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# **Teaching Guide**



#### OBJECTIVE

- Hugh and the Star is a series of cartoons designed to be an initial proclamation of the Gospel for boys and girls. The initial proclamation of the Gospel is intended to create the child's first cognitive and emotional bond with Jesus as someone who is alive and wants to be their friend in order to give them life and happiness.
- In order to awaken Christian faith in children, the initial proclamation of the Gospel comes before catechesis and acts in a different cognitive and emotional register to the explanation of Christian subjects in religion classes.
- Hugh and the Star, used according to the indications of this teaching guide, is the ideal medium for encouraging the cognitive and emotional link with Jesus which will be the basis for catechesis and offers material to complement religious education.
- **Hugh and the Star** is an aid for parents, grandparents, catechists and teachers who are responsible for awakening faith for the first time in the children in their immediate environment.

#### PLOT

- *Hugh and the Star* depicts the life of a boy and his family in the context of a medieval city, late 15th-century Barcelona, and more specifically, the area around the famous church of Santa María del Mar, which is also called "the Cathedral of the Sea".
- The story shows how Hugh and his group of friends begin their experience of Christian faith, in the Christian community which lives and celebrates its faith in the famous and mysterious cathedral of the sea.
- This process is framed by an adventure story, in which everyday life spontaneously gives rise to the fundamental experiences of faith, the personal encounter with Jesus, liberation from internal chains, and the life of the community, with the sacraments, the experience of forgiveness, and the compassion and charity which come from a consistent Christian life.
- Occasional comments by a 21st-century child help children understand the context of the earlier period and relate it to the present.







## Episode 1:

# The Pilgrim

#### OBJECTIVE

• To spark the child's curiosity and interest in Jesus and God, the "Heavenly Father", through Hugh's experience of the testimony of the pilgrim and the actors.

#### GUIDELINES FOR STARTING DIALOGUE

HUGH'S EXPERIENCE	CHILDREN'S REACTIONS
• The character of the pilgrim who is going to the Holy Land.	<ul> <li>Do you know anyone who has gone on Saint James'</li> <li>Way or has gone to the Holy Land?</li> <li>What were they looking for? What made them go?</li> <li>Would you like to be pilgrims for a few days?</li> </ul>
• The initial proclamation of Jesus comes from the pilgrim.	<ul><li>What do you know about Jesus?</li><li>Who do you think Jesus is?</li></ul>
<ul> <li>The actors.</li> <li>The mother invites Hugh to dinner</li> <li>The mother says grace, saying:</li> <li>"Thank you, Heavenly Father, for this performance which lets us live another day"</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Why do you think the mother invites Hugh to dinner if they don't seem to have much money?</li> <li>Who does she say these words to?</li> <li>Do you know what "saying grace" means?</li> <li>At your home, do you say grace or pray to God any time, for example, when you go to bed?</li> </ul>
• Hugh has a bad dream because of the journey he has to begin the next day.	<ul><li>Do you have bad dreams?</li><li>Do you get scared at night?</li></ul>
• Hugh repeats the words he heard from the pilgrim and the actors.	<ul> <li>Do you talk to Jesus at night when you're tucked up in bed?</li> <li>Did anyone teach you to do it?</li> <li>Would you like to learn how to do it?</li> </ul>

#### FOCUS OF INTEREST

- + Would you like to talk to Jesus like the people in the video do?
  - Create a feeling of seclusion.
  - The catechist/teacher begins a short sentence:

"Thank you Jesus because today we have met you through the story of Hugh..."

• The catechist invites the children to say their own spontaneous phrases.

#### COMMITMENT

+ What do you think about talking to Jesus at bedtime from now on, saying something to him like: "Jesus, I want to be your friend" or "Jesus, I want to know you"?











## Episode 2:

# The journey

#### **P**OBJECTIVE

- Awaken in the child a sense of life as an adventure, so later they can discover it as a vocation.
- Presentation of a friendly version of Christianity: the Franciscan monk, with his simplicity, bonhomie, and love of nature and animals. Canticle of the Creatures.

