



The United States Association of *The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd*

1. Why did you attend this seminar? Select all that apply.

- Interest in seminar topic 80.0%
- Essential for your job 60.0%
- Networking opportunity 32.5%
- Concern for return 76.2%
- Other 2.5%

1. Why did you attend this seminar? Select all that apply. - Other responses

fellowship and support

Ideas for fall

1. Why did you attend this seminar? Select all that apply. - Comments

Our DRE asked me to research ideas and learn what the national CGS office was recommending.

Need to bring information to our pastor and administrator to determine the opening.

It lifts my spirit and strengthens me to be among fellow CGS catechists.

Wonderful support by ALL!! Thanks so much!!

Seeking sense of community and ideas for how to proceed

I wanted to get different ideas about returning and also hear considerations that I might not have thought about.

We are all in similar positions, trying to figure out how to support children and their families. No one gets it like other CGS folk.

The seminar was of great value in determining a plan for the fall.

I was very interested in ideas and best practices for returning/or not returning to the atrium.

I do not have any co-workers to serve 400 children, 6 classes/day, and wanted to hear what others doing to respond to covid environment.

Being the sole catechist responsible for multiple atrium sessions for the 300 children in our school causes me great anxiety about how to continue to live the CGS model with the children while insuring that they and I am safe within the environment or enjoying a shared religious experience if we are forced to be contemplating via zoom during shut downs!

Did not check "concern" for return because the decision is already made that we are not returning to in person atrium or other religious ed classes.

I wanted to hear what others are considering.

Carrying on our work in these COVID circumstances is so complicated and there are so many unknowns. The collective wisdom from around the country proved (no surprise there) invaluable, enlightening, encouraging.

Looking forward to sharing of ideas and struggles since we are struggling with the same uncertainty.

I am the volunteer coordinator for CGS at the parish

I had a day off work, so was able to attend.

... to find out and find solutions for the autumn work with the children.

CGS is obviously unique. As the director at my parish I desire to return safely and wanted to collaborate with others who understand and live the CGS environment.

As director of Children's Formation at my parish, it is essential for me to determine possible scenarios for reaching children and families this fall as the pandemic continues.

I am interested in how we can promote CGS within our parish and still maintain the social distancing that is required by our Diocese.

2. How relevant was this seminar topic?

Very relevant 96.2%

Somewhat relevant 3.7%

Neutral 0.0%

Somewhat irrelevant 0.0%

Very irrelevant 0.0%

3. How satisfied were you with this seminar?

Very satisfied 80.0%
Somewhat satisfied 18.7%
Neutral 0.0%
Somewhat dissatisfied 0.0%
Very dissatisfied 0 0.0%

4. Was there one scenario that you felt was workable for your community this fall?

Scenario 1 We return 5.0%
Scenario 2 We support the Domestic Church 18.7%
Scenario 3 The Retreat Model 8.7%
Scenario 4 Prepare for the second wave of COVID 19 1.2%
I will be blending the different scenarios 63.7%
No Responses 2.5%

4. Was there one scenario that you felt was workable for your community this fall? - Comments

Dependent upon our communities guidance at parish and diocesan level

A covid-19 materials manual packet - was a great idea. Even it just meant taking already made PDF files from the current materials manual and know that these tracing packets, collages, Level 2 missal, etc. were "approved" to go home as extension works

Is it a safe assumption to make that Celebration presentations can now be made online - as Zoom meetings for the older children?

I am not sure about the Retreat Model but I am interested in that option as well.

it was good to hear and discuss them all. We are still in consideration. If and when we return we will take a closer look at the options.

We aren't allowed to gather yet, but when we do it will probably be more of a retreat or short term return until Advent.

There were great session ideas and I can see blending each of these through out the year. The Retreat model hadn't occurred to me. I can't wait to ponder what that will look like for us.

Because of the scope of atria involved, I anticipate a blending with unpredictable curve balls coming for the rest of this year at least. My parish atrium is very different from the atrium at the academy where I serve as the coordinator and lead catechist.

The parish where I work is not having any on-site faith formation or any other activities this school year.

The resources being provided by CGS have been invaluable. When the resources are brought together by Theme, will they remain on a broader spectrum as they are now, or will these themes also carry through all three levels of the atrium?

If so, would having a Level I, Level II and Level III resource be beneficial moving forward to allow for ease in finding them for parents each week?

Loved idea of incorporating an outside environment with the atrium experience!!!

I like all the ideas, just as we are currently experiencing such change its hard to commit to one - we need to be ready for all 4

I don't know if the retreat model will be workable, but it is the most intriguing at this point.

Our diocese is undecided yet. Probably a mix of 2 & 3.

2 & 3

We will need to see how our local community, schools, and parishes are dealing with this and be ready to respond accordingly. It's good to consider various ways to respond to different possible scenarios.

We will be offering Family Faith Guides. Each family has a Guide (CGS Catechist) who calls once a week, offers resources and support. The resources will include CGSUSA resources, videos and articles we produce, CGS materials to be lent (for those who have received presentations) and CGS extension materials. There will also be a "sign up for a session" option for children to receive a presentation up to once a month if the family is open to it. We are reevaluating in January.

