

How Godly Play Follows the Pattern of Christian Worship

By Kathleen Capcara, Accredited Godly Play Teacher Trainer

In Church

Getting Ready

Greeting by usher
Choose seat in church
Individual prayer and centering

The Lessons

The Sermon or Homily

The Great Thanksgiving

The Communion

Blessing and Dismissal

In Godly Play

Getting Ready

Greeting by doorman
Circle 'built' by storyteller
Quiet conversation, prayer, guided meditation, or
quiet singing

The Lesson and Wondering

Response Time

Prayers of Thanksgiving

The Feast

"Good-bye" and Affirmation

Some people like to come to church because the order of worship provides a sense of stability in their lives; it is a routine they know they can count on. Grounded in the structure of worship in a beautiful space that feels safe, many adults experience God's presence. It is the same with children. The pattern of Christian worship that has served the Church well for centuries is equally comfortable for children. Following this pattern of worship during Godly Play makes classroom management less of an issue in Sunday School. The children do less testing of boundaries because they know what to expect and what is expected.

Godly Play

Our Goal:

To provide an environment that fosters discovery learning in which children feel safe and welcomed; where they can learn the art of using Religious language to encounter God and to find meaning in their lives.

Our Objectives (The Heart of Godly Play)

- To create sacred space
- To build and work in community
- To learn religious language
- To use that religious language to make meaning

How we do that:

By using religious language sacred stories, parables, liturgical action and silence (*the stories*)

By modeling how to wonder using the religious language, so that children can 'enter' the language rather than merely repeating it or talking about it. (*the wondering*)

By showing children how to choose their work so that they can confront their own issues rather than working on issues determined by others. (*the response time*)

By organizing the time to follow the pattern of worship that the Christian tradition has found to be the best way to be with God in community. (*the structure of time*)

By showing the children how to work together as a community by supporting and respecting each other and one another's work. (*the adults model this in their interactions with other children*)

By organizing the space so that the whole system of Christian language is present in the room so that the children can literally walk into that language domain when they enter the

room. (*the set-up of the room*)

[Compiled by C.B. Moser, Accredited Godly Play Teacher Trainer]

The Heart of Godly Play

By The Rev. Dick Gibson, Accredited Godly Play Teacher Trainer

Call: To Trust God
To Trust the Child

Mission: To Provide a safe place
To help children come close to God

Faith: In Creator, Son, and Holy Spirit
In the Mystery of Christmas
In the Mystery of Easter
In the Grace of the Sacraments

Language: Of Sacred Stories
Of Parables
Of Liturgical Actions
Of Silence (waiting, wonder, joy)

Community: Of Relationships
Of Responsibility

Worship: As Gathering
As Word Response
As Thanksgiving (prayers and feast)
As Sending Forth

Nurture: Of a total classroom environment
Of the quality of materials
Of the creativity of play
Of an openness to multiple learning styles and intelligences

Leadership: By shepherd teachers
By servant helpers
By a faith-filled church