



**Guided Children's Hour of Adoration:
Younger/Preschool Children
(Advent: Getting Ready Theme Overview)**

Intro

Exposition of the Eucharist - Kneeling and Song: You Are My All in All

Focus on Jesus' True Presence in the Eucharist in the Monstrance.

Repeat after Line

Cleaning Our Hearts

Repeat after Lines

Prostrate

Making a Soft Manger in Our Heart for Baby Jesus

Repeat after Lines

Closing Thoughts

Song: Away in a Manger

Benediction and Divine Praises

Reposition of Blessed Sacrament and Song: Holy God We Praise Thy Name

Based on previous plans' rubrics that have been published with the approval of the Committee on Divine Worship, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

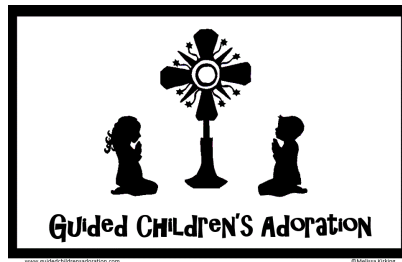
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Guided Eucharistic Adoration for Younger/Preschool Children Advent: Getting Ready

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[As we wait for the students to file in and get settled, play reflective music in the background to encourage silence and reflection.]

_____ 0 minute mark
in plan timing.

Leader:

[Leader should stand at the front of the church for this Introduction.]

[Please note the estimated timing in the right side margins. For your ease, you can write the actual minutes of the hour prior to beginning. Example: 4:15, 4:18, etc. However, a firm time is you must start the closing kneel by 13 minutes past the start of the Adoration to close on time.]

[Welcome the children to Eucharistic Adoration. Issue reminders as needed about Christ's True Presence in the Eucharist, behavior expectations, posture, booklets only being held when needed, what to do in the silence, etc. See: "An Introduction for Children about Eucharistic Adoration" for suggestions.]

[Optional Handouts: Color Sheets]

Good morning! Can everyone softly whisper to me why we are here today. (Pause for the children to whisper their answer.) That's right, we are here for Adoration - to spend time with Jesus and to show Him that we love Him.

Show me where Jesus will be today. [Using your hand, palm up show the clear window to the children. This helps reinforce where the children will see our Eucharistic Lord.]

Quietly nod your head yes or no. When I say look at Jesus during our Adoration time, do I mean this is Jesus? [Point to the actual gold on the monstrance. Pause to look at the children.] No. Well then, would you look here? [Point to the currently empty window in the monstrance. Pause to look at the children.] Yes!

Is He there now? (no)

The host looks like bread, but is really God . . . Jesus.

Repeat after me: The Host is / Jesus' Body, / His Blood, / His Soul, / and His Divinity (His kingship).

We want to be able to show Jesus our listening ears during Adoration. I want to see your listening ears. [Model your hand cupped behind your ear.]

Since we are here to spend time with our Jesus, we want to show Jesus we are listening to Him. We show God that we are good listeners by:

- keeping our voices off with no whispering
- you can either bow your head, close your eyes, or look at Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament
- you need to still hands or fold them in prayer, keep your hands to yourself.
- You also need to stay in your pew or on your mat.

[Request catechist assistance prior to Exposition:]

Catechists, as we all know, the children need redirecting at times. I ask that you help encourage and guide them to show reverence before our Sacramental Lord with the items I just talked to them about.

[Redirect during the Holy Hour as needed with reminders:

- Let's take a moment to remember how to show God we are listening.

- Let us show Jesus our listening ears.
- Please put your worship aid down.
- Let's try to still our bodies and quiet our voices.
- Remember Jesus is truly here.
- I need you to stay in your pew.
- Remember we leave the kneelers down the whole time.
- Give Jesus your full attention. If you are whispering to a neighbor or fiddling with your papers, you might miss something that Jesus wants to share with you.
- Etc....]

Please kneel. Kneeling shows Jesus we know He is our King.

Take a moment to quiet yourself and get your mind and heart ready to spend time with Jesus. Take a few deep breaths, be still, and feel the Lord's peace fill you.

(pause: about 15 seconds)

_____ 3 minute mark
in plan timing.

[Leader should be seated behind the children.]

