

## LESSON 10

# THE GOOD SHEPHERD AND WORLD COMMUNION

### LESSON NOTES

#### FOCUS: THE GOOD SHEPHERD AND HOLY COMMUNION

● LITURGICAL ACTION

● CORE PRESENTATION

#### THE MATERIAL

● LOCATION: FOCAL SHELVES

● PIECES: GOOD SHEPHERD, SHEEP, SHEEPFOLD, TABLE, PRIEST, PEOPLE OF THE  
WORLD, SMALL CONTAINER HOLDING A PATEN AND CHALICE

● UNDERLAY: 2 CIRCLES COVERED IN GREEN FELT

#### BACKGROUND

The images of the Good Shepherd and Holy Communion deepen each other's interpretation when set side by side like this. One does not need to step outside the domain of religious language into the language of philosophy or science, for example, to talk *about* the two religious images or interpret them. One can remain *within* religious language, meditating, while the images disclose the depths in each other.

For older children, you can also place other presentations side by side. For example, lay out the story of the Exodus (pp. 65-72, *The Complete Guide to Godly Play, Volume 2*) next to this story. Ask, "I wonder what in *this* story (the Exodus) belongs in *this* story (the Good Shepherd and World Communion)?" and *vice versa*.

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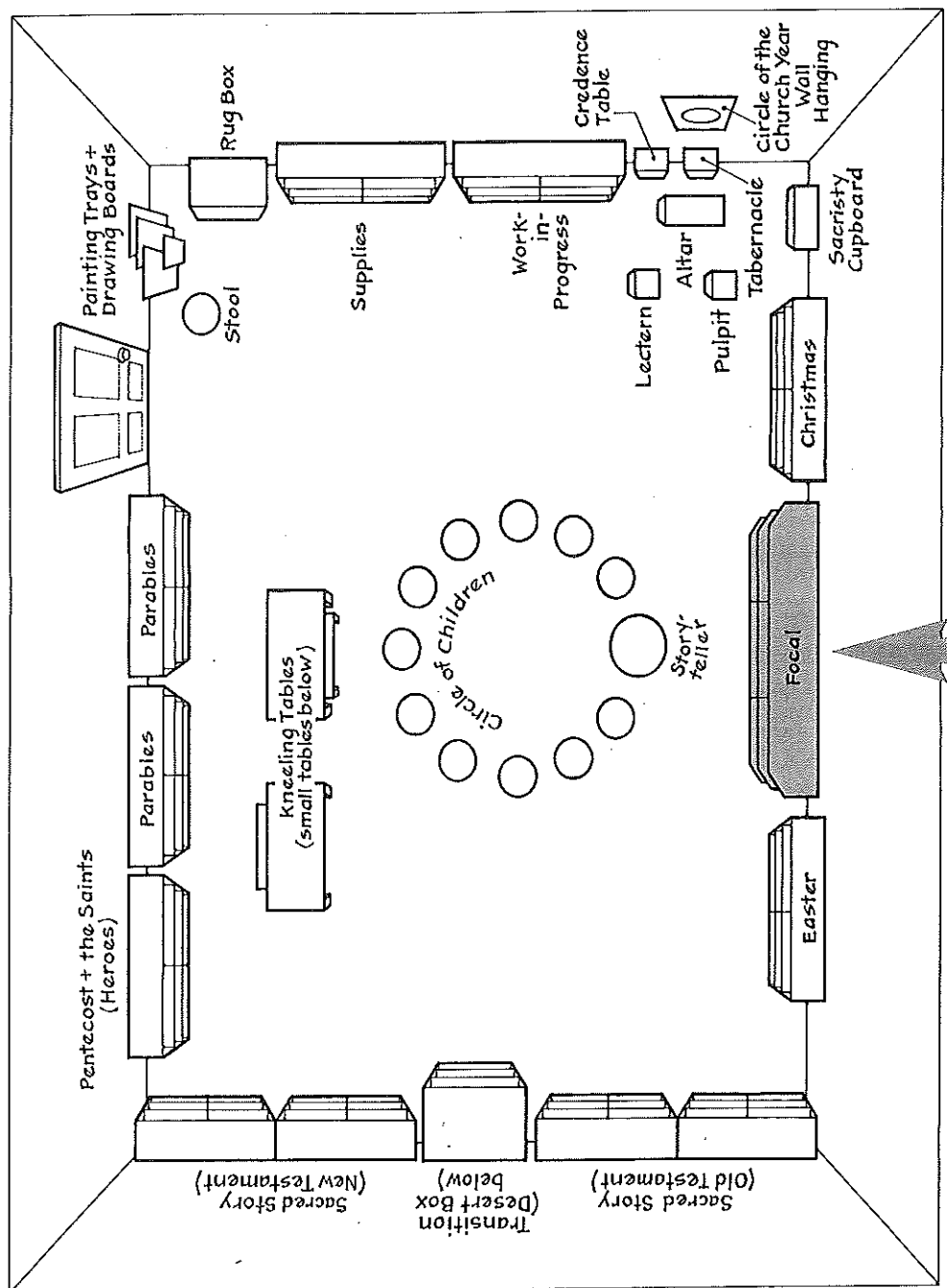
**Note:** This lesson was suggested by the work of Sofia Cavalletti. The reader should be aware, however, that both the teaching material and the lesson are substantially changed and put to a different use in *Godly Play* than in her work. Please see *The Complete Guide to Godly Play, Volume 1*, Chapter 6, pp. 86-107, "Entering the Tradition," for further information.

