

**The History and Future of the Good Shepherd Program:
The Parishioners of Assumption and The Marks/Graziano Good Shepherd Certification Scholarship Fund**



The Marks/Graziano Good Shepherd Certification Scholarship Fund will promote and strengthen the faith formation of the youngest children at Assumption Parish by helping its recipients attend certification programs recognized by the National Association of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.

The Good Shepherd Program offers a unique approach to the faith formation of the young child. It is offered as part of Assumption Religious Education and is an option available to all young children of registered parishioners at Assumption Church. It offers the young child a joyful religious experience within a multi-age setting replete with engaging, developmentally appropriate activities and lessons which nurture the child's relationship with Christ, encourage the child's understanding and participation in the Mass, and convey confidence in the child's ability to contribute to the many expressions of faith and service in the community at Assumption.

The creation of the Marks/Graziano Good Shepherd Certification Scholarship Fund honors the love and faithful service of Sr. Patricia Marks and Sr. Marie Graziano to the young children of Assumption. Their desire to help the young child come closer to God through the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd led them to recruit the assistance of other loving members of the Assumption family-Father Martin, JuliAnn Ferdenzi, Marianna Quagliano and Mary Romance. In 1997, the first atrium was opened at Assumption to serve the 3-6 year old children of the parish. Through the love, service, and guidance of Sr. Pat and Sr. Marie, a second level atrium was added to the program to serve the 6-9 year old children who had completed Level I of the Good Shepherd program. The Level III program for children 9-12 was added in 2003. In 2013, the first Good Shepherd graduate enrolled in a Level I Formation Course and returned with catechist certification to serve 3-6 year old children in the Level I atrium. In

August 2014, the first children with special needs in our Level II special Friday atrium celebrated the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. The Good Shepherd program presently serves children enrolled in 3 different levels of formation who meet in 8 separate sessions. With your prayers and support, we hope to be able to continue the legacy of Sr. Pat and Sr. Marie by continuing to offer Levels I, II, and III of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd to 3-12 year old children at Assumption.

Registered parishioners who have demonstrated a desire to serve the children of Assumption by becoming catechists in the Good Shepherd program and who embrace the Spirit of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd as elaborated in the 32 points of reflection detailed in *The Religious Potential of the Child 6 to 12 Years Old* by Sofia Cavalletti, may apply to the Marks/Graziano Good Shepherd Scholarship Fund for full or partial tuition assistance to attend a formation course and earn a certificate from the National Association for the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.



In 2020-2021, we were blessed to be able to offer in-person Good Shepherd atrium sessions during the Pandemic. Many of the children's artwork, prayers and photographs were published in the special online CGS April 2011 journal: "CGS in Quarantine". We look forward to safely and joyfully welcoming the Good Shepherd children back into the atria in September 2021. In October 2021, two of our Good Shepherd Students with special needs will celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation!