

GUIDED REFLECTION

on Leo's Gift



Note to reflection leader: Read the book *Leo's Gift* by Susan Blackaby and Joellyn Cicciarelli. Discuss the story with the children. Then take some time to lead this guided reflection based on the story. Adjust the pauses as you see the children respond and as the Holy Spirit makes the pace clear to you.

Everyone has an imagination. Let's use ours today to grow closer to God and to learn more about ourselves.

I'm going to read something to you, and I'll pause from time to time. You won't be answering out loud when I ask questions. Instead, tell God your answers in the silence of your heart. This is one way to pray.

Let's get ready. First, let's quiet ourselves and close our eyes. Keep them closed, and listen to your breathing. *(Pause.)* Take a slow, deep breath in. *(Pause.)* Then slowly and silently breathe out. *(Pause.)* Breathe in and out, in and out. *(Pause.)*

Imagine that you hear music. It's beautiful, and it makes you feel peaceful and calm. Maybe the notes sound like water swirling around rocks, like they did for Leo in the story. *(Pause.)*

Next, imagine that you are at a music recital like the one in the book. You sit in the audience, listening. All around people are enjoying the show. The last song is played, and you look up to see Jesus at the piano. What does he look like? Is he wearing a tuxedo or something less formal? *(Pause.)*

As the recital ends, Jesus invites you to come forward and sit with him on the piano bench. Jesus smiles. He looks friendly and happy. What does Jesus say to you? *(Pause.)*

Jesus starts to play and sing to you. *(Whisper or sing:)* "I love you. I love you. I love you." *(Pause.)*

What do you want to say to Jesus? Whatever you're feeling or thinking is OK. Jesus listens. You don't have to be afraid of what Jesus will think. *(Pause.)*

Now it's his turn to talk. Jesus says, "I will always be with you. No matter what."

What else does he say to you? *(Pause.)*

Jesus invites you to look inside the large piano, where the strings are. You see something shiny. It's a treasure! What does it look like? Is it in a small chest? Is it gold coins or precious jewels? It's really spectacular. *(Pause.)*

As you look, Jesus says, "The treasure is **you.**" *(Pause.)*

You realize that you are looking at your own reflection inside the piano! You see your own face and Jesus' face smiling at you, reflected in the shiny surface of the piano.

"**You** are my treasure," Jesus tells you. *(Pause.)*

"I've placed special gifts inside you. You don't need to worry about what they are right now. Just pay attention. As time goes by, you will notice some of the gifts you have inside." *(Pause.)*

Let yourself enjoy sitting right here with Jesus. *(Pause.)*

Jesus says, "The most important gift I've placed inside you is love. If you make your decisions based on what's most loving, you will make good choices." *(Pause.)*

Do you want to ask Jesus something? Take a moment to ask him now. *(Pause.)*

How does Jesus answer you? *(Pause.)*

Jesus is singing again, softly. "I love you. I want to be close to you always."

Do you want to sing or hum something back to Jesus? *(Pause.)*

Soon it will be time to leave this place. Jesus tells you that you can come back anytime. Jesus will be waiting for you, like a deep memory in your heart. Thank Jesus for your time together. *(Pause.)*

Slowly, think about where you are sitting right now. Take a few breaths, and when you feel ready, open your eyes. Stretch if you'd like. Welcome back.