At this point in the year, all look feasible, to be honest. But the retreat model seems most likely for the autumn.

I feel that this lockdown has provided many opportunities for parents to become more involved with their children's spiritual development by being an example in daily life in the home.

That children have an opportunity to serve their families in carrying out practical life in the home environment.

The opportunity is there too in the home for more contemplative time for the child as an individual. A home prayer corner can be created by the child.

Most of the folks in our group 1 preferred the Scenario 3: The Retreat Model.

Looking forward to best case scenario, but preparing for other scenarios as well.

I teach at school, prek-3rd. They decided to return and figuring how. So, will prepare for blending of scenario 1 and 2.

T I believe that I will be blending the first and second scenarios throughout the school year.

Of course we will support the domestic church but not solely in the way implied by the use of phrase by cgsusa. The parent pages and podcasts are great resources, true. Yet, too many parents are struggling, too overwhelmed with working from home with children at home to appreciate these. And neither address the (absence of) relationship between catechist/chln (or chln w one another) or the communal aspect of faith.

We don't really know yet what our situation will be in the fall.

Our parish is reopening tentatively, and we do not yet know whether parents want to stay home or come back to the church campus, with or without their children. We'll have to be adaptive.

I hope for the retreat model and supporting the domestic church. However, any in person meetings this year are very uncertain at this point. I think we need to prepare for 0 in person contact. NY Governor is expected to make an announcement on July 15 regarding schools. Faith Formation (and diocesan schools) followed the state closure in March.

We only have a level one atrium and do not have the space for social distancing.

After this seminar I'm leaning towards supporting the Domestic Church. I love the idea of a theme each month and engaging the whole family and perhaps have catechists assigned to families rather than to individual children, as Mary Heinrich suggested. I'll also offer returning to atrium if catechists and parents want this. Perhaps also offering one retreat each month for the families along the lines of the themes for those who want to meet- having stations for the families rotate through.

More than likely it will have to be a combination of ways. We have many things like age of Catechists and number of children enrolling.

We still need to gather a lot of information before settling on any one scenario, but we are anticipating a variety of responses from our families and may well blend the scenarios in order to reach and nurture as many families as we can.

Scenario 2: But hope to do some blending: Retreat or possible open atrium time depending on what the children's school schedules look like.

Unfortunately, I sense the need to be ready for scenario 4 while utilizing the first three ones.

I believe we are looking at the possibility of something in between 2 & 3. We are striving to support the domestic church in everything we do but hope to be able to offer the opportunity for our children to back in the atrium is some capacity. They need the prayerful silence of the space now more than ever.

* IF * Diocese and Parish leadership (and parents) allow a return with health protocols, I imagine a blend of 1 and 3 We may use once a month 1:1 sessions w/ each child because we have so few in Level 1 and some will be just 3 years old

There is so much that is unknown. Its very hard to plan.

We did a good job compiling questions and concerns but it left me wanting more resolution. I look forward to follow up.

I imagine we would use a blending approach depending on state regs and diocesan and parish directives.

Actually, my class only works once a month. So the retreat model is fine for me. I just don't meet the parents and I only have an hour to work with my 3-6years.I'll continue preparing material and I'll see how things go on with COVID 19. For the moment, it seems quite ok in France.

I work both in the school and parish. I will likely need to offer CGS in ways that will work best with each. Still praying and discerning how this will work.....

I hadn't thought of the retreat model. No matter how we return, we will be focusing on the family group.

As of now we plan on returning. But given different circumstances that may change. It was good to hear the different scenarios so maybe it will be a blended if we can't go back but that decision isn't mine to make

My atrium is in a school, so the school will determine how we return and what restrictions we have. The atrium is such a different environment from a classroom however, that knowing how other atriums will proceed and adapt is extremely helpful to me.

Especially supporting the domestic church and retreat model, perhaps even with single family appointments.

I think that at this point it would be up to the parents to decide to let their children return and then we may have to shelter in place again for the winter. However, I do not feel that sending home extension pages would help with most of MY families at our parish. I can barely get my parents to respond to email, unfortunately.

I have CGS in a school and we are returning. But the guidelines for school make it seem that I cannot return to the atrium, because children must stay in their classroom with the same group of students and teacher all day. So "special" classes have to come to the classroom. I have about 250 children a week usually. Not sure how to make CGS work this way. But the choices of your scenarios were very helpful and I am thinking of ways to possibly blend them. :)

I would like to have parent education/Catechesis as a focus

In a perfect world the retreat model would be wonderful! But we don't have the resources/catechists for it

5. Do you have concerns that we at CGS may help and support? - Responses

I would like information on how to modify practical life so that it lowers the possibility of germ transmission. For instance, should works such as sponging new removed in busy atria?

Can we sing in the atrium? We don't currently sing in our church. Maybe humming while in procession?

I would like ideas on how a retreat model could work in L1.

I would like more info on UV lights for sanitation. Are they safe and are they recommended for Covid?

We discussed possible models for presentations in a large group (10-12) children in a school setting. I don't see how we can continue to present in a small circle, intimate group. Considering an alternate space for presentations but would love thoughts.

