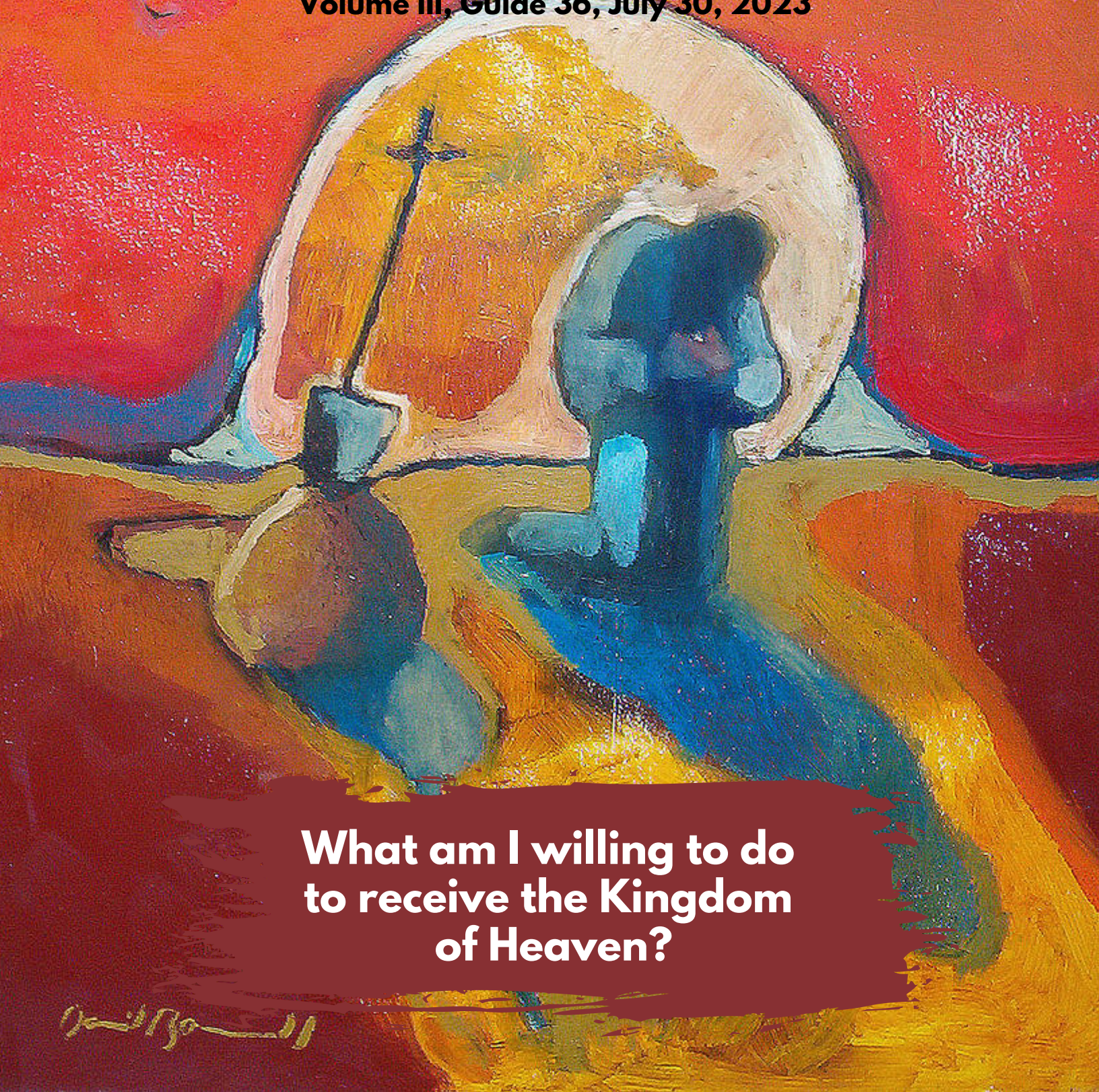


CGS FAMILY

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Volume III, Guide 36, July 30, 2023



**What am I willing to do
to receive the Kingdom
of Heaven?**

www.cgscscc.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

The Answer is Close at Hand

In this Sunday's gospel, we continue reading from the 13th chapter of St. Matthew where Jesus tells parables about what he calls "The Kingdom of Heaven." Earlier in Matthew (4:17), Jesus begins his public ministry with a message. What is the very first thing he says when as he begins to speak to the people? "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." If Jesus leads with this, it must be very important. It is the basis on which he builds everything else. Clearly, he goes on to speak of this "Kingdom" in various ways: each example and story is meant to lead us to a greater understanding of the truth. Jesus is leading us to what will fill our hearts with peace if we are willing to listen, accept, and obey. Through this Sunday's parables and many others, Jesus tells us to "repent;" that is to be sorry for what we have done wrong, to turn away from sin and turn toward him; to stop the mad dash towards things that never fully satisfy us. He tells us to do this because the thing our hearts want most is a fingertip away: the Kingdom of Heaven "is at hand;" it is very close to us, it is among us and within us. What keeps us from touching it, and allowing it to touch us? Fear, selfishness, greed, laziness, pride, injustice, and foolishness of all kinds. It's simple, really; yet it is the task of a lifetime to achieve, and remains wholly unachievable without the grace and mercy of God.

