

Sabbath Meditation

SLATE

Lectio Divina for kids: read, wonder, pray, and rest

Six pages: a cut-out table card with the ten-minute script, age adaptations, passage ideas, and safeguards.

INSIDE THIS PDF

- A cut-out card with the whole ten-minute script
- Read, wonder, pray, rest, do — with spoken cues
- Age adaptations for 4–7, 8–11, and 12+
- Twelve short passages that work with children

Clear structure · optional sharing · room to adapt

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Choose a passage a child can hold

Use a complete scene or short saying with a concrete image: Jesus blessing children, the lost sheep, the mustard seed, Zacchaeus in the tree, Mary at Jesus' feet, or Psalm 23. Read from a translation the child can understand. For young children, tell or read a story under five minutes. Older children can follow a paragraph in their own Bible.

Preview the passage so you can explain one necessary word without turning the gathering into a lesson. Lectio is not a substitute for teaching, but this moment gives attention before explanation. Ask, "What did you notice?" and allow an answer such as a color, action, feeling, or question. That concrete notice is already a beginning.

- Ages four to seven: use a short story and one question.
- Ages eight to eleven: read twice and invite a word or image.
- Ages twelve and up: add quiet journaling and a context question.
- End while attention remains; shorter can be more faithful.

A TEN-MINUTE FAMILY RHYTHM		10 MIN
01	Welcome "You may sit, draw quietly, hold something, or simply listen. No one has to share."	1 MIN
02	Read "Listen for one word, picture, action, or question that catches your attention."	2 MIN
03	Wonder "What did you notice, and what might this part show us about God or Jesus?"	3 MIN
04	Pray "You may say one sentence to God, repeat a line from the story, draw, or pass."	2 MIN
05	Rest and do "Let's be quiet for a few breaths, then choose one phrase or small response to carry."	2 MIN

Cut along the guides and keep this card where the group meets.

Words you can use

Ordinary sentences, not a script to perform. Change them into your own voice.

WELCOME

“You may sit, draw quietly, hold something, or simply listen. No one has to share.”

READ

“Listen for one word, picture, action, or question that catches your attention.”

WONDER

“What did you notice, and what might this part show us about God or Jesus?”

PRAY

“You may say one sentence to God, repeat a line from the story, draw, or pass.”

REST AND DO

“Let’s be quiet for a few breaths, then choose one phrase or small response to carry.”

Keep prayer invitational

Say these aloud at the first gathering, then keep them available for anyone who joins later.

- Sharing is always optional; a child may pass without explanation.
- Movement, drawing, and open eyes are valid ways to participate.
- Do not use prayer time to investigate a disclosure; follow safeguarding policy and seek appropriate help.
- Shorten or stop the practice if silence increases distress.

Contemplative rest for a child may be thirty seconds, not ten minutes. Use a gentle visual cue such as turning over a small sand timer, holding an open hand, or listening for the quietest sound in the room. Say, "We can be quiet with God, and you can keep your eyes open." Movement, fidgeting, and looking around do not automatically mean the child is not praying.

Make the next gathering usable

Ask, "What could we remember or do?" Keep the response specific and communal when possible: include someone at lunch, thank a caregiver, place a worry in a prayer jar, feed birds, visit a neighbor, or reread the story at bedtime. Avoid making every passage into a moral assignment; sometimes the response is simply receiving that God is near.

Welcome everyone: "We're going to listen to a short Bible story. You may sit, draw quietly, or hold something in your hands." Read Mark 10:13–16. Ask what each person noticed. Read the key sentence again: "Allow the little children to come to me." Wonder what Jesus is like in the scene. Invite a one-sentence prayer or a pass.

Was the pace supportive?

Were the instructions clear?

What one variable should change next time?
