



One Flock, One Shepherd

Volume 14 Issue 1

March/April 2020

Newsletter of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Association of Canada



Participants in the First Level I Formation Course in Montreal, Quebec

Inside This Issue

A Message from the Chair	2	Edmonton Firsts	5
How should we prepare?	2	Ernie Skublics' book: Plunged into the Trinity	6
Resources for the Domestic Church	3	Presentation to Western Catholic Bishops	8
Ring and Sing	4	Atrium Transformed After Flood	10
Points to Ponder	4	Upcoming Courses	12
Level 1A First for Montreal	5		

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

As I write this we have just celebrated the feast of the Annunciation. As I reflected on the Gospel two phrases stood out for me “Be not afraid” and “Nothing is impossible for God.” In the uncertainty of these times of the Covid-19 pandemic we should let these words nestle deeply in our hearts.

I know we are missing being with the children in the atrium but maybe this is part of our Lenten fast this season. We know that it is in the desert wilderness where the Chosen People met their God, who provided for them every day, day by day. To still the anxieties and worries of our hearts and minds let us contemplate how the Good Shepherd is providing for us this day and trust the future to His care.

We are all facing many challenges as we are called to create a new rhythm in our life as we adjust to children home every day of the week, ourselves, our spouses or both working from home and so on. The hole in our schedule left by not having atrium could be repurposed to a time to refresh our album pages or repair/make materials we have been meaning to do, or to just “Be still and know that I am God”.

This time is a gift and as Mary was open to what God was calling her to, so also should we be.

We have launched our new website with our new logo and look. The newsletter will be receiving an update in style and format in light of this and the capabilities of the website.

Let us hold one and another and the families we serve in our hearts during this time as we look forward to Easter.

In love of the Good Shepherd,
Dorothy Burns

Lord, How do you want us to prepare?...encouragement for CGS catechists

In this time when atria sessions, catechist formation, and even liturgical gatherings are being cancelled out of the need to social distance to fight the coronavirus pandemic, we ask how will we live Easter, this holiest time of year? How and where should we prepare for the celebration of Jesus’ death and resurrection this year?

A thoughtful gift of encouragement for catechists of the Good Shepherd recently came from CGS leaders in Rome, Francesca and Patrizia Cocchini, who sent what is called in Italian, a Foglietto or a little letter. Certainly we are aware that the coronavirus has been particularly devastating for those in Italy and so both Francesca and Patrizia have pondered the same questions we are also considering as we look to Easter.

Francesca and Patrizia both spent many years as older children, adolescents, and adults with Gianna Gobbi and Sofia Cavalletti in the atria of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. Their mother, Tilde Cocchini, was a close friend of Sofia and Gianna and one of their first colleagues in their work with children.

You can read the reflections we have received from Francesca and Patrizia Cocchini in Rome regarding the "signs of the times" we are living in now. [Easter Foglietto 2](#)

Ann Garrido, a catechist and formation leader for the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd shares her reflections in this 32 minute [Podcast](#) as she ponders the question found in the passage from the Gospel of Luke 28:1-8 that Peter and John asked Jesus before the Last Supper, “How do you want us to prepare?” It is a question Christians around the world are asking as we seek to celebrate the Triduum – the holy days of the Paschal Mystery of Jesus.

Submitted by Therese Wright, Formation

Be Still and Know That I am God

Resources for the Domestic Church:

The “Domestic Church” refers to the smallest body of gathered believers in Christ. Within the life of the family, the parents are the “first heralds of the faith; the family is the fundamental environment where a sense of God’s loving presence is awakened and faith in Jesus confessed, encouraged and lived. It is important, therefore, that we help parents with their responsibility to nourish their child’s faith during this time when we are facing COVID-19. **Here are a few resources offered by the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.**

Go to <https://www.cgsac.ca> and check out the “Parents” tab

Videos & Songs “Singing for the Terrified” Go to <https://www.cgsac.ca/> “Members” Area

- ◆ Parent Pages “Preparing a Prayer Space in the Home” [Article](#)
- ◆ Examples of Family Prayer Tables- [Video](#)
- ◆ Praying with Young Children [Article](#)
- ◆ Praying with our Children [Podcast](#)
- ◆ Parent Pages “Making Prayer Cards at Home” [Article](#)
- ◆ Parent Pages “The Gift of Silence” [Article](#)
- ◆ Parent Pages “Observation as a Tool for Parenting” [Article](#)

Some of these links will take you to our sister organization CGSUSA. Our members are welcome to share with their families and parishes any resources found under the Covid-19 tab at the top of the USA home page.