In what ways do you desire peace, freedom, and joy in your life? How are you suffering from uneasiness, discontent, and spiritual longing? The answer is close at hand, though it requires our assent and our participation. The Kingdom will not be forced upon us; it is being offered to us. Our Lord declares: "Whoever has ears ought to hear." Are we listening? Are we willing? In this week's Guide, let us explore: "What am I willing to do to receive the Kingdom of Heaven?"

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

A Message About Mass to the Parents of Young Children

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

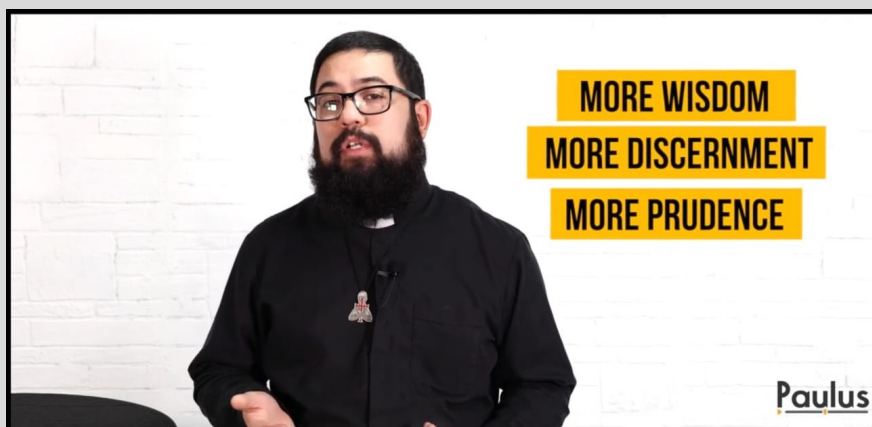
Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
readings and podcasts, Year A (USCCB)

First Reading: 1 Kings 3: 5, 7-12

Psalms 119: 57, 72, 76-77, 127-128, 129-130

Second Reading: Romans 8: 28-30

Gospel: Matthew 13: 44-52



This Week's Gospel Video by Fr. Juan Pablo Orozco, CC.

Reflecting on the Sunday Readings
Sunday Connection

WE LEARN & BECOME DISCIPLES TOGETHER

Getting Started

Why are we doing this?

How to manage a group discussion.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE



Question of the Week

What am I willing to do to receive the Kingdom of Heaven?

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

Can you recall a time when you gave up something so that you could get something you thought was greater, more important, or more special to you? What made you want to trade one thing for another?



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:

- Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand--Matthew 4:17.
- If you love me, you will keep my commandments--John 14:15.
- Go and sell what you have and you will have treasure in Heaven -- Mark 10:21

In the Catechism of the Catholic Church

- Vocation of everyone including the lay people is to seek the Kingdom of Heaven #898
- The Beatitudes fulfill promises pointed to the Kingdom of Heaven #1716
- The Sacraments point to the Kingdom of Heaven. #1130

Discuss

1. In today's gospel, a man goes to sell everything he's got just to get that one field. Have you ever wanted something so much you would give up everything else to have it? Explain.
2. Human beings are always looking for the elusive "pot of gold," the "treasure of a lifetime;" a "winning lottery ticket." What is your greatest treasure now and what treasure are you looking for?
3. Jesus concludes his message in this parable by saying, "Whoever has ears ought to hear." We all have ears, it's true--so what is it, do you think, that Jesus wants us to hear?

Want more? Go Deeper!
Layers of Wisdom



Reflection Question

What am I willing to do to receive the Kingdom of Heaven?
What am I currently unwilling to do? What does this tell me about my relationship with God as it is right now?



CONNECT with OTHERS...

Living the Gospel with commitment & action.

How can I show others how to receive a glimpse of the Kingdom of Heaven through the week?

Practical Activities



For the Individual- **Use the Sacrament of Reconciliation**

The Sacrament of Reconciliation also known as the Sacrament of Penance is God's gift to us. Any sin committed after baptism can be forgiven. Use this Sacrament as a means to heal hurts in your life and relationships. Need help? Ask any priest, deacon, or staff member.



For Couples- **Speak about your childhood**

One beautiful thing about being in a couple is having someone to share stories about your childhood with. Take time together to draw what you imagined Heaven to look like as a child and talk about it.



