

A Quiet Place Apart

*Guided Meditations  
for Youth on  
Personal Themes*

*Jane E. Arsenault*



*Leader's Guide*    ⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨⇨

*Guided Meditations for Youth  
on Personal Themes*



A QUIET PLACE APART

*Leader's Guide*    ⤵⤵⤵⤵⤵⤵⤵⤵⤵⤵⤵⤵⤵⤵⤵⤵⤵⤵⤵⤵

*Guided Meditations for Youth  
on Personal Themes*

*Jane E. Arsenault*

*Saint Mary's Press®*

The publishing team for this book included Robert P. Stamschror, development editor; Barbara Augustyn Sirovatka, copy editor and typesetter; Lynn Dahdal, production editor; Stephan Nagel, cover designer; Elaine Kohner, illustrator; Steve M. Alden, West Stock, cover photographer; pre-press, printing, and binding by the graphics division of Saint Mary's Press.

The scriptural text throughout this book is freely adapted. These adaptations are not to be interpreted or used as official translations of the Scriptures.

The acknowledgments continue on page 46.

Copyright © 1995 by Saint Mary's Press, Christian Brothers Publications, 702 Terrace Heights, Winona, MN 55987-1318, [www.smp.org](http://www.smp.org). All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced by any means without the written permission of the publisher.

Printed in the United States of America

Printing: 12 11 10 9 8 7

Year: 2010 09 08 07 06

ISBN-13: 978-0-88489-347-2

ISBN-10: 0-88489-347-2

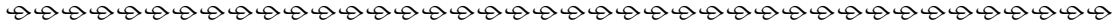
# Contents



<i>Directions for Leading the Meditations</i>	7
<i>New Life: Deadly Stones</i>	12
<i>Discipleship: Do You Love Me?</i>	21
<i>Self-esteem: Salt for the Earth; Light for the World</i>	29
<i>Secrets: In the Quiet of the Night</i>	37

To  
Isabel,  
*who helped me experience the love of my God  
tenderly, magnanimously, compassionately.*





# *Directions*

## *for Leading the Meditations*

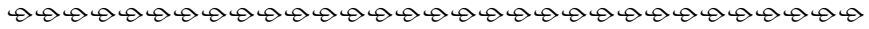
**LEADER PREPARATION** As the meditation leader, your preparation is especially important to the success of a guided meditation. Pray the meditation before leading the youth group in it. This helps you to become comfortable with its style and content. Determine if any of the material requires a review with the young people before the meditation (for example, the necessary uses of salt and light sources in the prayer experience on self-esteem). Praying the meditation beforehand can also help you in setting the mood and giving directions later.

If you choose to have your group do the optional art expression offered as follow-up to the meditations, it is best if you try it out before the group gathers.

If you intend to guide the meditation yourself rather than use the accompanying cassette, it will be important to rehearse the guided prayer, including the introductory comments, the scriptural reading, and the opening and closing prayers, so that appropriate and sufficient time is allowed for the imagery to take place and for prayerful reflection to occur.

Only a good reader who has prepared should read aloud the scriptural passage that precedes each guided meditation. The scriptural passage is important to establishing the theme and tone of the meditation. Read it with reverence and expression, using a Bible. The meditation script should be read slowly and prayerfully with a background of soft, instrumental music.

**PARTICIPANT PREPARATION** To introduce the young people to guided meditation, it might be helpful to tell them that they are being introduced to an adult prayer form but one that is perhaps better suited to young people because their imagination is sometimes

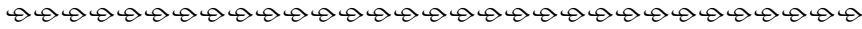


much more active than that of adults. This prayer form helps them use their imagination to meet Jesus.

Take the time to preface the prayer by asking for complete quiet and mature, serious participation. Remember that this type of prayer may not be easy for everyone in the group—some may be self-conscious about closing their eyes; some may have difficulty getting in touch with their feelings; some might have personal obstacles in their relationship with the Lord. Be gentle, let go, and let the Spirit work. In fact, participants can be told that although the meditation is guided, if the Spirit leads them in another direction, it is okay for them to go with their own reflection and not worry about the words being spoken. Have the participants spread out, about three or four feet from one another, and settle into a comfortable position.

