

**St. Vincent de Paul Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) Catholic Montessori  
Atrium Handbook Fall 2019-Spring 2020**

*Level 1 (ages 3-6 years old)*

**CLASS TIME**  
**Wednesday 4:15pm-5:40pm**



*St. Vincent de Paul Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Atrium  
14330 Eagle Run Drive Omaha, Nebraska 68164  
Office Phone: 402-493-1642*

## What You Need to Know Before 1<sup>st</sup> Class

### **LOCATION**

The atrium is located in the Parish Center in the JP II room. Please enter the Parish Center via the gathering space in Church. At Kampschneider Hall take a right and go down the hallway towards the stairs. Go down the stairs and walk through the hallway. The JP II Room will be on your left.

### **ARRIVAL**

Children should arrive for gather time:

-4:15pm for Wednesday session

- Chairs will be lined up outside the atrium to give your child a transitional space to prepare his/her heart, mind, body and voice for the atrium.
- Have your child choose a chair, remove shoes (as a sign of respect for the sacred space of our atrium) and participate in songs.
- Once all the children have arrived, the catechist will enter the atrium and invite the children individually.

Please be sure children have eaten and have gone to the bathroom. The children are taught to have a reverent attitude and behavior. On time arrivals are essential so that you do not disrupt group presentations given at the beginning of atrium. If late arrivals become habitual (more than 3 times), the catechist will discuss an alternate plan for your child(ren).

### **BEHAVIOR**

Children participating in the atrium are expected to be able to listen, follow directions and respect their classmates and the environment. If a child is unable to do these tasks on a regular basis, it will be necessary to set a time out period before returning to the atrium. During the first 4 weeks of atrium, we assess if the child is ready for the atrium. If the child is not ready (i.e. not potty-trained or not able to follow simple instructions and work independently), we will ask you to wait a few months and try again.

### **DISMISSAL**

Children gather around the prayer table to listen to the Word of God, pray and sing closing their time. Parents must pick up their child in the hallway outside the atrium:

-5:40pm Wednesday session

- Your child will return to their hallway chair and put their shoes on.
- Children will only be released to designated persons authorized by parents or legal guardians.

Please be prompt at pick up, if you arrive late, your child will wait for you in the atrium.

### **ABSENCES**

If your child will be absent:

- Wednesday session- Notify the Religious Formation Office at 402-493-1642.

### **CALENDAR**

The atrium follows the liturgical seasons of the Catholic Church while in session. Please see the atrium calendar for the schedule located on the Parish's website [www.svdpomaha.org](http://www.svdpomaha.org) Faith Formation/Children/Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.

## **DRESS CODE**

Please have your children wear clothing that allows ease of movement reflecting modesty and a respectful attitude due to this special place.

## **WEATHER INFORMATION**

If class is cancelled, an email will be sent to the address on file in the Religious Formation Office. You may also call the Religious Formation Office, 402-493-1642, where there will be a recording. Please use your best judgment and stay home if you are at all unsure.

## **PARENT VOLUNTEERS**

We need and are grateful for parental help! It is wonderful way to be involved in your child's atrium experience. We ask every parent to assist in one way or another during the atrium time throughout the year.

- 1. ATRIUM ASSISTANTS-** Adults are needed to assist the catechists in the atrium. Training and materials will be provided. All volunteers helping in the atrium must be safe environment trained. Please contact Jennifer McMahan in the Religious Formation Office at (402)493-1642 or [mcmahanj@svdpomaha.org](mailto:mcmahanj@svdpomaha.org) if you need to complete safe environment training.
- 2. PARENT TAKE HOME WORK PROJECTS-** We have various work projects of materials and supplies that our atrium needs. These would not be for the children attending the atrium to prepare. We have cutting, coloring and pasting (paper) projects that you can check out and volunteer for. Project packets containing instructions and supplies will be provided and will be out by the atrium. Please let our catechists know if you would like more information on these projects.
- 3. FLOWER VOLUNTEERS-** Our children enjoy taking care of others and things. A favorite work our children in the atrium is flower arrangement. Our atrium needs a plant with saucer or fresh flowers on occasion.

## **CHILD'S PAPERWORK**

Each child will have a folder in which to keep their papers (coloring, gluing, etc...). At the end of the year, we will send the work home. We ask parents not expect paperwork after each session, since one of the key Montessori principles is that young children work for a process and not the end product.

## ATRIUM

### **ENVIRONMENT**

The atrium is a special place of prayer and enjoyment of God, where children listen to the Good Shepherd's voice during catechetical presentations and can meditate on God's Word while working. In order to cultivate a prayerful environment, we teach children to use the slow atrium walk and quiet atrium voice. Please model a quiet manner of speaking and walking to help your children become accustomed to using their atrium voice and atrium walk.

### **OBSERVATION IN THE ATRIUM**

We welcome observation in the atrium! The first few weeks of class will be spent helping the children about life in the atrium, so we recommend waiting a few weeks to observe unless you are certain that your presence will not be a distraction to your child or any other child in the atrium.