

Introduction

*Let the little children come to me,
because the kingdom of God belongs
to such as these.* MARK 10:14

Step by Step is a practical resource that faithfully follows the Sunday gospels, introducing young children to God's word and encouraging them to learn about Jesus in an imaginative and enjoyable way that is both suited to their age (4-7 years) and sensitive to their level of understanding.

Week by week a double-sided activity sheet (which can be folded to produce a leaflet) reveals each Sunday's gospel message and reinforces its teaching using simple puzzles, pictures, and drawing activities. Together, children and adults are encouraged to share in a positive and stimulating experience of discovery and understanding.

The sheets may be photocopied and used in a variety of ways whenever and wherever gospel-based activities are needed. Teachers, group leaders, and parents will find this book ideal for use with young children, whether as individuals or in groups. Copy them to take home and share within families; introduce them as an additional resource for children's liturgy celebrations; use them to produce a children's newsletter or include them in the parish newsletter or magazine; use them in parish groups or at school. Above all, use them with flexibility and imagination according to your own particular needs.

Each sheet includes a reference for the text of the day, and, wherever practical, a "Look Ahead" page encourages the children (and adults) to use their Bible during the week to complete a simple activity that relates to the following Sunday. You may find it useful to give the children a photocopy of the following page, which will help them to find their way around their Bible.

To help you use this book, the Contents details the Sundays of the three-year cycle as well as the principal celebrations of the liturgical year, together with their scriptural references and themes.

I hope that *Step by Step* will help children to discover the gospels for themselves in a way that is positive and enjoyable, encouraging their natural curiosity and creativity to lead them to know Jesus and to recognize his love in their young lives as they set out on their journey of faith.

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