#### GUIDELINES FOR STARTING DIALOGUE

HUGH'S EXPERIENCE	CHILDREN'S REACTIONS
• Hugh leaves his village for the first time and begins a journey, an adventure on the river.	<ul> <li>Do you remember the first time you left home to go on a journey?</li> <li>How did you feel? Afraid? Curious? Excited?</li> </ul>
• Appearance of the Jew.	<ul> <li>What do you know about the Jews? Did you know that Jesus was a Jew?</li> <li>"Shema Israel" is Hebrew for "listen, Israel" and it goes on to say: "The Lord is your God" (Dt 6.4).</li> </ul>
• The Franciscans.	• What do you know about St. Francis of Assisi and the Franciscans?
• The Canticle of the Creatures.	• St. Francis composed this hymn to God through his creatures.

#### FOCUS OF INTEREST

- + What do you think life is? Check the answer and complete the sentence if you want.
  - A coincidence
  - A path
  - An adventure
  - A pilgrimage to...

#### COMMITMENT

- + A slow reading, with comments, of the "Canticle of the Creatures" (it can easily be found online).
  - How does St. Francis thank?
  - Why?











## Episode 3:

# The city

#### **2** OBJECTIVE

• To motivate the desire to experience the peace and quiet we find inside churches, and learn from the people who introduced them to this practice.

#### GUIDELINES FOR STARTING DIALOGUE

HUGH'S EXPERIENCE	CHILDREN'S REACTIONS
• Hugh begins living in the big city.	<ul> <li>Do you live in a big city or a small town?</li> <li>Have you experienced the feeling of submerging yourself in a big city? How did it feel?</li> </ul>
• He quickly makes friends and they play, and even make mischief.	<ul> <li>Have you made friends with other children when you were on holiday?</li> <li>Is it easy making friends when you're new in a place?</li> </ul>
• They hide in a church. They discover the beauty of Santa María del Mar.	• Do you like the peace and quiet you find inside a big church? Have you had any experiences like that?
• They are made welcome by Rosana the catechist.	<ul> <li>Who introduced you to contemplating the beauty of a church?</li> <li>Your parents, your grandparents, a teacher or catechist?</li> </ul>
• They look at the city from the top of the bell tower	<ul><li>Have you looked at the town where you live from the top of a bell tower?</li><li>Would you like to?</li></ul>

#### FOCUS OF INTEREST

+ The desire to experience the inner peace and seclusion one feels inside a church.

#### **D**ACTIVITY

- + Visiting an important local church.
- + If possible, do this in the company of someone who knows its history and can explain its Christian meaning.











## Episode 4:

# Internal chains

#### **P**OBJECTIVE

• The first mention of the internal chains we all have, and the role of Jesus in freeing us from those chains.

#### GUIDELINES FOR STARTING DIALOGUE

HUGH'S EXPERIENCE	CHILDREN'S REACTIONS
• Based on the church's stained glass windows, Rosana tells them the story of how God freed the people of Israel from their slavery in Egypt.	<ul> <li>Do you know the story of how the people of Israel came out of Egypt?</li> <li>What book is the story in? Would you like us to read it? (Book of Exodus, Chap. 15).</li> </ul>
• Suddenly Hugh and his friends see a real event: the freeing of a merchant from the city who had been taken captive by the Berbers, thanks to a brother of the Order of Mercy who took his place.	<ul> <li>Did you know that in the Middle Ages there were Christians who offered to take the place of people in prison?</li> <li>What do you think of that idea?</li> </ul>
• The freed merchant offers his chains at the foot of the cross. He thanks God for his freedom and for letting him return to his family and his city.	• Can you imagine the joy of coming home again after being kidnapped by pirates?
• The priest relates the event everyone just saw with the story of Jesus dying on the cross and coming back to life. He says that like what the brother of Mercy did, Jesus on the cross freed us from our "internal chains".	<ul> <li>Hugh's friends don't seem to understand the relationship between the events. It has a big impact on Hugh.</li> <li>What do you think?</li> <li>What are these "internal chains"?</li> </ul>
• Hugh runs to tell his father about it. When he sees his father's back-breaking work, Hugh begins to intuit what his internal chains are.	• What are Hugh's internal chains?

