

St. Theodore Preschool offers Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. CGS is an approach to the faith formation of children ages 3-12. It is based on Sacred Scripture, liturgy, and the educational principles of Maria Montessori. God's love is experienced through Jesus as the Good Shepherd. Through a specially prepared religious environment (Atrium), children reflect and wonder on the questions "God, who are you?" and "How do you love us?" The aim of CGS is to help the child enter a relationship with God.

Children will visit the Atrium 1-2 times per week for 45-minute sessions. Each visit consists of prayer, song, a presentation of a work, and quiet time to reflect on their chosen work.

Atrium

The Atrium is a prepared environment where a child can fall in love with God. It is not a place of religious instruction but a place of religious life. The Atrium can be compared to a "retreat house", a place for community, worship, and to come closer to God. The Atrium helps the child develop their faith and to participate more fully in Mass.

Handmade materials (works) are biblically and liturgically based to help make the mysteries of faith more concrete. Materials are accessible to the child at eye level. Work spaces facilitate independence and concentration. Essentiality is emphasized rather than an over-stimulating environment. The Atrium is divided into areas with corresponding materials:

The Prayer Corner	Kingdom of God (parables)	Geography
Baptismal Corner	Altar/Mass Works	Good Shepherd
Infancy Narratives	Paschal Mystery	Practical Life

The Catechist

The catechist's role is to prepare the environment, give presentations from scripture and liturgy, and reflect with the child on questions generated from the presentations. The catechist acts as a facilitator while the child works independently with the materials. The child's work is a form of prayer and they are in a dialogue with God. The atrium is an environment where Christ is the "one true teacher". The catechist serves as a spiritual guide understanding that the experience is about the child's relationship with God.

Feel free to stop by and see our Atrium on the lower level of the school.

For more information about CGS visit: <https://www.cgsusa.org/>

To see video of an Atrium visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hfg9RfBk-fY>