

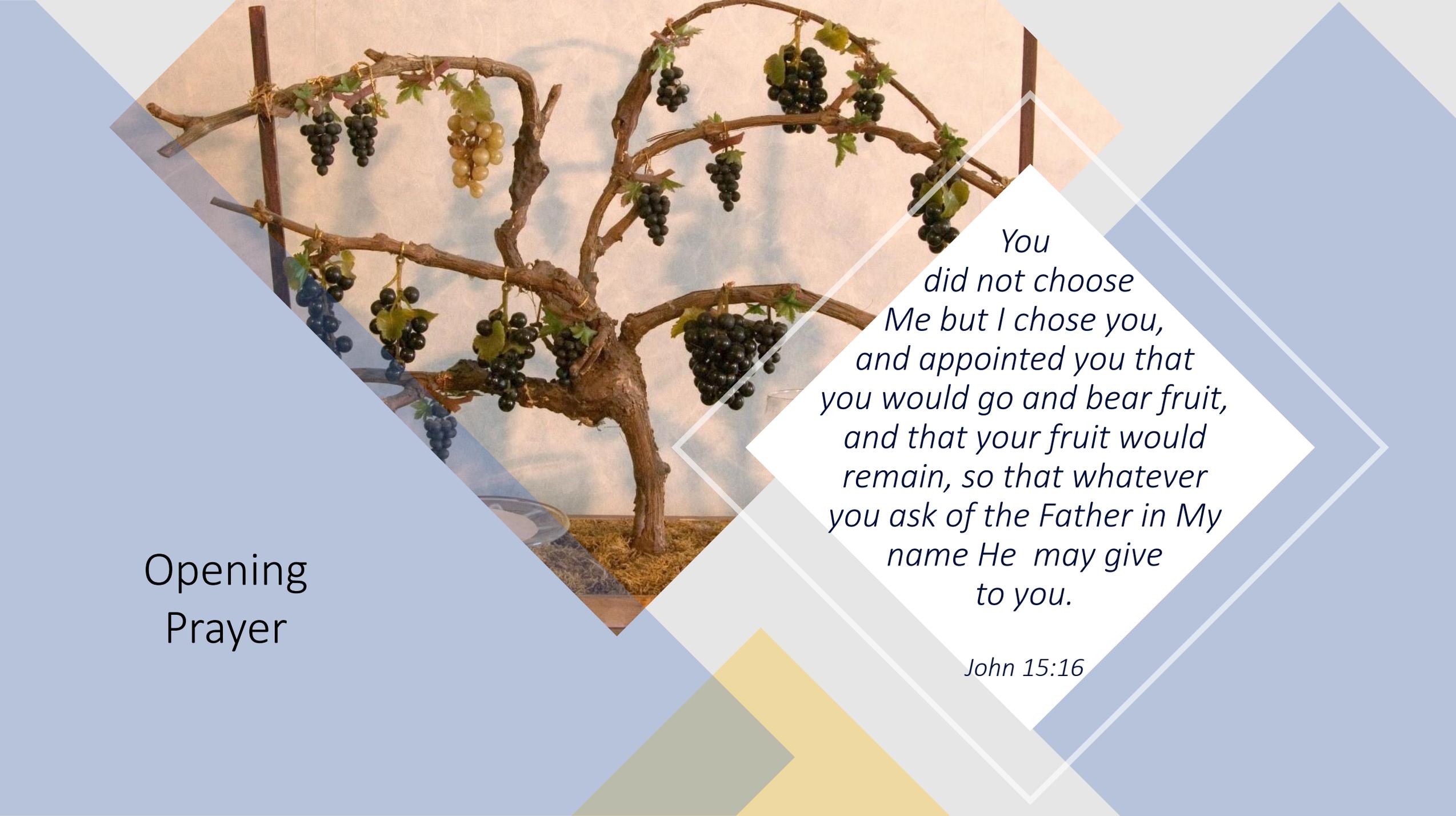


CGSUSA  
SUMMER  
SEMINAR 3

The Domestic Church  
In the time of Covid

## A Proviso:

- We are here to pray together, share ideas and wisdom and have a conversation.
- What works in New York will not work in Nevada, what works in Birmingham will not work in Bismarck.
- Every community may be different.
- You will need to follow your local and state government guidelines as well as your diocesan and parish/school guidelines.
- We are not giving an endorsement of any product or particular way of doing something, we are simply offering what we believe are best options. We remember that the only teacher is Christ.