#### • FOCUS OF INTEREST

- + What are our internal chains?
  - Fear, sadness, laziness.
  - Resentment, holding grudges.
  - Envy, vanity.
  - Pride, thinking we are better than others.
- + Can we free ourselves from them by ourselves?











#### Episode 5:

## The man in the tower

#### **P**OBJECTIVE

• To provide a quick introduction to the history of Christianity based on the stories of churches built on former places of persecution or popular devotion.

#### GUIDELINES FOR STARTING DIALOGUE

HUGH'S EXPERIENCE	CHILDREN'S REACTIONS
• A mysterious person seen on the church roof turns out to be an expert on the exciting history of the church.	<ul> <li>Do you know an older person who can tell you about memories of what Christians' lives were like a long time ago?</li> <li>Did you know that mass used to be in Latin, and the priest stood with his back to the congregation?</li> </ul>
• The church of Santa María del Mar -like many others- was built on the site of a Roman circus where the city's first Christians might have been killed.	<ul> <li>Did you know that in the first centuries Christians were persecuted and murdered?</li> <li>Did you know that this was partly because Christians worshipped only one God and did not accept the Roman Emperor as the son of God?</li> </ul>
• Workers like Hugh's father who carried passengers from ships to land were the same who carried heavy stones on their backs from the nearby mountain to the church while it was being built.	<ul> <li>How do you think those men found the strength to carry heavy stones after a hard day's work?</li> <li>What makes towns work so hard to have beautiful tall churches?</li> </ul>
• All they needed was the terrible fire, recorded by historians, to make things more difficult.	<ul> <li>How did the fire affect the mysterious man?</li> <li>Did it keep him away from the church?</li> <li>What was the attitude of the man in the tower towards the church and his own role as bell-ringer and guard?</li> </ul>

#### FOCUS OF INTEREST

- + The word "Church" has two meanings: on one hand the stone building, and on the other, the people who share the same faith in Jesus.
  - Which do you think is more important: the stone church or the people who form the Christian community?
- + What is your opinion of the "martyrs" (testimonies) who gave their lives for their faith in Jesus?
- + Do you know that even today there are Christians who are persecuted and murdered for believing in Jesus?









# Hugh and the Star

#### Episode 6:

# Together again

#### **P**OBJECTIVE

- To value the sacrifices and efforts many people have to make to keep their families together.
- Living in the situation of reunited families with a Christian perception.
- Relating Christian prayer -the Lord's Prayer- with daily work and the struggle for our daily bread.

#### GUIDELINES FOR STARTING DIALOGUE

HUGH'S EXPERIENCE	CHILDREN'S REACTIONS
• Hugh's mother and little sister come to the city after a long time apart.	• Today many families are split up because one of the members has to go to another country to find work. Do you know a family in that situation, maybe someone who looks after your grandparents or helps with the housework in your home?
• When they unpack the Franciscan cross appears, and in the evening the family says the Lord's Prayer togethe	<ul><li>Does your family pray together?</li><li>Do you know the Lord's Prayer?</li></ul>
• There is a riot in the town square in protest at the rising price of wheat and bread. Hugh and his friends take part in the uprising. One of them even has to hide from the guards. Hugh's mother and sister hide them	<ul> <li>What relationship can you see between asking God for our daily bread and basic foods being cheap enough for everyone to afford them?</li> <li>Do you know the price of bread in your town?</li> <li>And in countries like Africa and Asia?</li> </ul>
• In the end everyone in the parish of Santa María comes together to celebrate the Eucharist on Sunday. Hugh's mother and sister introduce themselves there.	<ul> <li>Do you go to mass on Sundays?</li> <li>Do you like it?</li> <li>Does it ever get boring?</li> <li>Do you like feeling like part of a community?</li> </ul>

#### • FOCUS OF INTEREST

- + Valuing one's own family; knowing its history (bring photos next time).
- + In the case of reunited families, treat the subject sensitively but as part of normal life.



+ Recite the Lord's Prayer slowly after explaining each phrase.











## Episode 7:

# Montserrat

#### **P**OBJECTIVE

- To explain the practice of pilgrimage to a shrine.
- To help children understand and value the monastic life.
- To introduce devotion to the Virgin Mary.

