



**Saint Paul's**  
CATHOLIC PARISH ALBION PARK

*Preparing to celebrate  
the Sacrament of  
Reconciliation  
for the first time*

**PROGRAM INFORMATION**

**[stpaulsparish.org.au](http://stpaulsparish.org.au)**

Office Hours: Tuesday: 1pm – 3.30pm; Wednesday - Friday: 8.30am – 12.30pm & 1pm - 3.30pm

249 Tongarra Road, Albion Park (PO Box 194, Albion Park NSW 2527)

Tel: (02) 4256 2038

Parish Priest: Fr Richard Healey

Parish Secretary: Mrs Mary Jennings

Parish Sacramental Administrator: Mrs Paula Potts

Sacramental Program Planner: Mrs Julie Ferguson

**[sacraments@stpaulsparish.org.au](mailto:sacraments@stpaulsparish.org.au)**

My Dear Parents,

When you presented your child for baptism, you promised to support your child in 'the practice of the faith'. The role of the Parish Priest, teachers, catechists and the wider parish community is to support you to fulfil this role.

Sadly, many parents demonstrate a belief that the Catholic school, catechists or sacramental program is meant to *primarily* educate and form their children in the practice of the faith: and because they hold such a view they have decided to leave the faith formation of their children to others. Yes, these schools & classes have a role to play (and that is a role of being a support and mentor to parents and their family unit), but the constant understanding of the Church is that parents are called to be the **first teachers of their children in the ways of faith.**

Pope Francis reminds us that "The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a Sacrament of healing. When I go to confession, it is in order to be healed, to heal my soul, to heal my heart and to be healed of some wrongdoing." He also tells us "The People of God is a *disciple People* — because it receives the faith — and a *missionary People* — because it transmits the faith."

I hope and pray that amidst the busyness of our lives we will all continue to work together as members of St Paul's Parish to support your children grow in faith, hope and love, especially through our support of them during this Sacramental program and through giving them the opportunity to join their fellow Catholics at the weekend celebration of Mass.

A number of parents have asked that a guide like this one be put together to support families during their child's sacramental program and to be a source of information for parents. I hope this goes some way to achieve this goal.

Be assured that you and your family are in my prayers, and that your 'parish family' is here to support you as you prepare your children for their first Reconciliation and first Holy Communion. Note – your child will be celebrating these sacraments for the first time during the program – they are both sacraments that can be received every week, indeed every day of their life.

Grace and peace!



Fr Richard Healey - Parish Priest  
BEc (Sydney), MTh (SCD), STB (CIS), CCPE

# Quotes on Reconciliation from *the Catechism of the Catholic Church*

---

- 986** By Christ's will, the Church possesses the power to forgive the sins of the baptized and exercises it through bishops and priests normally in the sacrament of Penance.
- 1424** It is called the *sacrament of confession*, since the disclosure or confession of sins to a priest is an essential element of this sacrament. In a profound sense it is also a "confession"—acknowledgment and praise—of the holiness of God and of his mercy toward sinful man.
- It is called the *sacrament of forgiveness*, since by the priest's sacramental absolution God grants the penitent "pardon and peace."
- It is called the *sacrament of Reconciliation*, because it imparts to the sinner the love of God who reconciles: "Be reconciled to God." He who lives by God's merciful love is ready to respond to the Lord's call: "Go; first be reconciled to your brother."
- 1457** According to the Church's command, "after having attained the age of discretion, each of the faithful is bound by an obligation faithfully to confess serious sins at least once a year." Anyone who is aware of having committed a mortal sin must not receive Holy Communion, even if he experiences deep contrition, without having first received sacramental absolution, unless he has a grave reason for receiving Communion and there is no possibility of going to confession. Children must go to the sacrament of Penance before receiving Holy Communion for the first time.
- 1460** The *penance* the confessor imposes must take into account the penitent's personal situation and must seek his spiritual good. It must correspond as far as possible with the gravity and nature of the sins committed. It can consist of prayer, an offering, works of mercy, service of neighbor, voluntary self-denial, sacrifices, and above all the patient acceptance of the cross we must bear. Such penances help configure us to Christ, who alone expiated our sins once for all. They allow us to become co-heirs with the risen Christ, "provided we suffer with him."
- 1468** "The whole power of the sacrament of Penance consists in restoring us to God's grace and joining us with him in an intimate friendship." Reconciliation with God is thus the purpose and effect of this sacrament. For those who receive the sacrament of Penance with contrite heart and religious disposition, reconciliation "is usually followed by peace and serenity of conscience with strong spiritual consolation." Indeed the sacrament of Reconciliation with God brings about a true "spiritual resurrection," restoration of the dignity and blessings of the life of the children of God, of which the most precious is friendship with God.
- 1491** The sacrament of Penance is a whole consisting in three actions of the penitent and the priest's absolution. The penitent's acts are repentance, confession or disclosure of sins to the priest, and the intention to make reparation and do works of reparation.
- 1496** The spiritual effects of the sacrament of Penance are:
- reconciliation with God by which the penitent recovers grace;
  - reconciliation with the Church;
  - remission of the eternal punishment incurred by mortal sins;
  - remission, at least in part, of temporal punishments resulting from sin;
  - peace and serenity of conscience, and spiritual consolation;
  - an increase of spiritual strength for the Christian battle.