Opening  
Prayer

*You  
did not choose  
Me but I chose you,  
and appointed you that  
you would go and bear fruit,  
and that your fruit would  
remain, so that whatever  
you ask of the Father in My  
name He may give  
to you.*

*John 15:16*



*“A small child has a tendency which can be best described as a sensitive period of the soul. During this period it has intuitions and spiritual longings which are surprising to anyone who has not observed children able to express the needs of their interior life.”*

*“It thus seems that little children are exceptionally endowed with spiritual insights and are marvelously called by divine grace.”*



*“The religious needs and capacities of older children are no less great or essential than those of younger children. Their religious potential no less strong; rather it is expressed through the new capacities of their own stage of development.”*

*Religious Potential of the Child: 6 to 12 Years Old, p x*





*“If we want to assist the child in his or her religious experience, an important area which we must attend is that of prayer. Prayer is, first of all, listening to God. It is the particular key which opens up the mystery of God’s relationship with God’s creature; it is a key which belongs to God, but which God gives to all... Prayer is initiation to the mystery of God and is, itself, a mystery... our task is that of creating the conditions for silence and reverence which will help the child focus on and listen to God. We do this, first of all, by preparing an environment with a prayerful atmosphere.”* Gianna Gobbi, *Listening to God with Children*, page 117-118

Gianna Gobbi

A portrait of Gianna Gobbi, a woman with dark, curly hair, looking slightly to the right with a gentle smile. The portrait is set within a diamond-shaped frame that is part of a larger geometric design on a light blue background. The design includes overlapping diamond shapes in shades of blue, green, and yellow, with white outlines.

*Observation was a spiritual practice, and one that she prized in the formation of those who accompany the inner life of the child.*

“As Gianna watched the slow changes in nature, she also knew how to watch, without attempting to hasten, the slow normalization of the child and his or her manifestation as a child of God.”

*Sofia Cavalletti*



*We pray for the youngest child,  
who is sensitive to order,  
language, and possess a great  
capacity to  
be in relationship.*

*Give them  
each your strength  
and patience, Lord, as they build  
"the church of the home."  
Grant them your healing, your  
love and the peace that comes  
only from remaining in you.  
We ask all these things in your  
most Holy Name.*

*Amen*

*We pray for the older child, as  
he contemplates and enjoys  
the mystery of time, a cosmic  
hunger, and a sensitivity for  
imagination.*

*We pray for  
parents who give witness  
of their Christian lives, a witness  
that is often without words,  
but which perseveres  
throughout a day-to-day life  
lived in accordance with the Gospel.*

*We pray for the catechist, who lives the 32  
Points of Reflection, and proclaims the Word  
of God as witnessed in his or her daily life.*



“Catechesis is to let ourselves be loved and saved. It is to nurture the desire of the Shepherd, to remain in his love, to rediscover the conditions and the essential needs of life lived in communion and to support each other in seeking the way to actualize it.”

*Dalmazio Mongillo OP*

Returning with Families  
2020-2021



We support the  
Domestic Church –  
the heart of the family

Podcasts for Parents

Children's Pages

Catechists  
Zoom with  
Families for  
meditation  
and prayer

Traveling materials

Extension work

Parent Pages

Parent Zoom  
Meetings

joyful confidence



SO JUST,  
**LOOK**  
AROUND YOU  
AND TRY TO

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EbbGjx4ZKL8>

Mary Pat Heelan  
Associate Director  
Office of Religious Education Mission  
Diocese of Worcester Massachusetts



Play (k)

0:29 / 3:12



# Catechists weekly preparation



- Working as a team is very important.
- Coordinate weekly online study sessions with your catechetical team to pray, meditate, select resources from the CGSUSA website, and work together regarding what will be offered to children and the way it will be offered.
- Write together an essential presentation from a main Christian Message Point.
- Select the focal images to share.
- Select options for songs. Singing virtually can be difficult due to a slight time delay. A suggestion is to mute the children and then invite them to sing along with the catechist or the song leader.
- Rehearse session for the children among catechists, especially when to open and close microphones, when to share and stop sharing images, etc.

Prepare  
a Prayer Corner  
at home.

The importance of the  
presence of another family  
member during the sessions.  
See local diocesan policy

Prior communication  
with families:  
explain how encounters  
will be held and how we  
collaborate with each  
other.

Prepare the environment –  
a peaceful place in the  
home without distractions.

