

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd – Spring 2016

Parent Updates from Week 1 to Week 2

Dear Parents and Grandparents,

It is a pleasure to see the children back at the Atrium for the Spring session.

In Week 10 of the Winter session (just before the Easter break), the children were presented with the Cenacle presentation. They heard the account of the Last Supper (Mark 14: 12-17, 22-24, 26) where an important meal was celebrated by Jesus with His disciples in the upper room -- the Cenacle. The Catechist re-read the Scripture using the materials. The materials consist of a beautiful wooden structure consisting of stairs leading to the upper room, a long table, three-dimensional figures of Jesus and the 12 disciples, a small paten holding a model of bread, and a small chalice.

The Catechist paused and slowly emphasized Jesus' simple words: "Take and eat. This is my body." "Take and drink. This is my blood."

As the Catechist slowly removed all the figures out of sight, the children were reminded of what happened next: Jesus left to pray at the Mount of Olives; he was arrested; and then later died on the cross and was buried (a small cross is placed on the table which has the chalice and paten still on it). But we know Jesus rose again (candles are placed on the table and lit).

In a very carefully crafted fashion, the final picture the children are left with is the image of an altar table and the Eucharistic celebration.

Week 1

Week 1 of the Spring Session commenced with a procession to change the colours of the table cloth at the prayer table from Purple (for Lent) to white (for the feast of Easter). The catechists and children processed solemnly to the Atrium to replace the purple cloth with white and lay all the articles on the table. A new item, the Easter candle, was added to the prayer table to represent the light of Easter.

Much of this time in this session was dedicated to reviewing materials that were previously presented. It was fascinating to watch the children gravitate to three of the presentations that appeared to call to them: the precious pearl; the good shepherd, and the Cenacle.

Week 2

In Week 2 the children were presented with a joyful presentation: the presentation of the Empty Tomb and the news that Jesus is risen! He is alive!

It is important to know that at the Atrium, the catechists will always link the events of Jesus' death with Jesus' rising. Hence, if you recall from the Stations of the Cross and Cenacle presentation in previous weeks, the narrative of Jesus' death and burial was followed immediately by the proclamation of His resurrection. As such, the passion and the resurrection

are always proclaimed together. "Jesus died, was buried and rose again" is a refrain that the children will hear often.

For the Empty Tomb presentation, the Catechist read the version of the news of the resurrection from Mark 16:1-7:

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go and anoint him. Very early when the sun had risen, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb. They were saying to one another, "Who will roll back the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" When they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back; it was very large. On entering the tomb they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a white robe, and they were utterly amazed. He said to them, "Do not be amazed! You seek Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Behold the place where they laid him. But go and tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him, as he told you.'"

The beautiful hand-crafted Empty Tomb materials consist of a tomb carved of rocks with a stone that can be rolled away. The children were curious to see the inside of the tomb. The Catechist gently opened the hinged cross-section of the tomb: what the children saw inside was a platform of stone with a linen cloth in one of the catacombs. Three dimensional figures of the young man in white and the three women with spices are also part of the materials used in the narrative.

The children were engrossed in the narrative and the rich visual materials that aided in the meditation of the account of Jesus' resurrection.

God Bless,

Norma Dawes, Patti Hendricks, Suzanne Sheppard, Anita Kuriakose

