

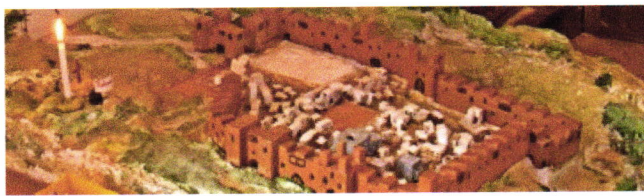


# All About the Atrium

## CGSUSA Parent Newsletter

### The City of Jerusalem

Sofia Cavalletti and Gianna Gobbi understood the importance of knowing about the Holy Land in order to grasp the message of the Bible. There is no history without its geography. She wrote, "In our view it is important that the historical events also have materials relative to their geographical reconstruction in order to let the children know how to situate them in a point in space. The material helps to concretize the events." (*Religious Potential of the Child*, p 113)



#### WHY DO WE FOCUS ON THE CITY OF JERUSALEM?

Every year during the Lenten and Easter Seasons, we find ourselves returning to the city of Jerusalem and visiting the places and events that lift up the Paschal Mystery in the Sacred Scriptures. Sofia Cavalletti, founder of this work, along with Gianna Gobbi, wrote in *The Good Shepherd and the Child: A Joyful Journey*:

**The City of Jerusalem** in which we offer a raised-surface map of Jerusalem with moveable pieces of the sites of the paschal events. The very brief narrative that accompanies the naming of the sites underscores the realness (or historical reality) of the Passion, Death, and Resurrection and the unity of the events. In a sense, all of these

episodes are really one event: the greatest mystery of love! (p 80)

Biblical Geography allows the child to participate more deeply in the liturgy, and will draw their attention to listen more closely in the coming weeks to the names of the towns and the locations they hear proclaimed in the Scriptures. Especially during Holy Week on Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Vigil or Easter morning, we will be journeying to these sacred spots that our children will discover with the City of Jerusalem presentation.

It is important to note: When we speak to the children, we are careful to hold the death and resurrection of Jesus together. We never speak about one without the other. They are one mystery.

After the children are oriented to the city, the catechist shows more details, depending upon the children's attention span. For the youngest children, our meditation includes:

The Pools: There are two pools in the city of Jerusalem, that were places where Jesus performed healings, the Pool of Siloam and the Sheep's Pool.

The Temple: The Temple, located on the Temple Mount, is the highest point of the city. The temple comprises a large portion of the upper city. The temple is the site of many of Jesus' preaching and teaching.

The Cenacle, or Upper Room: Jesus came to