# WORKSHEETS

Families need to complete worksheets together with their child  
and then return on designated weekends to Mass

PLEASE NOTE: Do not complete all the worksheets at the one time, or in the first week of classes.

While they are being given out to parents at the beginning of the program, so parents have an OVERVIEW of the whole program (especially the worksheets and projects that need to be completed at home and then brought back to Mass) to ensure children have adequate knowledge and information to complete the worksheets, please ONLY start to complete the designated worksheet in the WEEK before it is to be CUT OUT OF THIS BOOKLET and returned to weekend Mass.

One suggestion is to set aside a common time, each week, to complete the sheet with your child

Please ensure that once the sheet is completed, it is signed and dated by a parent or adult family member

As you will see, the worksheet is divided into 2 parts:

**GATHER:** The parent or adult family member is invited to find a time to sit down with their child and work through the 1st part of the sheet

**ACT:** There is a 'family orientated' task that the child, supported by the rest of their family is asked to complete every day

WHERE DOES MY CHILD HAND IN THEIR WORKSHEET?

- The child hands in the worksheet to a member of the Parish Sacramental Team (AS YOU ENTER THE CHURCH for weekend Mass, at the door between the narthex/foyer and the main body of the Church.)
- Children must hand in their own sheet (in person). The sheet cannot be handed in by another family member or another child.
- Children will all sit together with their teachers / catechists in the front seats of the church.
- Children will not be permitted to leave until the end of Mass. Please go to the toilet before Mass!
- Other family members are free to sit wherever they feel comfortable in the church.

WHAT IF MY CHILD CANNOT ATTEND A LESSON, or HAND IN THEIR WORKSHEET AT MASS – DUE TO ILLNESS OR ANOTHER FAMILY EMERGENCY?

Children unable to attend a lesson, or hand in a worksheet (due to illness or another family emergency) **MUST** contact the Parish Office (and if the office is unattended to leave a message on the answering machine). This message must be left ASAP to ensure that this information can be handed onto the Sacramental Team.

**TO BE ABLE TO RECEIVE THEIR 1st Reconciliation children must attend ALL LESSONS and hand in ALL WORKSHEETS.**

# WORKSHEET 1 NOTES

Return worksheet at any weekend Mass, the weekend following Workshop 1

## Purpose of Worksheet:

- If you don't already have one, to create and establish a family prayer space in your home (sometimes known by children as a 'sacred space') that will be a focus for your child and your family during these weeks of preparing for their 1st Reconciliation
- Children are asked to either take a photograph of their family prayer space OR if they cannot do this to draw the sacred space they have created.
- Children are asked to write one or two sentences about their 'sacred space'.