### **NOTES ON THE MATERIAL**

In an ideal setup, the focal shelves are the shelf unit directly opposite the door that the children enter. The Holy Family sits in the center of the top shelf. To the right of the Holy Family as you face the shelves is one green circle with the figure of the Good Shepherd, the sheepfold and his sheep. (The sheepfold is a set of hinged wooden fence pieces.) On the shelf below the Good Shepherd and his sheep, there is another green circle with a table standing at its center. On the shelf below the second circle, there is a basket that holds a priest, the people of the world and a small container. The container holds a paten and chalice to represent the bread and wine.

### **SPECIAL NOTES**

As you can see, this is a core presentation for the liturgical action part of the Christian tradition of communion, as conceived of in *Godly Play*. It is not included among the parable lessons, because parables function in a different way than liturgical action, although there is always some overlap. This presentation does tell a story, but it is not part of the sacred story materials because it focuses on the liturgical action and the symbols by which that action carries its meaning to us and to which we respond.



WHERE TO FIND MATERIALS

## MOVEMENTS

*Even though the material is right behind you, on the focal shelves, get up and walk around the circle to find the material. This is much more dramatic than merely reaching out to pull the pieces off the shelves. The children will gain a better sense of where the material is.*

*Carry the material carefully, with two hands, as you want the children to carry it. First bring the green circle with the Good Shepherd, the sheepfold and the sheep to the storytelling circle. Place it in front of where you will be sitting. Then return to the shelf for the second circle with the table on it.*

*Bring the second green circle to the storytelling circle. Then return to the shelves and bring the basket with the people of the world and the small container.*

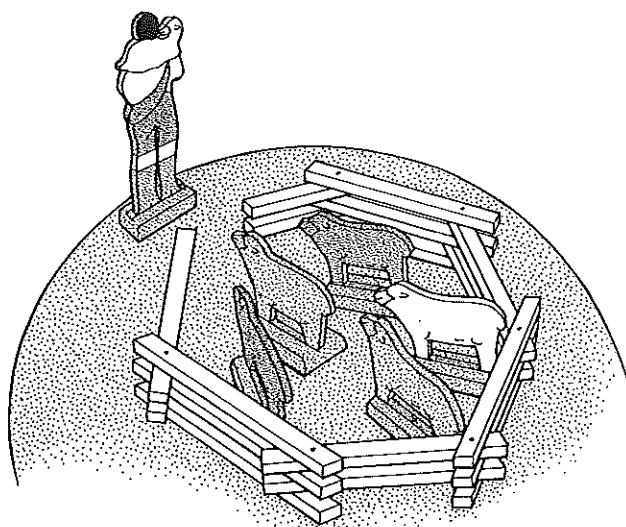
*Put the two green circles next to each other, touching. The one on the right in front of you, the storyteller, is the Good Shepherd, and the one on your left is the Table. Put the basket to the right and a little behind where you are sitting. The point is to get this out of the way, so it will not distract the children until you are ready to use it.*

*The sheepfold, sheep and shepherd are arranged as shown here.*

## WORDS

✦ Watch carefully where I go so you will know where to find this material. Watch with your eyes.

✦ You see, there is a lot to bring. This is big work. Watch carefully.



