

Guided Meditation before the Blessed Sacrament

The following resource provides an outline and script for leading children through a guided meditation. If this is the first time you are using a guided meditation with the children, you may want to take some time to explain this form of prayer to them. Invite them to listen quietly and to use their imagination throughout the prayer.

Materials and Preparation

- Have enough chairs so that the children have an empty place on both sides of them. This will create an environment with less distraction. If there are pews in front of the tabernacle, be prepared to space the children accordingly so they have space around them.
- Provide a CD player and a CD with soft, meditative background music with no words.
- Practice the meditation aloud several times by yourself to get the tone and delivery you want. It will be helpful to read slowly and with a voice that is soft and calming but clear enough for the children to hear easily.
- The pauses are important in a guided meditation. They give the children enough time to visualize what you are saying. Make sure not to give too much time, or the children may become restless or their minds may wander.
- Before the children arrive for the meditation, have the music playing softly and have the lights dimmed, if possible. You want them to arrive in a space already set for the meditation.

Guided Meditation Directions

1. **Welcome** the children as they arrive, and ask them to sit down with at least one chair (or space) between them. Continue with the following:
 - This is the tabernacle, and this is the tabernacle lamp. (*Point to the tabernacle lamp.*) Does anyone know what it means when the candle by the tabernacle is lit? (*Ask several children to share their responses.*) Yes, it means that Jesus is present. He is right here with us.
 - We are going to use the next few minutes to think and to pray quietly. While we are here, rest your voices. I will be talking and leading you in prayer. I am going to help you think about Jesus and invite you to talk to Jesus quietly in your heart. You are getting ready to receive Jesus soon, and I want to help you feel really close to Jesus.



- Rest your hands in your lap. Close your eyes, or look at a candle or the cross. Take a deep breath, and imagine that you are breathing in God's love. As you breathe out, whisper the name Jesus. *(Repeat this several times with the children.)* Now try to rest your eyes and listen carefully.
- Keeping your eyes closed, imagine that you have just walked in the door of a little room. *(Pause.)* It may be very fancy or very plain. Look around your room. *(Pause)* You like this room. The walls are your favorite color. You can hear soft music in this room. You also see a small stained-glass window, like the windows in church, with lots of pretty colors. *(Pause.)* You see the sunlight coming through the window—it makes everything sparkle. How does it make you feel? *(Pause.)* You see a table. Is it a kitchen table or a dining room table or maybe a breakfast bar? Maybe it is a picnic table or a booth like in a restaurant. *(Pause.)* You sit down at the table. It is just your size. You feel very relaxed and peaceful. *(Pause.)* Now someone else comes into your room. You look around to see who it is. Right away, you know it is Jesus. *(Pause)*
- Jesus sits down beside you. Feel how near he is to you. *(Pause.)* You look at Jesus, and he smiles at you. You smile back at Jesus. Jesus has such gentle eyes. His eyes seem to say, "I love you." *(Pause.)* Jesus says your name. . . . It sounds so beautiful. You feel warm and cozy. *(Pause.)* Without using any words, you say hello to Jesus. *(Pause)* Then Jesus begins to talk to you. Jesus says, "I want you to know how happy I am to be here with you. I love you so much. Very soon, I will be even closer to you. I am even more excited than you are about to receive your First Eucharist." *(Pause.)*
- Now Jesus wants to talk to you about what happens at Mass. He says, "In the Eucharist you give gifts of bread and wine. But you also give me your good works and your prayers. In a way, you give me yourself. During the liturgy, the Holy Spirit changes the bread into my Body—for you!—and the wine into my Blood—for you! I give these special gifts back to you so you can share my life." *(Pause.)*
- Jesus asks, "What would you like to tell me now?" He smiles again, and waits. It is your turn to talk to Jesus—silently, in your heart. Tell Jesus how you feel about receiving First Eucharist. Maybe you will tell him that you are so excited, or very happy, or maybe even a little bit nervous. Tell Jesus what you like about getting ready for First Eucharist. Tell him what is hard for you. Maybe the hardest part is the waiting—waiting to receive Jesus! Now I am going to give you a little quiet time to talk to Jesus in your own words. *(Long pause)*
- It is almost time to go. Say goodbye to Jesus, but remember, Jesus is always with you. With your eyes still closed, look around again at the little room you are in and feel how comfortable and calm the room makes you feel.
- Now I want you to become aware of the place we are in and the seat you are sitting on. When the music stops, everyone will take a deep breath and slowly open their eyes. *(Stop the music and give the children time to open their eyes.)* Now let's all stay quiet, genuflect, and make the Sign of the Cross. *(Genuflect and make the*



Sign of the Cross.) Let's leave this space now, silently. We can begin speaking again once we have left.

2. **Use** your normal speaking voice to indicate to the children that they can talk (after you have left the space). If there is time, it will be helpful to gather the children in a room and talk about their experiences in the guided meditation. You may also wish to have them draw or write a journal entry describing their encounter with Jesus in the guided meditation.
3. **Encourage** any children who share that they did not see Jesus. Though most children will have no problem with the guided meditation, some may have difficulty closing their eyes or calming themselves enough to maintain attention. Assure these children that sometimes this kind of prayer takes practice and that they can always talk to Jesus in their own prayers.

