**Curriculum

Each Level of CGS is a three year cycle, in a spiral curriculum. The two sources for the presentations are the Bible and the Liturgy.  This work, beginning in 1954 in Rome, Italy, with Scripture scholar Sofia Cavalletti and Montessori educator Gianna Gobbi, has now spread to five continents and the discovery that the child has an innate relationship with God.  All the presentations chosen have proven to meet the child's needs to nurture this relationship.

Each presentation has a corresponding 'material' with which the child can work.  At least half the time is spent in the child's personally chosen work with these materials and other handworks. This is time spent with the "Inner Teacher." A catechist is not the teacher, God is.

Level I CGS, serving children ages 3 to 6, lifts up Christ Jesus the Light of the World (John 8:12) and the Good Shepherd (John 10, Luke 15). This is the face of God for which the young child thirsts. These themes weave in and out of all the presentations in Level I throughout the three year cycle. This child has an 'absorbent mind,' and lives through certain 'sensitive periods.'  The question 'What is that?' is frequent! These realities shape what we do in the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.

The mystery of life and death is a deep experience for children in both Level I and Level II CGS.  Whether spoken or unspoken, the child needs to hear the good news of Jesus's death and resurrection and the invitation to participate in that through baptism and later, the Eucharist.

Preparation for participation in the liturgy is imbedded in all of CGS from Level I all the way through Level III. The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd impacts positively on the children’s Mass participation, especially with the parents’ desire to assist that participation and to grow in understanding it for the child and for him or herself as a parent.

Late in Kindergarten and early in Grade 1, the child enters the transition period from Level I to Level II. In Level II (ages 6-9) the metaphor of Jesus the True Vine (John 15) is key for the expanding relationship of the child with God and communion with others. The child begins to search for the face of God as judge (what is fair? what is right?), and the heart of God as mercy (what happens if I fail to do good?). The question 'why' replaces 'what.' The child is present in a new way to the mystery of time because this phase of human development reveals new capacities to abstraction and imagination.  Again, we try to serve this new child who searches for the answers to questions we used to easily answer by definition: Who made me? Why am I here? Where am I going? And some questions which will serve the child to connect with the prayer and sacramental life of the Church for years to come- e.g., What is my part in the plan of God?

We find that the presentations and materials we offer lodge themselves deep in the memory of the child, finding a place to live and grow in their heart.

Bird's eye view of curriculum,**[**Level I**](http://cgsvoice-phila.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/L1_Presentations.pdf)**and**[**Level II**](http://cgsvoice-phila.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/L2_presentations.pdf)**as written up by CGS group in the Diocese of Sacramento. Note the inclusion of Practical Life, a key component of life in the atrium for all levels, although the meaning and purpose of it change from Level I to Level II and III.**