



# The Grapevine

Autumn 2014

"Follow the Son."

Vol. 7, Issue 2

## SERVING THE CHILDREN OF KANSAS AND NORTHWEST MISSOURI

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*Open Board Position*

**www.CGSKsMo.org**

*E-mail the board at  
**CGSKsMo@gmail.com**  
or contact it through  
Corresponding Secretary  
Jo Thornley Cox  
6915 N. Woodland Ave.  
Gladstone, MO 64118.*

## Dear Catechists,

It is with great sadness that I write to tell you that my days as a member of this beloved organization have come to a close. My husband has taken a wonderful job in Cleveland, Ohio. Fortunately it is a great opportunity for his career and he is really excited. After praying a novena and asking for clarity in our decision, God granted that wish to me in a most profound way. I will try to be brief as I recount the event.

Before Sean and I visited Cleveland, I was interviewed by a woman with the relocation agency that the hospital had assigned to us. During the 45 minute Q&A session, she asked if I worked or volunteered anywhere. I told her that I "teach religious education at our Catholic parish and would like to continue to do so" after we move. That was the end of our religious conversation.

The day that I was shown around Cleveland by the relocation agency, I met a priest at his rectory. I found this odd to be on my itinerary, given all of the things we could have been doing, but really exciting since it was in our favorite neighborhood and possibly our future parish.

Father Tom was warm and charming. The women that were showing me around told me to tell him what I do at our parish in Lawrence. I explained that I am a "co-director of CGS at our parish." He said, "We are just getting ready to start that here. We have our atrium and just had our altar and ambo delivered. Do you want a job? Fifteen

hours a week? We don't have anyone to do it."

I was completely blown away at God's humor at this moment! Here I was asking for a measly "sign" of comfort, and He was giving me a neon billboard! Where do we have a priest and parish ready and waiting to receive CGS? So often it is the catechists who are begging

for just a tiny closet to store their materials and asking for the priest to "just let us try it"!

I walked away that day in the middle of June knowing that our future home was in Cleveland and that God had wonderful things in store for our family.

Today, I am not sure what role I will have at St. Dominic's parish in Shaker Heights, Ohio. Father Tom and his director of religious education are eager to start CGS. Once we have settled here, I will meet with them on how to begin.

Thank you for 10 wonderful years in the Sonflower Region! I will treasure them forever since it is here that I was formed as a catechist. My thoughts and prayers will always be with you!

May the Good Shepherd continue to bless you on your journey as you proclaim the Good News with the children.

*Keri Cupp*

President, 2014

P.S. Remember to vote for our 2015 board. See Pages 3 and 4.

# Dignity, discipline priorities in atrium

How often have we been frustrated by a particular child who is disrupting our quiet atrium time? Lisa Broussard Ryan, a Montessori teacher in Lawrence, Kan., and the keynote speaker at the Fall Conference of the SonFlower Region, will address children's behavior in a Montessori environment.

We wonder how we can honor a child's dignity while guiding him to appropriate atrium behavior. What are the right words? When should we intervene? How can we guide a child to a positive atrium experience that's enjoyed by all the children?

These are just a few generalities, but Lisa would appreciate specific questions from you catechists so she can focus her talk on your needs and concerns. Send them to CGSKsMo@gmail.com by Oct. 25.

Lisa has strong southern roots, being born in New Orleans and growing up in Memphis. She earned

## 2014 FALL CONFERENCE

*Send questions concerning discipline, behavior, and atrium management to Lisa Broussard Ryan by Oct. 25 through the SonFlower e-mail: CGSKsMo@gmail.com.*

a bachelor's degree in early childhood and elementary education from the University of Memphis. For the next 10 years, she taught kindergarten and first and second grades in a parochial school. During that time, she was introduced to the Maria Montessori School in Memphis.

"I fell in love with the Montessori Method," she said, and she decided to take the elementary training through the Association Montessori International.

After being certified through the AMI Washington Montessori Institute in Kansas City, she started the elementary program at the Maria Montessori School. Lisa taught there for 10 years.

While living in Memphis and raising her family, Lisa met Rebekah Rojcewicz, whose children were her students. Rebekah of course introduced her to Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. "My children were fortunate enough to be a part of Rebekah's atrium in Memphis," Lisa said. "I was always amazed by her level of dedication and the beauty and grace of her class."

In 2002, her family moved to Lawrence, where she is an upper elementary teacher at Raintree Montessori School. In 2008, she trained to facilitate the "Love and Logic" workshops for parents, developed by Jim Fay, and she offers them at Raintree every year.

Lisa's presentation promises to be one that concerns us all. Come to SonFlower's Fall Conference from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Nov. 1, at Our Lady's Montessori School, 3020 S. 7th St., Kansas City, KS 66103. Annual elections also will be held.