Be sure to take advantage of the chat feature on our new website available to members to share ideas and stay in touch with one another, especially during these challenging times.



Erin Tayler catechist at Corpus Christi Atrium
At home prayer table

Ring and Sing

Like many of you Erin Tayler is staying in contact with her families via e-mail. She reminded them of how excited the children were to hide the Alleluia at the beginning of Lent. She is suggesting that it would be wonderful if the children could find an alleluia sign along with their eggs on Easter morning.

She also encourages families to create a “He is Risen” poster to put in their front windows for their neighbors to see on Easter morning.

We can all ring bells and sing Alleluia together in our homes.

Points to Ponder during the Pandemic

By Murita Chua, Membership

God has been showing me many things during this difficult time. They point to the importance of CGS and why:

- Mother earth is healing due to stopped human activities. In CGS, we take care of the earth by using beautiful re-usable materials hand-made carefully by catechists. We combat materialism.
- We’re forced to focus on the essentials – food, clothing, shelter, family and love. Isn’t that one of the 32 Points of CGS is to focus on the essentials? Essentiality is very deep rooted in our own experience.
- The non-essentials are gone and people are not busy. Sports, entertainment, shopping, distractions, and things that amuse us are dissipating painfully. Our society has succumbed to complicated amusements so that even in teaching catechesis, we have to be very entertaining or else we lose the interest of children. CGS brings us back to essentiality.
- We are forced to pray, to rely on God and reflect on our relationship with Him especially during this Lenten season. Aren’t we always offering these moments of contemplation to every child in CGS?
- Most importantly, there are outbreaks and now epidemics of LOVE for God and for neighbor which we all hope to change to a global PANDEMIC OF LOVE. CGS helps us to contemplate about “Loving God and loving thy neighbor.”

LEVEL I — A FIRST FOR MONTREAL

by Lucie McElligott



The first Level I Formation course in Montreal began with two long weekends in May and June of 2019.

This course, which resumed the first weekend in February 2020, had eighteen participants. These are parents, grandparents and a teenager who love children, and who have fallen in love with the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. They are of both Roman Catholic and Orthodox denominations.

These dedicated people have offered up two long weekends away from their families, and even a winter vacation, in order to attend this wonderful formation, and to bring this marvellous biblical and liturgical approach to the youngest children in their parishes.

They are inspired and enriched in their own spiritual lives by this formation, offered by three wonderful formation facilitators, Nancy Wood, Heather Lamp-

man, and Susan Perna.

These formation facilitators bring the content of the formation to life and offer all of us a deep and enriching catechesis.

We in Montreal are grateful to the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Association of Canada, for their continued support, and we look forward to continuing the great work which has begun in two parishes, who now have a level 1 Atrium, and a third parish preparing to open their Atrium in September.

May God continue to bless this important and fruitful work. Thank you!

EDMONTON FIRSTS FOR CGSAC



By Susan Perna

In all my years of giving CGS Formation Courses to adults across Canada, the Edmonton Level I Part A in February 2020 was a first- time event for me in so many ways!

It was the first time:

- A Diocese has gathered so many participants together to begin their first ever course. We stopped registration at 30 adults.
- I picked up a flu bug on the course and missed 1 ½ days. Thankfully Heather Lampman and Nancy Wood each carried through until I was able to return.
- All the participants were invited to visually shop the basement archives, at the diocesan building, scanning everything from candle snuffers, small ciboriums, mass kits and many other cherished treasures for their future atriums.

PLUNGED INTO THE TRINITY: ESSAYS

By Heather Skublics Lampman

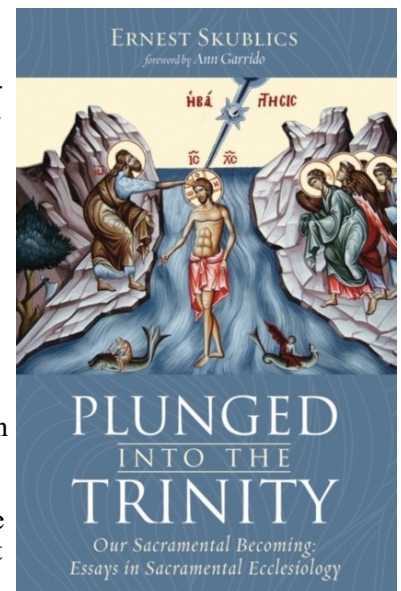
The final weeks and months of my father's life had one principal goal for him: seeing publication his book *Plunged into the Trinity: Essays in Sacramental Ecclesiology*. This book represents not only the culmination of a lifetime of theological study, some of which is articulated in Ann Garrido's foreword to the book (reprinted here), but also the fulfillment of his association with the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, and his gift to catechists. The book's dedication to CGSAC reflects this reality.