Personal Work Materials for the Child:  
A small Bible, Stationery, Sheets,  
pencils, crayons, glue, etc

The time and timing of the sessions

Accompanying families and  
encouraging them to use the  
resources uploaded in the web site

# Themes

- Level One: Bible Studies, Nomenclature for Life in the Church, Tour of the Church, Seeds (the mystery of life), gestures from livestreamed Mass
- Level Two: Bible Studies, Gifts of Creation Missal work, Gestures, Maxims, making scripture booklets.
- Level Three: Bible Studies, Typology- Creation, reflections on the Virtues, the Maxims.

# Aims

- To assist the involvement of children and adults in a common religious experience in which the religious values of childhood, primarily those values of contemplation and enjoyment of God, are predominant.
- Accompany families through an unprecedented time
- Support parents to encounter Christ with their children and live the liturgical year within their homes.
- Help families strengthen their relationships with each other, with our Good Shepherd, and with their faith community

# The Encounter

- **Individual contact:** before the first group meeting.
- **Maximum groups:** 10 children.
- **Announcement:**
  - According to liturgical time.
  - Biblical themes or liturgical prayers they already know.
  - Look for only one point of the Christian message (the most essential) and based on this, one or two points of meditation (questions) that lead the group to prayer in response.
  - Try not to cover too much... Covid-19 has taught us that it is time to listen, be still, patient and silent. Let's convey this to the children.
- **Celebrations:** children enjoy them so we can celebrate even remotely.
- **Resources:** Some images and ideas will be published on the web site.

# Length and rhythm of the encounter

- **Encounter duration:**

  - Level I: 20 minutes

  - Level II: 25-30 minutes

  - Level III: maximum 40 minutes

- **Rhythm:**

  - Welcome each child as they enter the virtual meeting.

  - Optional: share some children's work -sent by their families, perhaps the catechist could make a digital collage.

  - Essential Presentation (Main Christian Message Point)

  - Short meditation (starting from main point)

  - Prayer and/or singing (select song and have it ready)

  - Invitation to personal work.

# Celebrations!

Preparation  
in the home

Each family  
can bring  
things to the  
prayer table

Scripture

Sing!

reflection

# Monthly Resources for Gathering with the Children & Families

- Monthly Celebrations for Families
- Parent Pages
- Catechist Notes – *new!*
- Digital Templates *new!*
- Podcasts
- Level One Child(ren) prayer, reflections, extensions
- Level Two Child(ren) prayer, reflections, extensions
- Level Three Child(ren) prayer, reflections, extensions
- Catechist Zoom Meeting with other catechists in the parish

# Children's Work – What about materials?

- Invite children to express (drawing or writing) what has echoed in their hearts.
- Level 2 and 3 may also be invited to search for more Biblical texts.
- Extension works for all levels are available on the CGSUSA website.
- Materials are an aid to the child's reflection, not a tool to teach a lesson.
- Materials aid the child's meditation rather than encourage a craft project.
- The child will work on their own.
- If they want to share their work with the group, their caretaker can take a photo and send it to the catechist. Perhaps the catechist can make a collage with the children's works to show the group the beginning of the next meeting.

# Parent's Work – What about developing rituals and traditions?

- Can be informed of their role and empowered, not intimidated.
- Can be encouraged to reflect on what prayer has been in their life.
- Can invite family prayer led by the children.
- Can seek a daily time for a short and essential prayer of the family.
- Can be encouraged to share stories of their childhood relationship with God.
- Can take a photos and send to the catechist to be shared with the group.
- Can look to celebrating family events (such as the reception of the sacraments, the celebration of great liturgical feasts, the birth of a child, a bereavement)
- Can be informed of helpful tools for understanding and engaging in the pedagogy of family faith formation.

# Catechist's Work – What about videos?

- In CGS we know the importance of encounter, of relationship which means interaction and conversation, videos do not provide these things.
- Giving children presentations online is not the same as when they are offered to children in person. These are moments that we cannot in any way “realize” electronically.
- In the atrium the presentation the catechist offers children is an announcement, a proclamation of the Christian message. While it is a brief moment: the rest of the atrium time allows children to absorb the message internally through the work of their hands. The material we use in a presentation is not a “didactic material” and therefore, it isn't designed for the adult as a teacher's aid.
- The children would see the material associated with the message but cannot immediately use it with their own hands which is key to allowing them to absorb the message it conveys.