## ! WOO-HOO !

Okay, maybe not everybody is as excited as we are, but we have a new website at [www.CGSKsMo.org](http://www.CGSKsMo.org)! The hosting service has been very helpful, yet we could use the assistance of a SonFlower member with some web design experience. Communication is vitally important to a group such as ours that is spread throughout an entire state and beyond.

Check out *Events* on the website to see what is planned. See what *Certification Courses* are being offered in our region. See whether your atrium is listed under *Find an Atrium* and that the information is correct. Also send in your photos and children's work or prayers. Anything that shows children or their work must be accompanied by a parent release (on the website under *Documents*).

We hope to use the site as an additional forum for your questions and discussions. We also have a Facebook page: SonFlower Region Catechesis of Good Shepherd.

[www.CGSKsMo.org](http://www.CGSKsMo.org)

## SonFlower Calendar

**Oct. 1-4**

*International Celebration of CGS, Phoenix, Ariz. (www.cgsusa.org)*

**Nov. 1**

*Fall Conference, SonFlower Region; Keynote Speaker: Lisa Ryan on "Dignity and Discipline in a Montessori Environment" 9-noon Saturday, Our Lady's Montessori School, 3020 S. 7th St., Kansas City, KS 66103.*

See [CGSKsMo.org](http://CGSKsMo.org) for new and current course listings in all three levels.

# SonFlower Region Annual Meeting

The SonFlower Region is dedicated to fostering the growth of and supporting atria in Kansas and the northwestern counties of Missouri. Its work is overseen by a nine-member board, with three members rotating on annually.

Because of previous vacant positions and also a couple of board members moving, we have several openings on the board. Keri Cupp, Diane Olsen, and Jo Thornley Cox are completing their terms this year. Brooke Keller and Katrina Taggart resigned.

Following are catechists who have been appointed by the current board, but who need to be confirmed through our election process, according to our bylaws:

- **Christine Robinson** confirm appointment to one-year term through 2015 (filling vacant post)
- **Janet Lovick** confirm appointment to one-year term through 2015 (replacing Katrina Taggart)
- **Jennifer O'Malley** confirm appointment to two-year term through 2016 (replacing Brooke Keller)

**So we need a minimum of three people to run for a three-year term on the board.**

Please consider this work. The board generally meets four times a year. Officers are president, vice president, treasurer, recording secretary, corresponding secretary, and formation leader representative, and these positions are determined at the first meeting of the new board. Work of the board includes managing formation courses in the region, offering continuing formation for catechists, supporting the establishment of atria, and fostering education about Catechesis of the Good Shepherd for parents, teachers, pastors, and diocesan officials.

Board members must be certified in at least Level I and reside in the SonFlower Region.

Submit your name and a brief biography, including atrium experience and why you want to support the region, to CGSKsMo@gmail.com. You may nominate others only with their consent. Nominations may be offered from the floor during the general meeting at the fall conference.

## Election of SonFlower Region Board of Directors

All catechists certified in at least Level I of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd and who reside in the SonFlower Region (Kansas or the greater Kansas City, Mo., metro area) are qualified to vote. Only one ballot is allowed per member. The ballot is on the last page of this newsletter.

Ballots may be submitted by:

1. postal delivery to Shannon Rasmussen, 1406 New Jersey St., Lawrence, KS 66044, postmarked no later than Oct. 28, 2014.
2. **OR** electronic delivery to CGSKsMo@gmail.com by midnight Oct. 30, 2014
3. **OR** delivery to the Registration Table at the Nov. 1, 2014, SonFlower Region Fall Conference at Our Lady's Montessori School, 3020 S. 7th St., Kansas City, KS 66103.

## *Help much appreciated, always needed*

The SonFlower Region cannot fully bloom unless more catechists are involved. The nine-member board is only part of the nutrients for a growing region. It also needs people

- to serve on the financial aid committee, reviewing applications;
- to work on development, e.g., fund-raising, continuing education;
- to help with communications, e.g., newsletter, press releases, archives, and web site,
- to provide financial and legal assistance;
- to update the membership database.

These are just a few of the necessary parts to a flourishing region, many of which can be done from your home.

Like the mustard seed, the region began small, but the power of the Holy Spirit has strengthened and guided it. Like the leaven, though, it needs the work of human hands to help it grow and change with God's grace. Please prayerfully consider serving the region in some capacity, be it small or large.

