

In the Meadow

Where the sheep gather

A newsletter for the Organization Members of CGSUSA

Greetings!

We have the opportunity to gain further insights into the impact of CGS Catechist Formation and what it can offer the Church. To that end we are working with PhD candidate, Michelle M. Smith to gather information on catechist formation. We invite you to please respond to the survey that will be sent next week. Your feedback will be so valuable!

Michelle M. Smith is a PhD Candidate in Religious Education at Fordham University. She completed her Masters in Religious Education at Fordham several years ago. Mrs. Smith has written many papers about Catechesis of the Good Shepherd and will continue her research with a comprehensive, qualitative survey on behalf of the United States Association of The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. In her current ministry, Mrs. Smith serves as a Theology teacher for high school boys at a Jesuit Catholic school in Connecticut. She is also very active in the school's Christian Service and Campus Ministry programs, coordinating and supporting service projects and immersion programs and participating in retreats, Liturgies, and prayer services. The mother of four children, Mrs. Smith resides in Connecticut with her husband, Jim. She is excited to be involved in this important project and hopes to complete her research in the Spring of 2019.

In Christ,
Karen Maxwell.
CGSUSA Formation Director.

For the Parish Bulletin or Parent Newsletter or Catechist Note

To print in the parish bulletin, parish or parent newsletter or a weekly 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.

9. In harmony with the universal church, the life in the atrium follows the liturgical year; therefore, moments which are particularly intense are those of

Christmas/Epiphany and Easter/Pentecost.

For the Parishioner: What are the traditions of your parish community that mark the seasons of Lent and Easter? How have those events and rituals impacted your spirituality?

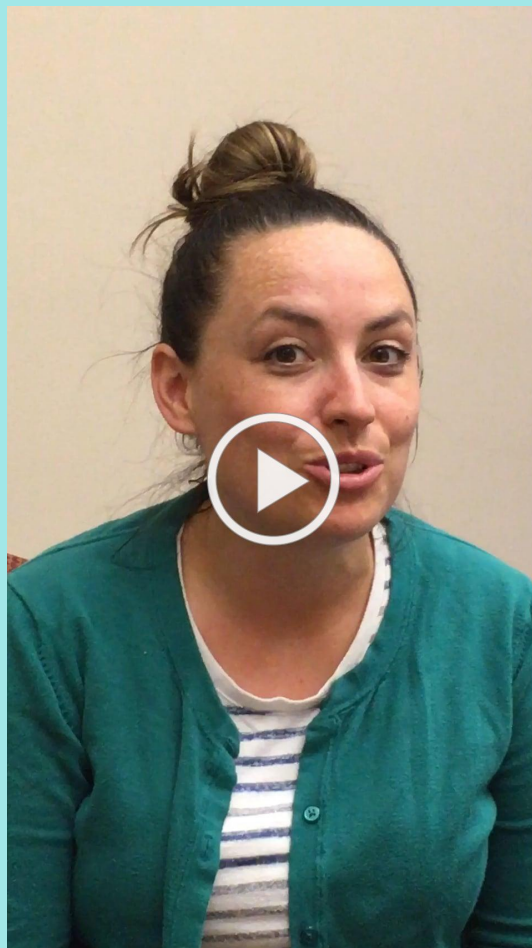
For the Parent: What are the seasonal and liturgical traditions of your childhood that you have brought to your home today? Is there a particular ritual that your child(ren) enjoy?_

For the Catechist: During these weeks of Ordinary Time, consider how you will prepare the children for Lent? What songs will you sing this year?

For the Catechist and the Children

Share this video with your catechists via email or at your next gathering.

This month Sarah Burke, CGSUSA member from Iowa, shares a song about restoring our work.

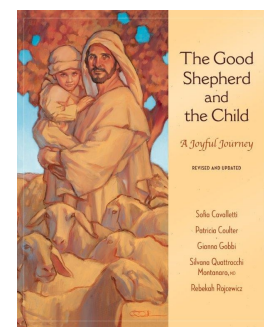


It Is Time To Restore Our Work

For Reflection...for the Catechist in the Atrium

Share this with your catechists via email or at your next gathering.

The Sources: *from Sofia and Gianna*



Our long observation of young children has helped us hear their unvoiced request for the greatest mysteries of our faith, the best and richest "food" we have. Among these greatest mysteries are:

- The Incarnation: the coming of "Immanuel" who is "God with us"
- The Paschal Mystery: the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Christ, who invites us to share in his risen life through Baptism
- The descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost: that equips and empowers us as individuals and as Church to experience fullness of life in Christ as we help to build God's kingdom on earth

The young child needs to be oriented to these great mysteries and the corresponding feasts in the life of the Church, both for their personal growth and joy, as well as to enable them to become fuller participants in the celebrations of the Church. With this aim in mind, we help them best by leading them to Scripture. The Gospels are the source, a wellspring overflowing with living waters.

Last month in the Atrium, you may have presented or observed a child work with the material for the Adoration of the Magi.

The Adoration of the Magi: God places a "sign" (a star) even in nature so that those from far away, and not of Jesus's country or religion, can also know of his coming. The Magi follow the star to honor him and give him gifts. These gifts offer clues as to who this Child really is: gold (pertaining to a king), frankincense (meaning God is near), and myrrh (a spice used to anoint people when they die).

For Reflection:

1. In the Bible, the symbol of the star is a sign of blessing and glory: we read about the star in the book of Genesis (1:16, 26:4), Psalms (148:3), Baruch (3:34), and of course, in the prophecy of Numbers (24:17) which reveals the star as a sign of the coming of a king. But there is something about THIS Child that causes the movement of the stars. What has the star revealed to you about the Child? Have you observed the star in the child's artwork and prayer?

2. Matthew 2:12: "they departed for their country by another way." The Magi were on a different journey **after** they encountered this Child. How have you observed the children in your Atrium as "new children" after an encounter with Jesus?

3. The Magi bring gifts to the Child. *Joyful Journey* tells us "These gifts offer clues to who this Child really is..." What clues have been revealed to you in the Atrium? Are there realities that you have discovered from your work with the children?

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,