#### GUIDELINES FOR STARTING DIALOGUE

HUGH'S EXPERIENCE	CHILDREN'S REACTIONS
Hugh and his friends make a pilgrimage on foot to a well-known Marian shrine: Montserrat.	• Do you know anyone in your family who has gone on Saint James' Way, the Ignatian Way, or a pilgrimage on foot or by bicycle to any local shrine?
<ul> <li>The Benedictine monks welcome the children.</li> <li>They show them the <i>scriptorium</i> where they copy the Gospels and the rest of the Bible by hand.</li> <li>During the meal an acolyte reads.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Do you know about the life of Saint Benedict, the founder of the Benedictine Order?</li> <li>Do you know the meaning of his motto "ora et labora" (pray and work)?</li> <li>Did you know that the Bible, the holy book of Christians, was copied by hand from generation to generation until printing was invented (1450)?</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>They hold a night of vigil praying to the Virgin as Saint Ignatius of Loyola did when he left his soldier's sword at the foot of the Virgin.</li> <li>Pilgrims used to dance and sing all night in honor of the Virgin.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Would you like to hold a prayer vigil?</li> <li>What did it mean to leave a sword at the feet of the Virgin?</li> <li>Do you know the story of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit order?</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Bernard fell and was hanging on a rock, and the monks had to rescue him.</li> <li>They went back together in the cart, singing "The Lord is my rock!".</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Have you ever been stuck in a high place or lost in the woods?</li> <li>How did it feel?</li> <li>How did you react?</li> </ul>

#### FOCUS OF INTEREST

+ Valuing the Christian meaning of pilgrimage to a shrine, keeping a vigil, etc.



+ Recite - or sing - psalm 94.22 together:

"The Lord has become my stronghold, and my God the rock of my refuge".











#### Episode 8:

## Liberation

( Note: This episode is the core and key to the whole series )

#### OBJECTIVE

• To teach children to establish a relationship of friendship with Jesus, giving him their internal chains and asking him for peace and forgiveness.

#### GUIDELINES FOR STARTING DIALOGUE

HUGH'S EXPERIENCE	CHILDREN'S REACTIONS
• The physical punishment of a thief brings Hugh face to face with the reality of good and evil, and the question of why there are good people and bad people.	• Have you ever wondered why there are people who do bad things, and people who do good things? Maybe when you've seen terrorist attacks on TV what do you think?
• Hugh is tempted to steal a bag of money, although the voice of temptation turns out to come from a puppet show.	• Have you ever experienced an inner struggle between a voice inviting you to do something bad and another voice showing you the right thing to do?
<ul> <li>The show is completed by the appearance of a seagull which gives its life to free the child trapped in the invisible strings of the tempter.</li> <li>Hugh understands the message as a reference to Jesus nailed to the cross and goes into the church.</li> </ul>	• This is the main message of the Christian faith: Jesus dying on the cross and coming back to life has freed all of us from our internal chains and bonds (selfishness, sadness, envy, pride) and made it possible for us to feel the love of God the Father.
<ul> <li>At the foot of the cross, Hugh understands that to be free of his internal chains he must give them to Jesus and ask for his Holy Spirit and his Peace.</li> <li>Clara appears next to him and also gives her own chains to Jesus. Both ask for his Peace.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>The secret to taking part in the victory of Jesus over evil is to enter a relationship of friendship with him, giving him your chains and asking him for his Holy Spirit, his forgiveness and his peace.</li> <li>Have you ever done it?</li> </ul>

#### FOCUS OF INTEREST

- + Tactfully, and respecting the children's free will, you must invite them to perform this action of turning over their own problems to Jesus. Having a cross and creating a feeling of seclusion can help.
- + A brief formula: The catechist can say the formula and the children who want to can repeat it in chorus.

"Jesus, I give you my internal chains (pride, envy, etc.) and I ask you to give me your Holy Spirit, your peace and your forgiveness".











# Episode 9:

## The test

#### OBJECTIVE

- To deal with the tension between resentment when somebody does something bad and the desire to forgive.
- An introduction to the sacrament of reconciliation.