**GATHER:** A parent or adult family member is invited to find a time to sit down with their child and discuss with them how you could create 'a sacred space' and what you could put in it:

Your sacred space might be as simple as a small table, or shelf, or plastic crate or box covered in a cloth (even a plain coloured tea towel or beach towel). You could display in this space:  
- a crucifix, or bible, or candle, or flowers, or a photo of your child who is making their 1st Reconciliation (or a photo of the whole family), or a statue (or icon) of Mary or another saint, or a set of rosary beads or a prayer book.

If you don't have any of these items you don't need to go out and purchase them, you can also assist your child to make a cross, or draw a picture of Jesus or a bible scene that can be placed in this space.

We ask that one item placed in your sacred space is a picture of the Prodigal Son (coloured in by your child).

**ACT:** The 'family orientated' task that the child, supported by the rest of their family is asked to complete every day this week... is to find some time each day to gather near this 'sacred space' and say the Our Father (the Lord's Prayer) and Hail Mary

You are invited to keep this sacred space up until the end of the 1st Reconciliation. However, you may consider keeping such a sacred space in your home even after the program is completed. You will need this sacred space if your child is making their First Holy Communion later in the year.



## 10 WAYS TO...

# CELEBRATE YOUR CHILD'S FIRST RECONCILIATION

### 1. Pray 'sorry' prayers

Support your child in prayer. Pray together as a family. As well as 'thank-ing' and 'asking' prayers, include 'sorry' prayers in your time together before God.

### 2. Adorn your 'sacred site'

Place a symbol or picture at your 'sacred site' (i.e. your family prayer area). This might be a picture of a scene from a parable like the prodigal son. Open the pages of your bible to this parable (Lk 15:11-32).

### 3. Talk about it

Talk about what this day means: a celebration of God's mercy and love.

**Table topics:** Who is the most forgiving and compassionate person you know?

*Or:* Share a time when you really needed forgiveness and someone forgave you.

### 4. Practise forgiveness

This is a graced time to work at the quality of forgiveness in your own home. Practise being more gentle, compassionate and patient with one another. Let the fruits of the Spirit reign in your home.

### 5. Remember when...

Share Reconciliation memories. What was First Reconciliation day like for Grandpa? Mum? Older sisters and brothers? Give your child a sense of our Catholic story, including the positive changes in the way we celebrate Reconciliation today.

### 6. Seize teachable moments

Look for teachable moments to impart to your child a lesson about forgiveness and reconciliation. e.g. Talk about ways to resolve a playground conflict; hold a dinner table discussion about Aboriginal reconciliation.

### 7. Celebrate with the saints

Read the story of St John Vianney who was a great confessor. People flocked to him to receive Reconciliation. Encourage your child to call upon his/her favourite saint as a good companion on this part of their faith journey.

### 8. Read stories to inspire

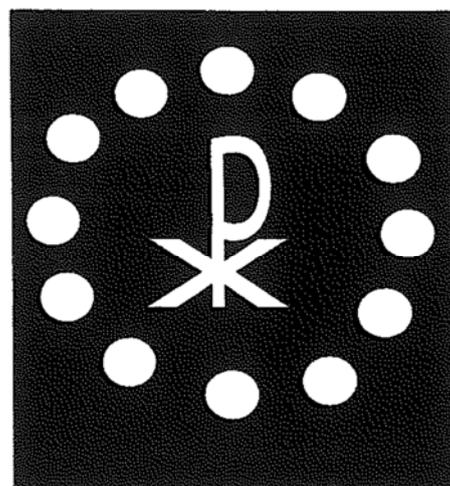
At family prayer-time, read a bible story such as the woman who washed Jesus' feet with her tears (Lk 7:36-48); or the parable of the lost sheep (Lk 15:1-7), the lost coin (Lk 15:8-10), the prodigal son (Lk 15:11-32).

### 9. Set an example

Undoubtedly a powerful parental witness you can give your child as to the value of Reconciliation is to participate in the Sacrament yourself. (If you are a non-Catholic parent, you are welcome to come forward to receive a blessing.)

### 10. Party well

Conclude the big day by gifting your child with a special treat - e.g. an icecream, a special meal. Some parishes hold a party after the Reconciliation ceremony. Whatever your style, enter into the festivities and envelop your child in a spirit of celebration.



