



In the Meadow

Where the sheep gather

A newsletter for the Organization Members of CGSUSA



Greetings!

In the Atrium, children and adults listen to God's Word together. Sofia Cavalletti tells us listening in community enriches us. This is especially so when we listen with children, because God's Word resounds in a different manner with young children than in adults. The rhythm of the atrium affords us the opportunity to slow down and listen to the Word, observe the response of the child and to encounter within the silence, the Voice of God.

Peace,
Mary Heinrich,
Membership Coordinator

For the Parish Bulletin or Parent Newsletter or Catechist Note The Characteristics of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd The 32 Points of Reflection

What are the principal points which distinguish this catechesis and because of which it is called the "Catechesis of the Good Shepherd?" The following characteristics are intended to represent the principal aspects of the catechesis as they have emerged after more than fifty years of work with children of different countries, cultures and socio-economic backgrounds. These characteristics are reflective of the constants which have presented themselves in this work and are presented here with the invitation to go deeper into them for further reflection.

6. The Word is proclaimed in the most objective manner possible, so that the words of the adult do not impede the communication between God who speaks and God's creature who listens. The only aim of the words of the adult is to discreetly serve the listening to God's Word, in accordance with Jesus' own statement in the gospel: "My teaching is not mine but his who sent me." (John 7:16)

For the Parishioner: Is there a story from Scripture that you look forward to hearing proclaimed at Liturgy? Is there an image from the Bible that speaks to your heart at this moment?

For the Parent: When proclaiming the Word with your child, there is no need to explain the Scriptures, but simply ask the child, "What did you hear?" Allow your child's response to lead your conversation.

For the Catechist. In *Religious Potential of the Child*, on page 51, we read, "Let your words be counted." How has this impacted your role as a catechist?

For Parents

This information may be included in your communication with parents.

This month our focus is [The City of Jerusalem](#)



For the Catechist

We have heard in our formation courses, "Let your words be counted." Let us also recall what Sofia wrote on pages 52 and 53 of *The Religious Potential of the Child*:

In the process of the knowledge of encounter with God, there is a second and more precious moment that follows the adult's exposition, a moment made of silence, for it is the time in which the listening becomes interior. During this moment the child reconsiders within himself what has been presented, in an intimate conversation with the Teacher within.

The incandescent moment of the meeting with God occurs in secret between the Lord and His creatures, and into this secret the adult may not and should not enter.

- Do you allow for silence after proclaiming Scripture with the child?
- How does the child respond to that moment of silence?
- Silence needs to become a habit of our being. How is silence a habit in your own prayer life? How is silence a habit in your Atrium?

For the Catechist and the Children

In preparation for the Easter Season, we can learn the words and actions to "Jesus Christ is Our Light," sung by catechist and CGSUSA member, Paula Rush.



Jesus Christ is Our Light

For Reflection...for the Catechist in the Atrium *The Sources: from Sofia and Gianna*

Gifts for Us

When speaking about God with children it is valuable to keep in mind that the message we are announcing is addressed not only to the child but to us as well. It is necessary to know and experience new things to hear God's Word proclaimed, yet it is just as necessary for us. We need the opportunity to probe more deeply into things that often remain on the surface of life, so that our experience of encounter stays vibrant and the message retains its living and active quality within us (Hebrews 4:12)



To proclaim God's Word, however, does not mean assuming the role of an expert but simply serving God and children in a particular way. To serve in this way does not change what should be our habitual stance before God's Word: an attitude of openness, in a spirit of joy, wonder, and gratitude, to the presence of a gift that reveals itself to us as even greater.

- Sofia Cavalletti, *The Good Shepherd and the Child: A Joyful Journey*, p 34

Sofia goes on to say that thanks to the children, the sense that the relationship with God is joy, will remain especially alive in us. How have you experienced that joy as a catechist?

Besides in the Atrium or at Liturgy, when do you listen to Scripture with others? Is God's Word a part of your daily habit?

Reflect upon when the Word of God has been a gift for you in your own life. Can you describe the encounter?

The black and white version of some of the elements that you would like to copy and paste to your parish bulletin or catechist communication can be [found here](#). We look forward to [hearing from you](#). Please let us know what resources may be helpful to you as an Organization Member.

In the Shepherd's Care,

Mary Heinrich
Membership Coordinator,
The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd
cgsusa.org

