

Galvin, Betty, 2005, *The Alive-O Seven Religious Education Programme in Primary School: A Survey of Teacher Perceptions.*

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

The teaching of religion in Irish primary schools has been updated in recent years. The *Alive-O* programme was launched in 1996 (*Alive-O 1*) and phased into schools on an annual basis. The year 2004 was the second year of implementation of the *Alive-O 7* (Fifth Class) programme. This study investigates Fifth Class teachers' perceptions of a programme which has been accredited as being a "refreshing, imaginative, inclusive and positive statement of the Church's commitment to children's faith development" (Mairtin, 2003, 213).

The study reviews literature on the teaching of religion and its evolution. From the memorization of catechism questions we have progressed to the eclectic modern approach of *Alive-O* which takes account of different intelligences and a changing cultural landscape.

Through the use of quantitative and qualitative methods of research the survey examines the area of in-service and analyses teachers' views on the various elements of the programme. It explores such topics as memorization, prayer and the sacraments and the whole concept of partnership. Partnership is considered a vital component in the process of evangelisation. This study seeks to ascertain progress, if any, in this area. Finally, the study considers teachers' opinions on the teaching of religion in general, the option of choice and the current call for a core religious programme regardless of denomination.

The study ends with appropriate recommendations and indicates areas of further research.