I'm really concerned about my special needs kids. Our region held a session in January on managing the atrium and it was attended by about 50 catechists who were all concerned about how to work with children with needs.

I have around 450 children weekly. Prayers!

I was not aware until today that there was so much on the website thank you for that

I understand why we would not do videos of theological presentations. But I am wondering if we can help parents teach their own children by giving videos of practical life. I would not want to go against recommendations from the national office but I think that this might be doable. Also, I often sing songs and share them with the catechists because they can't remember them from training. (I'm in a new parish with all new catechists except one.) If we just simply sing the songs And share them with families would we be breaking copyright?

The continued discussions are necessary. Hearing from others around the world was eye opening and realization to know we are all in this together.

The thought of making several cities of Jerusalem is daunting (one of our most popular materials), but short of recreating everything in the atria, how shall we decide what to offer the children to send home, especially for level I?

I'd love to hear about material-cleaning possibilities that won't damage the wood for when we DO get to return.

I think we are all in the same boat! I am more concerned with having enough catechists willing to serve if we are in the atrium or running smaller sessions.

Your ideas, resources and support throughout the Spring were lifesaving for me and those I serve. There was a great deal of pressure to just film the presentations and make them available online. I was able to guide away from this and provide some alternatives that were helpful. I love the parent pages!

Cleaning atriums

Easy resources for parents

My concern is for the longevity of CGS in the parish where I work; the pastor of the parish has asked all of us faith formation coordinators to offer online classes this year. I am afraid that if I cannot find a way to offer something online the program will be cut. So I am trying to figure out how I can support the parents, have prayer meditations, etc, in an online format that wouldn't go against the spirit of CGS, but which would allow the atrium to continue in some way.

Has there been discussion if/how virtual orientations could/would take place welcoming new families into the atrium?

Is this something that we do without being able to have a child come to experience atrium in its fullness?

Should we even be considering anything like this given the uncertainty of everything?

Greatly enjoyed the sharing of gifts, time, talent, wisdom and spiritual support of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Community during this challenging time.

Not at this time, but probably as directives come from our school principal from the diocese.

Personally, I am so thankful for this opportunity to meet and get to know other catechists and formation leaders. I think there are many ways this could work - even in normal times - choosing a topic or series of topics, doing some overview on what the official position/opinion/resources are and then doing the small groups to get to know each other. What a gift - to put names and faces together, to hear about opportunities and challenges in other parts of our country and the world... puts our own challenges in perspective and also helps new ideas sprout

Our main concern is effective disinfection techniques that are safe to use with children and that do not harm materials.

I would appreciate your reflections on parent exhaustion and how to work with that in the fall, especially in non-zoom dependent ways.

Was there some type of formula you can share for calculating an appropriate number of children in an atrium?

Keep doing what you are doing sharing the Parent Pages, Podcasts, etc. You are creating amazing resources for us as catechists, the children, and their families. This next year is going to be different but you are encouraging us to stay inspired and to not lose hope.

Not at all, CGS has done a wonderful job. Keep it up!

We love all of your resources! As we plan what videos, audio talks, materials etc. to produce, it would be helpful to have a timeline for what CGSUSA is offering so we don't reinvent the wheel.

We oversee the catechetical office for our small diocese. I wondered if I might use some of the powerpoint ideas and slides in a zoom conference with catechists in our diocese?

This Zoom call was very helpful. I loved the structure of having breakout groups and coming back to hear from each group. It was very helpful to talk with other catechists. I am very grateful for these opportunities. I hope I get in to attend the other Zoom gatherings offered this summer. I knew folks who wanted to get in but it got filled up too quickly! A wonderful problem to have!

I really like the planned monthly themes and I hope this will happen. This will be of great help in the remote learning blend with in person meeting.

I would love help with "kits" that we could supply to the families/children.

How to guide to or let children experience the reverence of God's presence in the atrium (of CGS program) is my concern. I do not want to send a message that causes misunderstanding about CGS, especially for newcomers.

I cannot see the immediate feedback.

The Domestic Church is not an idea familiar to many of the families in our school. Catholic/Episcopal families are the minority in our region. Also, as our school is non-sectarian, engaging parents of different faiths in assisting children with work related to Christian topics will have new challenges. I will need to adapt the beautiful parent pages provided by CGSUSA to make them more accessible to our population's culture. (I'll treasure the original versions for myself!)

Children in the school will be attending atrium in classes of 20 or more in groups which arrive back to back. Not having adequate time to clean the room or materials between groups causes me concern. I'm searching for solutions to this. As our school will not be requiring children to mask, I am concerned from my own health (I am diabetic and over 60) as well as my husband's (who is a stage four cancer patient). I am considering asking to only zoom atrium for the foreseeable future.

We must have all resources available in both English and Spanish.

Also, wondering if you've considered getting a similar effort done with parents... I know we don't tend to have direct connection to parents, but I worry that we on the "provider/catechist" end of things may see/feel things differently than parents do. Might be worth looking into or providing a similar experience template that communities might take to their parishes.

Yes. I chose "very satisfied" in #3 because I am very pleased that CGSUSA is sponsoring this much needed conversation. That said, I suggest 1) Fostering more open discussion. We could learn from those who tried videos or presented online (I did neither) why it doesn't work or for specific situations where it was favorable, e.g. w parents, w chln of a certain age, if chln had materials at home, live vs video, view only on materials or catechist visible too, etc.

