

Youth Week: Holiness Meditation Exercise Leader's Guide

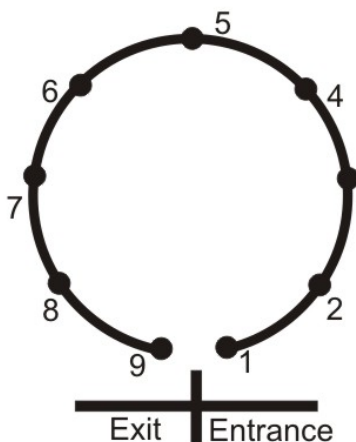
To many, the word "meditation" often brings to mind Eastern religions. But from the earliest days of the Church, Christians have used meditation as an essential part of prayer along with offering intercessions, supplications, and praise. From a Christian perspective, meditation might be thought of as *quiet prayer*, a prayer without petition, since "he already knows your needs." (Mt. 6.8) The prayer of quiet brings the soul into quiet rest, as well as the body. Many meditative practices have become perfected over centuries by countless believers, especially those in religious communities. This meditation exercise will allow your students to focus on the many facets of the holiness message that you have taught from the Fuel Week lessons.

Setting up the Room

In order to effectively set up this experience, you will need to locate a large open room, such as a gymnasium or fellowship hall. Please make sure you are able to secure the doors to the location as you want to prevent persons from just "dropping by" at an inappropriate time, thus, distracting the students from hearing God speak to them. You will want to be able to dim the lights in the room, yet be sure you do not dim them so far as to impair the students' ability to read the notes that will be placed at each station. If you have that ability, you may want to consider turning off all the lights and instead place reading lights at each station, which will provide ample light for viewing the material, yet still provide enough ambient light to keep the room at a proper level for meditation.

Consider setting up a sound system or stereo to play reflective music in the background. The volume should be kept low enough so as not be distracting, yet loud enough to mask some background noise that will naturally occur as the students move through the path.

The path is to be laid out in the shape of a circle with the beginning and end near the front of the room where students will enter (note the diagram). There are nine stations for this experience. They are to be laid out in the sequence and location indicated on the diagram. Make sure there is enough room at each station for two or three people to gather. Also, we recommend that you use masking tape on the floor to indicate where the students are to go next. This will help them traverse the meditation experience in the proper order, without skipping or missing a station or without having to carry around a diagram, which could distract them from the experience.



Instruct your students that they are to enter the room with an attitude of prayer. Tell them this is an individual journey, so they will be entering the room at 3-5 minute intervals. As the leader, help keep the students waiting to go in to the room quiet, so they don't distract those who are already on the

path.

Place the meditation for each station on the floor. It might be helpful to put the meditation instruction sheets in some type of holder that will stand the sheet upright. If you like, you can provide pillows for people to sit on. Avoid using chairs unless there is a medical reason for a student to have a chair. The idea is to get students on the ground, hopefully on their knees, before God.

You will need the following items set up the Holiness Meditation Experience:

- A copy of each station's reflection instructions. Masking tape
- Reading lamps for each station
- CD player/PA system/stereo
- Quiet, contemplative music—CHANT, Stephen Iverson, Taize Worship etc.
- A rule book from Little League or Department of Motor Vehicles
- A bar of soap
- A larger lit candle and enough unlit candles for each person who participates to light
- A candle holder for each unlit candle or a bucket of sand to place lit candles safely into
- A mirror large enough for a student to hold and see their face in
- Small rocks or pebbles
- A bowl of water to place small rocks or pebbles in
- A circle shape made out of wood or cardboard. The center should be cut out so the circle looks like a tire or doughnut
- Small links of a chain, some of which are connected and some separated
- Two or Three Portable CD players with headphones
- Classic ballroom or big band music that people would normally dance to
- Large Pillows (optional) to place in various stations

Set each station up as follows:

Station #1

Place the meditation sheet on the outside of the circle with the rule book lying open just in front of it.

Station #2

Place the meditation sheet on the outside of the circle with the bar of soap lying just in front of it.

Station #3

Place the meditation sheet on the outside of the circle with the burning candle just in front of it. Have the unlit candles lying to the left of the burning candle. Place the candleholders/bucket of sand to the right of the burning candle. You may want to already have a couple of candles burning in the candleholders/bucket of sand so that students know where to place their lit candle.

Station #4

Place the meditation sheet on the outside of the circle with the mirror lying just in front of it.

Station #5

Place the meditation sheet on the outside of the circle with the pile of small rocks/pebbles lying just in front of it to the left. Place the bowl of water to the right of the pile of small rocks/pebbles. You may want to already have a few small rocks/pebbles in the bowl of water so that students know where to place their small rock/pebble.

Station #6

Place the meditation sheet on the outside of the circle with the cut-out circle lying just in front of it.

Station #7

Place the meditation sheet on the outside of the circle. There is nothing else necessary to prepare this station.

Station #8

Place the meditation sheet on the outside of the circle with the chain links just in front of it.

Station #9

Place the meditation sheet on the outside of the circle with the CD players and headphones just in front of it. You may want to include a note on the CD players that say, "Please press stop when you are finished."