A possible difficulty, one that may not be apparent at first, may be encountered by those young people in your group who wear the type of contact lenses that prevent them from closing their eyes for an extended period of time. Invite these participants to put their head down, hiding their eyes in the dark crook of their arm. Another possible difficulty may be experienced by those who have a sinus problem or asthma. Instead of breathing through their nose during the deep-breathing exercises, they can breathe quietly through their mouth.

**MUSIC** Quiet music is important for setting and keeping the mood of the meditation. Music can be playing even as the group gathers. It is a nice background for giving instructions. The meditations on the tape are accompanied by background music. If you read a meditation aloud to the group, use instrumental background music with it. Have additional tapes ready to play during the activities after the guided meditation. Ideally, the follow-up activities will take place in a separate space; therefore, it is less disruptive if cassette players are already set up in the different areas.



**REFLECTION  
QUESTIONS**

After a guided meditation, the young people need to reflect on and name the experience. The reflection questions following each meditation script can help the young people do this. Choose several of these questions (or use questions similar to them) and type them up, leaving room after each for a response. Make enough copies for each participant.

To avoid disrupting the quiet mood of the meditation time, pass out the reflection questions (placed facedown) as the participants take their places. Also give a pen or pencil to each person. If the young people are sitting on the floor, you could give out hardcover books or clipboards to facilitate writing. Explain that you are distributing reflection questions for use after the meditation. Assure them that their responses are private and that their papers are not going to be collected.

When it is time for sharing, honor and affirm all responses and respect those persons who do not wish to answer aloud. Enough time must be allowed for the participants to respond to the questions and to share their responses with the group. These prayer experiences are not meant to be rushed through.

**ART EXPRESSION  
(OPTIONAL)**

Each prayer experience comes with an optional art expression. You might choose to use this rather than the reflection questions.

If you choose to do the optional art expression, try it out yourself before the group gathers. Prepare the art materials ahead of time and lay them out in the area in which the participants will work. Familiarize the group with the art activity before the prayer time, if possible, so as not to disrupt the meditation mood. This should allow you to give particular directions for the art activity without having to answer a lot of questions. It is a good idea to show your sample at this time.

**SETTING** It is imperative that the area for the prayer experience is quiet—no ringing of telephones, bells, and the like. If necessary, put a sign on the outside of your door: Praying! Please do not disturb!

Participants may sit in chairs or find a comfortable position on the floor, but they must be a few feet from one another so that they each have their own space and do not distract one another. Therefore, the area must not be cramped. Lying down on the floor should be discouraged, as some participants are likely to fall asleep.

**CENTERPIECE (OPTIONAL)** Each theme of the prayer experiences can be enhanced by creating a centerpiece that can be placed on a small table, an altar, or the middle of the floor. The centerpiece should have objects that reflect the message of the prayer. For example, for the meditation on discipleship (*Do You Love Me?*), you might display some items to denote love, such as several heart-shaped objects, along with a jewelry box, a key chain, earrings, a pendant, a picture frame, and even your sample art expression. Or you might spread out a couple pairs of sandals on sand to signify following Jesus as his disciples. Include candles and the Bible opened to the scriptural passage.

A centerpiece for the meditation on secrets (*In the Quiet of the Night*) might first include a dark or black cloth draped decoratively, candles, the Bible, and closed containers to represent hidden secrets. After the art expression or reflection period, students could return to a bright cloth and several added lit candles, as well as crumpled, bright-colored tissue paper strewn randomly across the black or bright cloth or spilling out from the now open containers.

For the healing meditation on new life (*Deadly Stones*), you might arrange a decoratively draped cloth, stones placed all around the Bible, and lit candles.

To enhance the meditation on self-esteem (*Salt for the Earth; Light for the World*), the centerpiece might consist of a decoratively draped cloth (not white), mounds of salt or several variously shaped salt shakers, and several candles set