Pondering these connections and recognizing my Dad's contributions in the History of the Kingdom of God gives me joy. Who ever knows all the little seeds that contribute to this great unfolding? Does anyone remember that it was through his initiative that his parish sponsored me to come for the first Calgary seed-planting in March 2010, at which Michael Soentgerath - whose support would be so essential to this work - first encountered the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd? Ernie Skublics had a critical role in the beginnings of this work in Calgary. Would God have helped the work find its way there otherwise? Certainly, he led other leaders to get involved shortly after and they were critical in making it happen. But it is wonderful to think about the fact that it was through my father that the seed was first planted.

In November 2011, CGSAC decided to focus the annual Gathering in Richmond Hill, Ontario, around the Eucharist, and Ernie Skublics was the keynote speaker. He repeated part of his presentation at a Manitoba catechist gathering the following January. From those talks, the book *Plunged into the Trinity* was born. Over the next few years he expanded it to cover all the sacraments, looking at how, beginning with our plunge into the Trinity at baptism, each sacrament knits us more into the very life of the Trinity.



Ernie Skublics, at a course in Winnipeg, presenting the CGS-inspired model he created summarizing the theology of baptism (being plunged into the Trinity) rooted in Matthew 28:19 and Romans 6. This shows the newly baptized, having died with Christ in baptism (the cross is in the pool), now risen with Him and integrated into Christ and through him the Trinity.



In 2016 he received the diagnosis that led to his death. So the book was quickly printed without the help of a publisher, because the 2016 Gathering centred again on the Eucharist and it was happening in Calgary, his home. Not well enough to be sure of being there, Ernie did manage to come and speak briefly, presenting the theology of baptism, and discovering in the process that the keynote speaker, Fr. Jerome Lavigne, had also been affected by seeds he had planted years before: Fr. Jerome's talk was the fruit of his studies at Mount Angel Seminary, under the curriculum Dad had designed, reflecting the Eucharistic ecclesiology that also underpins this book.

God's hand is so clearly visible in all these moments! The story continues with my father's continuing efforts to see his book to publication before he would depart this world; next catechist Ann Garrido became part of the story, and Rebekah Rojcewicz. I sent copies of his book to both of them, requesting an endorsement, and the response was enthusiastic, especially from Ann, whose foreword is here. Not only did she write this response, but she invited him to speak (through the internet) at the Cavalletti Symposium held in honour of Sofia's

IN SACRAMENTAL ECCLESIOLOGY

100th birthday, August 2017 at Aquinas Institute. She also continued to encourage him and suggest publishers until at last Wipf and Stock agreed to publish the book.

The last three months - the three months that often felt like an unnecessary extra burden to him - encompassed the stages of final proof-reading and approvals. Under his direction, my step-mother and I went through the book repeatedly until we were all satisfied; the publisher hurried to see the project through before his death; and his most pressing concern was to get it finished. The email that it was going to print arrived on the morning of April 9, 2019; that night, he achieved his heavenly peace.

I offer this little book to you with pride and with the deepest gratitude for the hand of God through it all.

Foreword to *Plunged Into the Trinity* written by Ann Garrido Associate Professor, Aquinas Institute of Theology

When my family gathers to celebrate a birthday, before the candles can be extinguished and the cake sliced, one among us reads what has become our traditional birthday blessing. In the middle, the reader pauses for the whole family to chime in together with a quote from the artist Pablo Picasso: "*It takes a long, long time for one to become young!*"

The older I grow the more clearly I understand the sentiment behind this statement. It takes a long time to become more fully who we have always been. It takes a long time to recover the joy and simplicity that marks childhood. It takes a long time to be as daring and free as we were in youth.

The Italian theologian Sofia Cavalletti describes a similar realization when she writes about the slow evolution of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd movement. Discussing the twenty years of experimentation that finally led to a single but seminal presentation on the Eucharistic Presence of the Good Shepherd, she writes, "I think it took us so long to achieve this idea because it was so natural and essential.... Great things are simple; nevertheless, simplicity - true and essential - opens up horizons so limitless and profound that we feel almost lost when confronted with them."

It takes a long, long time for something to become simple.