THE SHEPHERD AND THE SHEEPFOLD (STORYTELLER'S PERSPECTIVE)

## MOVEMENTS

*Sit for a brief time to let the children settle. If they have trouble getting ready, work with them until they are settled. Then begin.*

*Touch the head of the Good Shepherd figure.*

*Run your thumb down the back of the neck of each sheep.*

*Move the Good Shepherd out of the sheepfold and around to your right. Move him halfway around to a position at the bottom of the circle in front of you. Then go back and move each one of the sheep to catch up with him. They stay in single file. Keep silence while you are doing this and just enjoy watching the sheep.*

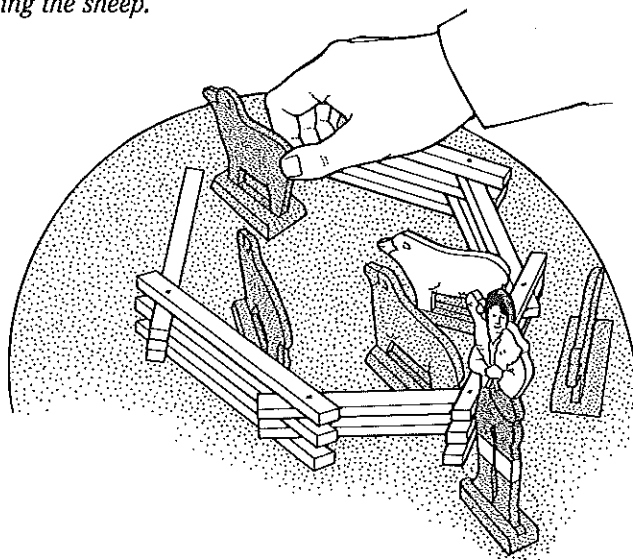
## WORDS

There was once someone who did such wonderful things and said such amazing things that people wondered who he was. Finally they just couldn't help it. They had to ask him who he was.

When they asked him who he was, he said, "I am the Good Shepherd."

"I know each one of the sheep by name, and they know the sound of my voice."

"When I take the sheep from the sheepfold, they follow me."



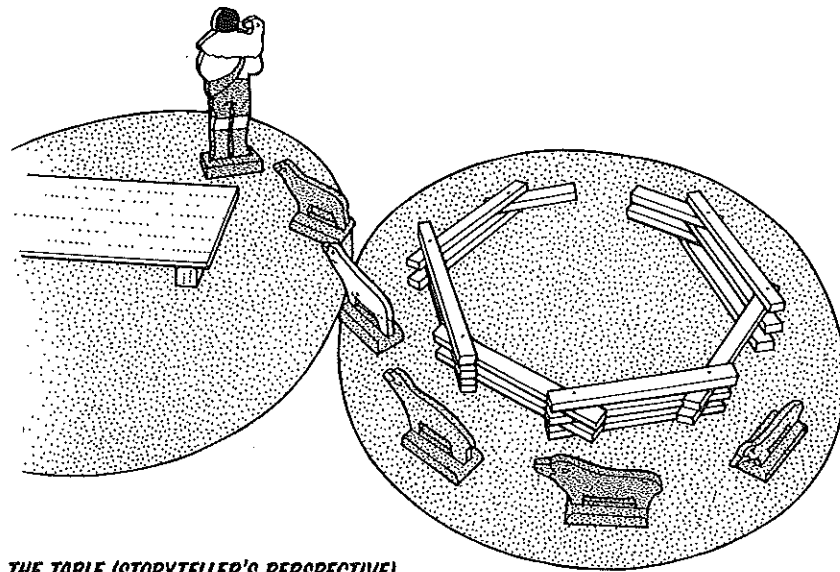
OUTSIDE THE SHEEPFOLD (STORYTELLER'S PERSPECTIVE)

*Move the Good Shepherd from the bottom position on the right circle to the top position on the left circle. Take your time.*

"I walk in front of the sheep to show them the way."

