

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) Parent Handbook 2020-2021



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Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to St. Clement Faith Formation Program. We are looking forward for your participation and are eager to share our faith with you and your children.

The process is structured with the belief that “families are partners” in the Faith Formation of their children. In order to provide the best possible environment for faith to grow, parents/guardians are expected to regularly participate in Sunday Mass with their children. This practice helps your children to develop their faith-life and to live what they experience in their weekly sessions.

- **Atrium-MODEL:** Students will gather for in-person sessions led by catechists at the Education Center (Sundays, 9:30am-10:45am) 1x a week. **We have made every provision to make the classrooms a clean and safe place to learn.** We are following the CDC guidelines and will continue to put our families first. Due to these provisions we will only have **nine** children in the atrium.
- **All children and adults must wear mask at all times while in the atrium.**

Regardless of the decision you make for your child, know that we are working hard to make sure your child receives a quality Religious Education in the safest environment possible. These family guidelines contain general information, as well as policies, that will positively enhance participation and help your child develop the specific attitudes, knowledge, and practices necessary to grow in relationship with their family, the Catholic Christian community, the world, and with God.

We pray that God will be with you and your family in the months ahead. May God, the source of all life, protect you, deepen your faith, build up your hope, and constantly increase the gift of love in you. May He keep your children strong in body, in mind and in spirit. And may the peace of Christ Jesus abide in your hearts and home.

Sincerely,

Cathy Rosales/ Director of Religious Education

Candice Tripi Scott/ Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

Sunday's CGS Sessions

Meets every Sunday from 9:30am to 10:45am
During Regular Faith Formation

¡First Communion Preparation is a 2 year program!

Oct. 4th **First Session/class in the Atrium**
May 2nd **Last day of Class—for First Year Students ONLY**
May 9th **Meeting with Fr. Mike—ONLY for Students who received First**
Communion (Social Hall)

DATES WHEN THERE WILL NOT BE CLASS:

November 22 **Thanksgiving Break**
December 27 **Christmas Break**
January 3 **New Year's Break**
March 7 **Strawberry Festival**
March 14 **Spring Break**
March 28 **Palm Sunday**
April 4 **Easter Sunday**

IMPORTANT DATES (Meetings, etc.):

****First Communion Mandatory Meetings-ONLY for children attending their 2nd year of Faith Formation!****

October 18th	Sunday 9am-10am	Parent meeting - <i>Middle School Center</i>
November 7th	Saturday (9am-3pm)	First Reconciliation Retreat
January 12th	Tuesday 6:30pm-9pm	First Reconciliation- <i>in Chapel & Church</i>
January 19th	Tuesday 6:30pm-9pm	First Reconciliation- <i>in Chapel & Church</i>
February 7th	Sunday 9:am-10:am	Parent meeting - <i>Middle School Center</i>
February 13th	Saturday (9am-3pm)	First Communion Retreat
April 10th	Saturday 11am-3:pm	First Com. Picture Day
April 27th	Thursday 7pm-9pm	Rehearsal-<i>in the Church</i>

***** *Dates for First Communion Masses will be announced at a later time* *****

DUE TO THESE USUAL TIMES ALL DATES AND TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

To receive the most update information please download the [Remind](#) application and add yourself to the message group,

Send a message to [81010](#) with the code: [@sunclass20](#)

This will be the **main** way to communicate with you about any changes/news regarding Faith Formation. If you have any problems let us know so we can help you.

All children and adults must always wear mask while in the atrium.

MASS

Parents and children are encouraged to attend regular Sunday Mass (in person or virtual), as the children need to experience the celebration of the Mass in order to make the connection between what they hear in the Atrium and Mass.

ARRIVAL

Before arriving at the Atrium, please be sure children have had a snack and have gone to the bathroom. Arrive 15 minutes before session begins. Please sign in your children when you arrive. Since the Atrium is a reverent environment, like a church, please encourage your children to use their Atrium voice and Atrium walk when entering. On time arrivals are essential so that you do not disrupt group presentations given at the beginning of Atrium.

ATTENDANCE

Regular session attendance will provide the best possibility for the religious potential and religious development of your child. Each week builds upon the last, so please be consistent with your child's attendance. Of course, children should stay home if they are ill.

ATRIUM BEHAVIOR

Following the discretion of the catechist or assistant, if a child hurts another person in the Atrium (hitting, kicking, biting, pinching, scratching, etc...) we will ask them to skip the next week of Atrium. This is to cultivate an atmosphere of respect in the Atrium. If it happens a second time, the child will be asked to wait until the next year before returning.

ABSENCES

Please call the office at (813) 752-8251 ext. 306 to report an absence, Please leave a message with your child's name and last name; normal session day and time and a working number just in case we need to call you back.

Please keep your child home if they are not feeling well or if anyone in the family is sick.

CHILD'S PAPERWORK

Each child will have a folder in which to keep their papers (coloring, gluing, etc.). At the end of the year, we will send the work home. We ask parents not to expect paperwork after each session, since one of the key Montessori principles is that young children work for the process and not the end product.

DRESS CODE

Dress children in comfortable clothing that allows ease of movement, as they will be working on mats on the ground, while keeping in mind the respectful attitude due to this special place.

CALENDAR

The Atrium follows the liturgical seasons of the Catholic Church from mid-October to May. Please refer to the monthly calendar and the web site for updates.

REFUNDS

We realize that children are unique and develop at their own pace. If your child has not acclimated to the Atrium by Nov. 15th, we would encourage that he/she return to the Atrium the following year. This is in the best interest of your child and the other children in the Atrium. Your tuition fee will be adjusted accordingly.

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

“Help me come closer to God all by myself!”

Frequently Asked Questions:

Who gave us Catechesis of the Good Shepherd?

What are its roots?

In 1954, in Rome, Italy, renowned Hebrew Scripture scholar Sofia Cavalletti observed that the child received the Word of God and essential truths with great joy. Gianna Gobbi collaborated in the discovery of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS). Together, Sofia and Gianna, developed the Catechesis, integrating the methods and insights of Maria Montessori using hands-on, developmentally appropriate materials that put the Scriptures and lessons into the hand of the child with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is now practiced in 20 nations throughout the world and has been in the United States for more than 30 years.

What is unique about this method?

CGS content helps the child “come closer to God, all by myself!” As a team, the child and catechist explore the proclamation of the Scriptures, discuss and personally work with the materials, and encounter mysteries that reveal the Holy Spirit, the interior teacher. The catechist prepares the materials, studies the Scriptures, prays and presents them to the children. The work is then placed in the hands of the child, who works with the materials, draws or writes about the presentation, or sits in silent contemplation. The Holy Spirit, True Teacher, works within the child, nurturing the child’s relationship with God.

Why is the prepared environment, which we call the “atrium” necessary?

Children learn indirectly from the environment. Each atrium is prepared according to the age, development and religious needs of the child.