ADDITIONAL BENEFITS OF CATECHESIS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

WITHIN A SCHOOL SETTING

CGS is effective in inspiring spiritual growth in children because it is rooted in an a**uthentic Catholic understanding** of the **human person** at each stage of development. This justifies the time and space devoted to the experience. Additionally, there are many other "indirect" benefits that flow from CGS, impacting learning even outside of the atrium. An authentic CGS experience at the elementary levels:

STRENGTHENS LITERACY

With selections from the Bible as our primary text, children are exposed to the beauty of language and with the guidance of the the catechist, they discover motifs and symbolism which point to the divine authorship of the Scriptures.



PROMOTES HANDWRITING



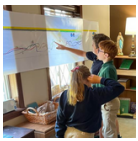
Having heard the story of how the Bible came to be, children choose to make beautiful "illuminated" copies of Scriptures and prayers that they love, just like the "monks of old." They make booklets and scrolls that tell the story of salvation in their own words, too.

CONNECTS TO GEOGRAPHY

Children work with maps of the Holy Land to identify cities, regions and waterways significant in the life of Christ and in the Old Testament.



ENHANCES HISTORICAL THINKING



Timelines show the development of human history. Cultures, inventions, wars and explorations are all put in the context of the Plan of God which reaches its high point in Jesus and continues in His Church.

ENCOURAGES A LOVE OF SCIENCE

We consider God's work in the natural world and see patterns of mutual help and harmony. We marvel at the gifts of creation and we wonder what cosmic function each animal and plant fulfills.



PROMOTES CRITICAL THINKING



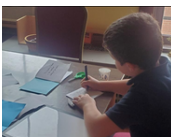
Catechists use a Socratic method, asking wondering questions to engage children. Catechists listen and respond to the ideas proposed by the children which invites them to search for patterns and meaning.

INSPIRES CURIOSITY

By slowing down and examining the details of Scripture, liturgy and salvation history, CGS catechists stoke wonder and inspire children to go beyond the superficial, asking deep questions about all aspects of our world.



ENHANCES FOCUS AND CONCENTRATION



In offering time and space for each child to choose and engage in meaningful work within a quiet, prayerful setting, children strengthen their powers of concentration.

BUILDS SKILLS IN WORKING WITH OTHERS

Small groups plan and lead communal prayer. Children may choose to work on group projects, developing social and planning skills while enjoying the blessing of faithful friends.



FOSTERS CREATIVITY



We offer a variety of media through which children may express their understanding of the great themes of their faith. In this way, they hone and use the talents God has given them to grow His Kingdom!

ENCOURAGES CITIZENSHIP



At the end of each session we gather for communal prayer but we also ask ourselves if we lived our freedom well this day. We have an opportunity to compliment the virtues we have seen in friends and make plan for improvements if needed.

DEVELOPS MEMORY

A spiral curriculum offers repetition with variety. Songs activate the memory so that children effortlessly recall the names of the books of the Bible, the articles of the Mass, and the lives of the saints.



By Cathy Johanni for CGSUSA

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