



Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

We are happy to announce the opportunity for families to participate again in Catechesis of the Good Shepherd at Our Lady of the Rosary Church. This beautiful form of catechesis is available to children ages 3 to 5 years.

Schedule

We will meet on Thursdays from 10:00-11:30 am during the school year. Our Lady of the Rosary's atrium is located in the new upper school building (park in the church's lower level parking lot – walk up the hill and you'll see a small awning and private entrance). In order to properly introduce children to the atrium, the first few meetings are shorter in length and gradually increase in duration.

The schedule below is for the fall, and the winter/spring schedule will be forthcoming. All children must be fully potty-trained to participate. A hearty breakfast, since our time in the atrium does not include a snack, and comfortable clothing and shoes are helpful. If you know in advance that your child will miss a meeting, please let me know as it helps with planning.

Thursday, September 12th - Park Day at Runway Park, 10:00-11:30 am
Thursday, September 19th - Our Lady of the Rosary atrium, 10:00-10:45 am
Thursday, September 26th - Our Lady of the Rosary atrium, 10:00-11:00 am
Thursday, October 3rd - Our Lady of the Rosary atrium, 10:00-11:00 am
Thursday, October 10th - Our Lady of the Rosary atrium, 10:00-11:15 am
Thursday, October 17th - Our Lady of the Rosary atrium, 10:00-11:30 am
Thursday, October 24th - Our Lady of the Rosary atrium, 10:00-11:30 am
Thursday, October 31st - Our Lady of the Rosary atrium, 10:00-11:30 am
Thursday, November 7th - Our Lady of the Rosary atrium, 10:00-11:30 am
Thursday, November 14th - Our Lady of the Rosary atrium, 10:00-11:30 am
Thursday, November 21st - Our Lady of the Rosary atrium, 10:00-11:30 am
Thursday, November 28th - No meeting - Happy Thanksgiving!
Thursday, December 5th - Our Lady of the Rosary atrium, 10:00-11:30 am
Thursday, December 12th - Our Lady of the Rosary atrium, 10:00-11:30 am

Parents generally drop off for this program, but they are welcome to observe meetings – please get in touch to arrange this. All adults who volunteer or observe must complete a background check and the Diocese of Charleston's Safe Haven training.

Each parent will need to complete about an hour's worth of volunteer work per semester. This will consist in preparing tracing packets or cutting out collage pieces, and can be done at home. We also invite your help in furnishing the atrium, especially if you are interested in donating

materials or artistic skills (painting, sewing, woodworking, calligraphy, or a good eye at the thrift store or yard sale!).

What is Catechesis of the Good Shepherd?

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is a Montessori-based form of religious instruction in which the catechist and children together joyfully encounter and ponder the Word of God together. It takes place in an atrium, an orderly environment that has been carefully prepared for the children.

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd began in Rome in 1954 when Scripture scholar Sofia Cavalletti reluctantly agreed to give religious instruction to a child. Her experience of reading Scripture with the child changed her life as she saw profound wonder and joy in his relationship with God and recognized the gift that a child's relationship to God is to the whole church.

Sofia soon collaborated with Gianna Gobbi, a Montessori directress who had worked as Maria Montessori's assistant. The two women quickly recognized that children were uniquely receptive to certain Scripture passages and themes at different stages of their moral development.

Over the course of working with many children over decades, Sofia and Gianna's insights into how to help invite the children towards a deeper relationship with God grew. Through prayer, study, contemplation, and trial and error, they developed an array of beautiful handmade materials, called "works," to assist the children in contemplating the truths of the faith in the context of the Catholic Church's liturgy and doctrine. Today, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is found in 37 countries around the world. More information can be found at www.cgsusa.org.

For 3-6 year olds, the primary topics introduced are the Good Shepherd and Jesus's Eucharistic Presence, the Messianic Prophecies, Jesus's infancy from the Annunciation to the Presentation in the Temple, the Kingdom Parables (such as the Mustard Seed and the Pearl of Great Price), the liturgical year, baptism, the altar and sacred vessels, some of the gestures and prayers of the Mass, the Paschal mysteries, and the geography of the Holy Land.

Each topic is introduced in a peaceful, age-appropriate way. The children have time to participate in the day's presentations and celebrations as well as to spend some time with the work(s) of their choice; these range from Montessori practical life exercises to the Scriptural and liturgical works that have been introduced earlier in the year.

Questions?

Contact Claire Cousino* at catechesisofgoodshepherd@gmail.com or Katie Orbon, Director of Faith Formation at korbon@charlestdiocese.org or 864-422-1648.

*Claire is certified by the National Association for the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd in Level I (3-6 year olds) and Level II (6-9 year olds).