



The Found Coin

November 2025

CGSUSA Philanthropy News

Banner artwork by Dana, age 9

Dearest Friends,

As we approach the end of the Church year and the calendar year, I am filled with gratitude for the incredible generosity of our donors, members, and friends. As you may have seen in our Annual Report or heard at our Annual Meeting, we have been diligently building our capacity to invite new and existing donors to support the work of CGSUSA, and we are seeing the fruits of this labor.

Our growing capacity to serve the needs of those seeking formation courses, to prepare new formation leaders for ministry, and to accompany catechists and communities who are inspired to serve the religious potential of children through CGS would not be possible without you. Everyday, we hear from DREs, pastors, lay leaders, parents, and catechists who want to bring CGS to a new community, and who are motivated to attend courses, set up new atria, and commit to ministering to children in the best way possible. We can respond to these needs because of you.

As we enter the season of Advent and Christmas, we rejoice that the Lord Jesus continues to show Himself present among us, and we give thanks that we are called to collaborate in building His Kingdom. May we all hear the words of the prophet Isaiah as we serve the little ones: "A little child will guide them." (Is. 11:6)

With gratitude,
Erin Miller, Stewardship Coordinator

*In this newsletter
you can expect:*

Board News

Donor
Testimonials

Endowment News

Ways to Give to
CGSUSA

Donor Testimonial

I completed Level I formation this past summer and am on my second year as a Level I Catechist. I have several children that have participated in CGS at our parish, Holy Trinity, and have three currently enrolled. This formation and program has been such a gift to me. It has enriched my faith tremendously and I think I love it as much, if not more than, the children! The privilege of coming along side the children in wonder of our Good Shepherd is humbling. I can't say enough how much I have grown in love of the Lord through this formation and working with the children. I want this program to continue growing and reaching more parents, children, priests, and religious so I'm trying to do my part supporting it with a recurring donation.

Julia Zaffos, San Antonio, TX

The Tina Lillig Memorial Fund – Donor Testimonial

I am incredibly grateful to the Tina Lillig Memorial Scholarship fund for making my Level II Formation possible. In the midst of growing our CGS program as the CGS Coordinator, the TLM scholarship was a true gift and a key to opening the door for further formation for myself by lightening the financial burden on my family and making it more possible for me to say "yes" to the call of Level II formation. God's timing of this gift was incredible in that shortly after I began formation, some changes in our community made it clear that I would be needed as a Level II Catechist for multiple sessions. I am so deeply grateful that I am able to step into this role with confidence thanks to the beautiful preparation and formation I have received in South Bend, under so many wonderful formation leaders. The fruits of this gift have been immediate for our Atria and CGS Community here in Chicago. This November, I keep Tina in our prayers and offer gratitude to everyone at CGS USA who honor her memory through the tangible support of Catechists (and thereby their families and communities).

Lauren Franzen, Chicago, IL



Endowment Update

Since the beginning of her first term on the Board, Claudia Petúrrsson made it her mission to grow our small endowment so it could be a sustainable income stream for CGSUSA. Thanks to her efforts to inspire donors and secure corporate matching gifts, our endowment corpus is over \$600,000.

You will soon hear more about a new endowment campaign to build our “forever fund” in an effort to someday make formation in the US more accessible and affordable to any catechist who wants to take a course.

If you’d like to make a forever gift to the endowment, contact Erin Miller or visit [OPRFCF’s website](#).

Tax Advantaged Giving in 2025

CGSUSA is here to welcome gifts beyond simply cash. We are equipped to help you make long lasting, tax-smart contributions that provide value for you and us. For more information on how you can make gifts of stock, use your IRA rollover, donor advised funds, or join the Light Bearers Circle through a legacy gift, contact [Erin Miller](#).

Introducing our New Board of Trustees Members

At the Annual Meeting on November 14, Erica Dunning, Zachary Krueger, and Maris Wimberly were elected to serve a three year term on the CGSUSA Board of Trustees. Our Board will now expand from eight members to nine, with three seats being up for election every years. This helps ensure a healthy mix of change and continuity for our Association.

Thank you to all who voted, and thank you to Maris, Zachary, and Erica, for saying “yes!”

Please visit our [Annual Meeting page](#) on the website to read the 2024-25 Annual Report, watch the Year in Review video, and learn more about our new Board members.