Your child's sacramental experience begins at home. Here are some ideas for enveloping your child in an atmosphere of faith and love as First Reconciliation Day approaches.

### Helpful hint

One of the advantages of receiving Reconciliation at a young age is that children develop the habit of asking for and receiving forgiveness. How important this will be at age 13, 16, 19 - as they start to explore the adult world and perhaps make some serious mistakes - to know that they can be forgiven. With youth suicide rates so high, it is essential that our children grow up knowing that no failure is so bad that there can be no way out; every sin can be forgiven.

Likewise, it is terribly important that children see their *parents* receiving the Sacrament. Otherwise they will associate Reconciliation with 'kids stuff' and may not turn to this source of grace when they most need it in their adult lives.



**Remember how the parable of the prodigal son ends?  
Party well!!**

**The Story Source**  
PO Box 1106, Maroubra NSW 2035.  
Tel/Fax (02) 9314 0867.  
storysource@ozemail.com.au

# WORKSHEET 2 NOTES

Return worksheet at any weekend Mass, the weekend following Workshop 2

## Purpose of Worksheet:

- The child is invited to discuss with their families and think about “WHAT BAPTISM MEANS TO ME”

**GATHER:** A parent or adult family member is invited to find a time to sit down with their child and assist them to complete this sheet.

The child is asked to write 5-7 lines about what Baptism means to them then draw or find pictures about Baptism for the bottom section of the sheet.

**ACT:** The ‘family orientated’ task that the child, supported by the rest of their family is asked to complete every day this week... is to once again find some time each day to gather near this ‘sacred space’ created last week and assisting your child to learn the PRAYER OF SORROW, by praying either PRAYER together:

Option 1

LORD JESUS,  
YOU ARE A FRIEND OF SINNERS.  
I AM A SINNER:  
HAVE MERCY ON ME. AMEN.

Option 2

O MY GOD, I AM VERY SORRY  
THAT I HAVE SINNED AGAINST YOU  
BECAUSE YOU ARE SO GOOD  
AND WITH THE HELP OF YOUR GRACE  
I WILL NOT SIN AGAIN. AMEN.

It would be great if the child learnt this PRAYER OF SORROW ‘off by heart’, so they do not require a sheet in front of them when they make their Reconciliation in future years.

(When they make their 1st Reconciliation they will take into the Mercy Room a sheet that has the format for the Sacrament, along with the PRAYER OF SORROW)

# Sacraments

## God *made flesh*



### Sacraments:

#### Our Life in the Church

Relationships grow through communication. Communication is more than just words. We also communicate with gestures like smiles, handshakes, hugs, gifts, cards, flowers. In our relationship with God, we too can connect with him through words and also through gestures.

But how does God communicate with us? In the same way really; in words and gestures. There are the scriptures which are God's words to us and there are the sacraments which are gestures of God's love. The Church has named and formally recognised seven sacraments as powerful examples of God reaching out to connect with God's people. Pope John Paul II said that a sacrament made visible the invisible mystery of God. The Sacraments of the Church are visible signs that God's presence is real and is among us. They are signs that God loves us.

Each of the seven sacraments of the Church emphasises a different dimension of our relationship with our loving God.

**The Sacraments of Initiation** (Baptism, Holy Communion and Confirmation) highlight our relationship with each person of the Trinity:

- In **Baptism** we become a child of God the Father as we are reborn spiritually. We use the symbol of water to signify this rebirth (recalling the waters of our natural birth). Many of the prayers of baptism express belonging, being part of the family of God, and being an heir in God's kingdom, just like a real son or daughter.

- At our first **Communion** we unite with Jesus. When we eat his body and drink his blood, his body and blood mingles with ours and we become "one flesh". That's why it's called "communion": we become one body and one spirit with Jesus.

- In **Confirmation**, we recommit to our baptismal vows (made on our behalf by our parents and Godparents) and consciously welcome the gifts of the **Holy Spirit**. We are empowered as adult members of the Church to live the Christian life with conviction.

**The Sacraments of Healing** (Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick) highlight the merciful nature of God, while **the Vocational Sacraments** (Matrimony, Holy Orders) illuminate our call to intimacy with God and to share God's love with others.

