

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd training last week. It was a marvellous success, and we are excited to get started.

If you have children between the ages of 3-6 and you are interested in CGS, please email Sister Anna Marie at SrAnna.Marie@staned.org.uk if you have not done so already.

The children need to be introduced to the atrium environment gradually, so please see the schedule below for the timetable:

September 10-October 15:

- 3-4 year olds: Tuesday 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.
- 5-6 year olds: Friday 1:30 – 2:30 p.m.
- (If needed) 5-6 year olds: Wednesday 4-5 p.m.
- (If needed) 3-4 year old group TBD



October 25-end of school year:

- 3-4 year olds: Tuesday 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
- 5-6 year olds: Friday 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.
- (If needed) 5-6 year olds: Wednesday 4-6 p.m.
- (If needed) 3-4 year old group TBD

Regarding weeks off from the atrium, we will follow the school calendar for Saint Peter's Catholic School. A more detailed calendar for parents will be shared, along with registration forms.

Sr Anna Marie RSM



Training for Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Level I Part 1 took place in St Columba's Halls last week with fifteen participants from our own parishes and further afield. Archbishop Cushley blessed the Atrium last Monday and met the trainee catechists and leaders.

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is a Christian catechesis programme for children aged 3-12 years which enables them to experience and form an authentic relationship with God.

The Catechesis is rooted in Scripture and the Liturgy of the church and is inspired by Maria Montessori's principles of education.

This programme provides :

- an opportunity for children to fall in love with Jesus, the Good Shepherd, in a child-friendly space called an atrium;
- Guided activity to aid meditation on Bible scripture and the mysteries of the Christian faith once a week - in small groups, facilitated by trained catechists;
- And above all that each child's unique spiritual needs and abilities are respected and nurtured.

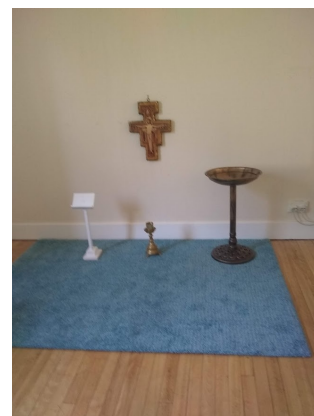
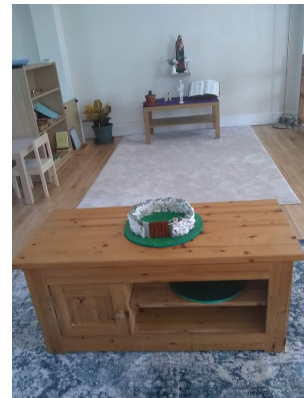
The vision for the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd formation began in 1954 with a Dr Sofia Cavalletti, a Hebrew and Scripture scholar and member of the Vatican Commission for Jewish-Christian Relations, and her colleague, Professor Gianni Gobbi a Montessori trained educator. Sofia was asked by a mother to give her son some religious instruction. At first she refused, not having much to do with children in her academic world, but eventually she consented and this experience with the 7 year old boy changed her whole life and began what we now know as the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. Dr Cavalletti saw in that child, and in number of other children since, a way of being in the presence of God that is unique to the child and a gift to the adult who stops long enough to notice.

Children desire to draw near to God but need the sensitive guidance of the adult as well as the inner guidance of the Holy Spirit to nurture this relationship.

Today the Catechesis can be found in many Christian traditions (Anglican/Episcopal, Lutheran, Orthodox and Roman Catholic) as well as in schools through the world. It continues to grow and has spread over the years to many other countries. It has also been adopted by Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity as a method of catechesis.



We in St Columba's and St Peter's are very privileged to be the first in the Archdiocese to introduce this programme and it is hoped that other parishes will also become interested.



Our Atrium in St Columba's Hall