

Testimonials about Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

"Theo loves going to Catechesis – he will tell me every Wednesday night “tomorrow is Thursday and you know what that means Dad – it’s Catechesis day!” I’ve asked some follow up questions about what he does, what he likes, etc., and he has never been very forthcoming with those answers. I mentioned this to Mrs. Osburn during P/T conferences last month and she said that was kind of the expectation – don’t ask for a bunch of follow up and let them do their thing. So I haven’t pushed for a lot of details. Theo did tell me once he likes cleaning the atrium. Regardless, I can tell you it’s a special part of his week! He certainly looks forward to it."

-Lance & Barbara Wagner

"The first day Ashlyn came home after going in the atrium, she told us that she learned about 'Catechesis of the Great Shepherd'. No matter how many times we have corrected her, she still insists it is the 'Great Shepherd'! Thanks for all your teachings! Ashlyn can remember what she learns in there, but not what she had for lunch...so you are doing something good in her mind!"

-Jen Cowher

"Every night at dinner, we go around the table and everyone tells about their favorite part of the day. Mary Grace & Eoin always say their favorite part is going to the Atrium. We have asked them to explain, what they do in the Atrium and why it is their favorite part. These are some of the things they say: Mary Grace enjoys having a quiet place to be and not be interrupted. She loves to read the prayers and be just like a priest at Mass. Eoin loves the water pouring works. He enjoys the different parts of Mass. He also enjoys the quiet time to pray and be with Jesus. They both love the atmosphere of the quiet and smaller group size."

-Janice Bosland

"Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is so rich and full of beauty! I have seen our boys, typically full of energy and bouncing from one activity to the next, begin to build deep, personal relationships with Jesus through their time in the CGS atrium. One example of the fruits of their CGS experience was made tangible during our extended time together at home, when they were no longer able to attend atrium together because of Covid-19 gathering

restrictions. After we had been home for a few weeks, Lucas and Isaac began asking if we could make our own prayer table in our living room. We decided on a table, the boys chose the items they wanted to have for when they make a visit to pray, and they all 3 now use it multiple times a day to pray and slow down their busy bodies and minds. Lucas will often stop and read the Bible to himself, sometimes Isaac and Vincent will ask if they can listen.

Other times, Isaac will get a pillow to sit or kneel on while he talks to Jesus in his heart in front of the lit candle. Even Vincent visits to pray, occasionally he picks up his blue rosary to look at before running off to his next activity. Catechesis of the Good Shepherd has helped my boys begin to form a beautiful, personal connection with Jesus the Good Shepherd and it has been a joy to watch as that relationship has carried with them from the atrium into our family home and prayer life."

-Bridget Paseka

An Open Letter to Parents of 3-6 Year Olds from a Parent of Teens

When I was 14, and getting ready for my confirmation, I was asked to select a Bible verse that 'spoke to me.' Little did I know then just how important this passage would serve me in my life.

I have been very blessed to be the mother of three amazing children. I have watched my babies grow into three strong and independent teens. Sometimes I wonder how my husband and I got so lucky. Sure we've had some of the 'normal' teen drama and I'm sure there will be more to come, but we have also witnessed the way in which the Holy Spirit has touched each one of them.

How did this come to be? Well you may doubt what I am about to tell you, but this much I know...I have watched and heard them say and do things that I know for a fact came from being children of the Good Shepherd.

I'm sure many of you have heard of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd here at our parish.

It is an amazing faith formation for children -especially for the youngest of them. I am talking about the 3-6 year olds. When our children entered the atrium (the learning room for the Catechesis) their eyes filled with wonder and excitement. The entire room was a spiritual and delightful place for them to be. The environment was so calm and so serene -not like any other I have ever experienced -especially for children so young. They were shown so many wonderful things and in such a tranquil setting. I was fortunate to be an aide for those first few years. I watched children walk slowly into the atrium and quickly 'get to work.' They practiced setting the model altar -they loved when an adult would light the candles and they could extinguish them. They colored vestments, herded sheep, mixed dough and touched mustard seeds. They learned beautiful songs and shared wonderful stories. To be able to see the face of God in a child is a blessing.

I can sincerely say my kids are better prepared for the world because of their time spent in the atrium. They know how to work independently, they know how to be compassionate, and they know that they are never alone. They have learned that its okay to ponder, to be still and to listen to their heart. They can work on their own and have the self-confidence they need to do it all by themselves. Trying to instill these values at such a young age is a tough task. The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd will help you do just that. It will teach your precious children that each and every one of them is very important. It will allow them to experience the wonder and awe in their own way. It will be a blessed time that will place

values deep in their soul - values that will one day help them to be strong and independent teens. I truly believe that with all my heart.

Even now, as my kids are pulled in so many different directions, and just getting them to church is sometimes a task in and of itself, I still see glimpses of that earlier time. I see the value they place on each other as well as themselves. I see a beautiful soul that knows right from wrong. I see how they put others first without compromising their own being. They have been given the foundation needed to see them through the difficult years ahead. They know they are children of the Good Shepherd and that they are loved. What more could a mother ask for?

*Let us hold each other, and our children in prayer,
A grateful mom*