2) It is concerning to hear discussion about "educating" parents, especially at this time of pandemic & social unrest, rather than journeying with them to hear the needs of their children and then exploring how to meet them. This "need to educate" orientation toward parents reminds me of the drawing of traditional teaching: the big adult in the know with a big book of knowledge being pushed toward a child (in this case the adult). May we be co-listeners before the Word with children AND parents.

This is not about reopening, although it does have an effect because our leadership is aging. To continue the Catechesis, our church is going to need more trained catechists, and we have not been able to interest parents -- or others -- in the Level I course offered in our region recently. Some trained catechists in the parish are unable to participate right now, and our leaders are retirement age and, honestly, getting tired. Are we the only ones having this recruitment and training problem?

These are exceptional times in a pandemic. If we follow the current needs of the child, I believe we should reevaluate the stance on no presentations via technology. Could it be done horribly? Sure. Is it better to be in the actual atrium? Of course! Could it be done well in a way that is beautiful, respects the integrity of CGS, and still offers children a gift? I believe 100% YES! In my breakout group, some admitted to doing things online but not comfortable sharing that for fear of getting in trouble and others talked about switching to book based programs next year since we can't. I think we can do better! I think children could still be offered a gift over technology that leads them closer to Jesus when we don't have the option of being in the atrium. Parents are overwhelmed right now and resources for them, however good, will leave many children out. The domestic church can also be built up by working with children remotely. Not all tech options are equal...

During the webinar, you provided good opportunities to address our concerns and identify ways the association can help.

Group 8's notes:

- need to survey parents, catechists and parish priest/staff to find out peoples needs and desires before selecting scenarios
- one school is hoping for option one, but realizes that their 3-6 classroom might become mostly Kindergarten and not many 3 & 4 yr. olds- so need to plan for this.
- suggested grouping catechists together with families and having retreat stations for families.
- excited for the Domestic Church partly because she and her assistant have adult education backgrounds. Her pastor wants to open this up for all families not just CGS. This might help recruit future catechists as well.
- found that the 'parent pages' on nat'l website too wordy so she made them more essential and used pictures.
- There was a real concern that insisting on social distancing might not be good to foster the child's relationship w/God
- requesting that regional areas create support for one another

I need more of the information in either a bilingual (English/Spanish) format or more Spanish only. It would be helpful in the extension materials as well.

The resources you have been providing and will be providing have been wonderful. I know that as concerns arise I can come to you! THANK YOU!

Right now we will be retraining 5 days a week. Our school district is asking that teachers travel from room to room and the children stay in their assigned classroom. So I have pondering how to bring the atrium to the individual classrooms.

The parent pages are great and I will be sharing them with the families.

If you all present the domestic church support information to us as in advance as possible, so that we might determine if there are some at home extension materials we can prepare in advance. Example: In September if we do practical life - can this be applied to all Levels? What materials could we consider sending in advance.

I keep trying to answer these questions: what will be meaningful to the children and helpful to parents?

Perhaps a CGS Family Formation. In other words we train the parents so they can do presentations to the entire family. Most especially let's include "Dad", the head of the house.

The resources you offer are great.

I am thankful for the website resources and the ability to send home extension works for further pondering and contemplation. We have struggled with how to connect with our Level I&II students. I have a team of wonderful catechists who tried to keep connected via zoom and through email. We also sent snail mail to our students and got great responses. However, I find myself trying to ask how Sofia would meet the children where they are during this age of technology. The connection and community are so important and I continue to encourage my families to create prayerful space and helping our parents learn to make silence from thier children, but I want to do more. I'm not sure presentations via video are the best option. I don't want our beautiful materials to be limited to visual aides, however, I do beleive seeing the materials for children who have already had the presentation could provide a point of further contemplation. There is no easy answer, just a need for more prayer needs.

Not at this time other than your prayers that additional people discern a desire to become a catechist

I am concerned about the children having enough opportunity to work with the materials. There is something about being in the atrium that can't be duplicated at home.

I am concerned we will be so concerned about disinfecting that we will expose the children to high levels of toxins.

Some locales are talking about making children wear masks. If you could find verifiable research on children not being effected in general nor being carriers to adults, that would really help us to be advocates for the children. Our governor leans to the overly cautious side but our Archbishop may decide otherwise for us if we can produce solid support for our opinions.

Even the idea of us adults wearing masks makes me cringe. Expression adds so much to presentations. We need legitimate guidelines on how to do this, perhaps distanced, but without a mask, at least during presentations.

Group 4

- helping parents to understand the paradigm of CGS and to be comfortable in praying/reflecting on Scripture in their home with their children. (CGSUSA Resources have been tremendous.)
- desire to include catechists over 65 even if on-site or hybrid model used with younger catechists
- what are parameters of what is permitted to be posted on video for parents/ children?

I would like to see the continued use of CGS USA meetings to network, share best practices, and learn and pray together. It is important for catechists to remain unified and continue to go deeper in our understanding of this work. I am very excited about the upcoming book study. Great idea! That is the book that I reread when preparing a session.

