

CGS FAMILY

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Volume III, Guide 34, July 16, 2023



**How have I prepared my
heart to receive God's Word?**

www.cgsgcc.church



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**All underlined text in
this Guide is linked!
Just click!**



How is this Guide working for you and your household or small group?

Share a resource, activity, or picture/video of what you are doing in your Domestic Church.

For questions, comments, and feedback, please contact us at

discipleship@cgscc.church

Welcome

CHRIST THE GOOD SHEPHERD FAMILY!

Welcome to our weekly CGS Guide that helps our parish families to grow in knowledge of the faith and deepen our relationship with Jesus as his disciples. As we encounter Jesus, we come to know him, love him, and serve him so that we can be reasonably happy in this life and happy with him forever in heaven.



Very Rev. James Burkart
Pastor



This Week

This Week's
Gospel Video



Hearing with an Open Heart

...the word of God is living and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating even between soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and able to discern reflections and thoughts of the heart. Hebrews 4:12

In September, my husband James and I will celebrate our 30th wedding anniversary. When we first met, it wasn't quite "love at first sight." I liked him, but due to the difference in our ages, I didn't readily consider dating him. Despite this, we began to have frequent conversations between us (I couldn't avoid him even if I wanted to, we lived in close proximity to each other and both of us attended daily Mass). Over time, we talked more and more often and for longer periods. We became lost in lively and intriguing discussions: two or three hours would go by, and we would still be talking! Both of us appreciated what the other had to say, and the more we listened to one another, the more we shared our beliefs, ideas, and convictions. He shared something of himself with me, and me with him. There was a fascination in getting to know each other. The more we learned about one another, the more we respected one another, and the closer we became. The intellectual exchange slowly became a heart exchange. I guess you could say he talked me into loving him! This gradual person-to-person interchange grew until I wanted to be with him more often. Then I wanted to be with him for the rest of my life.

Allowing myself encounter James in unfettered dialogue with him is the closest example of opening to God's Word I have experienced in my life. It was an easy exchange because I was open, willing, and interested in what he had to say. The God of all creation wants to have that kind of heart-to-heart talk with me and with you. God speaks, whether or not we are listening. God's Word always accomplishes its goal one way or another. It is an honest question to ask whether or not we truly want to hear God's Word, what he wants to say to us. What attitudes do we have about hearing God's Word? Do we truly want to hear it, or do we minimize it or close ourselves off from it? Are we avoiding it for fear of what God may ask of us? Do we think what God has to say to us is worth hearing? Do we allow other voices to overcome his? In this week's Guide, let us prepare our hearts so we can be more open to God's Word and his will. He does want to be with us for the rest of our life.

Ivana T. Meshell

HOW HAVE YOU SEEN GOD PRESENT AND ACTIVE IN YOUR LIFE THIS WEEK?



The Holy Mass

The liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed, at the same time, it is the font from which all her power flows. (Cf. SC #10)

Why go to Mass?

Christ the Good Shepherd Mass Schedule

Find Mass Anywhere

We come to know, love, and serve Jesus Christ.

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

readings and podcasts, Year A

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)

First Reading: Isaiah 55: 10-11

Psalm 65: 10, 11, 12-13, 14

Second Reading: Romans 8: 18-23

Gospel: Matthew 13: 1-23

A Message About Mass
to the Parents
of Young Children

Explore

Opening the Word on FORMED
Reflecting on the Sunday Readings
Sunday Connection

Join us for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Come as you are. Bring your family. We need prayer.

See the schedule on our parish website.



WE LEARN & BECOME DISCIPLES TOGETHER

Getting Started

Why are we doing this?

How to manage a group discussion.

All underlined text is linked! Just click!

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE



Question of the Week

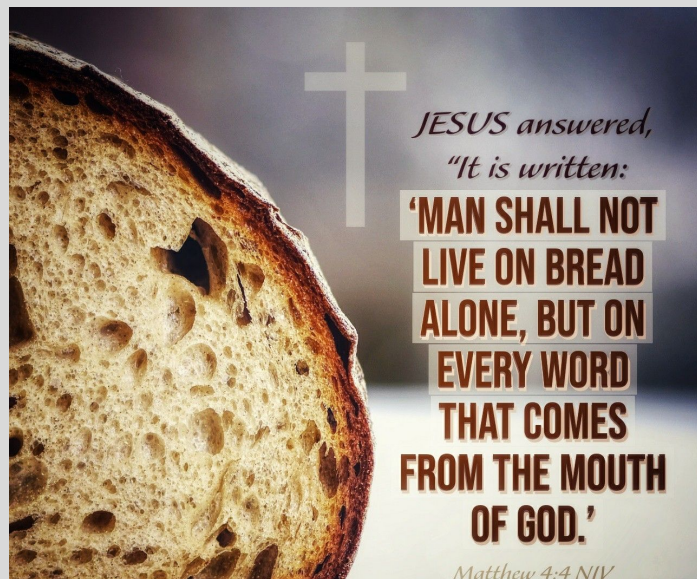
How have I prepared my heart to receive God's Word?

