



What if the weather is bad?

For weekday sessions, we will follow the decisions of St. John Neumann Catholic School. If school is closed, or dismissed early for weather, or evening activities cancelled, there will be no CGS. Check [Susquehanna Valley and Pennsylvania Weather Alerts – WGAL News 8](#) for updates. The Catechists will also reach out to parents via email and text. For Sat morning sessions, the Catechists will alert parents via email and text at least one hour before session start. If you have questions, you can text the lead catechist at 717-725-0832.

Parents are encouraged to use their own good judgement regarding safe travel for their children in inclement weather.

What if my child needs to miss a session?

Please email the lead catechist at bgosshome@gmail.com if you know in advance that your child will not be attending a scheduled session. If the change is "day off" please text the lead catechist at 717-725-0832. Life in the Atrium has a lot of flexibility. Presentations your child misses due to absence can be shown at a later session.

What if we are unexpectedly delayed and will be late?

Life happens. If you believe you will be late getting your child to session, you can decide if it still makes sense to come. The children are *always* welcome! Please text the lead catechist at 717-725-0832, as soon as you are able, to advise you will be arriving late. After having your child remove coat and shoes in the Narthex and stop for a drink of water or the restroom as needed, bring your child to the Atrium and quietly open the door. Your child knows to put her/his nameplate in the basket and ring the bell to announce entry.

Why don't the children wear shoes in the Atrium?

When we first meet children, before they join us in the Atrium, we "orient" them to the difference of this prepared environment. That starts in our gathering space, the Narthex. We invite them to choose a favorite color knob on which to hang a jacket or sweatshirt so they can "move freely" in our Atrium. We show our own socked feet and the benches with shoe trays beneath. We invite the children to place shoes there so we can "walk softly" in our Atrium.

While children do not question this phrase, adults may naturally wonder what does "walking softly" mean?" It's a signal that this space is different. It's not the playground with our sneakers or the pool/beach with our bare feet. It is someplace where we won't be running, jumping, or splashing...it's someplace where we will be moving about at a little slower pace and with attention to our steps. This is the underlying explanation that the child discovers over time in the Atrium.

Walking softly allows us also to control our bodies as we process in "on the blue line"; to walk around the work mats of others not over them; and to carefully carry our trays of special materials to our place of prayer/work and restore them to the shelf when we are ready to explore something else. These "grace and courtesy" lessons are part of orientation to the Atrium. We all come to appreciate that socks are quiet and, since our Atrium is carpeted, there is no skidding but also no tripping from rubberized shoe soles or slapping sandals.

Why is my child wearing other clothes?

Life in the Atrium is peaceful but not uneventful! Spills of water, wine, plant soil, et al can happen along with potty accidents. We keep a small supply of Pullups, sweat pants, long sleeve tees, and low level socks on hand. If your child is uncomfortable from an unexpected event, we can help them change in the restroom to clean, dry, items. When you come to pick up your child, we'll give you the soiled clothes and a Ziploc bag. You can return the Atrium clothes in the Ziploc bag when your child comes to the next session. No need to launder them...we can take care of that.

Why is my child not bringing any "work" home?

The Atrium is first and foremost a place where children can grow closer to God through listening to His word and reflecting on it with joy and wonder. While we do have "handwork" materials, these are all a way to spend time in meditation to see what the Holy Spirit stirs. Any drawings, collages, tracings that children freely choose to do during their work time are placed each week in their bins. We date stamp these after each session and place them in the child's folder. This folder will come home at the conclusion of our Atrium season for you to reflect with your child on their experiences.

How can I support and encourage my child's life in the Atrium?

Our time as adults in the Atrium is spent mostly listening and observing. It is such a joy to see the children concentrate on their work and slowly discover God's voice in their hearts. We wonder aloud with the children rather than suggesting or supplying answers to their questions. We encourage you to listen and wonder with your child, too, allowing God to reveal Himself in His good time and way. Reading short passages from the Bible with your child, sitting for short periods in silence and stillness, and sitting close to the Sanctuary at Mass where they can see everything up close are all good, encouraging activities.