

**CAPRICORN
COAST
CATHOLIC
PARISH**



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Dear Parents and Carers,

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM 2023

This year, the Capricorn Coast Catholic Parish will be using a program based on the **Catechesis of the Good Shepherd** as we prepare children to celebrate the sacraments of initiation.

The **Catechesis of the Good Shepherd** is grounded in scripture and the liturgy of the Church, and framed by Maria Montessori's principles of education. In this approach the children and their parents hear the Gospel and reflect on the Liturgical moments through the use of sensorially rich materials. Adults and children alike respond to these proclamations of the mysteries in their own personal way with a variety of possible means.

An Atrium of the Good Shepherd is a place of community and worship rather than a classroom for academic study. It is more a retreat house or prayer room than a schoolroom. It is a place to be with and enjoy God, listen to the Word, and to pray. It is designed to reflect the beauty of creation and God's abiding love.

Our Atrium, which is under construction, will have simple yet beautiful materials that are used to draw children and adults near to God – e.g. by placing wooden figures of sheep in a sheepfold of the Good Shepherd, while that particular scripture is read, or setting wooden figures of the Apostles around the Last Supper Table. There is also an opportunity for an art response to the presentations.

Those who come to the atrium are first presented with a work by the Catechist – they then use the materials and work by themselves each time they attend. The presentations are centred on the Holy Mass, Sacred Scripture, Sacraments and Prayer. This approach helps to lay the foundations of Faith of the Catholic Church. The children live the life of the Atrium, forming a relationship with Jesus, the Good Shepherd. Adults are often welcomed seasonally to retreat days or times.

The Parish will run a 10 week program using this approach to prepare your children in readiness to receive the sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation, and Eucharist. Children of catechetical age who have not been baptised may also participate in these sacramental preparations, as well as sessions particular to the preparation for baptism.

This will be a significant commitment for you and your child. It will be a commitment that reflects the importance and sacredness of the sacraments that they are getting ready to receive. Just as you wouldn't hesitate taking your child to training for football, netball or cricket, for something as significant and important as the sacraments of the Church a genuine and enthusiastic commitment is required.

Of course, the greatest way to assist the development of your child's faith and your own is to participate regularly in the Sunday Eucharist community and we would love to have you join us at any of the Masses offered in the parish.

An information evening will be held at Sacred Heart Church on Wednesday 1st March at 6:00pm which will set out the practical elements and timing of the sacramental preparation. We are looking forward to this great opportunity in 2023.

Kind regards,

Fr Matthew Moloney