

A gift for our Church



The best way to explain this beautiful work is through a personal experience. I need to share a little vocabulary first:

Atrium a prepared environment that aids the child and the catechist in developing a personal encounter with Christ, our Good Shepherd through presentations of the bible and the liturgy and the hands on work with materials.

Materials have been made and prepared to aid the child to experience the lessons that are presented. The materials are child size and are made for the hands on work of the child.

Catechists The presenter who has spent many hours in formation on the nature and characteristics of the child, prayer, scripture, theology and song. She is considered not a teacher but a match maker in guiding the child into his or her relationship with Jesus, the Good Shepherd.

The personal encounter:

The atrium was prepared, the catechist (the match maker was ready) Andrew (age 4) was engaged in his work of preparing the altar. He opened the sacristan cabinet and pulled out the altar cloth and very carefully placed it on the altar table. He then took the paten with both hands and quietly placed it on the altar cloth. Next, he took the chalice and gently set it in front of the paten. Andrew then reached for the crucifix and placed it on the center of the altar and *may* have recalled that on Good Friday our Good Shepherd died for us. He then took two votive candles from the sacristan cabinet and set them on either side of the crucifix. Andrew quietly walked over to the catechist and asked if she could light the candles. As the catechist lit the candles Andrew *may* have recalled that on Easter Sunday Jesus rose from the dead. As Andrew experienced this quiet, sacred moment he took a deep breath and looked up to the heavens and he whispered, "I wish I could stay here forever!"