CONNECT with our GOD through Prayer

- Let's start with the The Sign of Cross.
- As we gather to share our faith, ask the Holy Spirit to be present. Use your own words or offer a Prayer to the Holy Spirit.
- As someone reads out loud the Gospel for this Sunday, listen to the Lord speaking to you.
- Listen to one other as everyone shares what in the Gospel caught their attention.
- Pray the Collect--opening prayer of Sunday Mass.

Family life is the first place where children learn how to pray as the Church. Through family prayer, children experience the first witness of Christ's living memory.

Points of Understanding
Grade 3, #4.4.1



CONNECT with our daily LIVES

Have you ever had a free and easy, comfortable and open conversation with someone? What was that like?

WHAT IS THE CHURCH'S TEACHING?

POINTS OF UNDERSTANDING

Where they come from and ways to use them.



Choose from among the following Scriptures and teachings for reading, prayer, and discussion.

In the HOLY SCRIPTURE we read:

- Incline your ear, and hear my words, and let your mind attend to my teaching...Proverbs 22:17-19
- ...embrace it [the Word] with a generous and good heart, and bear fruit through perseverance Luke 8:15.
- You have been born anew...through the living and abiding word of God--1 Peter 1:23.

In the Catechism of the Catholic Church

- ...The grace of faith opens "the eyes of your hearts...--#158
- "Seek in reading and you will find in meditating; knock in mental prayer and it will be opened to you by contemplation." -- #2654
- Christianity is the religion of the "Word" of God, a word which is...incarnate and living"--#108

From the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Hearing the Word of God

Liturgy of the Word

Discuss

1. When you are interested in someone, you hang on to their words; you want to hear everything he or she has to say. Do you "hang on" to God's words? Why or why not?
2. What is your favorite Scripture passage (even if you cannot remember chapter and verse). Tell why this passage is important to you.
3. Can you name a time when you heard or read something from the bible and acted on it? What was it, and what was the result?

Want more? Go Deeper!

God's Word is Living and Effective



Reflection Question

What is my general attitude about myself towards God? Am I seeking his Word and his will, or am I avoiding it? How does that make me feel and what (if anything) do I want to do about it?



CONNECT with OTHERS...

Living the Gospel with commitment & action.

What is one thing I am are willing to change in my life so that I are more open to God's Word and his will?

Practical Activities



For the Individual

Be Intentional

Think of ways that you can be intentional in your daily and spiritual life. Examples: Set aside 10 minutes to read the Scripture readings for the day or pray a decade of the rosary. Take time to listen to others and be in the presence of Jesus. Dedicate a part of each day to focus on the good things God wants you to say and do.



For Couples

Discuss your first Mass together.

Get together as a couple and share what was and still is in your heart about the first time you went together to Mass and the most recent time you went to Mass. How have you grown in faith together as a couple? What challenges have you faced together? Thank God for the ways he has helped you and sustained you in your married life.



For the Domestic Church

Share what God is saying.

This week, take time to sit together. As a family, ask yourself what is God saying to you all through the Gospel & Homily at Mass. Page 4 of this Guide will help you do that.



Missionary Mindset

Share your gifts & talents

As a community, we all have gifts and talents. Let us seek ways that these gifts and talents help us be open to God's message for us and how to guide others according to our time and abilities. Don't know where to start? Contact us at discipleship@cgscs.church and we will help you take the next step.



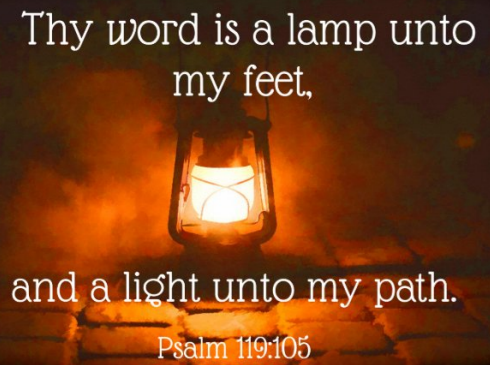
Building Your Church at Home

Your household is where "church" begins. Your parish is here to help you with support, resources, small Faith Groups, and gathered activities on our campus throughout the year. Visit our website or contact us if you need help.

