

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

The Geography of the Land of Israel in the time of Jesus: Maps and the City of Jerusalem

As we continue in this Lenten season, the children in the Atria are offered presentations that correspond with this time in the liturgical year in preparation for celebrating the Paschal Mystery. While the children have already pondered the Incarnation and life of Christ through His infancy narratives during Advent, we again remind the children of Biblical geography with various maps of Israel. We do this to help the children to understand, in a very concrete way, that Jesus is not just a story, but a real person, who lived in a real place, at a real time in history. Our Geography works include:

A topographical map of the Land of Israel (made of clay) that shows the elevation of the land and the 3 major cities: Nazareth, Bethlehem and Jerusalem. Children ages 3-9 enjoy this beautiful topographical map.

The puzzle map of the regions of Israel: this puzzle outlines the five regions of Israel and is enjoyed by children 4 and up. It is made of wood and each region is painted a different color. The children work with the puzzle, often tracing each region to recreate the map on a large piece of paper, and painting or coloring and labeling their map, proudly taking it home to enjoy.

The Pin Maps: 6-9 year old children are hungry for more advanced geography than just the three principle cities of Nazareth, Bethlehem and Jerusalem and so they go on to enjoy learning many more cities in the Land of Israel through the various 'pin maps'. These are maps that have flags with various city names attached to small pins, for the children to place on their appropriate locations on the map. One map shows the major cities where Jesus traveled, performed miracles, etc. The children enjoy placing these pins in their correct location while reading an accompanying booklet about the Biblical event that occurred there. Another pin map shows the major mountains, deserts and waterways of Israel.

The largest map work is a topographical map of the City of Jerusalem - a model of the city where Christ spent the final days before his death and resurrection. Here, the child ponders the journey that Jesus took during Holy Week as they rebuild the model, placing the walls, the trees of the Garden of Gethsemane, the Cenacle, the palace of Herod, the Tower of Antonia and other landmarks of the city on the map. At the end, we light a candle at the model of the tomb, proclaiming the glorious news of His Resurrection!

Volunteers needed: woodworkers, painters, label makers

Please contact Sarah Herendeen to get involved in creating CGS materials like these for the children of our parish.

Volunteers needed: woodworkers, painters, labelmakers

Please contact Sarah Herendeen to get involved in creating CGS materials like these for the children of our parish...