



Saint Agnes School 530 Lafond Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55103



May 28, 2019

*Feast of St. Augustine of Canterbury*

## **RE: Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) at Saint Agnes School**

Dear Parents,

This past year saw some wonderful new additions to Saint Agnes School: our four Dominican teaching sisters, our new Montessori Preschool, and Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS). In addition to preschool CGS (a permanent aspect of our Catholic Montessori Preschool) we piloted CGS with our Kindergarten students one day per week; the parish has also piloted a preschool aged CGS for the past few years.

### ***The Kindergarten CGS Pilot Program***

Kindergarten students, in addition to regular Religion instruction with Mrs. O'Hern, were able to attend CGS in small groups for 60 minute sessions in what is called the CGS "Atrium." The program, in the words of Mrs. Meggie Langlois (our CGS Guide), is described as follows:

Children spend time enjoying and nurturing a relationship with the Good Shepherd. Materials and presentations on the life of Christ and His teachings help to make the great mystery of who God is more understandable for children. Through geography, the words of the prophets, and infancy narratives, Jesus is established as a real person. The Paschal narratives are treated similarly, using model cities of Jerusalem, empty tombs, and cenacles for the Last Supper. Selected parables further children's wonder and curiosity about the great mystery of the Kingdom of God. Children become familiar with the articles of the Eucharist and Baptism by arranging them in their own atrium on miniature altars and fonts. The children also become acquainted with the gestures of our liturgy and their meaning of the Paschal Mystery: *Christ has died, Christ is risen, and Christ will come again*. A prayer corner located in each atrium reflects the liturgical time of year by means of appropriate colors, prayer, songs, artwork, and readings.

Having observed the CGS pilot program in action, it is a great delight to see students learn such rich content in and age-appropriate and hands-on environment. CGS is growing all over the Archdiocese and bearing great fruit at many parishes and Catholic schools.

### ***Community Survey***

As you may know, Mr. Adkins surveyed parents, faculty, and staff about our Kindergarten CGS pilot program and the results were overwhelmingly positive! That said, we did learn that we need to do a much better job in this coming school year of informing parents about what happens at CGS. We plan on hosting informational sessions on CGS for parents at the start of the school year.

### ***Pilot Program to Adding CGS / New Location within School***

We are pleased to announce that in addition to our regular Religion curriculum (*Spirit of Truth* taught by Mrs. O'Hern) and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade sacramental preparation for first Confession and first Holy Communion, we are planning to add CGS to 1<sup>st</sup> grade next year (fall 2019) and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade the subsequent year (fall 2020). In all, we will offer CGS for Preschool, Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade using an atrium soon to be relocated within Gruden Hall of the school over the summer. We are excited about how CGS can augment our already excellent Religion curriculum and sacramental prep.

In Christ,

**Fr. Mark Moriarty** | Superintendent & Pastor

**Mr. Michael Adkins** | Director of Lower School