For more ideas on how to build your home as a Domestic Church, go to: www.domestic-church.com or visit *The Family Fully Alive*, sponsored by the Knights of Columbus, or [Tools for Building a Domestic Church](#) by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

Closing Prayer

- We sign ourselves with the Sign of Cross.
- According to what we reflected on, or whatever is in my heart share a petition. At the end we all say: **Lord hear our prayer.**
- Then we can pray the Our Father, Hail Mary and the Glory be...
- As we finish, let us share a sign of peace with each other.



"Let us pray that families grow closer together, and together, closer to God." Fr. James



Prayer to Hear God's Voice

Lord Jesus Christ, I thank You for always listening to me and guiding me in spirit, to follow Your Word and to enjoy what You have given to me in this life from Your providence. Lord God, I pray that I hear Your voice today as You guide, guard, protect, direct and govern me.

Lord God You have told us that You will draw close to us when we draw closer to You. I therefore draw closer to You so that I can hear from You, know You more and obey any instruction that You will whisper into my ear.

We are Your sheep and You are our shephard. Let us hear Your voice alone and not be deceived by a stranger. Help me to avoid the voice of temptations of this world from people who do not know You.

I seek to hear from You today any correction, instruction or guidance. Give me wisdom to discern Your voice and act on it. In Jesus Name I pray. Amen.

Add to Your Faith Virtue
and to Virtue Knowledge
painting by Walter Rane

AT THE END OF THE LESSON OR END OF THE WEEK

From what you have learned, how would you now answer the Question of the Week?

How have I prepared my heart to receive God's Word?

WE ARE THE CHURCH

What Makes us Catholic?



The four types of persons envisaged in the Parable of the Sower are (1) those who never accept the word of the kingdom ([Mt 13:19](#)); (2) those who believe for a while but fall away because of persecution ([Mt 13:20-21](#)); (3) those who believe, but in whom the word is choked by worldly anxiety and the seduction of riches ([Mt 13:22](#)); (4) those who respond to the word and produce fruit abundantly ([Mt 13:23](#)). ([source, footnote](#)).

Catholics believe that we cannot be saved without God's initiative; however, we also believe that salvation involves our free acceptance and participation in it. We can grow in grace and holiness, becoming more beautiful for God by our attitude and choices.

Word of the Week - Contemplation

Contemplation is to look lovingly at God for an extended time. Contemplation starts when we entrust ourselves to God, in whatever way God chooses to approach us. It is up to God, not up to us. It is his work in us. God is willing to touch and transform us to be like him. God wants to lead us to be united in love with him, so that we may live in his loving presence. This flow of divine love slowly and gradually changes us. It empties us of our limited and imperfect human ways of thinking, loving, and behaving, transforming them into divine ways. To contemplate God's Word is to open ourselves to be transformed by it. **Learn more.**

Faith Groups at CGS



FAITH GROUPS

Four Reasons Why Faith Groups are Vital

(Video, 2:49)

Join a small Faith Group at CGS or start one of your own!

Ask us how.

Saints of the Month by Jeremy Hearne



Podcast each Tuesday!

More for your Domestic Church

Find resources for your family, household, or small Faith Group, including how to use this Guide, and much more. [Visit our website](#) OR scan the QR code with your smart phone.



ADULT & FAMILY MINISTRY



The Annunciation: The Virgin Mary
by Mikhail Nesterov

Mary had a God-centered mindset so she was ready to hear God's Word.

Five Ways to Put on the Mind of Christ
by Fr. Ed Broom, OMV

Adulthood

Articles

Gina Christian for Catholic Philly // Don't Just Hang in There--Hold On

Edward Sri for the National Catholic Register // The Dialogue of Love: Preparing Your Heart for the Liturgy of the Word.

Archbishop Allen Vigneron // The Power of the Word of God (*This one is a little longer, more extensive.*)

Podcast

Bearing Good Fruit **One Hundredfold**



Fill your Mind. Grow in Grace.

relevant
radio

Bringing Christ to the world through the media

Catholic Apps

FORMED Formed



IBreviary



Laudate

Book Suggestions

Current Bible Studies

A Quick Journey Through the Bible

Monday Mornings & Wednesday Evenings

Young Adult Ministry

Ages 18-30

Monday Mornings & Wednesday Evenings
Other days, times and activities as announced.

Sacramental Information



& Becoming Catholic!

