

# Teaching Children to Adore Jesus in the Eucharist

This initiative began in Vigo (Galicia, Spain) to help little children approach Eucharistic adoration in order to pray and form a relationship with God from a young age. Little by little, it spread to other parishes in the city.

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Lara and Ségolène, a pair of friends, organized the first Eucharistic

adoration for children in Vigo. Lara, a cooperator of Opus Dei, explains that the initiative began by chance, because of a misunderstanding: “One day, I went to pray in a perpetual adoration chapel with my son. He was running around, but no one seemed to mind until I was leaving, when an elderly man approached me and said, ‘You have to organize something for the children.’ I thought, ‘I’m not ready for this!’”

Shortly after, she returned with her five young children, all under the age of ten. To her surprise, they behaved well and even prayed a little. “Again,” says Lara, “this older man told me, ‘You have to organize something for the children.’ During a gathering with some friends, Ségalène, who is a supernumerary of Opus Dei, told us about ‘24 Hours with the Lord.’ She had chosen an hour to spend with Jesus, exposed in the Monstrance, and she invited me to join with the

children. I misunderstood and thought that she wanted to organize an hour of adoration for children... And that's how we started, because of this mix-up."

## **A Dozen Parishes**

Seeing how well the children behaved and that they enjoyed the experience, the friends decided to extend the invitation to other parishes, aiming to hold the event every two months. So far, they have visited nearly a dozen parishes. The children's parents also attend. Some of them have their first experience of Eucharistic adoration there, with their children.

After the adoration, they have a snack, play, and have fun. It's a good opportunity for the children to see others praying *and* playing so they don't feel like they are the only ones who pray.

“I knew this initiative existed in France,” says Ségolène, “but only by name. When my parish signed up for ‘24 Hours with the Lord,’ a program started by Pope Francis, I told Lara that we should arrange a children’s adoration. We didn’t know if children from other families would join, but we were happy to have just 5 or 6 children to adore the Lord.”

The initiative was a success. The chapel was filled with about 30 children. They laid a carpet on the floor with cushions, making it a comfortable space. Now go on pilgrimages to various parishes, promoting the idea as a missionary effort and encouraging each parish to start their own children's adoration sessions every two months.

## **Parents Teaching Piety**

Genesis Vian, a young mother and a recent convert to Catholicism, was

inspired by the idea. With help from her parish priest and other catechists, she organized a one-hour adoration for children every first Thursday of the month at the church of Our Lady of Peace.

Genesis shares: “It amazes me how Jesus makes it easy for us to get closer to Heaven. Every first Thursday, when we go with the children to adore Him, I feel we are earning a little piece of Heaven. During adoration, children express their affection for Jesus in different ways: singing, reading prayers, writing letters, or drawing pictures for Him. Each child participates in their own way. Seeing them there, without tablets, TVs, or phones, praying and being happy, brings me great joy.”

Parents bring their children to adoration because they want them to be responsible, study well, and have

a professional future while nurturing their spiritual growth and relationship with God. “We need to teach them to pray and cultivate an interior life, starting at a young age. As St. Josemaría used to say, parents are the best means God uses to educate children in piety, for example, through vocal prayers,” says Genesis.

Fr. Serafin, the parish priest of Our Lady of Peace, was enthusiastic when the idea was proposed. He found it a compelling approach and offered his full support. He believes that “little by little, this will become a normal activity for children. While it’s new to them now, they will grow more confident and aware over time, along with their families. It’s essential for children to strengthen their bond with Jesus. As Jesus said, ‘Let the children come to me and do not hinder them’ (Mt 19:14).”

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