

*Catechesis
of the
Good Shepherd*
Faith Formation for
Children



Level One
Catechist Formation for Adults
Working with 3–6-year-old children

Part 1 - 2026

February 14

April 18

June 13

June 14 (1-5pm)

August 15

August 16 (1-5pm)

October 10

Part 2 - 2027

January 9

March 13

May 1

July 31

Sept. 11

October 9

November 6

9:00 am - 4:30 pm
(unless otherwise noted)

Hosted by
St. Ann Catholic Church
4905 Roswell Rd
Marietta, Georgia 30062

Formation Team

Lynne Worthington worked for 30 years as a catechist for children and adults in Durham, NC. She also served as the coordinator for CGS in Immaculata School and the parish. Since 1991, she has taken part in National Formation courses for the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, earning certificates as a catechist for all levels, ages 3 to 12. She has participated in numerous formation leadership workshops and is recognized as a formation leader by the National Association of The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. She holds an MA in Pastoral Studies from Aquinas Institute of Theology in Saint Louis, MO. Lynne now lives in Ball Ground, GA, and serves as a catechist at Our Lady of La Salette in Canton and St. Catherine in Marietta. She and her husband, Bill, have three grown children and two grandchildren.

Karen Maxwell (karenmaxwell@cgsusa.org) is Director of Formation for the United States Association of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, CGSUSA (www.cgsusa.org). She has enjoyed the life-changing work of being with children of all ages in the atria of The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd for 34 years and offering CGS catechist formation for 27 years. Karen holds an MA in Pastoral Studies from Aquinas Institute of Theology in Saint Louis, MO. Currently, Karen is a Level III catechist and also offers CGS to Spanish-speaking and Burmese children ages 6 – 7 years for the Missionaries of Charity in Stone Mountain. She and her husband have three grown children and three grandchildren.

Debbie Dobson (ddobson3@gmail.com) began her journey with the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd in 2009. She is formed in Levels I, II, and III (ages 3-12) and the seminal Infant/Toddler formation. She has volunteered in various atria around the Archdiocese of Atlanta since 2009. She is a newly recognized CGSUSA formation leader for Level I and is in her third year of the MA in Pastoral Studies at Aquinas Institute in St. Louis, MO. She holds an AMI Orientation certificate for elementary and has participated in Montessori Foundations with CGSUSA. She was recognized in the Archdiocese of Atlanta as a master catechist. Debbie and her husband Paul have three adult children (who have all completed at least Level I formation in CGS) and takes great delight in her first grandchild.

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Level I Catechist Formation 2026-27 Registration Form

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Street Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Church/School/Denomination: _____

If you are taking this formation level for a second time, please indicate when and where you completed your previous Level I

Tuition: \$550.00 for the complete course. To secure a place in the course, either send a non-refundable deposit of \$50.00 or the entire tuition with your registration form. Balance will be due by the first session unless payment plan is requested. Scholarships are also available.

Deadline for registration is January 21, 2026

Payment Enclosed: _____

Send completed registration form with check payable to St. Ann Catholic Church to:

Beth Kosbab: 2252 Glenridge Dr. Marietta, GA 30062 (ekosbab@gmail.com; 678-314-3931)

For more information about Catechesis of the Good Shepherd or this formation, contact:

Karen Maxwell, karenmaxwell@cgsusa.org, 404-580-2960.

A Vision for Children

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd offers a method of catechesis for children ages 3 through 12 through which children are helped in forming an authentic, faithful relationship with God. The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is grounded in scriptural and liturgical study framed by Montessori's principles of education and understanding of the developmental needs of children. Themes that comprise Level I include *Introduction to the Atrium and the Life of the Church, Prayer, Mystery of Incarnation, Mystery of the Kingdom of God: Kingdom Parables, the Mystery of Christ as the Good Shepherd, the Paschal Mystery, The Gestures of the Mass/Eucharist, and Baptism*.

If we want to help the child draw nearer to God, we should with patience and courage, seek to go always closer to the vital nucleus of things. This requires study and prayer. The children will be our teachers if we know how to observe them.
-Sofia Cavalletti

This method of catechesis began in 1954 in Rome, Italy, with Sofia Cavalletti, a biblical scholar, and her colleague, Gianna Gobbi, a Montessori-trained educator. Both women were Roman Catholic. In their observation and engagement with children, **they sought to discover what face of God children most need to see to grow in their knowledge and love of God.** Children need the sensitive guidance of the adult and the inner guidance of the Holy Spirit to nurture this relationship.

The adult prepares a sacred space called the atrium, which allows children a prayerful place to listen to and respond to God through Jesus, the Good Shepherd. The atrium is also a place of celebration and community - to be with God, enjoy Him, listen to His Word, and share this experience with others. It is designed to reflect the beauty of His creation and God's abiding

love. It is also a place to begin recognizing the signs and symbols that speak of Him through the liturgies of Baptism and Eucharist.

Level I Catechist Formation

Level I catechist formation is foundational for all three levels of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. The objectives of Level I catechist formation include:

- ❖ To present the guiding principles of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.
- ❖ To explore the vital religious needs and capacities of the 3–6-year-old child.
- ❖ To offer the adult time to prayerfully reflect and personally consider the Biblical and liturgical themes presented to the 3–6-year-old child.
- ❖ To broaden the adult's ability to observe and learn from children's spirituality.
- ❖ To cultivate the capacity to deeply listen to and enjoy the Word of God with children.
- ❖ To offer guidelines and assistance in preparing the atrium, writing the catechist's album, and making materials.

Your Invitation

You are invited to participate in this Level I catechist formation, which prepares you to serve children ages three to six.

This course is designed to include spiritual formation for adults and instruction in this catechesis method to serve young children's religious life. The pace of this catechist formation is retreat-like, allowing its contemplative nature to be a prayerful experience for adults and a model for the children's atrium experience. A three-year cycle of presentations is offered from scripture and liturgy as given to children. Adults will also receive background information on the themes

that undergird this approach, including a foundational study into Maria Montessori's work with children.

Catechist formation includes seeing all the presentations as given to three—to six-year-olds, reading the core CGS texts, writing album pages for the presentations, and making a few of the materials used in the atrium. Successful participation in this course will result in a certificate from the United States Association of The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.

Tuition is \$550.00 for the entire course, payable with registration. The auditor's fee is \$100 for those who have completed Level I formation and received a certificate from CGSUSA.

Partial Scholarships are available through the Tina Lillig Memorial Fund:
<https://www.cgsusa.org/learn/courses-for-adults/scholarship-grant-information/>

Membership to the United States Association of The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, www.cgsusa.org, is highly recommended for each participant and will allow access to the Level I Materials Manual.

Special Note: The foundation and principles of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) are deeply rooted in more than 55 years of work with children by Sofia Cavalletti and Gianna Gobbi. Catechist formation is given to us by the co-founders in the Roman Catholic tradition. CGS also reflects the most essential proclamations of the Christian faith; therefore, a formation course in Catechesis of the Good Shepherd includes discussion, as needed, for liturgical adaptations to other denominations.