

USING MUSIC AND MOVEMENT IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Music plays an important role in the teaching and learning of our Catholic faith. It is a powerful and creative tool that can be incorporated into religious education for children of all ages. When combined with simple movement, it effectively reinforces the learning process by supporting key concepts, increasing retention, and sustaining enthusiasm.

Outlined below are some guidelines to assist you in incorporating song and movement into your religious education activities.

Guidelines for Using Movement and Song in Religious Education

1. Check the appropriateness of lyrics for concepts and correctness of Church teachings.
2. Look for music that lends itself to actions/movement.
3. Ensure the song/hymn is appropriate for the age group you are working with.
4. Ask yourself if the movement is appropriate for the setting, classroom, church, etc?
5. Keep the movements simple and repetitive.
6. Practice the movements and be confident with them before you share them with your class/children. In front of the mirror, or in front of family and friends are great places to do this!
7. Use movement/gesture resource guides. Some are available in diagrammatic or DVD format from [UCCAE](#) and [Catholic Education Australia](#).

Music and movement can effectively be included in religious education to:

- reinforce Scripture
- teach Catholic doctrine
- celebrate the sacraments
- teach and learn formal prayer

Over the last six years I have had the opportunity to visit many Catholic communities throughout North America and Australia. Together, we have celebrated our faith through the use of music and movement. During these times, religious educators have made many requests for a resource to demonstrate the moves and gestures we had shared in our celebrations and workshops.

Move! Pray! Celebrate! and ***God Loves Me*** respond to these requests. These DVDs are instructional resources for religious educators of both children and adults. Together they contain over 36 songs, complete with movements and lyrics. They cover a variety of themes/topics such as gathering, God's love, Easter, Christmas, Mary, the sacraments, and all the catechetical themes.

These DVDs are in two parts. The first part includes the moves clearly demonstrated on an *individual basis*. The second part offers four of the songs demonstrated in a *group situation* by children from five years of age to young adults.

Included with ***Move! Pray Celebrate!*** and ***God Loves Me*** are study guides that identify for each song a recommended age group, Scripture references, catechism references, questions for preparation and follow up, and ideas for further development of each movement.

Music CDs containing all of the songs from these collections as well as selected instrumental tracks are also available.

I am sure you'll find ***Move! Pray! Celebrate!*** and ***God Loves Me*** practical and useful additions to your teaching resources.

I look forward to meeting you at a workshop event in your diocese very soon!

Blessings,

John Burland