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The Storyteller

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Entering the Story

By Kitty Collier, Lancaster, Pa

Godly Play invites listeners to "get ready" to enter the story. We ask them to focus so completely on listening, watching, and reflecting that they truly draw near.

As an area Resource Consultant and Workshop Leader for Children's Ministries, I introduce Godly Play when I visit churches during the summer. I present a lesson to a combined group of children, usually 4 through 10 years old, using the Godly Play format. The teachers are observers for this session.

On one such occasion I got the group ready for the story. I had made a yarn circle on the floor to show where the story circle should be. Several children wanted to sit on chairs and since I was new to them and only going to be there one time I allowed them to do that. I began my story with every child ready in a chair or on the floor beyond my yarn line. Just after I had spread the underlay from my parable box, I realized that the whole circle had moved right up to the edge of the underlay and there was only one 5th grade girl still sitting on a chair. All this happened in complete silence and with no interruption to the story!

On another occasion I decided to tell the Mustard Seed parable to large group of primary age children who were visiting the Resource Center where I work. We made a very large circle on the floor of the great room. I told the story and during the wondering questions I realized that something was happening. Many of the children were on their

belly and sliding slowly and silently toward the yellow circle underlay. Not one child touched but little eyes and noses were all around the story.

I felt like I was holding a handful of invisible strings and slowly and silently drawing these children into the story. It was delightful for me, and powerful. The unspoken invitation to enter the story was accepted in deed.



The First Storyteller, **Helen Cordero** 1964
Alexander Girard Collection
Museum of International Folk Art