Visit the sacraments section of our parish website to find everything you need to get started with any sacrament or to inquire about becoming Catholic. Information is being continually updated. Contact Deacon Stacy Millsap our parish office if you have a question. We are glad to help you!

FAMILIES WITH YOUTH

Early Adolescence (Jr.High, Grades 6-8)

Characteristics of Early Adolescents

Question: Why is it important to read God's Word?

Ascension Presents // How Do You Pray with the Bible -- video (6:27)

Ascension Presents // How to Pray with Scripture Like a Friar -- video (9:01)

Ascension Presents // Ways to Read the Bible -- video (8:17)

Ascension Presents // What is Lectio Divina -- video (4:29)

Adolescence (High School, Grades 9-12)

Characteristics of Adolescents

Question: Why is it important to read God's Word?

Ascension Presents // How Do You Pray with the Bible -- video (6:27)

Ascension Presents // How to Pray with Scripture Like a Friar -- video (9:01)

Ascension Presents // Ways to Read the Bible -- video (8:17)

Ascension Presents // What is Lectio Divina -- video (4:29)



Youth Gather at CGS

Middle school and High school meet every Wednesday 7-8:30pm

FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

Birth to Age 2

The role of parents at this stage is to model the example of Jesus by offering God's unconditional love to their children and to others. Parents benefit from growing in their own faith so they are able to hand on the faith to the next generation.

Nursery Pages

Gospel of the Week and
Activity pages to do with your
Toddler and Pre-schooler

Early Childhood (Ages 3-5)



Characteristics of Young Children

Question: Do I make room in my heart for Jesus?

- EWTN // Tomkin: Our Father -- video (0:40)
- Christine In Action // Gospel Means The Good News --video (1:10)
- Coloring Page

Childhood (Elementary, Grades 1-5)



Characteristics of Children

Question: How do I welcome Jesus in my heart?

- EWTN // My Time with Jesus: The Bible -- video (30:00)
- Christine In Action // Gospel Means The Good News --video (1:10)
- Sophia Institute // Ready to Use Lesson for Each Sunday

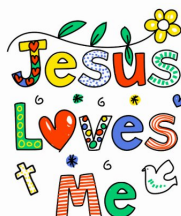


Catholic Gospel Coloring Pages and Worksheets
for Sunday Mass

Catholic Gospel Coloring Pages and Worksheets for Sunday Mass

Family Faith Practices

Age-specific Materials



Join a Group of Parents with
Young Children—or start one!

Inquire at
discipleship@cgscc.church.

GENERAL RESOURCES

The Holy Bible

Online Bible via the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)

If you don't know much about the Bible or want to learn more: **Scripture Support**

Catholics use the **New American Bible Revised Edition** (NABRE) as the translation for Mass readings. There are many acceptable versions of NABRE as well as other approved translations. You may purchase from any vendor. Basic editions are available upon request at no charge. Pick one up at the parish office.



Recommended Print Bibles

These are all by St. Mary's Press: Order directly from the publisher or search online for other vendors.

Catholic Family Connections Bible
(digital version available)

Catholic Youth Bible (Adolescents & College)
"Breakthrough" (Early Adolescents // Jr. High)

Catholic Children's Bible

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)

Online Catechism via the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)

NEW! Simplified version of the Catechism of the Catholic Church

If you don't know much about the Catechism or want to learn more: Catechism Support

Formed Online

Our parish subscribes to a library of online resources called **Formed**. It is excellent and free for you to use. Register at formed.org - Just click "Sign Up as a Parishioner." Need help? Watch this video.

Counseling & Spiritual Direction

Our parish offers **Rejoice Counseling** for individuals and families for a variety of issues and needs. You may use this online form to contact them directly.

We also offer **Spiritual Direction** for anyone interested in a spiritual companion, discerning God's will in your life. Follow the links or inquire through the parish office.

Prayers and Praying

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Prayers for Catholics



Prayer Requests



Common Prayers and
Formulas to Learn by Heart

and a chart showing at what
age level they should be learned.

How to create a prayer table
or prayer area in your home.

ART & MUSIC

Sacred Art on Formed

Parish subscription free for parishioners--register once, access all content.

Formed.org



Using Sacred Art to Bring the Faith Alive

[Sophia Institute](http://SophiaInstitute.org)



Ruth Gee // Reflections of God's Love

Sacred Art to Inspire You

[Catherine Saldana // God's Word](#)

[Jeff Hein // Christ Study, 2015.](#)

[Jeff Hein // Christ in America, 2010.](#)

[Michael Dudash // Not By Bread Alone.](#)

• **Music to Move You**

- [Dan Feiten // Seed, Scattered and Sown, Catholic Hymn | Parable of the Sower](#) -- video (5:08).
- [Amy Grant // Thy Word](#) -- audio (4:31)
- [Bria Jean // Teach Me To Obey](#) (Upper Room Sessions) -- video (4:10)

COVER IMAGE

Interior of the first St. Louis Church in Castroville, Texas.

