

**St. Vincent de Paul Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) Catholic Montessori
Atrium Handbook Fall 2016-Spring 2017**

Level 1 (ages 3-6 years old)

CLASS TIME

Wednesday 4:15pm-5:40pm

Or

Saturday 8:30am-10:00am



*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 1st Class

LOCATION

The atrium is located in the school in SR3. Please enter the school doors, and go down the steps and at the bottom of the steps, turn right down the first hallway. SR3 is the first room on the left.

ARRIVAL

Children should arrive for gather time:

-4:15pm for Wednesday session

-8:30am for Saturday 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 lower commons outside the atrium:

-5:40pm Wednesday session

-10:00am Saturday 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.
- Saturday session- The catechist will give you a phone number to text.

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 web at

http://www.svdpomaha.org/ReligiousFormation/Sunday_School.html

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. A sign-up sheet is located outside the atrium for these volunteer opportunities. These are areas where we need help to ensure a safe and balanced experience for your child:

- Artistically paint figures, sew or wood-working
- Provide a plant with saucer or fresh flowers
- Serve as an aide in the atrium on occasion

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 mcmahani@svdpomaha.org if you need to complete safe environment training.

CHILD'S PAPERWORK

Each child will have a folder in which to keep their papers (coloring, gluing, etc...). At the end of the end, 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.

PLANTS AND FLOWERS

Children enjoy caring for God's creation. Three to six year olds love being taken care of and taking care of others and things. Please use the sign-up sheet outside the atrium to provide a plant with saucer or fresh flowers on occasion.