This small book you now have before you shows all of the signs of a lengthy, refining journey. Ernest Skublics began his studies in liturgical theology at the famed Sant' Anselmo in Rome in the early 1960's, later continuing his studies at the University of Ottawa in Canada and the University of Nijmegen in the Netherlands. He studied under many of the most important theological figures of the 20th century including Cipriano Vagaggini, Balthasar Fischer, Edward Schillebeeckx, and Augustine Mayer. During his long academic career, he was active in Orthodox-Catholic and Catholic-Anglican dialogue, writing for distinguished theological journals in the U.S., Canada, and the U.K. In 1993, he became the first lay dean of Mount Angel—a Benedictine seminary outside Salem, Oregon—helping to restructure the seminary's curriculum around the unifying framework of communion ecclesiology. Such vast learning and extensive experience could take a scholar in the direction of increased specialization and complexity, resulting in only a few other peers being able to read one's work. But Dr. Skublics—now in his eighties—has instead walked the path of Picasso and Cavalletti.

It takes a long, long time to produce a work of sacramental theology so essential and accessible. In the pages that follow, Skublics synthesizes the substantive scholarship that undergirded the

(Continued on page 9)

CGSAC PRESENTATION TO ASSEMBLY

By Monica Perry & Susan Perna

Following an invitation from Archbishop Richard Gagnon of Winnipeg, Manitoba, CGSAC Formation Facilitator, Susan Perna flew to Victoria, BC to speak to the 23 bishops of western Canada at their **Assembly of Western Catholic Bishops (AWCB)** on February 19, 2020.



CGSAC presenters with the Assembly of Western Catholic Bishops (AWCB)

She came prepared with:

- a metal key chain for each of the bishops with Pope Francis' Pectoral Cross depicting The Good Shepherd and his sheep. "Here is your key chain," Susan told each bishop, "You are the key."
- a PowerPoint presentation with pictures of various atria in Western Canada which enabled the bishops to see evidence of the fruit that CGS is bearing in their respective dioceses, due in large part to their many years of support for this work.

With her inimitable enthusiasm, Susan then jumped into her presentation. She began by asking the bishops to raise their hands if they knew how to swim. "Keep your hands up," Susan continued, "if any of you learned how to swim by watching swimming on a video or reading about it in a book."

"Did your parents teach you to swim," Susan asked, "or did you have swimming lessons? Was the pool heated, and did you have trained swimming instructors? Did it only take one session, or did you go to a lake or a pool many times, week after week, month after month, year after year to learn to how swim and perfect this skill?"

"Is not what is done in the atrium for our children worth at least the same investment of time and re-



Susan Perna presenting how, for CGSAC, bishops are key to this work.

sources from our church as parents spend in teaching their children to swim?"

Susan reflected on the various approaches of pastors in shepherding their parishes. Depending on an individual pastor's vision, the needs and capacities of children may be recognized or disregarded. Sharing the podium with Susan was CGSAC's very own, Ex-Bambino (an International term for adults who were once children in CGS atria), Nicholas Cifelli. As a child,

OF WESTERN CATHOLIC BISHOPS

he attended all 3 levels at St. Benedict's, Mary Help of Christians Atrium with Susan, in Toronto. His mother and aunt were catechists and his dad helped to make materials.

Nicholas is now a Mechanical Engineer and lives in Vancouver with his wife and four little boys. Every Sunday he is the organist in his local parish.

Nicholas wondered aloud about each stage of life and the obstacles each stage presents to a free encounter with God: the business of life, careers, peer pressure, etc.

"Maybe," Nicholas suggested, "we should start introducing all children to God when they are children."

Wrapping up the presentation, Susan gathered the bishops for a group photo. Susan accomplished her goal, "To put a smile on every bishop's face".



Nicholas Cifelli suggests we should learn of God when we are children.

Foreward to *Plunged Into The Trinity* by Ernest Skublics

(Continued from page 7)

20th century liturgical movement, bearing particular fruit in the Second Vatican Council. But, he does so in such a way that the "average person in the pew" will be able to readily grasp. Christian readers of every stripe will be moved by the way Skublics illumines the simultaneous simplicity and profundity of the sacraments. As such, this book makes a wonderful companion to the writings of Sofia Cavalletti, who shared a similar mission. The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd community—frequently mentioned in the pages that follow—will want to take special note of what Skublics has accomplished here, as it may be a resource in trying to share with adults the rich theology that undergirds its work with children.

In her essay about the sources that most influenced her own thinking, Sofia Cavalletti says of one scholar, "I am generally diffident about theologians, considering they complicate matters. This definitely is not the case [here]. Despite the lofty level and the great quantity of his writing, his ideas are extremely clear and he expounds them clearly. Once I began reading his works, I went on devouring them." I do believe Cavalletti would speak similarly of this work.

It takes a long, long time to speak with the clarity and joy of the young.

(Reprinted with permission)

Plunged Into the Trinity by Ernest Skublics is published by Cascade Books.

