

How to Introduce Eucharistic Prayer 5 with Actions

1. Share the video with your team (musicians, worship committee, other sacred ministers etc.) so they can see it in action.
2. Print or project the people's copy in the order of service so they can follow the musical notation.
3. Consider rehearsing the children separately, so they feel more confident when they lead it the first time.
4. Try using it for a season, such as for Advent or Lent. Using it for a few weeks in a row builds confidence. Expect that week one will be clunky. Week 2 will be better. Weeks 3-5 you'll be cooking. By week 6, people are starting to tire of it and it becomes time to put it away. Also, mostly worshippers are no longer weekly attendees. Several weeks means more of your people will get to try it and enjoy it.
5. As much as possible, orient children towards the altar as they lead the actions. They are worshipping too and this worship is directed to God, not to the congregation. They are leaders of worship, not displays for adults to admire. The children may need a prompter they can see. We've put an adult prompter sitting on the chancel steps where the children can face the altar and see the prompter but they are not a distraction for the congregation. An exception to having the children face the altar may be in cases where this is new for the congregation and you are trying to make it explicit that the congregation as a whole may join in. Then the children become teachers of liturgy.
6. Many adults are eager to join in but may feel shy or cautious. When something appears like it is "for the children" they might need permission to join in. You can "plant" a few adults in your congregation that you can count on to join in. It is easier to join in when you have adults around you participating. Have staff and/or volunteers dispersed in the congregation who can model joining in at the right time.
7. If people are critical, you can share some of the theological rationale. This is a way for the whole people of God to come alongside the presiding celebrant and offer with song and movement their prayer. Some may always be critical. This is part of the strategy in doing it for just a season at a time. You can insist it is "for Advent" and then it will go away. You can also say we're trying it for a season and then we'll evaluate it. From time to time, I've introduced something in Lent and dealt with critique in a tongue in cheek way, reminding folks it is Lent and it's okay to be a little unhappy in a penitential season.
8. Some will love it and want it every week, forever. Insist on putting it away for a time. I often say, "I love my Christmas tree too, but I couldn't live with it up all year." We tend to appreciate things more when we preserve a bit of novelty.