Susan Stuhlsatz-Reese,
Board Chair (Missouri)



Matthew Irwin,
Vice Chair (Florida)



Jenny Pleiman,
Treasurer (Ohio)



Hannah Marconeri,
Secretary (Michigan)



Margaret Schaefer, Board
Member (Nebraska)



Davette Himes, Board
Member (Virginia)



Erica Dunning
Member (Texas)



Zachary Krueger
Member (Idaho)



Maris Wimberly
Member (Alabama)

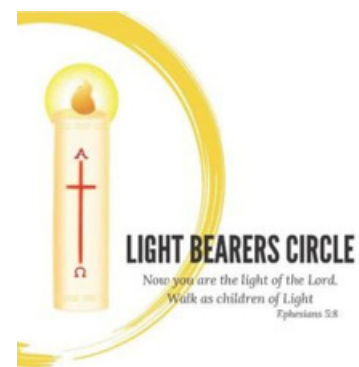
Giving through a Donor Advised Fund

A Donor Advised Fund (DAF) is a simple, flexible way to give to causes you care about. It works like a charitable investment account: you make a donation to your DAF, receive an immediate tax deduction, and then recommend grants from the fund to nonprofits over time. Many donors appreciate the ease of consolidating their giving in one place and the ability to support multiple charities from their DAF. If you have a DAF, you can recommend a gift directly to CGSUSA to help advance our mission. Simply share our legal name and tax ID with your DAF sponsor, and your generosity will go to work supporting children and catechists nationwide.

Have you designated CGSUSA in your estate plans?

Knowing of your generosity helps us plan for our future. Please contact us to share your plans via our online form so we can thank you!

If you want more information about how to name CGSUSA as a beneficiary in your estate planning, please contact Erin Miller at erinmiller@cgsusa.org. You can find more information on our website.



The Value of Membership

CGSUSA is a nonprofit membership organization. Our bylaws are written such that our members elect our Board of Trustees. Our members also pay dues in support of the Association and receive various benefits for this membership, including:

- our printed annual journal,
- access to the materials manual and other online formation content for catechists and families,
- the [Good Shepherd and the Child Podcast](#), which is free and available to all on your favorite podcast platform,
- invitations to online workshops and retreats, and
- regular newsletters with resources for catechists and ministry leaders...[and more!](#)

CGSUSA offers complimentary memberships to religious, priests, and those with financial need. The revenue generated from member dues cover about 55 percent of the actual cost of membership. *Philanthropic gifts are vital to making membership benefits available and accessible to all members. Thank you to our donors and members (individual, organizational, and vendor) for your generosity, which allows CGSUSA to create a membership community inclusive of all who desire to join us.*

To learn more about CGSUSA membership, visit <https://www.cgsusa.org/connect/become-a-member/>



Growing Seeds: A Sustainable Giving Initiative for CGSUSA Members



I love Kerri's story and in so many ways, I have experienced exactly the same things. I listened to the podcast even when I took a 2-year break from the Atrium. It's so good to hear from seasoned Catechists and to know we're all experiencing similar blessings and challenges. I love the podcast and I have been so blessed by CGS. We will be making a monthly donation. We love the CGS! - Pia

In honor of our 40 years of remaining with children, we launched a new sustainable giving program for CGSUSA members: Growing Seeds.

As part of Growing Seeds, your regular, automatic gift is simple and convenient, allowing you to spread your philanthropy over time. It also provides CGSUSA with a more predictable source of income so we can focus on sustaining and supporting the religious life of children and those who serve them.

To select your contribution frequency and amount click [HERE](#) or visit <https://www.cgsusa.org/connect/cgsusa/growing-seeds/> to complete the online giving form. For a minimum gift amount of \$15 per month (\$180 per year), you will automatically be recognized as a CGSUSA Growing Seeds donor, giving you one year of access to the recordings from Between Memory and Hope: 40th Anniversary Celebration as our way of thanking you for your generosity.



Hannah, Age 11



Jocelyn, Age 8, Richmond, VA

CGSUSA Annual Appeal: 2025-2026

This year, we seek to raise:

- \$175,000 to support CGSUSA's mission, vision and purpose
- \$16,000 to support the Tina Lillig Memorial Fund
- \$7,500 in tribute gifts, honoring catechists, formation leaders, and members
- \$7,500 in memorial gifts honoring those who have gone on to eternal life

Philanthropic support to enhances our impact in the following areas:

- Catechist Formation
- Technology
- Formation Leader Discernment, Training and Continuing Education
- Outreach and Atrium Development
- Infant/Toddler Formation
- International Resources and Support for Religious Communities
- Publications, Events and Educational Resources
- Mustard Seed Growth (support to dioceses, regional groups, etc)

Thank you for reading!

**ERIN MILLER,
STEWARDSHIP
COORDINATOR**

ERINMILLER@CGSUSA.ORG

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