It is available on Amazon.ca. ISBN: 978-1532666094 ISBN-10: 1532666098

ISBN-10: 1532666098

OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP ATRIUM



By Heather Skublics Lampman

The joys of pot-luck food, combined with the Banquet of the Word! On Sunday, January 19, Winnipeg catechists got a chance to sample each other's creations, to visit the recreated Our Lady of Perpetual Help atrium, and to sink into God's Word together.

Catechists met for four hours around a lovely meal. We explored the newest iteration of the atrium at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, which had been flooded just the week before and had been beautifully reconstructed in another space.

Maureen Foster-Fernandes' atrium includes level 1 and 2, which were in adjoining rooms, allowing level 2 children to move back into level 1 space and pull out those materials when desired. Now they are all together in one larger room, beautifully arranged to provide a sense of two different spaces. It is a room many of us are familiar with from courses, and it has been transformed from a multi-purpose classroom space into a place of wonder... how many times have you seen a space transformed by CGS materials? It is a miracle every time.

Opening prayer was a litany inspired by Gianna Gobbi's work, which had been prepared for the National Formation Leaders' Gathering in Calgary in October. Catechists then had the opportunity to experience a new method of adult scripture reflection now being used in courses. We gathered around the Good Shepherd material and first heard a short



TRANSFORMED AFTER FLOOD

reflection from Sr. Bibiana to help us enter into the meditation. Then we spent time in small groups, doing shared reflection, using a method many of you may have experienced under a variety of names. We listened to the passage of the Found Sheep three times. After the first, we noted and shared a word/phrase that stood out; after the second, something that struck us as new; after the third, a reflection on what we think God's call to us is in the passage today.

After a pause for supper, we looked at the passage again, considering it in the following way:

Listing all the actions in the text;

Identifying all God's actions in the text, and picking out which is the most radical;

Asking what *problem* God is addressing in his action;

Considering what this text reveals that God is doing *today*;

And considering which of the essential needs/capacities of the child is most addressed in this text.

After having reflected on the passage in this way, the presentation to the child flowed naturally. We had really spent our own time in coming to know the Word deeply, and then match-making that Word with the needs of the child, so the presentation did not need careful scripting. We truly experienced how this kind of work with scripture can build us into more confident catechists, more ready to meet the child and engage with the Word together without a layer of anxiety in between. Thank you to Maureen Foster-Fernandes for hosting us, to Regina Ramos-Urbano and Sr. Bibiana Ikwun, for guiding us through this experience, and to Debbie Zeni and Carolyn-Marie Petch who have developed this method.



Pictures of the flooding at the atrium at Our Lady of Perpetual Help.



CGSAC

18 Mountain Street
Okotoks, AB
T1S 1G5

E-mail:
Catechesis.Canada@gmail.com

Membership Renewal

2020 memberships due now!

Membership renewal forms are
available on our website at:
www.cgsac.ca

CGSAC Board

Chair/Newsletter: Dorothy Burns

Formation /Vice-Chair: Therese
Wright

Treasurer: Deborah Baker

Secretary: Claire Herbert

Membership: Murita Chua

Communication: Monica Perry

Website Committee: Lucie
McElligott

Member at Large: Cynthia Foster



Donations to Catechesis of the Good Shepherd
Association of Canada (CGSAC) may be made
through Canada Helps.org

Current and Upcoming Courses

Level 1

Calgary, AB
Part A : 2020 July 31 —August 5
Formation Facilitators: C. Petch + L. Funk

Montreal, PQ
Part B2: 2020 May 15-18
Formation Facilitators: N. Wood + H. Lampman

Edmonton, AB
Part B: 2020 October 22-27
Formation Facilitators: S. Perna +

North Bay, ON
Part A: 2020 July 5-10
Formation Facilitators: S. Perna + Annette Witte

Kamloops, AB
Part A: 2020 August 29-September 3
Formation Facilitators: D. Zeni + C. Petch

Saskatoon, SK
Part B: 2020 October 30-November 4
Formation Facilitators: D. Zeni + L. Funk

Winnipeg, MB
Part B: 2020 November 23-27
Formation Facilitators: D. Zeni + C. Petch

Level 2

Vancouver, BC
Part A: 2020 June 29-July 4
Formation Facilitators: D. Zeni + C. Petch

Vancouver, BC
Part B: 2020 Nov 7-15 (evenings only Nov 9,10,12,13)
Formation Facilitators: D. Zeni + C. Petch

Level 3

Russell, ON
Part B: 2020 August 10-18
Formation Facilitators: D. Zeni + C. Petch