



## Church instruction as an investment for the future

Zurich. All around the world, the New Apostolic Church provides children's instruction that is highly valued in pedagogical and methodological terms. How far along are the new teacher and student manuals? Here is a report from the latest European District Apostle Meeting.

"The District Churches are waiting for us to bring these textbooks to market," said District Apostle Rainer Storck as he summarised his report on the topic of children's instruction in the New Apostolic Church in the latest European District Apostle Meeting. His task is to bring together all the efforts of the various groups working on these publications on behalf of the [Coordination Group](#). The CTM (Children's Teaching Material) Steering Committee is responsible for the basic content: what will be offered in which teaching format, what will be designed for which countries? Professional teachers take care of the technical and pedagogical orientation, and professional artists are tasked with providing the illustrations. Last but not least, corresponding professional agencies are required for the design. All of this is coordinated by a Steering Committee comprised of educators and experts. This group then reports to District Apostle Storck about the work phases that have been carried out, so that he in turn can keep the Coordination Group and the other District Apostles up to date. "While it is quite a lot of effort, it is well worth it," says District Apostle Storck. "This work is all about the next generation. Our aim is to acquaint our children and adolescents with the love and greatness of God on their own level. That may sound easy, but it actually requires a great deal of work behind the scenes."

## **Sunday School, Religious Instruction, Confirmation Instruction**

The new material for Sunday School is the furthest along. Volumes 1 and 2 are already in use, and are available to teachers either as a printed version or in the [NAK Media Portal](#). District Apostle Storck is happy to report that the response has been consistently positive. "Volume 3 will be available in time for the next school year in all congregations in the German-speaking regions," he adds. "This means we are right on schedule."

It is much the same for the teaching materials that are to be used in Religious Instruction: everything is on schedule. The lesson titles have all been formulated, and several lessons have already been written. Four lessons are planned for each learning unit, which results in a thematically connected series. Specific competencies which the children are to develop have also been identified and formulated for all of the lessons. The required illustrations have already been awarded to an artist.

The Confirmation Instruction level will also receive new teaching materials. In terms of priority, these booklets are in third place. Here too, all the lesson titles, concepts, and lesson plans have already been created, and the illustrations have been awarded to an artist.

## **Modern and child-appropriate**

Already in 2015, the international Church leader spoke out very specifically in favour of an educational programme in Africa: "I ask you, my dear Apostles, to prioritise these two tasks: teach the ministers and set up Sunday School for children in all congregations. This is my agenda for Africa." In Africa his solution was: "We need a hybrid model consisting of both digital and analogue approaches."

In Europe the new [teaching material](#) for Sunday School has already been in use since the 2019–2020 school year. The lessons are designed in a modern way and contain a lot of child-friendly material in order to introduce the children to the faith in a timely and age-appropriate way. The most obvious innovations are a multitude of methodical lesson parts, namely the activities, which playfully help the children deepen their understanding of the subject matter, as well as a Take Home Page, which gives parents an opportunity to talk to their children about the contents of the Sunday School lesson and help them understand it.

## **Coming soon for all age groups**

In Canada there is also an [app for mobile devices](#). The app is available to teachers without charge in both Android and iOS versions. Offline use is also possible. This means that teachers there can also access the digital teaching material on the website in English, Spanish, and French.

This not only applies to four complete years of Sunday School, but also includes the teaching content for Pre-Sunday School, Religious Instruction, and Confirmation Instruction.

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