



*St. Joseph Parish Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Religious Formation*

July 26, 2016

Welcome to Catechesis of the Good Shepherd! I am so excited about this year. This is our 8<sup>th</sup> year of "Whole Family Catechism!" What a joy last year was. We completed our 4<sup>th</sup> year of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. If you are new to our parish "Whole Family Catechism" is the whole family coming together for faith formation. We have classes for adults, Level 1 ages 3-6, Level 2 ages 7-9, Level 3 ages 10-14, Confirmation and Youth Group. So bring the whole family and let's fall deeply in love with the Good Shepherd together. We are starting Sept. 18<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The agenda for each faith filled session will be as follows:

**Tuesday morning 9:30am-11:30am, Tuesday afternoon 4:30pm- 6:30pm, Sunday 11:00am-12:25pm:** Adults are encouraged to come and pray the Rosary for the CGS program and its success in helping families to fall in love with the Good Shepherd and nurture the family's spiritual growth. Material making is a vital part to our program and we ask all parents to assist us in this endeavor during the Atrium session while learning more about your faith with one of our amazing DVD series. We ask that all children arrive 10-15 minutes early to allow for traffic and getting the wiggles and talking done before each Atrium session. Thank you!

The Policies for Religious Education Classes are as follows:

- To register for the 2016-2017 Religious Education program it is expected that you are a registered parishioner. Therefore, please write your parish envelope number on the registration form where indicated. If you do not know your family envelope number, or if you are not registered with our parish, please contact the parish office and register. Please note if you are not a member of our parish we would ask you to contribute a donation in January.
- In the event of an absence, please notify your child's catechist and or Katie Prust prior to class time, either by phone or a written note. If there are more than **3 absences**, we will be asking you to meet with us to discuss your situation. It is our hope through the Good Shepherd program that you and your child will grow spiritually and come to a greater understanding of your Catholic faith and fall deeply in love with the Good Shepherd. This is a very popular program and we anticipate a waiting list. If you can't commit to being there each week we will discuss giving up your family's spot with another family who can make that commitment.
- *A child receiving a sacrament will be required to be enrolled in the Good Shepherd program for 1 year **prior** to receiving the sacrament. The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be 5/13/2017 @ Final Retreat. The Sacrament of First Holy Communion will be celebrated during Mass on May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017 @ 11:00am. Confirmation for 2nd year students ) May 30<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm. 1<sup>st</sup> year Confirmation students will have Confirmation in the Spring of 2018. Receiving the Sacraments @ St. Joseph Church is a two year program.*
- *Sacramental retreats for candidates and parental information meetings will be offered throughout the CGS year and participation will be required. First Holy Communion 11/12/16, 1/21/17, 5/13/17 & Confirmation Retreats are 10/1/16, 1/14/17, 3/5/17 and 5/05/17-5/07/17. All parents of sacrament children will be required to sign the Parent Requirement letter for Sacraments.*
- *Catechesis of the Good Shepherd requires work from all parents to help with preparation of materials throughout the year. Each family will be asked to help rosary leader, bible reflection leader, cutting, painting, building, and help clean up the Atrium 2 x a year. Please volunteer for **at least 3** volunteer hours. To be a parent helper you need to be finger printed by the Diocese and complete [shieldthevulnerable.org](http://shieldthevulnerable.org)*

Please **COMPLETE** the attached forms. Attach your child's baptism certificate and birth certificate to the form by Sept. 1, 2016. Forms may be mailed to the parish office attention: Katie Prust: You may also put them in the collection basket at Holy Mass. No one will be able to start class without a Registration Form filled out. Thank you for filling out the **WHOLE** packet. Looking forward to making this journey of faith together, helping the children fall in love with the Good Shepherd!

Katie Prust  
Director of Religious Education

Fr. Cesar Ageas  
Pastor

*"The Good Shepherd calls His own sheep by name and leads them." John 10:3*

## Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

### General

- The Catechesis is Christian formation, not just religious education. The Holy Spirit is the “Teacher.” Hence, we refer to “catechists” rather than “teachers,” and to “catechesis” rather than “class.”
- Prioritize Catechesis over other activities. *If you must miss a week due to illness or other issues, please let your catechist know as soon as possible.*
- The Catechesis is like a retreat, and Christian formation is a long, slow and deep work. Give your child space after Catechesis to assimilate their work. Instead of asking, “What did you learn in the Atrium today?” You might say, “Tell me about Atrium today.”
- Check in periodically with your children’s catechists. Relay any observations you make and any comments your child shares. These help us work with your child and also encourage us.
- Periodically schedule time to come observe the work in the atrium.

### Arrival/Departure

- Please give your child a snack before Atrium, but avoid sugar.
- Arrive at least 10-15 minutes before Catechesis starts each week to allow margin for unexpected delays.
- Ensure that children use the bathroom and wash their hands before Catechesis begins.
- Visit the bulletin board each week for volunteer assignments, other information, and needs.
- Please help us keep the noise down during pick up and after drop off while Catechesis is in session.
- For your child’s safety, please pick up your children at the office front door. They will be released to the parents.

