



### Why Aquinas Institute?

Aquinas Institute of Theology is a Catholic, Dominican-sponsored graduate school of theology with an ecumenical outlook. The 800-year-old intellectual tradition of the Order of Preachers and the legacy of our patron, St. Thomas Aquinas, shapes our theological orientation.

It is not an accident that the only MAPS degree specializing in CGS in the world finds its home at Aquinas Institute. There is a special connection between Dominican spirituality and the spirituality of CGS just as there is a special connection between the CGS movement and our institution. Sofia Cavalletti studied with Dominican theologian, Fr. Dalmazio Mongillo, OP for many years at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome. Like St. Thomas, Cavalletti came to understand that friendship with God is the goal of human life and that the pursuit of an ever-deepening friendship with God is best done in the context of friendship with others.

At Aquinas Institute, students are invited into the kind of study, dialogue, and—yes—friendship that Sofia and Fr. Dalmazio shared. Women and men, scholars and practitioners, young and old, all find a place at the table, learning from one another. Since 2005, Aquinas Institute has worked in collaboration with the U.S. national association of CGS to provide a rigorous intellectual and spiritual foundation to more fully support catechists in their ministries.

“Catechesis is to let ourselves be loved and saved. It is to nurture the desire of the Shepherd to remain in his love, to rediscover the conditions and the essential needs of life lived in communion, and to support each other in seeking the way to actualize it.”

FR. DALMAZIO MONGILLO, OP  
— CATECHESIS OF THE GOOD  
SHEPHERD: ESSENTIAL REALITIES

### Are you...

- ... seeking new ways to respond to all the gifts you've been given?
- ... hearing a call to deeper leadership within the CGS world?
- ... longing to equip yourself to use your gifts to the fullest degree?

**Then the MAPS-CGS program at Aquinas Institute of Theology may be your next step!**

### How Do I Apply?

1. Complete and submit the online application for the MAPS-CGS Program and all required components:

- Official transcripts from all undergraduate and graduate level studies
- Resume/CV
- Personal Assessment
- Reflection Paper
- Three letters of recommendation: Academic, Ministerial, and Personal
- Interview
- \$50 application fee

When writing your personal assessment and reflection paper, we suggest that you specifically describe and offer examples that explain how your background and experience meets the criteria for the Sofia Cavalletti scholarship. We also recommend that your ministerial recommendation comes from someone who can attest to your work as a CGS catechist.

2. Complete and submit the US Government Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and request the information be sent to Aquinas Institute of Theology. (Institutional Code – 01632)

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: OCTOBER 10, 2025**

**Questions? Clarifications? Please don't hesitate to contact us at [admissions@ai.edu](mailto:admissions@ai.edu) or 314.256.8801**



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# Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies – Catechesis of the Good Shepherd





How Might the Shepherd be Calling You?

Through CGS formation, you meet God through the eyes of a child and your own eyes witness the gifts children bring our Church. You dedicate time and energy making CGS available to children —building materials, seeking out space, writing album pages. Just as the children surface new questions the longer they are in the atrium, you find yourself asking some new questions as well:



- Where did this amazing work originate? Who were the theologians that most impacted Sofia Cavalletti and Gianna Gobbi in the development of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd?
- How do we continue to make the spirituality of children discovered in CGS more accessible to the Church as a whole?
- How am I being called to explore this work more deeply and offer myself in greater service to the CGS movement?

The Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies with a specialization in Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (MAPS-CGS) program at Aquinas Institute **is the only degree of its kind in the world.** Students in the program form a cohort learning community, walking together through ten academic courses interwoven with ongoing spiritual formation. They meet other catechists from around the country. They form deeper networks of friendship. They begin to answer the questions tugging at their hearts.

Just as Cavalletti’s background as a scholar made it possible for her to talk about God with children in a way that intrigued and enthused them, the scholarly formation provided through the MAPS-CGS program creates a foundation for present-day catechists who invite children into relationship with God. **Students who hold the MAPS-CGS degree possess greater theological,**

**scriptural, and liturgical expertise for the ministry of CGS.** Many graduates go on to assume leadership roles within the CGS community as association staff, board members, and formation leaders. Others pursue vocations as directors of religious education, pastoral associates, full-time catechists, diocesan staff, consultants, and faculty.