#### GUIDELINES FOR STARTING DIALOGUE

HUGH'S EXPERIENCE	CHILDREN'S REACTIONS
• Master Shoemaker, Hugh's boss, is envious of his youth and skill, and spoils some skins, blaming Hugh for the damage. He even takes him to the council of the shoemakers' guild to be punished.	<ul> <li>Have you ever been unfairly accused of something you didn't do, because of envy?</li> <li>How did you react?</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>A fire breaks out in the shoemaker's workshop. Hugh risks his life to go in and save the most valuable skins.</li> <li>Master Shoemaker is impressed by his heroism, admits he was envious and asks for forgiveness.</li> <li>Hugh feels a strong tension between resenting his boss and wanting to forgive him.</li> </ul>	• Have you ever felt an inner struggle between resentment when somebody does something bad and the desire to forgive?
• Later, Hugh confesses to the priest his resentment and how difficult it was to forgive sincerely, and receives the forgiveness of Jesus in the sacrament of reconciliation.	• Have you ever experienced the sacrament of reconciliation?

#### FOCUS OF INTEREST

- + An introduction to the sacrament of reconciliation:
  - Avoid a trial-related or law-related approach.
  - Avoid a Manichean contrast between good and bad people.
  - Connect the freely given forgiveness of Jesus with how difficult it is for all of us to forgive.











## Episode 10:

## Bells

#### **P**OBJECTIVE

- To introduce the reality of death as part of the human condition and as seen in the light of Christian hope.
- Describing the medieval feast of Corpus Christi, processions and popular devotion.

#### GUIDELINES FOR STARTING DIALOGUE

HUGH'S EXPERIENCE	CHILDREN'S REACTIONS
• Hugh experiences the encounter with Sister Death with the death of the man in the tower, the old bell-ringer.	<ul><li>Have you ever met Sister Death?</li><li>Maybe someone in your family</li></ul>
• The old bell-ringer receives communion - the viaticum or help on the journey towards God- and dies trusting that Mary will welcome him.	• Do you believe that the friendship of Jesus and Mary helps to overcome the fear of death?
• The Procession of Corpus Christi, introduced in the Middle Ages to reaffirm faith in the real presence of Jesus in the consecrated bread of the Eucharist.	<ul> <li>Have you seen a Corpus Christi procession in your town?</li> <li>Or an Easter procession?</li> <li>What impression did it have on you?</li> </ul>
• The fight of David and Goliath, and references to the fight between angels and demons.	• This is the origin of the giants and other Biblical figures who appear in Corpus Christi processions.

#### FOCUS OF INTEREST

- + A serene introduction to the reality of death which our modern society tries to conceal.
- + Introduction to manifestations of popular faith, helping to find value in ordinary people's expressions of Christianity. Always placing value on the relationship of personal friendship with Jesus.

#### **N**ACTIVITY

- + Find photos of processions online.
- + Ask family members for photos of processions from earlier years.











## Episode 11:

# He will be called Hugh

#### **P**OBJECTIVE

• Introduction to the sacrament of Baptism.

#### GUIDELINES FOR STARTING DIALOGUE

HUGH'S EXPERIENCE	CHILDREN'S REACTIONS
• Five years have passed. Hugh is now a qualified shoemaker, and he and Clara are godparents at the baptism of the Master Shoemaker's grandson.	<ul><li> Have you ever been to a baptism, maybe of a family member?</li><li> What did you think of the ceremony?</li></ul>
• The parents and godparents proclaim their faith and renounce evil, the "Baptismal Vows", which the child will have to say for himself when he is older, usually when receiving the sacrament of confirmation.	<ul> <li>Were you baptized when you were little?</li> <li>Who were your godparents?</li> <li>One day, would you like to renew for yourself the promises your parents and godparents made for you on the day of your baptism?</li> </ul>
• Baptism used to be done by immersion. That was how it was done in the first centuries of Christianity. Later it was simplified.	• What does the triple immersion in water mean? (You can show the baptism scene again and identify the three steps: 1) the death of selfishness. 2) resurrection with Jesus. 3) reception of the Holy Spirit.
<ul> <li>There is a party at the entrance of the Cathedral of the Sea.</li> <li>Master Shoemaker pays for plenty of food and drink for the poor.</li> </ul>	• Celebrating a Christian sacrament should increase brotherhood and charity to others, especially the poorest people.

