

Godly Play®: Liturgical Action

Marking Life, Time and Space so Children Can Know the Holy

What is Liturgical Action?

We need to organize our lives by ordered action as well as by stories. Liturgy helps express inner and outer existential realities in a way that others can participate in. It involves action, so all our senses can be involved in this kind of knowing. “Getting rid of” a liturgy usually means putting another in its place. The Quakers “non-liturgical” worship is a good example.

The sacraments are what focus our worship and involve our senses. Recent shifts are:

Substance	>	Relationship
Breakthrough in a Unique Medium	>	Symbols of God’s Presence
Sharp Distinction Between Word and Sacrament	>	Growing Integration of Word and Sacrament
Sign of Membership and Means of Control	>	Rite of Passage and/or Intensification of God’s Presence
Sharp Distinction Between Religious Education and Worship	>	Growing Integration of these Two Aspects of Ministry (note system of Princeton Model)

The Sacraments in Religious Education and Liturgy by Robert L Browning and Roy A. Reed (Birmingham, Alabama: Religious Education Press, 1985) is useful.

What is the Godly Play Approach?

The actions of Baptism, Holy Eucharist, Confirmation, Marriage, Vocation, Reconciliation, Healing and Burial are organized in the circle of the church year. Other actions are also preented.

What are the Wondering Questions?

“I wonder if you have ever come close to this in the church?”

“I wonder what happens when you see this in the church?”

“I wonder who puts it there?”

Why is Liturgical Action Important for Children?

Children need meaning and to find companions to share their journey. To learn to worship one must worship, like any art. The lessons only help show how.