### Service

- Each family signs up to ensure that the Hall is tidied up after Catechesis approximately one time per year. (Cleanup Guidelines are in the parent box). Each family contributes additional time to help make Atrium materials or in other ways. Please be generous with your time and talents.

## Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

### Weekly Catechesis Parent Information

#### "Homework"

- Pray regularly with your children at home, at least on waking, before and after meals, and at bedtime.
- Designate a quiet space for daily prayer at home, for example with a low table, a Catholic translation of the Holy Bible, at least one statue or icon, and a candle and snuffer.
- Have a procession to the prayer table to place these items on it.
- When gathered around the prayer table, invite your children into silence by stilling their bodies and their breathing, and listening to God in the silence.
- Read short passages aloud, particularly from the Psalms, such as Ps 118:27, Ps 97:1, Ps 84:11, or Ps 23:1.
- Model for your children short, simple prayers of thanksgiving, and slow and controlled movement.
- Sing together songs that your children have learned in the Atrium.
- In addition to Holy Mass on the Lord's Day, attend daily Mass whenever possible, and sit up front so children can clearly see the priest's gestures.
- Refer to the "The Prayer Area" guide for more information about the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd and information on how the Atrium's prayer area is set up. Please feel free to use this as a reference for your prayer table at home.



## Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

Please sign and return to religious formation.

I have read the Weekly Catechesis Parent Information.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Print First Name Last Name

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Print First Name Last Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

Can you give to the Good Shepherd?

*Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God." Luke 18:16*

Our program at St. Joseph Church is parent and parishioner involved catechesis. We pray the rosary at the beginning of each Atrium followed by catechesis, material making and discussion time. Come learn with your kids. We need parents to help so I would ask each family to pick at least 3 times over the year to do things to make Catechesis of the Good Shepherd a big success:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ text Y N (circle one)  
email \_\_\_\_\_

Please check all you are interested in! You will be contacted. Thank you!

Rosary Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Adult Speaker: \_\_\_\_\_ Topic \_\_\_\_\_

Help cut cutouts \_\_\_\_\_

Wood worker \_\_\_\_\_ (skill saw, wood burning, wood making stencils ect.)

Painter \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Atrium helper \_\_\_\_\_ (requires Sept. 13<sup>th</sup> 11am or 5:30pm training and fingerprinted & complete Shield the Vulnerable with Diocese also requires a commitment to be there every week. You may go to Mail Box Ect. with our form for fingerprinting)

Newsletter/Website \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Sewing \_\_\_\_\_

Donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Catechesis of the Good Shepherd cost 4 x as much as regular catechesis because of all the material we make and training we do. Once we make all the material in another year we will just need to maintain what we have. So we pay now and reap the benefits for years to come... Thank you for your support to Family Catechism: Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.

## Auburn Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

### RESPONSIBILITIES of Atrium FAMILIES

**Arrive early:** Families should plan to arrive 15 minutes before their session begins. This margin not only ensures on-time arrival when there are delays en route, but it also gives children time to reconnect with their peers before Atrium starts so they will be less likely to try to chat during work time. \_\_\_\_\_IN

**Help during Atrium:** While children are in the Atrium we ask parents **to stay and pray** the Rosary first, then work on material while we have a leader to lead in discussion of next week's Gospel Reflection and other spiritual reflections. We need the help of every parent during the two-hour session, so we ask that, for the most part, you don't consider Atrium as time to catch up on personal tasks. \_\_\_\_\_IN

**Come to the Masses:** Attendance the two Masses we will have at St. Joseph Church on Tuesday evening will be attended by all three Atria sessions. They will be at 5:00 and a potluck dinner will follow. \_\_\_\_\_IN

**Bring Atrium home:** Families are also very highly encouraged to make Catechesis of the Good Shepherd part of their home life by making regular use of their family prayer table, learning Atrium songs with their children, and taking their children to Mass and Confession as often as possible.

The more you extend your child's Atrium experience into your family's daily life, the more your child will benefit from it. IN \_\_\_\_\_

**Talking about Atrium at home:** Instead of saying "what did you learn or do" ask 'what struck you' 'what did you hear?' 'what material did you work with?' 'Tell me about Atrium today'

**Be patient and honest:** Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is a 9-year process (ages 3-14) of religious formation. For most children, it takes time to see the fruits. In addition, parents need to examine how media exposure and other aspects of our culture may be negatively influencing their children's Atrium experience. \_\_\_\_\_IN

**Sacramental Prep 1<sup>st</sup> Communion:** Be prepared to come three retreats Fall, Winter and Spring days \_\_\_\_\_IN

**Sacramental Prep for Confirmation:** Parents Be prepared to come to 1 retreat, 1 whole family volunteer day and Confirmation 5/30/2017 @ 6:00pm \_\_\_\_\_IN

**Retreats** are to be attended by the parents per Diocese new guidelines on 1/14/2017. The Confirmation Retreat 1/14/2016 should also be attended by the Sponsor. \_\_\_\_\_IN