## MOVEMENTS

## WORDS



**APPROACHING THE TABLE (STORYTELLER'S PERSPECTIVE)**

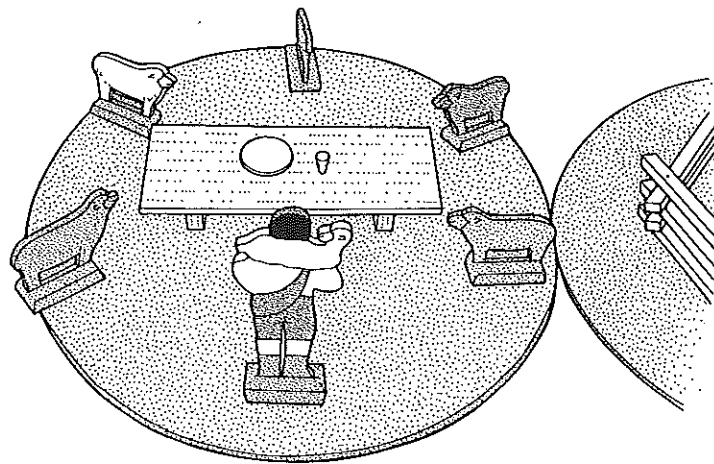
*Move the sheep up to where the Good Shepherd is. Move them one at a time. Think about what is happening as you move them from one circle to the other.*

*Without saying anything else, move the Good Shepherd to the bottom position of the left-hand circle and move the sheep so that they are spread out equally now around the table but still turned as if they are following around the edge of the circle.*

*When all of the sheep are in position, move the Good Shepherd forward to stand behind the table (from the child's perspective). Turn all of the sheep so they are facing the table.*

## MOVEMENTS

## WORDS



**AROUND THE TABLE (STORYTELLER'S PERSPECTIVE)**

*Trace the outside rim of the table.*

✦ This is the table of the Good Shepherd.

*Get the chalice and paten from the basket and place them on the table.*

✦ Here is the bread and wine of the Good Shepherd. Sometimes it seems like we need to have a little statue or something on the table to remind us that this is the table of the Good Shepherd, but the Good Shepherd is in the bread and the wine, so we don't really need anything to remind us.

*Remove the Good Shepherd. Bring out the priest and move the priest into the position behind the table where the Good Shepherd was.*

✦ Sometimes someone comes to read the very words of the Good Shepherd, and to give us the bread and the wine.

*Take one of the adult human figures from the basket. Show it to the children, then put it between the sheep. Continue doing this until all the adults from around the world are in place.*

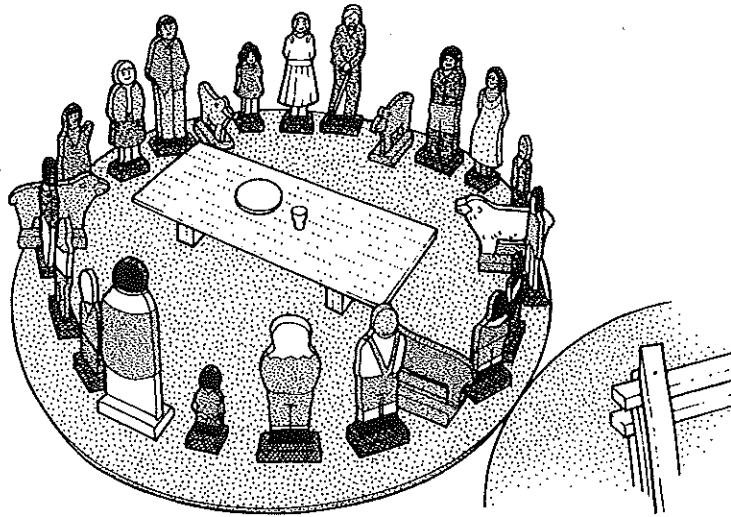
✦ Sometimes the people of the world come to this table, and...

*Take out the child figures and put them by the adult figures. Do not group the figures by gender, ethnicity or culture. The world no longer works like that.*

✦ ...even the children come.

## MOVEMENTS

## WORDS



**THE PEOPLE AROUND THE TABLE (STORYTELLER'S PERSPECTIVE)**

*Sit and look at the people of the world around the table for a moment, then begin the wondering.*

*Trace the outline of the table with your finger. Don't hurry the children. Give them time to wonder.*

*Move your hand over both circles.*

*When the wondering draws to a close, turn the children's attention toward getting out their own work.*

Now I wonder if you have ever come close to this table?

I wonder where this table could really be?

I wonder if the people are happy around this table?

I wonder if you have ever heard the words of the Good Shepherd?

I wonder if you have ever come close to the bread and the wine?

I wonder where the bread and the wine could really be?

I wonder where this whole place could really be?