



Summary: CAPTIVATE

Key Points to Remember:

- **To Be Captivated:** to see the One Who has always seen us. To encounter Him in a way that takes us from knowing about Him or knowing Him at a distance to knowing Him personally. To be captivated by Jesus is to see and experience His glory in some real and personal way that changes us.
- The Lord is the one who captivates; our role is to intentionally provide the opportunity, invitation, and accompaniment
- It is possible to have been Catholic your whole life and never experienced a captivating experience of the Lord
- Offering captivating experiences for families to share together allows each person to grow in their own personal faith and offers the family a meaningful bonding experience and a way to move forward in faith together in a more profound way
- The Lord can captivate us at any time, but He consistently does so during times of prayer and through beauty. We can cooperate with Him by offering more intentionally beautiful times of prayer for families.
- When we repeatedly and intentionally invite the Holy Spirit to guide us and be at work in our lives and in all of our ministry, we give Him more room to do the work of captivating.

Experiences of Being Captivated by God (How Might Others Describe It?)

- **Profound Peace:** A deep, unshakable calm and trust in God's presence, even amidst challenges.
- **Joyful Awe:** A sense of wonder and gratitude for creation, God's love, and His grace.
- **Transformative Love:** Feeling truly seen, known, and cherished by Jesus, which fosters a desire to reflect His love in relationships.
- **Magnetic Draw:** An irresistible pull toward prayer, worship, and service, motivated by a longing to grow closer to God and share His message.
- **Humble Gratitude:** Recognizing that God owes us nothing but loves us despite our flaws and sins, leading to rejoicing.
- **Feeling Not Alone:** A profound sense of God's constant presence, knowing you will never be abandoned.

- **Awareness of God's Realness:** Experiencing a miracle-like awareness of God's presence.
 - **Feeling Accepted:** Experiencing a sense of being where you're meant to be, in alignment with God's plan.
 - **Divine Presence:** Experiencing God's presence through the community, nature, or physical sensations like warmth or goosebumps.
 - **Excitement and Joy:** Feeling moved, particularly through music and shared moments in the community.
 - **Connection through Reconciliation:** Experiencing deep spiritual connection, especially after confession or reconciliation.
 - **Appreciation of Beauty:** Feeling awe in the beauty of creation, music, art, and nature.
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Ideas for Intentionally Offering Captivating Experiences for Families

- **Welcome the Holy Spirit:** Begin experiences by inviting the Holy Spirit to be present, setting a sacred tone.
- **Create an Immersive Environment:** Curate the sensory experience (sight, sound, touch, smell, and taste) to enhance the spiritual atmosphere.
 - Use dim lighting, candles, or twinkle lights to foster a prayerful mood.
 - Use music, art, and beautiful surroundings to elevate the experience.
- **Engage Through Story and Testimony:**
 - Invite disciples to share their testimonies as an introduction to prayer.
 - Share new stories or teachings to create a fresh perspective on faith.
- **Encourage Silent Reflection:** Help families practice silence, allowing space for God to speak to their hearts. Start small and grow this practice over time.
- **Incorporate Music and Worship:** Use music in family faith formation to enhance the spiritual environment and inspire joy.
- **Facilitate Prayer:**
 - Guide parents and children to pray for one another, modeling prayer aloud.
 - Invite parents and children to share their own faith stories, strengthening familial bonds.
 - Encourage the practice of writing petitions and placing them at the cross.
- **Use Special Moments for Encounter:**
 - Invite families to contemplate gratitude and share personal joys and challenges.
 - Include kids in intimate, age-appropriate prayer experiences, like Stations of the Cross.
 - Offer adoration moments with dimmed lights for a more intimate connection.
 - Consider making prayer experiences special or unique by breaking from routine (e.g., different locations or creative formats).
- **Community and Family Engagement:**
 - Foster connection with God through the shared community experience, allowing everyone to witness the movement of God in their lives.

- Ensure all family members, especially children, feel involved and able to express their thoughts and feelings about faith.
 - **Allow for Spontaneity:** Be open to adjustments in plans as the Holy Spirit leads, creating flexibility to meet the moment.
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Practical Suggestions for Structuring Captivating Experiences

- **Invite Physical Closeness:** Encourage families to gather near the Tabernacle or share moments of closeness in church.
- **Leverage Liturgical Seasons:** Incorporate the unique opportunities of liturgical seasons (e.g., Lent and Easter) to deepen engagement.
- **Focus on Developmentally Appropriate Experiences:** Tailor the experiences for different age groups to ensure they are accessible and impactful.
 - Example: offer a holy “hour” that’s 10 minutes for younger children and families who’ve never been before
 - Allow and plan for movement and wiggling
- **Facilitate Participation:** Include younger children in prayer experiences and ensure families can spend time with Jesus together, fostering an early and lasting relationship with God.
- **Manage Timing and Comfort:** Offer captivating experiences during regular commitments, not just during extra or late-night events. Serve snacks, anticipate needs, and reduce worries for a more relaxed environment.
- **Model and Teach Prayer:** Show parents how to pray aloud with or over their children, guiding them to deepen their own prayer practices.