



Ministry Position: Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Catechist

Date Last Reviewed: July 2019

◆ Position Overview

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) involves “adults and children in a common religious experience in which the religious values of childhood (contemplation and enjoyment of God) are predominant.”

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Catechist serves in a parish atrium, by creating and maintaining an environment where work and study can spontaneously become prayer; by presenting CGS materials to the children; by assisting them in their work; and by modeling prayer

CGS sessions are coordinated for groups of children aged: 3-6, 6-9, or 9-12 years. The duration of each atrium session is typically 2 hours / week.

◆ Activities/Responsibilities

- Prepare the atrium and maintain order within it, so that the atrium fosters concentration, silence and contemplation in both the child and the adult catechists working within it.
- Prepare the catechetical materials used by the children in the atrium as much as possible, while collaborating with others in areas that are beyond one’s abilities
- Present key themes from the Bible and liturgy to the children
- Help the adults of the parish community (e.g. parents, priests, other Catechists, etc.) open their eyes to the hidden riches of the child, especially to the child’s spiritual wealth, so that the adults will be drawn to learn from the child and to serve her/him

(Individual Parishes: Schedule of Atrium sessions and age groups served)

The Activities/Responsibilities listed above may not completely reflect the ministry performed at this parish. Please refer to the ‘Other Specifics’ box for duties that are specific to this parish.

Other specifics:
•
•
•
•



◆ **Skills, Experience and Qualifications**

- Fully initiated member of the Catholic Church in good standing
- Recognized within the parish community as a person of good reputation
- At least 18 years of age
- Willing and able to be faithful to the tradition of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd as handed to us by Sofia Cavalletti and Gianna Gobbi, when working in settings bearing the name Catechesis of the Good Shepherd
- Willing to live a shared religious experience with the child, according to the teaching of the gospel: “Except if you become as little children, you cannot enter the kingdom of God” (Matthew 18:3)
- Willing and able to observe and study the vital needs of the child and the manifestations of those vital needs according to the developmental stage of the child
- Desires to continually go deeper into the Christian message through knowledge of the biblical and liturgical sources and of the ongoing living tradition of the Church, including the theological, social and ecumenical movements, which enliven the Church today
- Able to work with adults in a variety of settings, in a mature, friendly and cooperative manner
- Able and willing to make the time commitment required
- Has personally prepared a comprehensive, and yet developing, collection (album) of guidelines for presentations given to children
- Has personally prepared a comprehensive, and yet developing, collection of sources for theological & pedagogical background to presentations

◆ **Personal Traits and Qualities**

- Able to work with other Catechists in a spirit of unity and harmony, in tune with God’s plan for communion in the history of salvation and in keeping with the theme of unity so strongly expressed in the parables of the Good Shepherd (John 10:1ff) and to offer their talents and experiences for the good of all (22)
- Demonstrates a deep sense of spirituality with an ongoing desire for a growing faith life and nourishment of the same
- Exhibits an attitude of humility before the capacities of the child, establishing a right rapport with the child by respecting the personality of the child, and waiting for the child to reveal himself/herself.
- Is comfortable with being accountable and is sensitive to the observance of proper boundaries

◆ **Screening Requirements**

This is a High Risk/Position of Trust.

Before volunteering begins:



Archdiocese of Toronto

- Complete a Volunteer Application Form
- Attend interview and have personal references checked
- Complete a Police Information Check
- Complete appropriate training and orientation

After volunteering begins:

- There will be supervision and periodic evaluations
- An annual Offence Declaration and a new Police Information Check every 5 years
- Participant follow-ups may be conducted

◆ **Orientation & Training**

- For the Level 1 Catechist: Completion of Level I: Formation Course; Children Ages 3 – 6.
- For the Level 2 Catechist: Completion of Level II: Formation Course; Children Ages 6 – 9.
- For the Level 3 Catechist: Completion of Level III: Formation Course; Children Ages 9-12.

Standard Parish orientation program, including AODA training.

◆ **Participant Group**

Children ages 3-6, 6-9, 9-12 and their families. Fellow Catechists of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd with the support of the parish community.

(Individual Parishes: Names of Catechists, director of atrium, families, etc.)

◆ **Support, Supervision and Evaluation**

The Coordinator and Co-coordinators of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd atrium within a parish will facilitate mutual support/evaluation among the Catechists of that parish.

The Catechists are ultimately responsible to their Pastor and Pastoral staff; on whose behalf they minister in their parish.

As well, support and resources are offered through the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Office, Archdiocese of Toronto to all those journeying with children in this catechesis.

◆ **Length of Ministry Appointment**

One year term minimum with the ability to renew.



The Catechist makes a commitment to be with the children weekly for the full liturgical cycle. Some parishes ask for a three-year commitment in order that the Catechists and children form a group that does not change for that period of time.

◆ Benefits and Working Conditions

- It is the wonder and joy of the children’s encounter with God that has given birth to the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. It is that joy and wonder that is experienced by the adult, too, through the time spent together with the children in the atrium. This is the greatest benefit to the Catechist as they share this environment of prayer and contemplation.
- This is a volunteer position requiring a time commitment of _____ hours per week/ _____ hours per month.

In compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), the Archdiocese of Toronto provides reasonable accommodation to individuals with disabilities. Prospective and current volunteers are encouraged to discuss potential accommodations with their Pastor.

This Ministry Position Description accurately reflects the ministry of **Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Catechist** currently practised at, _____ Parish.

Pastor’s Signature

PASTOR NAME

**Parish Volunteer Screening
Coordinator’s Signature**

COORDINATOR NAME

Date

Prepared by: Archdiocese of Toronto, Volunteer Screening Department