



# Jesus said, "Let the children come to me."

Pope John Paul II said back in 1996: "I urge priests, religious and lay people to continue and redouble their efforts to teach the younger generations the meaning and value of Eucharistic adoration and devotion. How will young people be able to know the Lord if they are not introduced to the mystery of his presence?"

"[...] By learning the words of the prayer of the heart, they will be closer to the Lord, who will accompany them in their spiritual and human growth. ... All interior life needs silence and intimacy with Christ in order to develop.

## **Benefits of Children's Eucharistic Adoration**

- What we learn as children will remain in us and help us to stay close to Jesus. Before young children have received their first Holy Communion, Eucharistic adoration is a great way to help them receive Jesus in their heart through spiritual communion.
- And afterward, it helps increase in them a desire for more frequent Communion. Hopefully during the teen years these same children will find in Jesus a best friend, strength and light. They also may be more disposed to hear and follow their vocation in life.
- It introduces kids to the sacred. The adoration chapel has a certain aura. It's just different; quiet, calm, and...holy. You can feel the presence of Jesus there.
- Part of the secret to integrating children into the Catholic Faith is the witness and example of other Christians. In adoration, children see other adults besides their parents that love the Lord and take time to pray. That's powerful.
- Adoration teaches children reverence. There are no bad examples in the adoration chapel. Everyone is reverent and respectful.

## **How do you help children understand adoration and get the most out of the experience? How do you keep them focused and engaged for an entire hour?**

Father Thomas: "None of us will ever fully understand this mystery. What we do with the children is to remind them of the love that Jesus has for all."

## **There are three other things recommended to encourage the children and reiterate Jesus' love for them.**

- First, read and share with them the "Letter to Children" written by Pope John Paul II. In (it he shares his thoughts on the importance of the prayers of children for the world.
  - [http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/letters/1994/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_let\\_13121994\\_children.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/letters/1994/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_13121994_children.html)
- Second is the story of Fatima. When the angel first appeared to the three shepherd children he prostrated himself and said, "My God, I believe, I adore, I hope and I love you. I ask pardon for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope and do not love you." He told the children to pray this way because the hearts of Jesus and Mary were attentive to them. This helps the children to realize how important their prayers are.
  - A good resource is the movie "The Day the Sun Danced" available on YouTube [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H\\_1wWj-rKlw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_1wWj-rKlw)
- Third, share with them the sixth day of the Divine Mercy Novena.
  - On this day, Our Lord told St. Faustina: "Today bring to me the meek and humble souls and the souls of little children, and immerse them in my mercy. These souls most closely resemble my heart. They strengthened me during my bitter agony. I saw them as earthly angels, who will keep vigil at my altars. I pour out upon them whole torrents of grace. I favor humble souls with my confidence."
  - In these words we see how these children today fulfill this. They are the angels keeping vigil at his altar. Praised be Jesus Christ now and forever. <https://www.ewtn.com/Devotionals/mercy/novena.htm#6>

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## Tips for bringing children to Adoration –

Adapted from <http://newevangelizers.com/blog/2012/11/23/a-how-to-guide-for-adoration-with-small-children/>

**1. Explain the Purpose:** Explain what Adoration is, Jesus truly present in the Eucharist. You are spending time with Jesus.. This will help the children understand why we're respectful and quiet.

**2. Have a Plan:** Your plan will depend on the ages of the children. Older children can silently pray the rosary, Divine Mercy Chaplet or bring other religious reading materials. For younger children you can provide them with religious stickers, religious coloring books, soft sided books – activities to keep little hands occupied, but quietly.

**3. Set Reasonable Expectations:** Children are all energy all the time: they don't sit quietly at home for an hour, so expecting them to sit quietly at the Adoration Chapel for an hour on their first several visits would be ridiculous.

*Start out small. Stop in for 5-10 minutes at first. Stretch it to 15 or 20 minutes slowly. Be sure and visit when everyone is well fed and rested. Nap time is not the time to drop in.*

**4. Check out the Scenery:** In advance, tell the children what they might see in the Adoration Chapel. While you are there, you can quietly point these things out to your kids. Show them the monstrance, the altar, the candles, the prayer book, the stained glass windows.

**5. Congratulate Yourself:** *No matter how brief your visit, rejoice in the fact that you spent time with Our Lord.* Adoration encourages a deeper relationship with Christ and a deeper understanding of our beautiful Faith. There's never a better time to bring our children to Jesus, to know and love him more.

## Adoration takeaway

It is strongly suggest families should work adoration into their schedules. It's an excellent way to evangelize children and establish them in an amazing and powerful Catholic devotion.

Is it hard for them to sit still and stay quiet? Like anything with children, it requires perseverance and patience. You have to work them into it. But with time and effort, it will come.

Other resources:

<http://www.therealpresence.org/eucharst/pea/a2.html> and [http://www.childrenof hope.org/](http://www.childrenofhope.org/)