# WORKSHEET 3 NOTES

Return worksheet at any weekend Mass, the weekend following workshop 3

## Purpose of Worksheet:

- The child is invited to complete the following 'heart of commitment' worksheet. It is an opportunity for the child to 'make a commitment' to their preparation for 1st Reconciliation

**GATHER:** A parent or adult family member is invited to find a time to sit down with their child and help them to complete their worksheet.

- On the top line in the heart the child is to write their name.
- On the bottom line in the heart they are to write something they would like to do more of during their preparation for 1st Reconciliation, eg. love, pray etc.
- They then colour in the heart 'in bright colours'
- Cut out this coloured heart
- Write their full name on the back

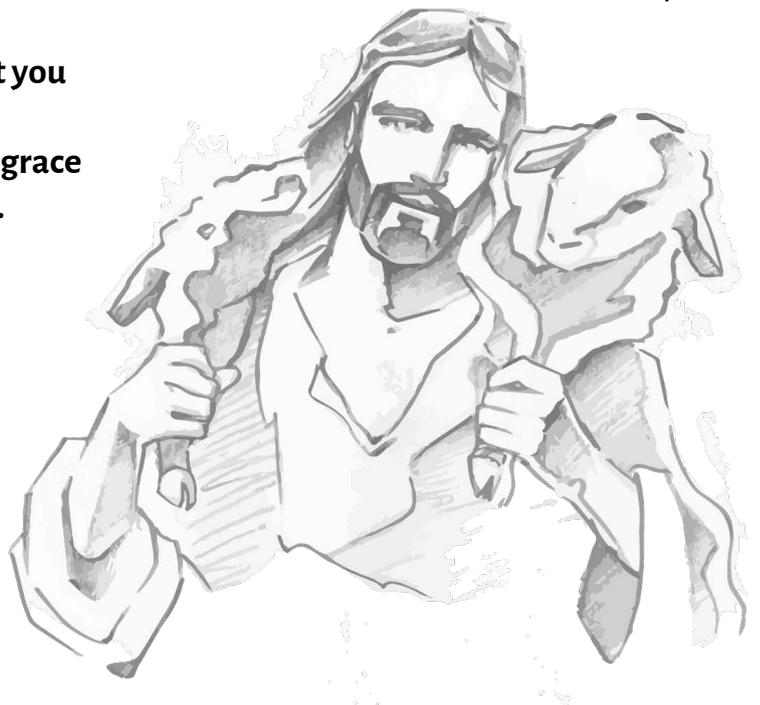
**ACT:** The 'family orientated' task that the child, supported by the rest of their family is asked to complete every day this week... is to once again find some time each day to gather near this 'sacred space' and assisting your child to learn either or both of the following options for the PRAYER OF SORROW, by praying the PRAYER together:

Option 1

**Lord Jesus,  
you are a friend of sinners.  
I am a sinner:  
have mercy on me. Amen.**

Option 2

**O my God, I am very sorry  
that I have sinned against you  
because you are so good  
and with the help of your grace  
I will not sin again. Amen.**



