

Prayers to Learn and Maintain and the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

Prayer pervades the Atrium. In the Atrium, the children are invited to individually meditate on scripture and works they have been shown. We observe that in so doing, a prayer response to our Creator God, our Redeemer, our Good Shepherd and friend, will be natural. The prayer response is also nurtured through silence. In observing the children who are presented works at the proper time in their developmental cycle and at the right moment in the liturgical year, we have witnessed the fruits of prayer to be rich and lasting. Our role as catechists is to introduce the children to God, the Good Shepherd, and to give them the ability to spend time with him alone and in community in our sacred space we call the Atrium. We plant the seeds of prayer or open the door and then get out of the way and allow God to speak to the child.

Every Atrium has a prayer corner that is used for both personal and communal prayer. Children are invited to help prepare for the communal prayer in various ways. In a Level I atrium, children are invited to set the prayer table. Beginning in Level II, children are invited to lead and participate in communal prayer. This is a prayer service for the whole group. The desire to lead prayer is born from their having worked with scripture, much of the time in silence, in the Atrium. Communal prayer is a way to engage more and more in the Church's liturgical prayer. Various forms of prayer are introduced in this way in the Atrium. Many of the "Prayers to Learn and Memorize" could be added to the binder of prayer choices the children present for use in communal prayer.

Celebrating Mass with the children and families of the Atrium is an annual event for some parishes with CGS. The Mass is planned, primarily by the children, and attended by the children and their families.

The "Prayers to Learn and Maintain," recommended by the Archdiocese of Seattle, are a natural supplement to many of the works. While rote memorization is not encouraged in the Atrium, the prayers themselves can be learned and memorized after an Atrium session that focuses on a particular aspect of our faith. The Prayer Book, generated by the Archdiocese of Seattle office of Faith Formation, is a resource we recommend, giving to families and encouraging parents use at home.

The List below shows the prayers that relate directly to the presentations given to children. Those left blank would be introduced through communal prayer, or through the child's family.

Key: **Red = Level I (3–6 yrs)** **Green = Level II (6–9 yrs)** **Blue = Level III (9–12 yrs)**

Prayers	Level	Presentation
Sign of the Cross	Level I	Sign of the Cross
Grace Before Meals		
Grace After Meals		
Prayer to One's Guardian Angel		
The Our Father	Level II	Our Father Presentation
Hail Mary	Level I	Infancy Narratives
Glory Be		
Prayers at the Stations of the Cross	Level I	Passion Narratives

Morning Offering		
An Act of Spiritual Communion		
An Act of Contrition	Level II	Reconciliation Preparation
Jesus Prayer		
The Apostles Creed		
Memorare		
Nicene Creed		
Prayer for Peace		
Joyful Mysteries	Level II	Infancy Narratives
Prayer for the Souls in Purgatory		
Queen of Heaven (Regina Caeli)		
Luminous Mysteries	Level III	Miracles and Parables of Jesus
Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel		
Anima Christi		
Sorrowful Mysteries	Level II	Passion Narratives
Hail, Holy Queen		
Angelus	Level II	Infancy Narratives and Passion Narratives
Prayer to the Holy Spirit	Level III	Pentecost Celebration
Glorious Mysteries	Level II	Resurrection Narratives
Divine Praises		
Act of Faith		
Act of Hope		
Act of Love		