For the Domestic Church- **Sharing our change**

This week, intensify the search and the collection of your change (coins) and as a family go make your donation to our Social Ministry Office. Our Social Ministry Office at Christ the Good Shepherd Catholic Community has been designated to help different social ministries projects within our area.



Missionary Mindset- **Partner With Others**

No one gets through this life alone. We especially do not get through the spiritual life without the companionship of other Christians who also love God and are doing their best to live a virtuous life. Consider joining or forming a small Faith Group at CGS. Don't know how? Need help? Talk to any Evangelization staff member or write to Anna Spalding at discipleship@cgscc.church.



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

Bring Forth Your Kingdom

Merciful Father, bring forth your mercy.

Loving Father, bring forth your love.

Faithful Father, bring forth the gift of faith and hope.

Bring forth your graces that we may have a greater understanding of who we are as your creation, that we may guide others closer to you, and that we may persevere in our own journey towards you.

Help us to be reminded of your Heavenly Kingdom through the most Holy Sacraments in which you have given us.

Grant us O God, these graces that we may show others a glimpse of your Heavenly Kingdom.

We ask this through the intercessions of the Holy Family of Nazareth and through the intercessions of all the angels and saints in Heaven. Amen.

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?

What am I willing to do to receive the Kingdom of Heaven?

WE ARE THE CHURCH



What Makes us Catholic?

The Beatific Vision

Beatific Vision, the immediate knowledge of God which the angelic spirits and the souls of the just enjoy in Heaven. It is called "vision" to distinguish it from the mediate knowledge of God which the human mind may attain in the present life. And since in beholding God face to face the created intelligence finds perfect happiness, the vision is termed "beatific".

E.A Pace

Word of the Week - Laity

Laity comes from the Greek word "laikos," which means "of the people" and "laos," which means just "people." The lay faithful are not exempt from a religious vocation. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (897), the laity "are made sharers in their particular way in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly office of Christ" through their baptisms." Laity have a special vocation "to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God's will" (CCC, 898).

Faith Groups at CGS



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



For where your
TREASURE *is,*
there will your heart be also

Adulthood

Articles

- Center for Action and Contemplation // [Matthew's Good News: The Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand](#)
- Pope Francis // [Freedom Means Always Choosing the Good; A Challenge in Today's World](#)
- Dr. Jeff Mirus // [Entering the Kingdom of God: What Does This Mean?](#)
- Sam Ellis // [How Do Catholics Get to Heaven?](#)
- Catholic Exchange // [Parable about the Kingdom of Heaven](#)

Videos

- Dr. Brant Pitre on Catholic Productions // [Pearl of Great Price Parable Explained--\(6:46\)](#)

[Catholic Apps](#)



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 would it be hard to receive the Kingdom of Heaven?

The Religion Teacher // Parables of the Hidden Treasure & the Pearl (6:39)
Ascension Presents // How to Lose Everything and Still Have Hope -- video (9:10)
Ascension Presents // He Gives His Whole Self To Me -- video (6:53)
Ascension Presents // Are My Sacrifices Working? -- video (5:19)



Adolescence High School, Grades 9-12

Characteristics of Adolescents

Question: Why would it be hard to receive the Kingdom of Heaven?

The Religion Teacher // Parables of the Hidden Treasure & the Pearl -- video (6:39)
Ascension Presents // How to Lose Everything and Still Have Hope -- video (9:10)
Ascension Presents // He Gives His Whole Self To Me -- video (6:53)
Ascension Presents // Are My Sacrifices Working? -- video (5:19)



Youth Gather at CGS

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



FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

Nursery Pages

[Gospel of the Week](#) and
[Activity pages](#) to do with your
Toddler and Pre-schooler

[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.

Age-Specific Materials

[Pre-order Your Pflaum Gospel Weeklies](#)

For families who want more "hands-on" materials.
[How to Use the Gospel Weeklies](#)

[Early Childhood](#) [Ages 3-5](#)

[Characteristics of Young Children](#)

Question: What is special to me?

Activity// [I Love Booklet](#)

EWTN // [Tomkin - The Catholic Cowboy: Charity](#) -- (2:00)



[Childhood](#) [Elementary, Grades 1-5](#)

[Characteristics of Children](#)

Question: What do I treasure?

Activity// [The Kid's Bulletin](#)

Two Fish Talks // [Pearl of Great Price](#) -- video (1:21)

Sophia Institute // [Ready to Use Lesson for Each Sunday](#)



For Parents

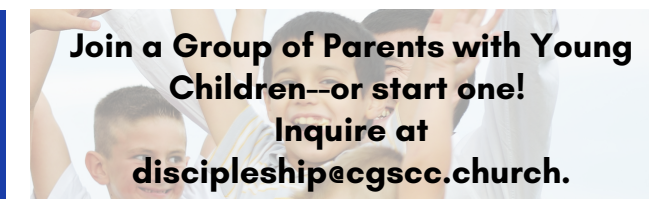
[Strong Catholic Family Faith](#)

A project of Strong Catholic Families, Strong Catholic Youth Initiative



[Family Faith Practices](#)

Join a Group of Parents with Young Children--or start one!
Inquire at
discipleship@cgsc.church.