Photo by Ivana Meshell



The Word of God in Texas

In the 1840's, missionary priests came from France to minister to the Alsatian Catholics in the newly-established community of Castroville, located in what was then the Republic of Texas.

In 1847, at the age of 29, Fr. Claude Marie Dubuis was assigned to be the first pastor of St. Louis Catholic Church (he was later appointed second bishop of Texas).

It was important to to the people there and to the missionary priests that the Word of God be preached and heard. What about you?

How important is the Word of God to you?

In what ways do art and music help strengthen your relationship with God? Tell us!
discipleship@cgscc.church

Meet Your Evangelization & Discipleship Staff

Helping Others to Know and Love Jesus Christ



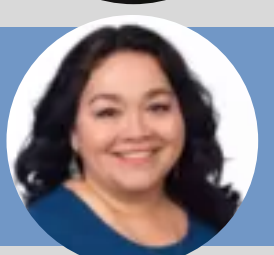
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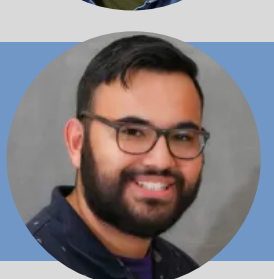
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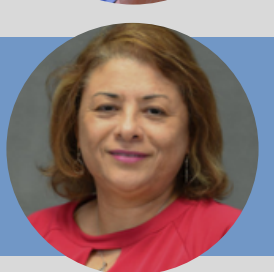
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Evangelization & Discipleship
Department Assistant
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The CHURCH EXISTS IN ORDER TO EVANGELIZE

...bringing all
humanity to
union with God;
this is the
missionary
mandate
of the Church.

*Pope Paul VI in
"Evangelii Nuntiandi"
("Evangelization in
the Modern World"),
1975.*



Evangelize with us for the glory of God!

discipleship@cgscc.church

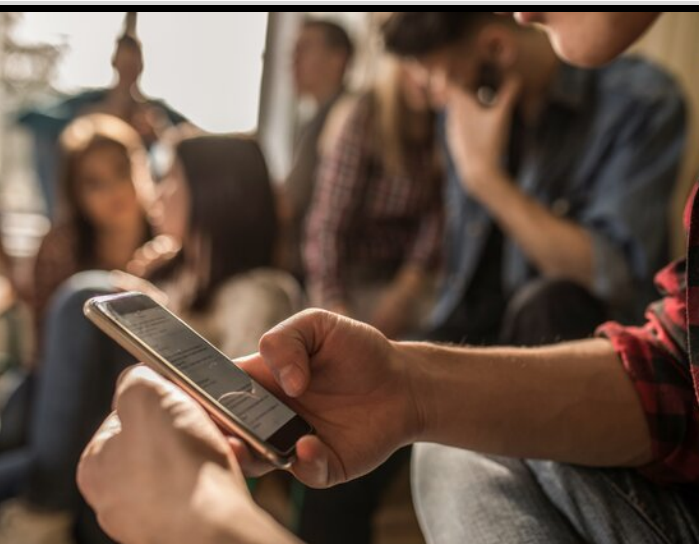


Our Vision Statement

Building a community of love and hope by putting our faith into action.

These Guides are produced weekly by our Office of Evangelization and Discipleship and are posted on our website each Friday evening: cgscs.church/cgs-family-guides

"HELPING PEOPLE TO KNOW AND LOVE JESUS CHRIST."



discipleship@cgscs.church



Official Page:

[Christ the Good Shepherd Catholic Church](https://www.facebook.com/ChristtheGoodShepherdCatholicChurch)



[@cgsyouth](https://www.instagram.com/cgsyouth)



Join us on Flocknote:

Text CGS to 84576.

You will receive emails & texts from CGS according to your preferences.

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Very Reverend James Burkart, Pastor

The contents of this Guide are in accordance with the teachings of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and the *Catechetical Framework for Lifelong Faith Formation* of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, under the pastoral care of Archbishop Daniel Cardinal DiNardo. Accordingly, the *Catechetical Framework* serves the definitive aim of catechesis which is to put people not only in touch with, but also in communion and intimacy, with Jesus Christ.