



Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

This is the third bulletin insert regarding the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS). The purpose of these weekly bulletin inserts is primarily to inform ourselves concerning what the CGS is all about so that we as a parish can “take ownership” of this new parish initiative/ministry. As we discover more about the CGS it is important to remind ourselves that this initiative is **not** a program, it is a **ministry**, a ministerial response on our part to fulfill our obligation to introduce our children to God and a life of faith.

“Let the Little Children Come to Me” (Matthew 19:14)

With the above scriptural quote in mind, from the principals of the CGS:

- **WE BELIEVE** that God and the child have a unique relationship with one another, particularly before the age of six.
- **WE BELIEVE** that the growth of this relationship should be assisted by the adult, but is directed by the Spirit of God within the child.
- **WE BELIEVE** that children need their own place to foster the growth of that relationship.
- **WE BELIEVE** that the child's spiritual growth is best served through tangible but indirect means.

More on Level One

As mentioned in previous bulletin inserts we will begin CGS here at Saint Francis, in September, by introducing Level One of the CGS for those ages 3 to 6. In last week's bulletin the insert offered some insight into what the children will focus upon during Level One, here are some more concrete things the children will participate in.

By using the materials provided for the children in the Atrium they will begin to establish a greater awareness of Jesus as a real person, who walked the earth in real time and space. They will recognize Israel as the geographic land through which God's plan of salvation was realized. To assist the children in establishing Jesus as a real person they will reflect upon the infancy narratives that announce the Incarnation, Annunciation and birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. They will unlock the mysteries of God by reflecting upon the many parables contained in the scriptures.

The children will focus upon the scriptural accounts of the Last Supper leading to a greater understanding of the meaning of the Empty Tomb and the place of the Resurrection in our lives of faith.

The children will familiarize themselves with the Mass by using “child size” materials in the Atrium: altar, chalice, paten, altar cloth, candles and crucifix. They will re-enact the gestures and prayers of the Mass. They will come to a greater understanding of the liturgical cycle of the church year by understanding the meaning of the liturgical colours, songs, prayers and liturgical readings. The Mass will become familiar to them so that their participation at Sunday Eucharist with the community of Saint Francis will be more meaningful and understandable.

Images from the Atrium