Program Format

The Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies with a specialization in Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is a 48 credit-hour program offered via an online-hybrid model. The program can be completed in three-and-a-half years, during which students follow a set schedule of classes as a learning community, completing the coursework online and traveling to St. Louis seven times for on campus intensives.



Curriculum

Spring 2026

Proseminar, 2 credits  
Spiritual Formation I, .5 unit  
Intensive: February 11- 14

Summer 2026

Biblical Interpretation, 3 credits  
Spiritual Formation II, .5 unit  
Intensive: June 24-27

Fall 2026

Introduction to Theology, 3 credits  
Spiritual Formation III, .5 unit  
Remote Intensive: October 21-24

Spring 2027

Foundations of Pastoral and Ethical Care, 3 credits  
Spiritual Formation IV, .5 unit  
Intensive: February 24-27

Summer 2027

Hebrew Scriptures, 3 credits  
Intensive: July 7-10

Fall 2027

Theology of Worship, 3 credits  
Spiritual Formation V, .5 unit  
Intensive: October 13-16

Spring 2028

Supervised Practice of Ministry, 3 credits  
Spiritual Formation VI, .5 unit  
Intensive: March 22-25

Summer 2028

Christian Scriptures, 3 credits  
Intensive: June 28- July 1

Fall 2028

Christology & Christian Anthropology, 3 credits  
Spiritual Formation VII, .5 unit  
Remote Intensive: October 18-21

Spring 2029

Contemporary Issues in Sacramental Theology, 3 credits  
Integrative Seminar, 1 credit  
Spiritual Formation VIII, .5 unit  
Intensive: March 19-24

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Formation Courses & Albums

Levels 1 and 2, 6 credits each <sup>1</sup>  
Level 3, 6 credits <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Completion of Level 1 and Level 2 CGS Formation is a pre-requisite for entrance into the program. Completed albums for each level are submitted for review to Aquinas. Graduate credit is awarded after a successful review of the album.

<sup>2</sup> Level 3 CGS Formation can be completed after starting the MAPS-CGS program at Aquinas.

Affording the Program

The following estimates for the MAPS-CGS cohort are based on a 48-credit hour degree program with four additional units of spiritual formation. **This estimated cost breakdown for the program is based on the 2025-26 tuition rate of \$925 per credit hour.** Students should note that tuition usually increases each academic year. Textbook costs are listed as estimates. All figures included in this document are estimates and should be considered as such.

**On average, your cost each semester will be about \$4,450 including tuition, fees, travel, and books.**

Program Elments	Cost
Tuition: 30 credits, \$925/hour .....	\$27,750
Spiritual Formation: 4 units, \$925/unit.....	\$3,700
Lodging & Meals:* 8 trips to St. Louis, \$940/trip.....	\$7,520
Books: 11 courses, \$125/course.....	\$1,375
Student Services Fee: 10 semesters, \$325/semester .....	\$3,250
Album Evaluation: 3 albums, \$450/album .....	\$1,350
Graduation Fee .....	\$185
<b>Estimated Total for Program .....</b>	<b>\$45,130</b>

*\* This is an estimate, travel to and from St. Louis should be considered individually.*

Need-Based Financial Aid

All applicants must submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as part of the application for admission. Based on your demonstrated financial need, Aquinas will automatically make an offer of need-based financial aid up to 60% of the cost of tuition.

Sofia Cavalletti Scholarship

This merit-based scholarship is granted to newly admitted students who bring noteworthy service within the CGS community as catechists and/or leaders and who demonstrate a strong commitment to continued leadership in local, regional, or national CGS settings. The Sofia Cavalletti Scholarship provides up to 50% tuition for highly qualified candidates. Upon acceptance to the program applications for this scholarship will automatically become accessible to incoming students.

