



St. Cecilia Religious Education

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

170 Mechanic Street

Leominster, Massachusetts 01453

August 17, 2023

Dear Parent,

Since your child was baptized at St. Cecilia Church our parish family has been praying for you and your family. Helping your child to learn about the love of God and to develop a true and lasting relationship with Jesus is one of your primary roles as a Catholic parent.

On the day of your child's Baptism, the celebrant said, "You have asked your child to be baptized. In doing so you are accepting the responsibility of training them in the practice of the faith. It will be your duty to bring them up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us by loving God and our neighbor. Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?" And you lovingly responded, "I do."

So, now that your child is growing and changing, you might wonder how our parish can support you in your role as the primary catechist (teacher of the faith) of your child. One way that we are reaching out to young families is by offering a religious education program for young children (ages 3-Grade 1). This program is a three-year program called *The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd*. A child could enter it at age 5 and would be introduced to the 1st year syllabus, while some counterparts the same age might be introduced to second year materials.

The *Level 1 Catechesis of the Good Shepherd* program is a Montessori based Catholic religious education program that most importantly, helps the young child to enter into a personal, intimate relationship with Jesus. They develop this relationship through the use of beautifully made materials that the children manipulate and enjoy. They also come to know Scripture and the many truths of our Catholic faith as we gather in our carefully prepared space for the children called the Atrium.

We will be offering this program to our young children on Sunday mornings from 9:45- 11:00 AM and our meeting dates will follow the schedule of the older children's schedule. Dates in parenthesis are dates that classes are held. **We will start on week later than the other children, our first class will be September 24th.** If you would like a tour of the Atrium or would like more information call Paula at 978.537.5596 or email me at pd@stceciliachurch.net.

You can also gather more information by watching this YouTube from the National Association of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hfg9RfBk-fy> or visit their website at www.cgsusa.org.

There is NO fee for your child(ren) to enroll into the *Catechesis of the Good Shepherd* program. If you would like your child(ren) to participate please review the forms and return them to me by Sept. 4th. You may place it in the mail, drop it in the collection basket, bring it to the rectory or scan the forms and email them to me. The entrance we will use to enter and exit the building for classes is the door where the two parking lots meet (Fourth St. & Third St.) The children will meet first in the hall and sit at the assigned table for their class until we ring the bell for them to go upstairs to the Atrium.

Friends in Christ: The Good Shepherd,

Paula Doucet, Administrator of Religious Education