

own level. To provide a separate "service," however developmentally appropriate, begs questions about the nature of congregational worship and of the worshipping community. Yet another question is whether or not the format of an adult telling a story with props while children are seated on individual rugs and given only limited access to the activity teaches as many concepts of what worship is *not* as it does of what worship *is*. The authors describe one storytelling/worship session:

Carefully placing the box on the floor in front of them, she says, "I wonder if this is a parable? Hmm. It might be. Parables are very precious, like gold, and this box is gold." She runs her hands gently over the box. "This looks like a present. Well, parables are like presents. They have already been given to us. We can't buy them, or take them, or steal them. They are already ours. There's another reason why this might be a parable. It has a lid. And sometimes parables seem to have lids on them. But when you lift the lid of a parable there is something very precious inside. I know. Let's take off the lid and see" (p.15).

The book is written in the fashion quoted above. The adult leader is given very precise instructions right down to how to smooth out the fabric underlay supporting the wooden figures and props, and exact terminology for what to say in telling the story and directing the thoughts of the children. Principles of worship, child development, and education are translated into very exact procedures, reminiscent of a Montessori method of teaching children how to wash their hands, very precisely. In this book sensorimotor learning has been prescribed into exact actions both for the adult leaders and the children. "Without speaking, walk slowly to the rug box. Pick up a rug with both hands. Place it over your shoulder and hug it. Walk back slowly, hugging your rug. Then place it on the floor and move to the end of it. Say: "I will show you how to unroll your rug. Watch' " (p. 62).

The separation of children from the rest of the worshipping community, the confusion of education and worship, and the mechanistic methods of teaching make this book problematical. About fifteen years ago this reviewer first met one of the authors and was thoroughly charmed by his guest presentation to a seminary class. He walked in with a shoe box filled with an old piece of felt, roughcut felt "Bible characters, sheep, trees and bushes," and cotton puffs of clouds. The story was told simply and the listeners were allowed to play with the pieces. The simplicity, directness, and charm of that earlier format has been lost in the newly revised standardized version. — *David Ng*, Professor of Christian Education, San Francisco Theological Seminary, San Francisco, California.

EDUCATING RELIGIOUSLY IN THE MULTI-FAITH SCHOOL. By Donald J. Weeren. Calgary, Alberta: Detseling, 1986. Paper, 103 pp.

The near absence of religion from our public-school classrooms in the United States is an educational scandal. On the elementary level, the subject is all but nonexistent. Its presence in high schools across the country is sparse and incon-

sistent. A recent surge of interest indicates that, at last, we may be prepared to tackle the topic. The document, *Religion in the Curriculum*, published by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development in 1987, is a welcome plea to the public school to face up to its academic responsibility and to put religion in the curriculum. However, we are still at the infancy stage. A comprehensive vision, a consistent pattern of language and solid curriculum materials await development. For guidance, United States educators may wish to turn north to look at the Canadian experiment. Juridically, the circumstances are different. But Donald Weeren's book, *Educating Religiously in the Multi-Faith School*, offers instructive curricular examples of incorporating religion into religiously plural Canadian classrooms.

Weeren decides against a comprehensive examination of the issue in various countries. Rather, his decision is to focus on "what is actually being achieved in Canadian schools." This is both the strength and weakness of the book. A philosophical and educational rationale undergirds the text and is a preface to his proposal. However, the book's main evidence is found in the case studies (chapters 3-7).

The five case studies depict three principal modes of "educating religiously": 1) through the "secular" curriculum, as exemplified by the Bible as literature (chapter 3) and a world religious component in social studies (chapter 7); 2) through explicit religious studies courses with the focus on knowledge, understanding and tolerance of religious traditions rather than nurture, imposition or indoctrination into them (chapters 5 and 6); and 3) through religious observances in the form of daily opening and closing public scripture (or other suitable) readings/prayers intended to prompt personal meditation (chapter 4). The latter, of course, is constitutionally unfeasible in the United States.

Weeren is aware of the educational dilemmas his proposals pose in pluralistic classrooms. He is also sensitive to the reticence and caution — if not propensity for avoidance — in the populace. However, he is convinced that there is a greater likelihood that students are indoctrinated (i.e., unjustifiably restricted in their freedom to learn and develop) through the *banning* of religious and moral education. Students need teaching in religion (i.e., the systematic treatment of religious concepts in formal courses) and educating religiously (i.e., fostering their secular and religious capacities). In Chapter 1, Weeren notes the contemporary attitudes toward educating religiously and sketches the historical roots, and in Chapter 2 probes the meaning of the term. The goal is to assist students to acquire a sense of the fundamental value and purpose of living. Weeren's thesis is that the development of students' understanding and the appreciation of religion are a key to the endeavor.

We lack a consistent international language of religious education. *Educating Religiously* exemplifies this problem. However, if we can temporarily bracket this linguistic problem, Weeren's book is to be commended for its practical curricular approach. — *Kieran Scott*, Professor of Theology and Religious Education, St. Bonaventure University, N.Y.



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