I thought that comes to mind is a safe environment issue. Our diocese has asked that during Zoom sessions 2 adults must be present when we are using distance learning. Our chancery office has let us know that their legal department will be implementing more guidelines in the future. I wonder if other dioceses have published guidance for digital safe environment.

I am experiencing tension internally of how to maintain the integrity of CGS while being flexible and creative in how to implement it with all our kids and families.

A concern of mine which was said also by others is that parents don't feel comfortable teaching their children our faith. Ideas for how to help parents feel at ease reading Scripture and wondering together with their children.

My priest is would like us to meet outside; he's very worried about spreading virus if inside. I've been thinking about what to do with level 1 children. For level 3 children we can do Bible study and bring a few materials outside.

It would be very helpful to receive a list of cleaning/disinfecting products suitable for various atrium materials: painted wooden figures (parables, infancy narratives, cenacle), wood, brass, etc.

Part of our group discussion and that the feedback you asked for was we felt that maybe sending home tracing packets at Cetera is not really beneficial. We opted more for zoom meetings.

The question of video of presentations -

I have not recorded presentations. I did make videos to follow presentations the children had already had, for instance, we had just had the GS lessons before we left, so I found an image of the GS and then did a voiceover reading of the scripture that the children could play anytime they wanted to listen. I did the same for the other parables we had covered.

The biggest concern for fall seemed to be what to do with new children as far as presentations, so I understand the concern. I know we will need to be creative and I appreciate continued direction and guidance from CGS on this.

Formation for parents as catechists seems to be a primary need now How can we equip and encourage busy parents to listen to God with their children, trust their children, and most importantly allow the Spirit to guide home religious life.

I think that many catechists may feel that the parents will NOT take the initiative to educate their child in the faith. The take home packets will not go far- especially with my parish families.

My CGS is in a very academic school and I have pressure from our principal and school leadership committee, to post videos of the presentations. You all have done and AMAZING job during this pandemic! Thank you so much!!! The podcasts and parent letters are so helpful. I look forward to the continued support through zoom meetings and/or emails.

God bless you all!

6. Do you have wisdom to share regarding this return? - Responses

Prayer!!!

Make practical life - friendly activities for the home environment...dusting, cleaning, gardening, germinating seeds

I felt the Holy Spirit leading this group today! There is much experience and wisdom to be gleaned. I think one of the fruits of the shutdown is going to be more parents actually becoming more aware of their vocation to evangelize their children and fulfill their baptismal promises. I think as an organization we need to empower the parents as much as possible!

Several, including myself, are "vulnerable" catechists and have concerns about that as well.

Our daughter, the doctor, said that she did some research among her colleagues and the consensus was that the catechist could wear a face shield only, IF the children were all wearing masks!

That is what I'm thinking about doing, but, at this point, who knows??

I do, I am still pondering and putting my thoughts and concerns into words. As I gather them I will email them to you all.

not yet....

I feel that there were valuable lessons learned throughout the Spring. Overall, we received good feedback. In the parish atrium, we were able to use what you call the retreat scenario to bring in children (and parents joined us) for Reconciliation card material, Cenacle and Centurion's Servant.

I think that offering family retreats with extension packets supports the domestic church well.

I tried specifically to be present to families and kids in live Google meets, emails, little how to videos and even read alouds. My focus was how to put work into their hands at home.

Probably the best received idea was a video I made of making unleavened bread at home with a very simple, quarantine friendly recipe. This is the basic recipe I use every year for our last supper enactments. The video was about 12 minutes long and many families made the bread and had their own enactments using the scriptures too.

They shared many photos.

Nothing that was not shared during the webinar

Trusting in our loving Good Shepherd. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28

Keeping this thought at the forefront of my plans: God's timing is impeccable with faith the size of a mustard seed!!!

One thing jumped out at me today we all acknowledge we are grieving the loss of Lent/Holy week/Easter/sacraments/Pentecost with the children... and most of us are doing ok with that now... but we are also grieving the lost opportunity for courses - which mean continued formation and community building for all of us, not just participants . I realized, Marilee has been coming to Corpus Christi every summer for 15 years I 'm not the only one grieving her absence this summer - other formation leaders and catechists who want to share and update and affirm what they are doing, other participants who are sad we are skipping a summer, even my young adult kids ...who always get time with her each summer... we are all grieving.... and yet, as I shared in my small group... we know there will be fruit with these deaths. in fact, one of the first fruits is the joy of working with small groups of children instead of our usual big sacrament gourds is the joy of small groups

If we don't return, keep what we do essential, just like with the kids, not to overwhelm the parents.

Remember the Parable of the Growing Seed ... that no matter how small or insignificant our efforts may seem, it is all up to God.

I guess, it all depends on the Diocese, and how can I comply with their standards. It's really very uncertain, but I would be willing to do 2 sessions per week, depending on the number of children enrolled.

Thank you for inviting me to this webinar,

The Good Shepherd has written the needs of the children on our hearts. We may not feel equipped, but we can take the same passion to serve and humility to observe into this new venue.

I wish I did!

Present most essential teaching in a simple, profound way. It's not easy and I do not know how.