Father/Deacon will now expose Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament as we sing: You Are My All in All.

[The Blessed Sacrament is placed in the monstrance on the altar. The presider then kneels before the altar. If altar servers are available, the priest or deacon incenses the Blessed Sacrament.]

Priest/Deacon:

[The priest or deacon may begin the time of Adoration with a prayer, such as the following.]

Opening Prayer: (With age and experience, more of the Opening Prayer can be added.)
Let us pray.

After a brief pause for silent prayer, the presiding minister continues:

Lord our God,
in this great sacrament
we come into the presence of Jesus Christ Your Son

All: Amen.¹

Moment of silence. (15-30 seconds)

_____ 5 minute mark
in plan timing.

Key for Pauses

. . . . indicates 1-2 seconds of silence
small pause: 5-10 seconds
pause: about 30 seconds
silence: 30-60 seconds

Leader:

Look carefully at the clear window (small pause: 3-5 seconds) Is Jesus here now? . . .
Nod your head yes if you see Him! (Pause long enough so the children can nod. Encourage them if needed.) Yes, He is here! You can see Jesus in the form of the white Host in the clear window . . . With your hands, show Jesus you know where He is. (Pause long enough so the children can use their hand to indicate that Jesus is in the clear window in the middle of the monstrance. Encourage them if needed.)

Jesus waited today with joy knowing that you were coming to visit Him Take a moment to feel Jesus' joy and love coming to you from the Host (small pause: 3-5 seconds)

Tell Jesus:
I see You!

(Pause long enough so the children don't repeat after you anymore.)

Jesus, again, we see You with our eyes as white circular bread. . . .

Children, now close your eyes . . . picture Jesus as a baby in your heart. (small pause: 3-5 seconds) Jesus, right now we see You in our minds as a sweet baby . . .

Please open your eyes and see Jesus as the Eucharist . . . as the bread again. (small pause: 3-5 seconds)

¹ No 224 Holy Communion & Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass

Jesus, we remember that You are both . . . the bread and the baby . . . because You are God and You can do anything! (small pause: 3-5 seconds)

Looking at Jesus, repeat after me:
Jesus, / I know You are here.

(Pause long enough so the children don't repeat after you anymore.)

Please sit.

_____ 6 minute mark
in plan timing.

Let us wonder about how we can spend our time during Advent getting ready for baby Jesus. (small pause: 3-5 seconds)

Think a moment, if your grandparent or aunt or uncle or some other special guest is coming to visit your home, what does your family do . . . besides get excited? . . . Your family prepares, right? You get your house clean and ready.

Your guest feels welcomed and important to you because you took time to prepare for them instead of playing. So you might sweep the floor . . . mom might put clean sheets on the bed . . . empty the trash . . . and of course you pick up your toys. . . you work with excitement because someone you love is coming for a visit!

Advent is the same. We joyfully get our hearts ready for baby Jesus on Christmas day. Baby Jesus is the special guest coming to our heart! . . . Nod your head if Jesus is important and special. (Pause long enough so the children can nod. Encourage them if needed.)

Look at Jesus, the white Host in the clear window, and repeat after me:
"Jesus, / You are special / and I love You.

(Pause long enough so the children don't repeat after you anymore.)

Like a clean house, we want a clean heart for baby Jesus. We sweep out the things that make our heart not so loving and kind . . . such as when we are cranky, mean, or rude . . . we will call these things dirt . . .

Pretend to hold a broom in your hands.

Sweep the broom and practice sweeping away the times you feel like yelling or pouting or you feel mad . . . get that dirt out of your heart. (small pause: 3-5 seconds) As you sweep, say, "Jesus, I am sorry."

(Pause long enough so the children don't repeat after you anymore.)

Keep sweeping, sweep away the times you don't want to do what your parents ask you to do . . . get that dirt out of your heart so you can listen better. (small pause: 3-5 seconds) Say, "Jesus, I am sorry."

(Pause long enough so the children don't repeat after you anymore.)

One more time, sweep away the times you don't want to share with your brother, sister, or friend . . . get that dirt out of your heart so you can be more loving. (small pause: 3-5 seconds) And say, "Jesus, I am sorry."

(Pause long enough so the children don't repeat after you anymore.)

