

# Jim McGillivary's Christmas Eucharistic Miracle

**M**y wife Lori and I got married later in life, well beyond the average age that most people got married. We knew we wanted children, yet age and a medical issue posed potential challenges. Imagine our joy when we learned we were pregnant within the first few months of moving to Kansas City in December, 2007. Sadly, a miscarriage occurred early in this pregnancy. We renewed our efforts while praying and practicing the Creighton method to enhance our chances of conceiving. While our prayers were constant, time marched on with no results. We were beginning to have doubts as to whether we were going to have a child of our own.

In December, 2009, we visited my mother in Ohio over Christmas. It was Christmas day and Lori, my mother and I went to Mass at my old parish church where I grew up. It was here my Eucharistic miracle occurred. I had just received our Lord in Holy Communion. I returned to my pew and was engaged in a visualization prayer technique I had been taught that



has allowed me to experience Our Lord's presence more fully. In those moments of visualization with my eyes closed, I saw Our Lord descend from a large wooden crucifix behind the altar and hand me a child. I knew in that moment we would conceive a child. Once home, I shared the vision I received with my mother and Lori. What a wonderful Christmas gift! That same week we got pregnant. Our son, James Ryan, was born to us September 23<sup>rd</sup>. Praise God!!!

I share this experience with you so that you may know the power of prayer and know that God hears and answers our prayers. I also share it so you may know and believe in the true presence of Our Lord in the Eucharist and the opportunity this sacrament presents for all of us to draw closer to Our Lord and experience His love. Please see the Visualization prayer technique on the next page to learn how you may deepen and enrich your own Eucharistic experience.

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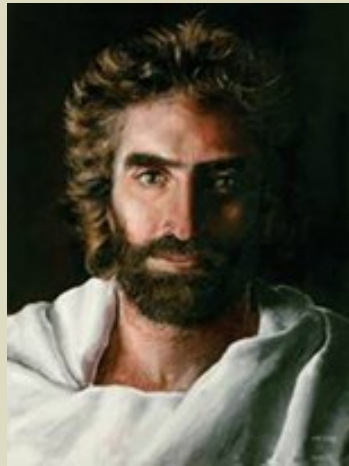
# How Jim McGillivary Did It!!

## The Visualization Prayer Technique

Select a favorite picture of Jesus Christ that you wish to picture in your mind. Choose a favorite setting in which you desire to picture a meeting with Our Lord. We encourage somewhere calm, peaceful, beautiful, and free of distractions. It may be inside or outside. A sandy beach or a meadow are settings you may find suitable. Maybe it is a place where Jesus walked, for example around the Sea of Galilee.

When you come back from Holy Communion - kneel and close your eyes. Closing your eyes helps you see the images in your mind more clearly. Put your head in your hands and cover your eyes if that helps to prevent distractions. Begin with a deep breath – first breathe in and then slowly let it out. With your eyes closed, picture in your mind that calm, peaceful and beautiful place where you want to be with Our Lord. You are alone. It is sunny and warm – the temperature is just right; maybe there is a slight breeze stirring the air; you hear birds singing.

Now you see someone approaching you at a distance; enough of a distance that you cannot yet make out their face. The person appears to be wearing an all-white flowing robe. As they get closer, you recognize it is Jesus. You are excited – you have been waiting so long to see him and embrace him. You start walking to him, then you break into a run. You are smiling and laughing - you are so excited. You see his face clearly now – He looks just like your favorite picture of Him. He is smiling, holding His arms outstretched towards you. You rush into His arms and wrap your arms around Him. He folds his arms around you and hugs you. You instantly feel at peace and joyful – all your worries are gone, nothing else matters; you can not think of anything but being in His arms and feeling His presence. He says He has been waiting for you. You tell him how much you love Him and how you always want to be with Him



and ask Him for the help you need in being the person He wants you to be.

You hear Him say ‘Yes, He loves you too and He will help you in being a good servant. You feel him rest his head against yours. You hold on to this moment staying in His arms – resting in His presence and enjoying being with Him.

He says, “Follow me” and he takes your hand and begins walking, holding your hand. You just walk with Him – no words are spoken, but you still feel that same peace and joy from being in His presence. Then He turns to you and says, “I must go for now but know that I will always be with you” and that “I will see you soon.” And then He is gone.

What you think, say or picture in your mind is ultimately your decision. The above can be changed to make it more meaningful for you. Your personal encounter with the Lord can be as long or short as you desire so feel free to customize it towards your preferences.

After undertaking the Visualization prayer technique, questions you may want to consider include:

- \* Did you feel like you were there in that special place when you met Jesus?
- \* Did you see Jesus’ face in your mind’s eye?
- \* Did you feel His presence?
- \* Did you feel a sense of peace and happiness?
- \* Did Our Lord tell or show you anything?

Practice will improve results. It is a proven method of prayer leading to a more rewarding spiritual life. An image I use for this prayer technique is the picture of Jesus shown above, but use your favorite images.