We are thinking about having the children attend CGS every other week. The weeks they do not attend we will provide materials they can do at home with their parents.

Make sure we have a Plan B since nothing is certain.

The emphasis on "return" in 3 out of 4 of the scenarios (even the title of the event) misses the mark for those of us (& our families) marked by the historic watershed event of CV19. There is no "return" for the foreseeable future. We need to think in new ways using our CGS/Montessori mindset and orientation for the children before us. Do we not need to explore how to foster a common religious experience characterized by the values of joy & contemplation even though virtual? The emphasis on the domestic church (if not returning) feels like not fully using the gift (talent) we've been given as catechists. Admittedly, whatever we do will not be "CGS" in the in-person way we know, but can't we collectively apply the gifts of Sofia & Gianna to find new ways in this moment to observe, proclaim, and prepare whatever environment (virtual & in the family) we're able to move in? And then share our experiences with one another to come to collective wisdom of what is possible in this moment.

I need to remember in our parish-based program that when we do programs with the children we need to have something for the parents to do as well. With capacity limits, this extra programming will have to be customized to the adults we know will be there. We have to keep thinking of the drop-off parents and what we will "do" with them.

I have a lot of thoughts about different technological platforms and how they could be used well or poorly by catechists and the benefits and disadvantages of live v. prerecorded presentations. I have working knowledge and experience with zoom, google classroom, seesaw, youtube, iMovie, and more. I am an elementary school music teacher who transitioned to distance learning and a mom of 6 and 10 year-olds who also transitioned to distance learning via live and prerecorded lessons from their Catholic school. I'm a child of the atrium. Normally I dislike the use of technology in education, but these are exceptional times.

FYI: Study on safety of singing underway (does singing produce aerosols like coughing?) Results expected 7/20/20:

<https://www.nfhs.org/articles/unprecedented-international-coalition-led-by-performing-arts-organizations-to-commission-covid-19-study/>

<https://files.constantcontact.com/b4d082bd201/84085c28-45dc-4552-bdfa-f520194cd09b.pdf>

No, I appreciated how much the Board understood the complexity of making return decisions.

Group 8 notes:

Regarding Alpha, suggests that some CGS folks develop an evangelization approach using CGS for parents or people who are around children, which would foster community, faith sharing, food and indepth discussions. Chicago's Arch wants parishes to offer Alpha in their evangelization efforts w/parents and to them empower parents to form their children. If CGS could offer a similar 10 week series of presentations, meals, faith sharing and discussion for adults- it might offer a more contemplative evangelization approach that speaks to people through scripture and liturgy. While people enjoy Alpha, many Catholics feel it doesn't offer the richness of the sacraments. Granted Alpha is suppose to be Christianity 101 and specific doctrine would be offered after Alpha in RCIA, or other fellowship groups, but it seems that the CGS approach could certainly 'evangelize' parents/all adults and get them excited to grow in their faith.

I have been watching how our local Montessori school has opened up for summer programming. My own children attend there during the school year. One of the things they are doing is to have a special rug to place the materials on that they just finished working with so that it can be cleaned by the teacher before being placed back on the shelves. The children understand that the work on that rug is not available to work with. They are sticking to each child with their own table and each child has their own rug for floor work.

Thank you for the monthly themes, I now feel like I have a little direction on how to move forward and can work with that!

As said somewhat above- I want to support the families. Parents vary in their desire and ability and we need to be able to meet them where they are or they might be very frustrated and overwhelmed.

For our current True Vine meditations we are wearing Masks.

We wash hands before and after meditation.

We check everybody's temperature upon entrance.

We ask the pertinent questions: Has anyone in the house traveled out of state and/or been exposed to COVID-19? Has anybody in the house have had any cold symptoms in the past week?

When we open, we are considering having Level 1 on Sundays after Mass, let any and all viruses to die for 48 hours and have have Level 2 & 3 on Tuesdays - Retreat mode (small groups)

Pray for the Lord's guidance.

I have continued to do weekly email and gospel reflections during the pandemic. I connect to presentations from the atrium when I can and always include additional resources and family prayer opportunities. I have been very cognizant of not giving parents 'one more thing' but still providing them encouragement and resources.

We are also working to complete sacramental formation and celebrations for our First Communicants this year. We have decided to do a Sacramental Camp, following the State day camp guidelines. Our children will come for 2 hours Monday through Thursday and go through the Meditations and spend time in the atrium in groups of no more than 9 students. Then we will celebrate First Reconciliation on Friday during staggered confessions, with only one group of 9 in the church at a time. Then for First Communions parents could choose any Mass over the next three weekends. Or parents could choose continuing formation in the next school year and celebrating next spring.

I think coating materials in polyurthane may allow for better cleaning without destroying them.

1. As to cleaning regimens, good old soap and water kills germs without harsh chemicals and would be a good habit for us to instill in the children at their work stations/chowkis. And it does not require a "set time" as some cleaning agents do.

2. It sounded like some catechists still wanted to record lessons for children to view at home. I understand how this could be bad in the long run. A colleague suggested perhaps using an online format similar to formed.org where all content is uploaded by you (cgsusa.org) and can only be accessed by authorized users. Then YOU have control of content and it can be removed whenever you want it to be.

