

Abstract

This thesis deals with the ways of initiation into the mystery of the Kingdom of God for children aged 3 to 6 in the Good Shepherd Catechesis programme. In the theoretical part of the thesis, the authors of the programme, Sofia Cavalletti and Gianna Gobbi, the historical background of the programme's origin and its theological and pedagogical bases are introduced. The theological foundations are compared with the requirements laid out for the catechesis after the Second Vatican Council. The pedagogical bases are presented in the context of Maria Montessori's pedagogy they are patterned on. The core of the thesis consists of the catechesis of the chosen topic – The Kingdom of God. At first, the selected parables are introduced from the biblical point of view, and then particular parables of the Kingdom of God are presented, which the children are gradually initiated into. The stress is put on those aspects that the catechesis of preschool children focuses on and reasons for the selection of the parables are given. The practical part of the thesis deals with hands-on experience, especially with children's verbal and visual interpretations of the topic. These interpretations show children's ability to understand the parables of the Kingdom of God and to synthesize different topics. The pictures and answers also reveal children's ability to reflect on the mystery of the Christian faith and the way of developing their relationship with God, which the Good Shepherd Catechesis is primarily centred on.