#### FOCUS OF INTEREST

- + Learning about the importance of baptism itself for children who were baptized as babies.
- + Baptism is the rite -a sacrament of the Christian community- which joins us very intensely to Jesus to take part in his victor over evil (resentment, selfishness, hard-heartedness) and the link which thanks to him we have with God the Father, with the help of the Holy Spirit.
- + Accepting the reality of the unbaptized children. Awakening in them an interest in the relationship of friendship with Jesus.



+ Looking for photos of one's own baptism.











## Episode 12:

# Reconciliation

#### **2** OBJECTIVE

- The importance of sharing what we have received with others.
- Awakening in the child the desire to share their friendship with Jesus with other children.

#### GUIDELINES FOR STARTING DIALOGUE

HUGH'S EXPERIENCE	CHILDREN'S REACTIONS
<ul> <li>Hugh and Clara help the injured who come by boat to the shore of the city.</li> <li>One of them asks Hugh to look after his two children.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>There have been many wars and a lot of suffering to reach the wellbeing we enjoy today.</li> <li>Are you aware of everything you have received thanks to the hard work and efforts of your grandparents and parents?</li> </ul>
• Hugh and Clara, as catechists of the two children, introduce them to the cathedral and explain the stained glass windows about the Israelites crossing the Red Sea.	<ul> <li>We must share everything we have received with other people.</li> <li>Would you like to share this experience of Hugh and the Star with a friend?</li> </ul>
• Next to the crucifix, Hugh invites the two children to make peace, which they do with a hug.	• Would you like to share the "secret" of the peace and joy which come from turning over our internal chains to Jesus and receiving all his love?

#### FOCUS OF INTEREST

- + Realizing how Hugh and Clara begin to share everything that they first learned from the catechist Rosana, the parish priest, the monks, the old bell-ringer and all the community of the cathedral of the sea
- + Motivating the children to want to share what they have discovered in Hugh and the Star.

#### **N**ACTIVITY

+ Organizing a screening of Hugh and the Star in which every boy and girl invites a friend.









# Hugh and the Star

## Episode 13:

# To be continued

#### OBJECTIVE

• For the children to feel they are the 21st-century continuation of the friends of Jesus and his church.

#### GUIDELINES FOR STARTING DIALOGUE

HUGH'S EXPERIENCE	CHILDREN'S REACTIONS
• Now Hugh and Clara take their pupils on a pilgrimage to the holy mountain of Montserrat and introduce them to the adventure of camping at night and the difficult descent of the mountain.	<ul> <li>What are your experiences of going on excursions or spending a night in the open?</li> <li>Have you tried it with other friends?</li> <li>Would you like to?</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>They are welcomed by the monk who received them years ago, and who is now the Abbot.</li> <li>Prayer vigil.</li> <li>Offering of flowers to the Virgin Mary.</li> </ul>	• How is the commitment going we made the day we saw the first episode, to talk to Jesus every night at bedtime?
• They meet the pilgrim from episode one, who is returning from the Holy Land and tells them about the unhappy experiences of Christians in that region.	<ul> <li>Are you informed about the situation of Christians in the Middle East today?</li> <li>Do you know they are persecuted, thrown out of their homes or even murdered just for being Christians?</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Hugh wonders if centuries from now there will still be Christians, friends of Jesus, in the world. Clara answers: "There will always be, because Christ is our rock."</li> <li>The rocks are transformed into the towers of the Sagrada Familia, designed by the Catholic architect Antonio Gaudí in Barcelona.</li> <li>A group of young people are going towards the church. We are in the 21st century.</li> <li>To be continued</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Do you feel worried in any way about friendship with Jesus continuing into the future?</li> <li>Do you think it's worth experiencing and talking about?</li> <li>Is Christ a Rock for you?</li> </ul>

#### FOCUS OF INTEREST

+ The idea of continuing and transmitting friendship with Jesus.



+ Organizing a guided catechesis visit to the nearest cathedral.