SACRAMENT ESSENTIALS

# reconciliation



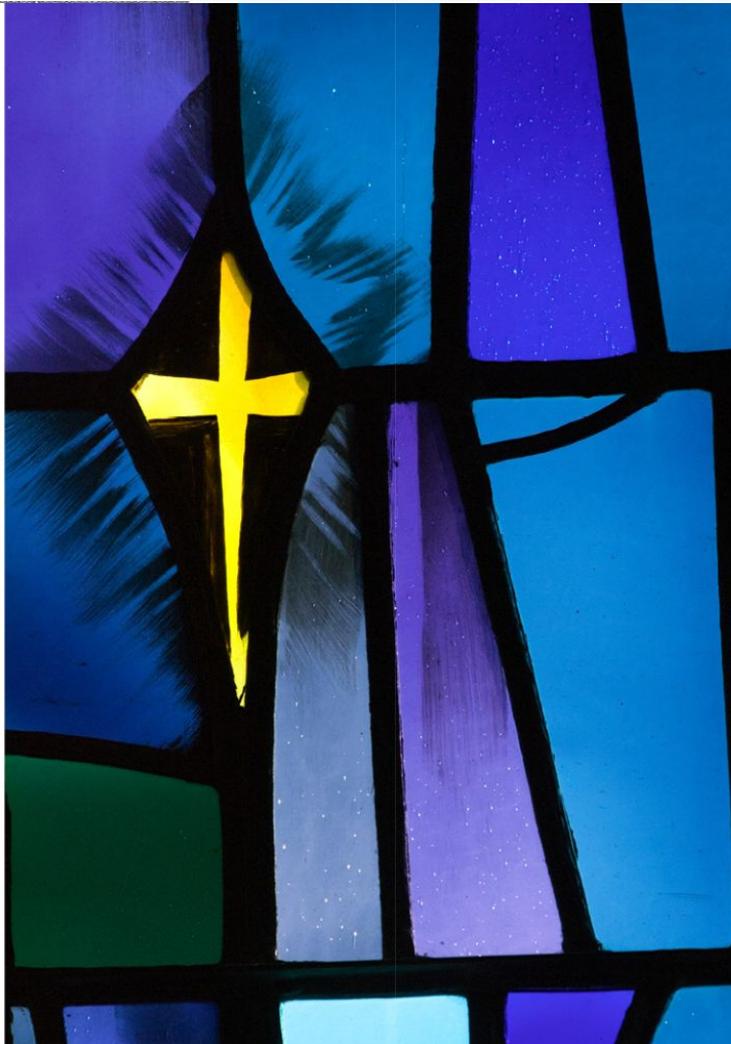
## What's this sacrament business all about?

As human beings we communicate through our body; through our words, gestures, facial expressions, and actions. Communication is so foundational to human relationships that they wither when we don't regularly make the effort to communicate. They also shatter when we use our words or gestures to hurt others.

God also communicates with us through words and gestures and this is especially so in the Sacraments. We have Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Communion, Confirmation), Sacraments of Vocation (Holy Orders, Matrimony) and Sacraments of Healing (Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick). Some Sacraments we only receive once because they mark us permanently with infinite grace, like a spiritual tattoo (eg Baptism, Confirmation). Other Sacraments have abundant graces that can be poured out again and again as we need it (eg Eucharist, Reconciliation).

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is one of the healing Sacraments and is one of the most important avenues of grace for you and your children to grow in relationship with God and each other.

Your role as a parent is vital in helping your child discover the beauty of this Sacrament and the key to establishing a life-long love for it. But we cannot teach what we do not know so read on to get some insights that will help you deepen your own appreciation for the Sacrament and pass it on to your children.



## The Sacrament of Many Names

The Sacrament of Reconciliation goes by many names according to the *Catechism*

- SACRAMENT OF CONVERSION it makes sacramentally present Jesus' call to conversion, the first step in returning to the father.
- SACRAMENT OF PENANCE it consecrates the sinner's steps to make amends.
- SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION confessing your sins to a priest is an essential element and confesses our belief in a merciful God.
- SACRAMENT OF FORGIVENESS through the priest's sacramental absolution, the grace of God's forgiveness is poured out.
- SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION it reconnects us to God and to our brothers and sisters in Christ.

# Celebrating First Reconciliation



*The priest begins with the sign of the cross. In the name of the Father...*

*Begin by asking the priest for a blessing. You say:*

**Bless me Father, for I have sinned.  
This is my First Reconciliation, and these are my sins.**

*Then tell the priest your sins – the things that prevent you from loving God and neighbour. In other words: **get rid of your junk!** When you have finished saying all your sins, say:*

**For these and all my sins, I am very sorry.**

*He will suggest something to do to help you grow closer to God (penance): a prayer or an action.*

*It is always a good idea to spend time sitting with Jesus as your friend. Let him just be there with you. Let him love you and heal you. Get to know him better. Offer your life to him once again.*

*A prayer like the **Our Father** can be a great way of doing this.*

*Then you pray a **Prayer of Sorrow** – use your own words, or one of these:*

**Lord Jesus,  
you are a friend of sinners.  
I am a sinner;  
have mercy on me. Amen.**

*or*

**O my God I am very sorry  
that I have sinned against you.  
Because you are so good,  
and with the help of your grace,  
I will not sin again. Amen.**