Group 4

One DRE created mini-website (linked to parish website) with library of materials parents could access on their own schedule; included CGSUSA resources and communication from DRE.

One DRE (encouraged by parish to have a video component since other catechetical ministries did) recorded videos of catechists in the atrium near the prayer table reading scripture verses the children already had heard and asking reflection questions.

A suggestion from our small group involves using a family model based on a retreat style to include the whole family and would be offered in all CGS levels.

A hybrid approach using Zoom meetings and atrium time seems prudent. Our group wonders whether the catechist could sit in front of the prayer table in the atrium to reflect/pray/sing with the children. Another question involves whether pictures of materials could be used in these discussions.

I personally do not agree with pictures other than the prayer cards that we use on the prayer table and icons or art pieces that aid the children to ponder beauty and joy.

I still don't know what to think regarding mask wearing with children in the atrium...

Everything is in God's hands and we have to trust him ! Let's not forget to worship and pray one for each other.

- Espacially for the children who are in great danger during holidays...

Simply a repetition....flexibility, but wit ssructure will be essential. At all times trying to do God's will as we work with the children and their families...

This is more feedback more in the question of how to handle singing in the atrium? Also someone suggested using a towel to give space to the kids to sit with their own towel. It was a concern as to whatever we do how can we continue these relationships with The children and parents in the church community in a way that is honoring catechesis of the good shepherd

I'm not sure I can claim wisdom, but I can offer some experience from our recent switch to online interaction this spring. I feel that my training has served me very well in focusing on what is absolutely essential in the presentations and materials. In offering online options, I found that the simpler I kept things, the better they were received. A single picture with a voiceover scripture reading, a short prayer time with lighting the candle, etc.

I also found that posting a video which could be watched anytime worked much better that zoom sessions. I work with mostly Level I children so this may be different with Level II. I also work in a school where students were having at least weekly zoom times with their classroom teachers, so that could be part of it too. The videos I made that were less than 5 minutes got the most responses, again mostly level I children.

Finally, the parent pages from CGS were great to email to parents and I received good responses from those also.

I believe that we can accept a greater diversity of materials as families and children look for ways to continue to meditate on scripture and liturgy together. A child may, for example, uses dolls or Legos to represent and remember a reading from the lectionary.

I think that most of the materials can be washed or disinfected in some manner. Maybe have a wash station with warm soapy water and an assortment of clean cloths? If something isn't laminated, get it laminated so that it is easy to wipe down.

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-mindbodygreen-podcast/id1246494475?i=1000480307943>

I found this podcast to be particularly enlightening about Covid-19. Our young population is at very little risk, but our catechists definitely fall into a risky category. This can be a major hindrance with reopening.

My hope is to hold live parent sessions and present materials on a monthly basis. I envision meetings similar to the extra session parent meetings in preparation for First Communion and Reconciliation. I know this is part of one the 4 models we talked about. I am praying for a live meeting in the atrium with necessary precautions and possibly zooming at the same time.

Not sure if this is wisdom, but the hope for our parish. I don't think we will be able to serve our children in the atrium, so I pray that educating the parents will lead the Domestic Church.

7. Are there products you would like to suggest for use? Or those that should not be used? - Responses

I'm concerned about the use of aerosol sprays in between classes for my kiddos with asthma.

More promotional materials for parish bulletins, email blasts, Instagram posts, Facebook posts from Shepherd's Closet.

Flower arranging Kit, Pouring Kit, Leaf Polishing Kit,

I like the ultraviolet light cleaners but I worry they will take too long to sanitize.

some of our parents won't use regular hand sanitizer. They worry about the chemicals. I don't know if anyone else has this issue.

In our group someone mentioned NORWEX cloths which are antibacterial....I've used them and they are supposed to be effective. Need more research.

none

Not at this moment...

We have the most sprayer on order. Interested in more info on uv light.

Would it be possible to share the name of the UV light bag (product info) that was shown at the end of the Zoom meeting today?

Wish I had something to offer here, but to me they all work, just differently...FYI ...my kids youth group had to discontinue zoom because apparently zoom donated to planned parenthood... I have no idea if that is true, and zoom is very workable... but that is out there too

The use of a face shield and a digital thermometer.

I agreed with avoiding coloring sheets. It would be great to have a resource for affordable "kits" to send home to families (such as prayer table kit, tracing packets, pasting works, etc.) but that might be too hard to provide en masse. I would like to learn more about "I am the Good Shepherd" books, which might be a help given the pandemic.

Thieves is an all natural product from Young Living that kills the Corona virus. Just spray and let dry.

I wondered if Gertrud Mueller Nelson's infancy narrative color/cut cone characters would be a possibility for children to make their own infancy narrative sets during Advent/Christmas season. And could her Good Shepherd design for CGSUSA years ago become a sticker to be put on foam core for children to have a home Good Shepherd work?

no

Someone mentioned essential oils. Some are not safe for use around children and others contain allergens - I would urge research before using them blindly. www.edensgarden.com has a safe for kids line with allergy info. However, none of them kill viruses!

UV lights for sanitizing materials.

Organic essential oils for sanitizing.

I defer to your good ideas.

