



Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

Level II Catechist Formation Course

for catechists with an interest in the spiritual
development of children ages six to nine

Part One ~ June 17-19 and June 23-26, 2025

Part Two ~ June 16-18 and June 23-26, 2026

Hosted by
St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church
11 North Broad Street
Hillsdale, Michigan 49242
stanthonyhillsdale.com
(517) 437-3305

Course Format

This course meets for three- and four-day segments during two consecutive summers. Each day begins at 9 a.m. and ends at 5 p.m. with a one-hour lunch break.

Lunch, water, coffee and tea, and light snacks are provided throughout the course.

Course Description

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) is a practice of religious formation for children based on the educational method of Dr. Maria Montessori. CGS seeks to prepare a sacred, “hands-on” space for children called an atrium, in which both children and their catechists can hear, ponder, and celebrate the most essential mysteries of the Christian faith as revealed in the Scriptures and Liturgy.

Originally developed in Rome by Sofia Cavalletti and Gianna Gobbi beginning seventy years ago, CGS continues to spread worldwide and is used with adaptations in various Christian traditions.

This formation course is sponsored by the National Association of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGSUSA). Upon the participant’s completion of the course and its requirements, he or she will receive Level II Catechist Certification.

Course Objectives

- To explore with participants the unique development and religious characteristics of the six- to nine-year-old child, including his or her relation to Sacramental Preparation

- To meditate further on the biblical and liturgical themes of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) in a manner appropriate for the child's second plane of development
- To offer guidelines for preparing an atrium for six- to nine-year-old children, writing an album, and making materials
- To deepen the participant's ability to observe and learn from children, and to explore avenues for helping one's parish or school community to do the same

Course Texts

Cavalletti, Sofia. *The Religious Potential of the Child 6 to 12 Years Old: A Description of an Experience*, 2nd ed. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2020.

Cavalletti, Sofia. *The History of the Kingdom of God: From Creation to Parousia (Part 1)*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2012.

Cavalletti, Sofia. *The History of the Kingdom of God: Liturgy and the Building of the Kingdom (Part 2)*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2013.

Rojcewicz, Rebekah. *Life in the Vine: The Joyful Journey Continues*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2021.

Course texts are available at www.cgsusa.org

Access to the online Materials Manual is an important aid to course participants. Materials Manual access is available to members of the United States Association of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.

Registration

Online registration at: [Level II #2-00810 Catechist Formation Registration](https://www.stanthonyhillsdale.com/getinvolved/yff/catechist-formation-registration)

Also found at [stanthonyhillsdale.com/getinvolved/yff/catechist-formation-registration](https://www.stanthonyhillsdale.com/getinvolved/yff/catechist-formation-registration)

Or, contact Katy Caspar at CGS@stanthonyhillsdale.com for the link

Your spot is held once the above registration link is completed and course payment is received (see tuition information below).

Tuition

Tuition for the entire course is \$625, due no later than June 17 and payable to:

St. Anthony of Padua

Attn: CGS

11 N. Broad Street

Hillsdale, MI 49242

On memo line, please write: "#2-00810 (your name)"

You may also pay the tuition fee online using our [ParishSoft Giving page](#) (also linked on our formation registration webpage).

If you require an invoice, please contact Katy Caspar at CGS@stanthonyhillsdale.com

Financial assistance may be available.

- The [Tina Lillig Memorial Fund](#), operated by CGSUSA, provides need-based assistance of up to one-third course tuition. Apply by April 30 for this year's disbursement.
- Contact your parish and/or diocese for further tuition assistance opportunities.

Formation Leader

***Joanie Rymza** has served children in the CGS atrium since 2005, coordinating a large team of volunteers serving the Level I and II atria at Christ the King School in South Bend, Indiana, from 2007-2023. She also served for six years as the lead catechist in the Level II and III atria at Good Shepherd Montessori School in South Bend from 2007-2013. Joanie was recognized by CGSUSA as a formation leader in 2012 and enjoys offering Level I and II courses around the Midwest. She currently works with 9-12-year-olds in two different Level III atria in the South Bend area and was certified in Level T (Toddler) in 2024, just in time to welcome her first grandchild. Married to Guy for 32 years and mother of three adult children, Joanie holds both a Bachelor of Architecture and Master of Arts in Theology from the University of Notre Dame.*