Workshop Proposal for “WISE UP” 2013

Title: Godly Play – Holistic Religious Education by Immersion

The workshop will be an inter-active opportunity for attendees to learn (more) about this multi-sensory approach to Christian ministry developed by Jerome Berryman, which aims to help the participant to connect faith stories with personal experience. Using a Montessori approach, Godly Play interweaves symbols, stories, wondering questions and open-ended responses to nurture both, an understanding of the language of the Christian tradition and personal contemplation.

Hence, the workshop will contribute to the question “What does a ‘transformed mind, body and heart’ look like?” Rather than viewing religious education only on a ‘head’ level, Godly Play acknowledges the importance of play for understanding and individual reflection for personal growth.

The presenter will bring her own resources to fashion a Godly Play room within which to run the workshop. We will do Godly Play.

Biography of Presenter: Pastor Kathrin Koning – born in Germany, grew up in South Africa from the age of 9 – studied theology in South Africa and Germany from 1982 to 1988 and was ordained in Cape Town in December 1988 – she has always had an interest in children’s ministry: thesis for 2nd Theological Exam focused on this area – has been Chaplain at Immanuel Lutheran College (Buderim) since 1995 where she is Director of Christian Life – she was trained in Godly Play in 2011 and is part of the Godly Play Australia Advisory Board; she is also the contact person for Godly Play in Queensland.

Contact Details:
Pastor Kathrin Koning
Immanuel Lutheran College
PO Box 5025
MAROOCHYDORE BC, QLD 4558

Tel: (07) 5477 3444

koningk@immanuel.qld.edu.au
What is it?

Goal:
To provide an environment that fosters discovery learning in which participants feel safe and welcomed; where they can learn the art of using religious language to encounter the elusive mystery of God and to use that language to find meaning in their lives.

Candy Moser
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 is this done?

1. By using religious language
   * sacred stories
   * parables
   * liturgical action
   * silence

>> THE STORIES
How is this done?

2. By modelling how to wonder using religious language, so that participants can “enter” the language rather than merely repeating it or talking about it

>> THE WONDERING
How is this done?

3. By allowing participants to choose their work so they can confront their own issues rather than working on issues determined by others.

>> THE RESPONSE TIME
How is this done?

4. By organising the time to follow the pattern of worship that the Christian tradition has found to be a helpful way to be with God in community

>> THE STRUCTURE OF TIME
How is this done?

5. By modelling how to work together as a community by supporting and respecting each other and one another’s work

>> (ADULT) MODEL INTERACTION
How is this done?

6. By organising the space so that the whole system of the Christian language is present in the room; so that the participants can literally walk into that language domain when they enter the room.

>> THE SET-UP OF THE ROOM
1. Religious Language

• Mystery
• Exclamation
• Perspective for other kinds of language
• Helps us come closer to God
• Asks us to discover a presence at the edge of our being and knowing
• Invites us to enter...
• A way to make meaning at the limits of being and knowing
1. Religious Language

- It says that the experience of facts, values, beauty and justice are all important but not one of these standpoints in the world is the ultimate one.
- The ultimate standpoint is at the edge of our existence, where we sense the presence of God.
1. Religious Language

SACRED STORIES

• God is the main character
• Trace encounters of the People of God with the mystery of the Presence of God
• From creation to life of Jesus and Church
• Give us our identity as people of God
• Help us identify our own stories with the story of our faith
• Use 3-dimensional objects
1. Religious Language

**PARABLES**

- Most authentic voice of Jesus
- Include the “I am” statements of Jesus
- Give us a glimpse of the kingdom
- Create paradoxes that push the language to its limit
- Encourage us to explore life in existential terms
- Raise more questions and they answer
1. Religious Language

PARABLES

- Richness cannot be exhausted
- Are constantly open to new meaning
- Stimulate the creative process
- Use 2-dimensional materials to emphasise metaphorical quality
- Engage the listener in building the metaphor before the telling begins
1. Religious Language

LITURGICAL ACTIONS

• Liturgy means “the work of the people”
• Explain the symbols and rites of the Church
• Explain the organisation of life in the Church
• Explain the way the Christian community worships God
1. Religious Language

SILENCE

• The silence is not empty but full
• Supports the process
• Gives us the opportunity to contemplate the lesson
• Helps us become aware of the elusive presence of God
• Helps us get ready to hear the still, small voice
• Provides an oasis of calm from the busy and noisy world
May the Good Shepherd who knows all of the sheep by name,
lead you to the good green pastures,
and stay with you through the times of desert.

May you find your pearl of great price,
and know that you journey with the People of God,
who are as many as the stars in the sky
and as many as the grains of sand in the desert.
Some added Points to my given Presentation

• Please note that Godly Play is neither conceptualised nor promoted as “the only way”, meaning: it should always be seen as one of many aspects that make up Christian ministry

• In our school setting, we implement Godly Play to enhance the Christian Studies curriculum
Some added Points to my given Presentation

• While all participants were sitting on chairs during the elective, everyone sitting on the floor together is an important philosophy of Godly Play: it conveys the message that everyone is “on the same level”, i.e. equal in worth and contribution
Some added Points to my given Presentation

• I am in the process of organising Core Training to be offered in South East Queensland. While dates have not yet been finalised, I hope to have this happen before the start of the academic year 2014. If you are keen to be informed of this, please contact me or look on the website for Godly Play Australia.
My contact details:

Pastor Kathrin Koning
Chaplain / Director of Christian Life
Immanuel Lutheran College
Buderim, Qld

koningk@immanuel.qld.edu.au
Tel.: (07) 5477 3444


>> Volumes 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 & 8 provide you with the detailed descriptions and scripts for core and enrichment lessons/stories.

Volume 1 provides a general introduction similar to the first resource listed; Volume 5 is a collection of practical experiences and tips from Godly Play practitioners around the world.
SHORT REFERENCE LIST
