

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

Level 1 Formation for adults working with 3-6 year-old children

Part 1a: July 31 – August 7, 2025, Mon – Sat: 8:30am-5pm, Sun: 1-5pm;
virtual meeting on Saturday, July 26, 9am-12pm

Part 1b: July 29 – August 5, 2026



At *Holy Name of Jesus Parish*, 1122 South 9th Ave, Wausau, WI 54401

Those already trained in Level 1 and wish to be refreshed are welcome if there is space. If you are already registered with the National Association the fee is \$80 for Part 1a+1b or \$40 for a single Part. Please contact Ruth.

❧ A Vision for Children ❧

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd offers Christian formation for children ages 0 through 12. Through this experience, children (and adults) are helped to form an authentic, faithful relationship with God. This Catechesis is grounded in scriptural and liturgical study, framed by Montessori's principles of education. It gives children the opportunity to hear the Gospel and absorb its message through the use of sensorially rich materials and the work of their hands.

This method of catechesis began with Maria Montessori and was continued in Rome, Italy, in 1954 by Sofia Cavalletti, a Hebrew and Scripture scholar, and her colleague, Gianna Gobbi, a Montessori trained educator. Both women were Roman Catholic. In their work with children, they sought to discover what face of God children most needed to see, in order 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 the sacred space for children, called the atrium, which allows them a prayerful place to learn to listen to and respond to a relationship with God through Jesus, the Good Shepherd.

The atrium is a place of community and worship. It is a place to be with God, enjoy Him, listen to His Word, and to pray. It is designed to reflect the beauty of His creation and God's abiding love. It is also a place to begin to learn and recognize the signs and symbols that speak of Him through the liturgies of Eucharist and Baptism.

❧ Formation Course Objectives ❧

This course is a *spiritual formation experience for adults* as well as instruction in this approach of catechesis for children.

The **Level I course** is the foundation for all four levels of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. The objectives of this Level I formation include:

- ❖ To present the guiding principles of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd;
- ❖ To explore the religious nature and the vital religious needs of the 3–6 year-old child;
- ❖ To offer the adult time to hear and reflect prayerfully and 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 listen deeply and enjoy the Word of God with children;
- ❖ To offer guidelines and assistance in preparing the Level 1 atrium, making the catechist's album, and materials making for the atrium.
- ❖ With successful participation in this course you will receive a certificate from the National Association of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.

❧ Formation Leader ❧

Ruth Ohm Sutherland (ruthohm@gmail.com) has been a catechist since 2007; she is trained in the Levels Infant-Toddler & Levels 1-3 in the CGS. She has started the CGS in three cities, in Wausau in 2014, and offers atrium sessions in Levels 1-4. Prior to moving to Wisconsin, Ruth taught Scripture at St. Patrick's, the San Francisco Archdiocesan seminary in Menlo Park, California.

☞ Registration & Contact ☞

- **The full course fee is \$375**; it includes Parts 1a & 1b of the Level 1 training, basic Montessori Skills training, and registration and certificate from the CGS National Association. Registration postmarked by **June 30, 2025**. Fee for Part 1a only is \$200 and includes registration with the National Association; fee for Part 1b only is \$175.
- Checks made out to “Stella Maris Catechesis of the Good Shepherd”
- The course is approved by the National Association of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd and is applicable toward certification after completion.

Contact: Ruth Ohm Sutherland, 715-551-4760, ruthohm@gmail.com

☞ Course Books ☞

Books must be purchased separately; books will be available for purchase through the training itself, or can be ordered through cgsusa.org (I pre-order a stack so that shipping costs can be shared). The core texts required for the Level 1 course are: Gianna Gobbi, *Listening to God with Children*; Sofia Cavalletti, *Religious Potential of the Child, 3-6* (3rd edition) and Sofia Cavalletti et al., *The Good Shepherd and the Child: Joyful Journey* (revised and updated).

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

Registration & payment postmarked by June 30, 2025

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Level 1 Adult Formation, for adults working with 3-6 year-old children. Held at Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church, 1122 South 9th Ave, Wausau, WI 54401.

Date: _____

Registration for full course, Part 1a + 1b (\$375) _____ **OR** for Part 1a (\$200) _____

Name: _____

Email: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____

Church/Denomination: _____

Mail this registration form & check (payable to *Stella Maris CGS*) to

Ruth Ohm Sutherland, 149654 Wineberry Ln., Wausau, WI 54401