



# Archdiocese of Winnipeg

*Office of the Archbishop*

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Dear Pastors/Administrators,

I write to you today regarding the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd programme (CGS), a Montessori-based faith formation program for children ages 3-12. Over the past number of years, this catechetical programme, inspired by the writings and practice of Sofia Cavalletti, a theologian influenced by the work of Maria Montessori, has grown in popularity throughout the world. The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd offers an opportunity for children to grow in love with Jesus, the Good Shepherd, in a child-friendly sacred space called an atrium. A guided activity with a variety of specific materials, presentations and works centered on Sacred Scripture and Liturgy and an exploration of the mysteries of the Christian faith once a week, are facilitated by trained catechists. Each child is treated as spiritually unique. The CGS is a comprehensive program faithfully serving both the catechetical aims of the Church and the developmental needs of the child. In the practice of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd in our Archdiocese, I find that this pedagogical and theological method also nourishes the imagination of Catechists in their faith so as to develop a sacramental approach to catechesis that meets the deepest needs of the child. It is a new way to receive and experience the gifts of the Lord through a contemplative listening to the Word and an active participation in the Sacraments of the Lord's presence.

I recommend that the Catechesis of The Good Shepherd be added to the Archdiocese of Winnipeg Catechetical Program & Faith Development for Children.

With prayer and confidence in your dedication to the mission of catechesis, I encourage pastors/administrators to attend and to send catechists from your parish to the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Catechists Formation Program Level 1 in the fall. Attendance at the Formation Program is open to all who are interested, particularly those parishes with atriums already established. A description of the CGS Catechist Faith Formation & brochure of the course is attached. For inquiry contact Judith Vasquez at 204-452-2227 extension 243 or at [catechetics@archwinnipeg.ca](mailto:catechetics@archwinnipeg.ca). Assists our catechists to be agents of evangelization: "Go forth to all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey all that I have commanded you." (*Matt. 28:19-20*)

Yours in Christ,

✠Richard Gagnon  
Archbishop of Winnipeg