Between now and Christmas day, our hearts may get a little dirty again with rudeness, bad choice, not being a good listener, or maybe even being mean. Every day sweep your heart clean to keep it ready for baby Jesus.

Look at Jesus, in the clear window. Show Jesus with your hand that you know where He is. (Pause long enough so the children can use their hand to indicate that Jesus is in the clear window in the middle of the monstrance. Encourage them if needed.) Repeat after me:

"Jesus, / You are so very special! / Please help me to keep / my heart clean for You.

(Pause long enough so the children don't repeat after you anymore.)

_____ 9 minute mark
in plan timing.

A minute of silence.

Remember we talked about that there are times that we run and play and talk with our friends and times that we are really still and quiet with Jesus. This is going to be one of those moments when we are still and quiet with Jesus.

Close your eyes or place your hands on your face so nothing distracts you from being still.

Be as still as you can . . . Don't move at all . . . Close your eyes. . . Slow your breathing . . . just be still with Jesus.

(Praise if needed:

- That is good, you have been silent for 10 - 30 seconds [depending on group], let us see if you can be still and silent for another 10 -30 seconds.
- Good! Most of you are being so quiet. Now let's keep our feet and hands oh so still)

(Repeat as needed)

(Try for 1 minutes of silence. It is important that children have at least some time of quiet which will grow in length as the children grow in age and experience.)

Open your eyes.

_____ 11 minute mark
in plan timing.

When Jesus was born, His mother did not have a regular crib to lay Him in. She laid Him in a manger which is a long open wooden box that animals eat from. (small pause: 3-5 seconds)

We each need to have our own place to lay baby Jesus . . . Put your hand on your heart . . . Close your eyes and imagine putting a manger, the wooden feed box, in your heart for baby Jesus to lay in. (small pause: 3-5 seconds)

Wood is hard and baby Jesus needs a soft spot to lay. His Mother lovingly made ready the manger for her Son by putting fresh straw and hay in it.

Between now and Christmas day, doing good deeds and praying for others will be like pieces of clean straw that you can put in the manger inside your heart. These deeds and prayers make your heart's manger soft and ready for baby Jesus on Christmas morning.

When you use kind words with others . . . you can pick up a piece of straw and put it in your heart's wooden manger . . . when you pay extra attention at Mass, you can pick up a piece of straw and put it in your manger . . . when you do an extra thing to help at home, or when you share with others, or when you say a prayer for someone these are all like pieces of straw.

Wonder a moment about how many pieces of straw you could put in Jesus' manger between now and Christmas morning. (small pause: 3-5 seconds)

Now wonder a moment . . . think about how soft you can make Jesus' wooden bed in your heart. (small pause: 3-5 seconds)

Look at Jesus, the white Host in the clear window, and repeat after me:

"Jesus, / please help me to do / many good deeds / so my heart's manger / is soft for baby You.

(Pause long enough so the children don't repeat after you anymore.)

Let us practice making Jesus' manger soft now. Softly whisper or think a prayer inside that Jesus help our priests, Fr. Dean and Fr. Henry, during the busy season of Advent.
(small pause: 5-10 seconds)

Now picture picking up a piece of straw. Place your hand on your heart to put the straw in the manger of your heart. (small pause: 5-10 seconds)

This time, think of something loving you can do for your mother, father, or someone special after school today. (small pause: 5-10 seconds)

Again, picture picking up a piece of straw. Place your hand on your heart to put the straw in the manger. (small pause: 5-10 seconds)

Look joyfully at Jesus in the Host . . . smile at Him . . . whisper you love Him . . . and blow Him a kiss. (small pause: 5-10 seconds)

Again, pick up a piece of straw and put the straw in the manger of your heart. (small pause: 5-10 seconds)

Each loving action and prayer makes Jesus' manger softer and softer. Keep doing loving things and praying every day from now till Christmas. Then baby Jesus will have a wonderful place prepared for Him in your heart.

We have just a moment left before we start our good-bye songs and prayers. Take a quiet moment to tell Jesus whatever you want.

Moment of silence. (15-30 seconds)

Look carefully at Jesus one more time and blow Jesus kisses to show your love for Him.

(Pause long enough for the children to blow Jesus kisses.)

_____ 14 minute mark
in plan timing.

Please kneel.

