

CATECHESIS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Summer 2026

Dear Friends in the Good Shepherd,

We are looking forward to seeing you at our upcoming formation course from Monday, August 3rd through Saturday, August 8th in the beautiful Shenandoah region of Virginia, hosted by Church of the Lamb. We will begin at 8:30 a.m.at the hosting facility Church of the Incarnation. We encourage you to come early to get parked and oriented to the space. Parking is available downtown and around the church. *see details for the facility below.

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd seeks to create and facilitate a sacred, hands-on space for children called an Atrium, in which both the children and adults can listen to, ponder and celebrate the most essential mysteries of the Christian faith as revealed in Scripture and Liturgy. Originally cultivated in Rome by Sofia Cavalletti and Gianna Gobbi over sixty years ago, the Catechesis continues to flourish worldwide and is adapted in various Christian traditions.

In our time together, we will enter the mystery of God and the child, from age 3 to 6 years of age and explore a way of being with children that invites us to listen to the voice of the Good Shepherd, who calls us by name. We will share with you the discoveries of Sofia Cavalletti, Gianna Gobbi and Dr Maria Montessori and their contributions to what we know today of children's developmental characteristics and religious potential. Meditations on the biblical and liturgical themes of the Catechesis will be offered as well as guidelines and assistance to parents and catechists to live out this way of being with children in a home or atrium setting for 3- to 6-year-olds. You will discover both the joy and efforts of material making and the preparation of a Catechist's album of presentations and we hope that you find this weekend a retreat-like experience.

This is a certificate course, and participants will be eligible to be certified as a Level I Catechist by the National Association of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. A certificate fee of $35 has been included in your tuition. Participants are expected to attend 90% of all course sessions to receive a certificate of completion.. In addition to the course sessions there are some reading assignments, podcasts, and observation in an Atrium that can be completed as your schedule permits.

We would also like to encourage you to visit the website cgsusa.org to learn more about becoming a member of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd which will give you access to the materials manual, the Shepherd's Closet online shop, parent resources, and much more.

We are looking forward to meeting all of you and getting to know you throughout our time together.

Yours in the Good Shepherd,
Jennifer Ashton and Renee Velker
Level I Formation team



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Required Texts for course: These can be purchased at cgsusa.org or on Amazon

- Religious Potential of the Child, Sofia Cavalletti (2nd or 3rd Edition) but our recommendation is the 2nd edition if you can find it; the 3rd edition is also available on audible
- Nurturing the Whole Child, Montessori Principles applied to the Catechesis of Children, by Gianna Gobbi
- The Good Shepherd and the Child, A Joyful Journey, Sofia Cavalletti (2nd Editions)

Additional Items helpful for the course:

- Bring a 3 Ring Binder with an 8 pack of dividers to hold handouts.
- A computer is highly useful but not required.
- Light snacks are provided so feel free to bring in packed food/drinks for your nutritional needs. Filtered water is available for your convenience.

Contact Renee Velker at renee@churchofthelamb.org with any questions.

Facility Information:

Arrival at Church of the Incarnation located at 75 N. Mason Street, Harrisonburg VA, 22802:

Plan to enter through the double doors on Elizabeth Street. An external pin pad will unlock the exterior set of doors. The pin pad is located on your right on the dark stone part of the building. The keypad code is 1225#. Enter through both sets of double doors. Once in the lobby, bear to the left. There is a gray door for stair access or the elevator will be unlocked.

Parking Options

1. Private Lot beside Incarnation: You can find parking in the private lot beside Incarnation; you must enter it via Federal Street to preserve the flow of traffic.

2. Street parking outside church entrance: Parking is available as well as various spots on the street where signage allows.

3. Elizabeth St. Parking Deck: Additional public parking is available in the public parking deck located on EElizabeth Street. Look for clear signage which allows for free parking within the parking garage.

Dining Options:

Google accurately represents the array of dining options with all the specific information.

We especially like the Friendly City Food Co-Op which is easily accessed via a short walk.

Plan to bring your meals. Light snacks, coffee and hot water for tea are available. A water bottle is also helpful as filtered water is available. We do have breaks for meals and you are welcome to snack/eat whenever is needed in the main gathering area at the facility.