A MUSTARD SEED OF WISDOM

It was September 1993. I had an 18-month old and a 3-year old and was desperate to find some activity in which I could enroll my son to "keep him busy." Something in our parish bulletin caught my eye: *Would you like to help nurture your child's prayer life?* Not what I was originally thinking, but what-the-heck? I thought. Two weeks later I watched my young son join 8 other rambunctious little 3-year old boys – and one little girl! – cross the threshold of a door quietly at the sound of a tiny bell. What they were doing in there changed my life.

Twenty-four years later, the lessons of the atrium are part and parcel of who I am: Seeking and living in joy; a slower pace, allowing the tide of awe and wonder to consume me; the comfort of silence; simple busy work of peeling vegetables or planting flowers that frees my mind and heart for contemplation. My prayers are simpler (Alleluia! God is good!).

As a catechist, we speak of falling in love with our faith all over again. And yes, formation and service as a catechist was just the right formula to feed my soul. Never do I visit a church without checking if they offer CGS. So many fellow catechists have shared their hope, their passion for wanting to make CGS available to all children.

But who would've thought that this tiny work for children could have such a profound impact on the spirituality of the adults who work with them? Who among us can ever hear the parables proclaimed and not immediately conjure in our minds a circle of children, a simple material, and an invitation: *"We'll have to think more about that."*

The gift of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is very much like the spiral method that we all have learned about: the invitation to return to a theme, to go deeper, and perhaps find yet another pearl to hold on to. I am grateful for this gift, grateful to be part of something that feeds my hunger to grow ever-closer to the Good Shepherd, *hidden with Christ in God* (Col 3:3).

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