

ST. ROBERT BELLARMINÉ

# CATECHESIS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 1

NOVEMBER 2020

## PRAYER IN OUR HOMES

**P**rayer has a special importance in the life of children. They have a great capacity to pray! It is important to be praying every day with our family in our homes. The Catholic Church calls the family the Domestic Church and it is here where the faith is learned and grows. To pray with our children is a wonderful gift! The children's prayer is often one of thanksgiving and joy. Sometimes it is silence or a song. How do we as parents help our children to enter into prayer? Daily prayer does not have to be formal, fancy, or long—just a simple moment where you can let Jesus into your life. Every day, perhaps after a meal or at bedtime, take time with your children to pray. Together you can:

-Thank Jesus (prayer of thanksgiving)

-Ask Jesus for help for you or for a friend (prayer of petition)

-Ask Jesus to forgive you for something that day (examen)

Maybe after everyone has had an opportunity to pray, close with a song. Another way to enter into prayer is to have a prayer table. Set up a small table (accessible for the children) with a Bible, a candle, and a picture of Jesus or the Holy Family. Jesus has already taken the big step toward you and your family. He knows you, loves you, and is waiting for you. The path to prayer begins for your family with only a small step. Please take that step as a family and grow in your love of Jesus together!



## LEVEL ONE: CHURCH TOURS!

In Level I (ages 2-5 yrs.), this month, we will be leaving our atrium and heading to the church for a tour! We have been busy doing *Altar Work* in the atrium, which helps us learn the names and main uses of the articles of the altar—such as the *altar cloth, chalice, paten, crucifix, candles, corporal, purificator, cruets, and lavabo*. We go into the church, starting out in the narthex and moving our way to the sanctuary. Along the way, we check out the confessionals, the stain glass windows, and the stations of the cross. In the sanctuary, we see the tabernacle, the altar, the candles, and the ambo. We spend time in the sacristy and see Fr. Jon's and Fr. Anthony's chasubles and recognize the liturgical colors. We see the real paten, chalice, and cruets used at Mass. We even go to the choir loft—a place often wondered about.

All of this helps the young child to feel at home in the church and to participate more fully in Mass (even before we are receiving the Eucharist). This strikes the senses of the child—sight, hearing, and touch. It fosters the deep natural interest and attraction that the young child has for the church.

## LEVEL TWO: GEOGRAPHY & PRAYER

In Level II (grades 1-3), we are extending what we learned in Level I geography with pin maps. We will add many more cities to our maps like Capernaum, Nain, Bethany, Bethsaida, Sychar, Jericho, Tiberius, Caesara Phillipi, Samaria, Arimathea, & Emmaus. We will also be introduced to the mountains in Israel. As we continue using this work, we will look up scripture passages in the Bible that tell us about these locations.

Working with this material deepens our knowledge of Jesus' life on Earth. By doing this work, we will not only learn to locate more places in the life of Jesus, but we will also come to understand the Incarnation: that Jesus is fully human and fully divine.

We will begin our Moral Parables with the presentations specifically on prayer: *The Insistent Friend* & *The Pharisee & The Tax Collector*. Moral Parables are windows that help us think like how God thinks. In the work we are presented with the parable, there is a three dimensional diorama and there are two dimensional figures that are moved along with the words of the parable that are read out of the Holy Bible. This helps us work and enter more deeply into the parable. In *The Insistent Friend*, we learn to lift up the insistent friend as a model of what it means to be bold in prayer. Prayer is a persistent conversation of listening and responding between God and us. In *The Pharisee and The Tax Collector*, we learn that prayer is based on right relationship with God in which we recognize God's greatness and our smallness.



Level I: Working with Liturgical Colors

## LEVEL THREE BEGINNINGS...

Depending on the age of the young people in the atrium and whether or not this is their first year, second year, or third year in this Atrium designed especially for children aged 9 thru 12, the presentations may be slightly different. As we enter November, our studies will take us to *typology studies* - themes we study from the Bible. *Creation, Sin, & The Flood* are the Bible Studies we may do within this month. Whatever Bible study is explored and pondered, we see God's golden thread, His loving plan unfolding over time, His unshakeable covenant of love and peace. This also inspires love and enjoyment of the Bible, and evokes an awareness of the personal response we need to make. It educates to hope, leads to fuller participation in the Liturgy, and lifts up the unity of the Bible and Liturgy.

We will ponder in a deeper way the structure and order of the Mass, one great prayer. The moments of the prayer of the Mass are like pearls and together they form a beautiful pearl necklace. This is a big work and aspects of this work will be presented over the three years in Level III. One of the moments covered will be the *Mystery of Faith*.

*The Mystery of Faith* - the moment during the Eucharistic Prayer where we know the Good Shepherd has called us to His table - where Scripture and Liturgy meet. Scripture tells us the Good Shepherd laid down His life for his sheep but Jesus did not stay dead, He rose from the dead and overcame death forever, and we will proclaim it until He comes in glory at the Parousia, where there will be no more tears, no death, and God will be all in all. We know that the Bread and Wine is Jesus, the Good Shepherd who continues to give himself, his life to all of humanity. This is a mystery so great, we can only understand it bit by bit. Every time we think about it, we will understand more and more about this mystery of our faith. This mystery comes to life at every Mass.

As always, our learning isn't all about head knowledge. Our environment gives us the space we need so that it can sink into our hearts and souls. In all three Atria, it is not just knowing about the Good Shepherd - it is all important to know the Good Shepherd, who loves us and leads us.

## Important NEWS & EVENTS

- **NEW WEBSITE:** We have a new website: [srbccatholic.com](http://srbccatholic.com)! It is still a work in progress but be sure to check it out for updated information regarding to our parish and Religious Education.
- **CHILDREN ARE WELCOME AT MASS:** Please know that if you feel comfortable bringing your children to Mass at this time, we are very happy to have them join us! Please feel free to bring your family to Mass. If you have any questions about our COVID-19 guidelines, please contact Miss Turchi and she will be more than happy to answer any questions you may have.
- **NO ATRIUM NOV. 24 & 29:** Happy Thanksgiving!
- **PLEASE PRAY FOR THE THOSE PREPARING FOR SACRAMENTS!** Our second graders attended a Mass of Enrollment for them on November 11. They submitted their names as a sign that they were ready to prepare for the sacraments of confession and Eucharist. They received blessed New Testament Bibles with the Psalms to help them in their preparation. Please pray for these children who will be receiving Jesus in this particular way! Please also pray for their families during this exciting year! May this be a year of drawing closer to Jesus and His Church!
- **ADVENT NIGHT OF REFLECTION (FOR ADULTS) ON DECEMBER 11, 2020:** Join us for an evening of adult reflection in the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd atrium! During Advent, a time of joyful anticipation, we will look at the Holy Bible and the Parousia. We invite you to come and enjoy a peaceful evening! Please RSVP by December 7 by contacting the Religious Ed Office at 659-8556 or [hturchi@strobertschool.com](mailto:hturchi@strobertschool.com).
- **HAPPY ANNIVERSARY OF BAPTISM (NOVEMBER BAPTISMS):**  
Ronan Eriksson (Nov. 2)                      Piper Attwood (Nov. 7)                      Kayla Rousseau (Nov. 9)  
Wyatt Loya (Nov. 11)                      Connor Keith (Nov. 26)  
Mya Fallis (Nov. 30)

Happy Baptism Day!!!

We thank God that you are a child of God and part of His family!

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