# September!

- *Celebration: The Enthronement of the Bible*
- *Parent Pages: (1) The Prayer Table and Practical Life, (2) Practical Life: Room by Room. (3) Practical Life and the Elementary Child*
- *Catechist Note: The Enthronement of the Bible*
- *Digital Catechist Template for Meeting with Parents of the Younger Child*
- *Digital Catechist Template for Meeting with Parents of the Older Child*
- *Digital Catechist Template for Meeting with Children: The Enthronement of the Bible and Practical Life*
- *Podcasts*
  - *Level One Child(ren) introduction/ orientation, prayer, practical life*
  - *Level Two Child(ren) introduction/ orientation, prayer, practical life*
  - *Level Three Child(ren) introduction/ orientation, prayer, practical life*
- *Catechist Zoom Meeting with other catechists in the parish*



Practical Life

# October!

- *Celebration: All Saints*
  - *Parent Pages: (1) The Altar and the Family Table, (2) The Mass and the Elementary Child,*
  - *Catechist Note*
  - *Digital Template for Meeting with Parents*
  - *Digital Template for Meeting with Children*
  - *Podcasts*
  - *Level One Child(ren) The Altar, Liturgical Colors, Church Tour*
  - *Level Two Child(ren) Liturgical Calendar ( See the LTP Calendar we will have in our eStore!)*
- Missal Work*
- *Level Three Child(ren) Liturgical Calendar ( See the LTP Calendar we will have in our eStore!)*
- Missal Work*
- *Catechist Zoom Meeting with other catechists in the parish*

# November!

- November: Biblical Geography
- Celebration: Thanksgiving
- Parent Pages:
- Catechist Note:
- Digital Template for Meeting with Parents
- Digital Template for Meeting with Children
- Podcasts
- Level One Child(ren)
- Level Two Child(ren)
- Level Three Child(ren)
- Catechist Zoom Meeting with other catechists in the parish

# December!

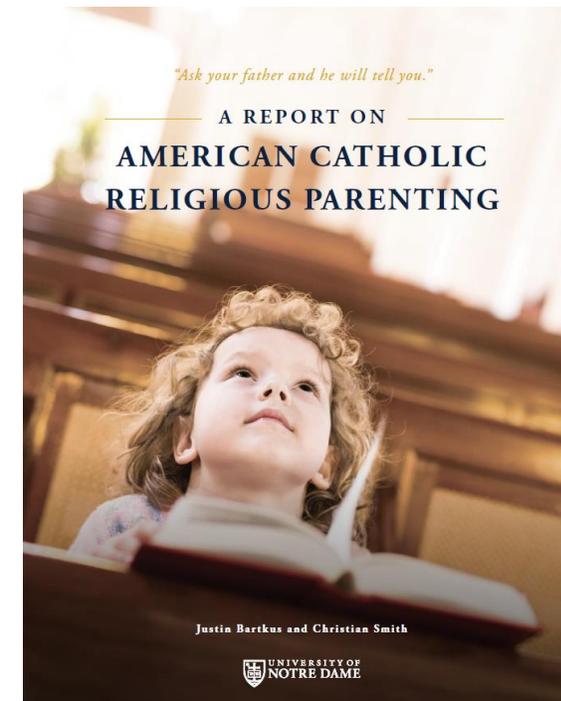
- December: The Incarnation
- Celebration: Advent
- Parent Pages:
- Catechist Note:
- Digital Template for Meeting with Parents
- Digital Template for Meeting with Children
- Podcasts
- Level One Child(ren)
- Level Two Child(ren)
- Level Three Child(ren)
- Catechist Zoom Meeting with other catechists in the parish

# Remember some key takeaways:

- 1) Parents should be informed of their role and empowered not intimidated.
- 2) Parishes, clergy and catechists are as necessary as ever.
- 3) Cultural opportunities need to be available for the enhancements of faith filled family life.



<https://churchlife-info.nd.edu/a-report-on-american-catholic-religious-parenting>



# Questions for Discussion

- Looking at the resources from CGSUSA, how will you share the resources on our website with the catechists, families, parents and children in your community? As you looked at the resources on the website, is there something you find called to think about and ponder more?
- What new questions or unanswered questions do you have about meeting the needs of the domestic church? (not that we promise to provide the answers to all the questions that will be posed today, but sometimes simply asking the question helps us to bring clarity and essentiality to the task, etc)

Most time @ Se  
Most Re celebrate  
again

