



Christian Reflection
A Series in Faith and Ethics

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Study Guides for Children

These guides integrate Bible study, prayer, and worship to recover a richer picture of childhood that should inspire renewed commitment to serving all children. Use them individually or in a series. You may reproduce them for personal or group use.

- A Vibrant Theology of Children** 2
Many distorted and simplistic views of children see them as commodities, consumers, or economic burdens, or only as sinful creatures that are 'not yet fully human.' In Scripture and Christian tradition we discover a richer picture of childhood that should inspire creative religious education and renewed commitment to serving all children.
- The Childhood of Jesus** 4
The mystery of God's incarnation in the child Jesus is a memorable theme in the Gospel of Luke. Why is it important that Jesus "grew and became strong, filled with wisdom" through the influence of his human family?
- Living in the Shadow of the Manger** 6
What is the significance of God choosing, in becoming human, to take on the fragility of infancy and vulnerability of childhood? When we prayerfully reflect on the suffering of the Christ Child with the same seriousness as that of the Christ Man, we will recognize and serve the needs of children entrusted to our care.
- Beyond Noah's Ark** 8
We want to guide our children into Scripture's rich banquet of stories of promise, deliverance, human failure, and divine forgiveness and fidelity. But how should we go about imparting to them a deep knowledge of the Bible?
- Caring for Children in Crisis** 10
How should we respond to the pain and grief children suffer in crises such as sexual abuse, divorce, and death? We can respond in creative ways to God's call to care for children beyond our families and faith communities.
- Parenting Virtues** 12
Parenting can be an unnerving prospect, for it opens us to vulnerability, change, and being permanently shaped by the habits we practice. Yet, as we parent with Christian intentionality, how may we be advanced in holiness by our children and shaped into new creations embodying hope, humility, and hospitality?
- Appendix: Optional Lesson Plans for Teachers** 14
For teachers who use these study guides in class, here are optional lesson plans with detailed teaching suggestions.