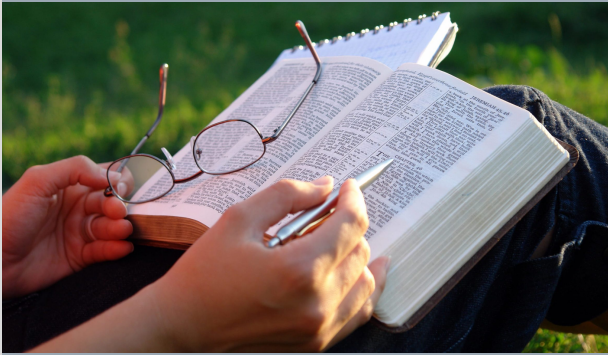
GENERAL RESOURCES

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

USCCB // God's Vision of Justice in Community

Aleteia // Desire for Heaven



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)



Cover Image

Pearl of Great Price

by Daniel Bonnell

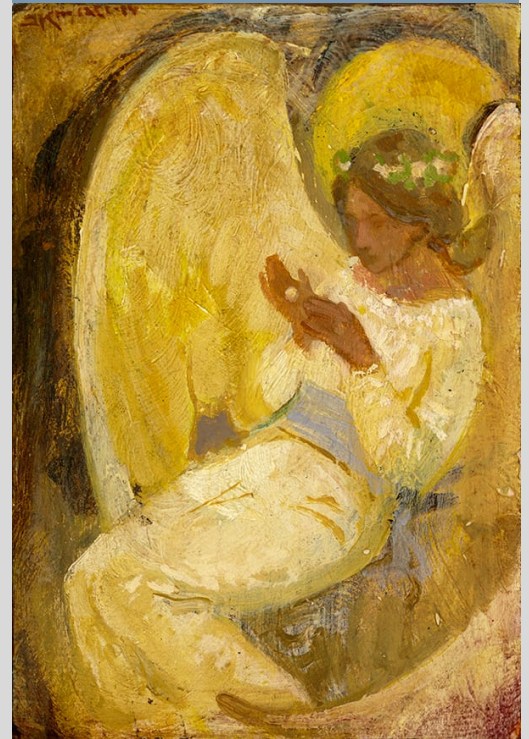
Sacred Art to Inspire You

The **Pearl of Great Price** is a subject illustrated by many different artists of all types of genre. Here is a selection of artists who have depicted this work, all of the same title:

- [Daniel Bonnell](#)
- [J. Kirk Richards](#)
- [Monica Welch](#)
- [Domenico Fetti](#)
- [Jorge Cocco](#)
- [Jacqueline Hart](#)
- [Dinah Roe Kendall](#)

Pearl of Great Price

by J. Kirk Richards



Music to Move You

- John Michael Talbot // [Lillies of the Field](#)--(5:51)
- Rend Collective // [Build Your Kingdom Here](#) -- (4:39)
- Red Rocks Worship // [On Earth as in Heaven](#) -- (5:10)
- Elevation Worship // [Here as in Heaven](#) -- (8:18)

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

Meet Your Evangelization & Discipleship Staff

Helping Others to Know and Love Jesus Christ



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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

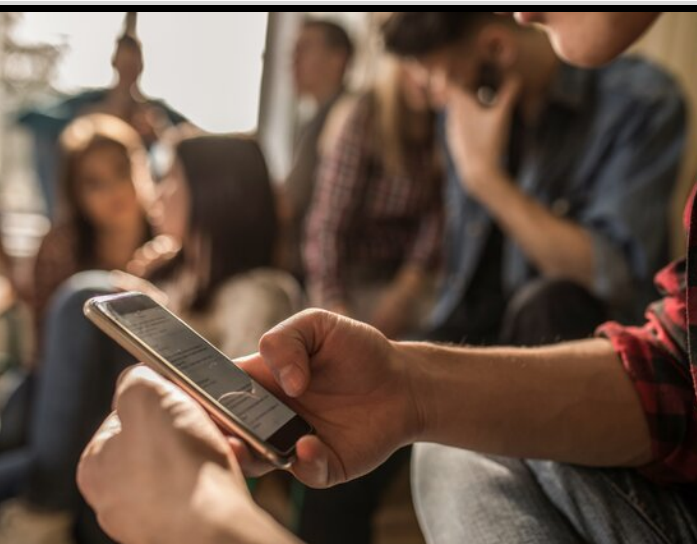


Our Vision Statement

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



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.