# BALLOT FOR SONFLOWER REGION BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOVEMBER 2014

\*\*\*\*\* CIRCLE YES OR NO TO CONFIRM THESE BOARD APPOINTEES. \*\*\*\*\*

YES NO JANET LOVICK one-year term through 2015

*I am a member of St. Ann Parish in Prairie Village, Kan. My husband, Darren, and I have three children: 12-year-old twin boys and a 10-year-old daughter. I was introduced to CGS seven years ago through my own children and began formation classes the following year. I have completed Levels I and II and am blessed to be involved with both age groups in the atrium. I also coordinate CGS for the children at St. Ann School in grades K-2. I would like to further support CGS through service on the SonFlower Regional Board because there are many catechists from the region who have supported me during and after formation. I believe we can be more effective in our ministry through the support of other catechists at a regional level.*

YES NO JENNIFER O'MALLEY two-year term through 2016

*I am wife to Patrick, a professor at Benedictine College, and the mother of three young children (ages 4, 2 and 2 months). We live in Atchison, Kan. I'm in formation for Level II, Part 2, having completed Level I in May 2014. After assisting in a Level I atrium last year, I will co-lead a Level II atrium in Atchison starting in January. I want to support Catechesis of the Good Shepherd in the region in order to further the growth of this beautiful work.*

YES NO CHRISTINE ROBINSON one-year term through 2015

*My first exposure to CGS was when my twins were in preschool at Holy Trinity in 2009. After observing a session and experiencing the Altar I presentation, I knew the program was an awesome one, and I felt called to be more involved. As a member of the Women's Bible Study at Holy Trinity, I loved meeting so many women who loved their faith and the Atrium. I assisted in the atrium there for a year, then began my Level I formation. Fellow catechist Sheila Gramling and I started the 3-6 atrium at our parish, Church of the Nativity. In our first year, we had nearly 100 children, but we had to taper our program when I had my seventh child and Sheila moved to Indianapolis. I'm looking forward to becoming certified in Level II. CGS has helped me grow in my faith while spreading some of the essentials to our young people. Being on the board further allows me to give back to a program that I believe in very much.*

\*\*\*\*\* VOTE FOR THREE OF THESE NOMINEES TO SERVE ON THE BOARD 2015 THROUGH 2017. \*\*\*\*\*

NOMINATIONS REMAIN OPEN UNTIL THE MEETING ON NOV. 1. PLEASE SUBMIT AT CGSKsMo@gmail.com.

\_\_\_\_\_ ELLEN BALKE-JONES

*Ellen put her name in the running just before deadline. She lives in Overland Park and is excited to offer her services for the SonFlower Board. She is a catechist and has worked in atria for several years.*

\_\_\_\_\_ JO ELLEN ENGERT

*My husband, Bob, and I have two grown sons and are members of Our Lady of the Presentation Parish in Lee's Summit, Mo. I dream of taking CGS to our parish's sister community in El Salvador. I have served as a director of children's faith formation in the Catholic Church for 18 years. I earned a master's degree in pastoral ministry from Aquinas Institute of Theology in St. Louis, Missouri, in 2006 and am certified in Levels I and II. Our atrium serves children 3-9. My journey with the Catechesis began during a diocesan meeting for directors of religious education, in which the guest speaker was a local CGS formation leader. I have been on fire with a love for the Catechesis since that day and want to increase opportunities for children in Missouri to experience Atrium.*

\_\_\_\_\_ SHELLE LANGE

*I live in Lee's Summit, Mo., with my husband, Fred, and our three boys, Ryan (16), Reed (13), and Rowan (11). My family has been in Holy Spirit Parish for 16 years. I first learned of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd in 2011 from my sister, whose children attend the program in Lawrence, Kan., and began working to bring it to my home parish. I am now certified in Level I and have completed Level II, Part 1. I and another parishioner, Carol Mathis, opened our first atrium at Holy Spirit in 2013. We hosted a CGS formation course this summer and now have six certified catechists in our parish. This has enabled us to expand our atrium sessions to include two Level I classes and a Level II class. I feel called to work with CGS in whatever way God asks. I would be honored to serve the SonFlower Region in helping to spread God's message about this amazing program.*

\_\_\_\_\_ JEANNE WICHMAN

*I have served CGS children since 1997, being one of the founding mothers of CGS at Holy Trinity Parish, Lenexa, Kan. I'm now in my 14th year as co-coordinator of its program, supporting ongoing efforts to grow the ministry in the parish, regionally, and nationwide. I now work in Level I and II atria, though certified in all three levels and as a Level I formation leader. I have a degree in psychology from the University of Missouri at Columbia and in 2013 completed the CGS Heritage Course through Aquinas Institute of Theology. My husband, Curt, and I have two grown children. I believe that PEOPLE make our Church, and I would like to assist catechists in the region who have served their churches and the SonFlower Board and to step in as the board's representative for formation leaders.*