We will sing Jesus about His manger.

Song: Away in a Manger (repeat after me fashion)

[During the song, the minister may incense the Holy Eucharist. After the song is finished, he stands and sings or says a prayer such as the following. ²]

Priest/Deacon:

Let us pray. (With age and experience, more of the Closing Prayer can be added.)

After a brief pause for silent prayer, the presiding minister continues:

Lord our God,
You have given us the true bread from heaven.

All: Amen. ³

Moment of silence: (15-30 seconds)

Leader:

Father/Deacon will now do Benediction, a blessing from Jesus. **Talk the children through Benediction:** Look! Don't miss your special blessing from Jesus! Father's/Deacon's hands are not touching the monstrance, they are covered in cloth. This means the blessing comes right from Jesus, not Father/Deacon. Keep your eyes on the Eucharist! Jesus' blessing comes from the Host like rays of sunshine covering you in His love. He covers you with love even if you can't feel it or see it. O, how Jesus loves you! Receive your blessing by making the Sign of the Cross.

[After the prayer, the priest or deacon puts on the humeral veil, genuflects, and goes to the altar. Then he picks up the monstrance and makes the sign of the cross over the people in silence. ⁴ During the blessing, servers may incense and ring the bells, according to local tradition.]

Priest/Deacon:

Benediction

[After replacing the monstrance on the altar, the priest or deacon may kneel and lead those assembled in the Divine Praises. The Divine Praises can also be said as the priest

² No 98 Holy Communion & Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass

³ No 226 Holy Communion & Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass

⁴ No 99 Holy Communion & Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass

or deacon reposes the Blessed Sacrament.]

We will now repeat a few of The Divine Praises⁵ after Father/Deacon. Repeat after the president. (With age and experience, more lines of the Divine Praises can be added.)

Blessed be God.

Blessed be His Holy Name.

Blessed be Jesus Christ, / true God and true man.

Blessed be the name of Jesus.

The priest/deacon reposes the Blessed Sacrament and Song: You Are My All in All

⁵ Repeating a few of the Divine Praises, but not all, expose the children to the beauty of the Praises, but allow the children to slowly learn all the Divine Praise over time just like the children learn to be silent for longer periods of time with age and experience.

Extra

[Sometimes you will get through the whole set of plans, sometimes you won't. Here are some extra prayers and reflections in case you get done early. Each group and each session will flow differently depending on the age of the children, how long you pause, and where God leads you that particular time.]

Hundreds of years ago, people did not celebrate Christmas as we do now - no tree, carols, and probably not even presents. St. Francis thought that the birth of Jesus should be remembered in a special way. He took time in Advent to get ready a Christmas surprise for the people of the town. St. Francis wanted the town people to feel joy and excitement as they waited to see the Christmas surprise. By Christmas Eve, lots of people had heard of the surprise and people came from all around. St. Francis had built the first nativity scene - a holy scene with a full-sized manger with hay plus a live donkey and ox. God was so pleased that He allowed St Francis to hold the real Baby Jesus and some of the townspeople saw St Francis do so.

We will now say some lines taken from The Divine Praises written by St. Francis to help us get our hearts ready for Jesus' birth. Look at Jesus in the Monstrance or close your eyes. Repeat after me:

Jesus, / You are holy, Lord, / the only God, / and Your deeds are wonderful.
 Jesus, / You are strong. /
 Jesus, / You are great. /
 Jesus, / You are the Most High. /
 Jesus, / You are love. /

(Pause long enough so the children don't repeat after you anymore.)

Come, Lord Jesus,
 Come, Lord Jesus,
 Come, Lord Jesus, come!

The "Our Father" is a prayer that Jesus gave us. He taught us the words so think of the importance of these words. Let's say the "Our Father" together slowly and very thoughtfully, focusing on the words.

Act of Hope (Repeat in sections.)

O my God, / relying on your infinite goodness and promises, / I hope to obtain
pardon of my sins, / the help of your grace, / and life everlasting, / through the
merits of Jesus Christ, / my Lord and Redeemer.

References

Books:

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Music:

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Away in a Manger: Gather: Comprehensive, Chicago: GIA Publications, Inc. 1994. #524.

You Are My All in All: Girls of Grace, Nichole Nordeman.