I am extremely curious about Io Sono. I have seen the English translation of a few pages from a friend in Canada. I'm wondering how it would work as a home supplement for a hybrid program where students are only in the atrium every other week. I don't want to replace the atrium, but some way for them to continue their prayer at home would be great.

I heard mention of extensions like the 3D cone shaped nativity made of paper. This could be useful but someone referred to the children "playing" with materials. I think we need to be very careful with our words and wording and how lessons and materials are given, especially outside the atrium.

Going forward, facilities should have no-touch thermometers. I have done a little reading on the UV light. I don't know if this technology is safe and ready for non-hospital use. Caution should be used to determine which device provides safe, effective disinfection.

Sit Spots are velcro circles (and other shapes) that easily attach (and can be removed) from carpet. Might be good for social distancing.

Autumn explained what her husband was doing at their camp by having a backpack sprayer with antiseptic safe for children. She would be able to give further feedback

I would like for the national organization to continue to resist presenting material online through YouTube, zoom, or other video hosting sites.

No

8. Do you have any suggestions for improving the events we offer? - Responses

Answer

Zoom is so tough. I'm afraid some probably monopolize the conversations even with good leadership. Maybe questions should be submitted at least in part through the chat option. Muting all is important and maybe raising a hand is helpful.

Thank you for starting with prayer! Also the break out rooms were such a good idea!

Loved the breakaway sessions and felt that it was all good information. There were lots of things I hadn't even thought about in regards to returning to the atrium. Looking forward to continued discussions. Thanks to all CGSUSA guys and gals who put so much thought and time into this and the website

The opening reflection was perfect. It was well paced. Thank you!

Deb did a great job of running the technology. It helped when Mary put on her headset.

I could only see a few people at a time. It would have been fun to see a list of names of everyone who was there even if we couldn't see their face.

Since the Good Shepherd calls us each by name But that's not essential. It's just a suggestion.

Can't wait for the next one. You guys did an amazing job. Thank you so much!

This was wonderful, and though it's MUCH work for you all, let's keep the conversation going and do it again!

Could we see the notes from the second session as well?

I hope we keep having zoom sessions throughout the year to build community and share ideas.

I am constantly humbled with how thought out and on point your efforts are.

I realize that this is a "uniquely large atrium session" so asking this may not be doable, however, do you think it might be possible that the next time we gather that one of our break outs is done in groups that have similar scenarios?

You all have done a great job! Please continue these group meetings ... I think we will all need them.... and often

This session was well-organized and helpful. Thanks so much.

During the conference, it would be nice to put the facts in order. They appeared in different areas of the screen, which made it harder to take notes from the conference.

Thank you for all you do! It was very supportive to hear all the ideas. The current web site is so packed too! Thank you all!!! God bless you!!

I thought this was extremely well done. Thank you.

This one was great...perfect timing, good balance of prayer, lecture, discussion and sharing. I appreciated hearing what the other groups said as well along with talking with a smaller group.

I know you all wanted to see how the first event would go before offering a schedule of upcoming events. Since it seemed to go well, it would be great to have a schedule for upcoming events like these Zoom gatherings. My main concern is there not being space for all who want to register.

Mostly, I want to offer thanks and blessings to you all!

Loved the breakout. Thanks for making this very essential!

More clarity and repetition about the roles in the break out rooms.

Mary H's opening reflection was lovely.

Consider having someone prepared to lead in the breakout rooms in order to facilitate all getting to speak and that discussions stay on point.

Have offerings at different times of day - daytime only works for me because it's summer. During the school year, these are working hours.

Longer limit on these text response boxes. :)

I just love the opportunity for the breakout room conversations. You designed just the right amount of time at this webinar.

I thought it was wonderful! Thank you for all your hard work!

YOU all are doing a great job. The parent pages you had up in the spring were very helpful to our parish.

Shorter, simple steps with simple explanations.

The video with different prayer tables was well received.

More of them would be wonderful! Just a sharing of ideas and experiences is so important. CGS is not the typical Religious Ed, so many solutions and suggestions from other DRE's doesn't really apply for us. We need more community ourselves :)

make some times available that aren't during work hours.

The event today was well planned out, beginning and ending on time, offering whole and small group interaction. The website, slides, and recording offer all needed information. I wonder if knowing agenda topics ahead of time would help catechists prepare for discussions?

I have been attending many Zoom meeting in the past few months. Yesterday's experience was the best meeting experience I've had! Everything was organized and thought out.

I enjoyed the small group breakouts. Thanks for a great meeting.

I would love to have continued Zoom conversations on what is working. Opportunities for networking during this time is critical. Perhaps offer meetings by state?

A way to limit how many videos we are streaming at once would be helpful in reducing internet strain.

I was happy to hear what Mary said is new on the website. I feel those things will be very helpful. I haven't been able to look at them yet.

I just wanted to thank you for the seminar. It went very smoothly including the breakout sessions. Thanks for being prepared for the task at hand!

I thought it was very organized and helpful! I do not know how you could divide the small groups into more similar groups, but that is just an idea. Just because of the differences in types of CGS (parish, school, large numbers, small numbers etc.) it could help with discussion. Thank you!



