

Hosting a CGS information Session, or “Taste and See” in your Parish

Some helpful ideas

1. Find a convenient time when the people you want to attract will come.
2. A short intro can be done in about 30-45 minutes. (Sunday morning)
Longer intro sessions might about an hour and a half. (Evening/ Saturday)
3. Avoid doing a really lengthy amount of talking to begin. Show as well as tell.
4. Plan to have a CGS lesson given. You might do this either as part of an Open House or while the adults are in the opening space. Consider the comfort of your audience.
5. Consider having a catechist offer a homily using a CGS lesson. This could be done in church on the same Sunday you offer the “Taste and See” as an Adult Forum.
6. The 4th Sunday in Easter each year, “Good Shepherd Sunday” is a natural time to highlight The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd in a parish.
7. No matter when you offer this Information Session overview, Open House, “Taste and See” or whatever you name it, doing so regularly will make a real difference in parent by-in and in finding new catechists and assistants. Pastoral support and promotion of this as a key ministry of your church is essential!

A Sample “Taste and See” agenda.

In 10-15 minutes, briefly tell the story of how CGS began. Explain that the whole CGS approach is based on the understanding that children have already encountered God and have a relationship with Him. A few key things I make sure to mention about CGS:

We allow the children to discover deep things for themselves instead of telling them everything. The purpose of Practical Life is as a preparation for Prayer. The Child’s work is their prayer. The atrium as a place of prayer as well as a place to learn. The adult as a guide by the spirit of the spirit, but not one who teaches the answers per se.

A Brief account the beginning of CGS is on the National Association Website <http://www.cgsusa.org/about/history.aspx>

Some Video Introductions we might use include:

This is a two part video from an Episcopal church. Shows a lot of materials, so may overlap a tour of your atrium.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VekLtFHA_9Q
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sF19WtvTBJI>

Hosting a CGS information Session, or “Taste and See” in your Parish

A briefer, slightly more professional intro in a Roman Catholic setting.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3F3jP0cf0nA>

A PowerPoint Presentation you is available to you on in our website.

Posters done by the Guild of the Good Shepherd are also available as a Poer point or full size.

- You might describe the atrium in a couple of sentences, and then invite everyone to see the atrium. All the materials are set up ahead of time and there are signs over each area (Parables of the Kingdom, Infancy Narratives, Practical Life, etc) and people just walk around in awe. There are always questions and comments, to which I respond.
- Alternately you might have key materials on a table and show them.
- After 10-15 minutes, have a catechist give a presentation -- often the Good Shepherd or The Eucharistic Presence of the Good Shepherd, with time for discussion between.
- You might end with prayer at the prayer table as done in atrium,

If this is a longer session you might not have a defined ending, but sit in the atrium and talk. This can be effective as it reduces the amount of verbal information at the front end. It also focuses the questions and discussion on what THEY want to know, instead of what I think is important. Just as with the children -- observe them and respond accordingly.

- You might reconvene for refreshments, questions and answers, introduction to the website and books
- Have a book and pamphlet table. Flyers for upcoming adult formation events such as the Assistant training day or a full course should be there. Some books to include would be: *The Good Shepherd and the Child: A Joyful Journey*, Cavaletti, Cutler; *The Religious Potential of the Child I*, Cavalletti; **“Catechesis of the Good Shepherd in a Parish Setting”** <http://www.cgsusa.org/shop-by-department/introductory-reading/> (note that they can be purchased at a discount in a bundle. Our options for your table are:

Overview brochures from the National Association.

<http://www.cgsusa.org/shop-by-department/pamphlets/> (Get the Green booklet)

“Sing with Joy” and “Songs of Love” are the songbooks that go with the Level I and Level II atria. They come with a CD. Parents can buy one and sing along in the car with their children.

<http://www.cgsusa.org/shop-by-department/music/>