*He will extend one or both hands over your head and pray the **Prayer of Absolution** (which forgives your sins)*

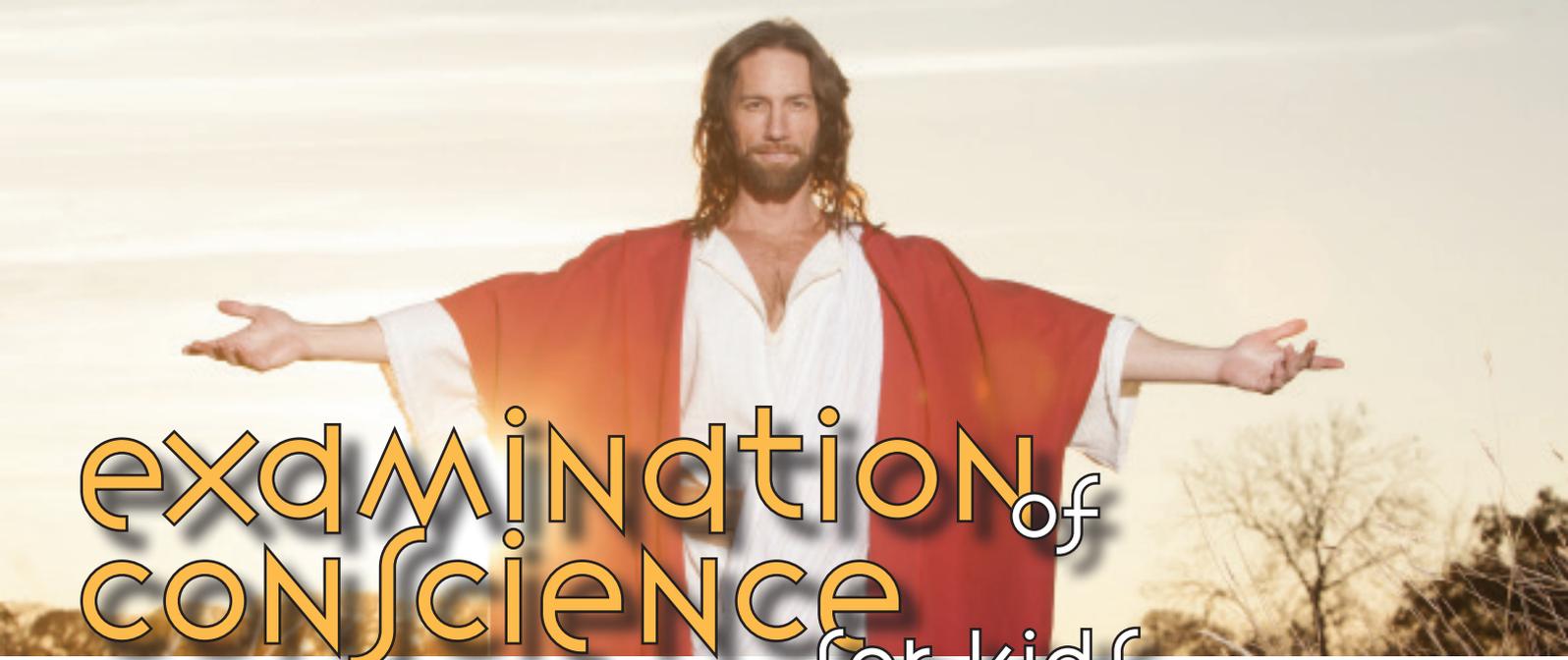
*God, the Father of mercies, by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus his Son has freed the world from sin, and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins. Through the ministry of the Church, may God grant you pardon, grace and peace, and I absolve you from all your sins, in the name of the Father, ✠ and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*

*and then finish by saying:*

*The Lord has freed you from all your sins, go in peace.*

*You say: **Thanks be to God.***





# examination of conscience for kids

According to the  
2 Great Commandments  
(*Love God & Love Others*)

## Responsibilities to God

- Have I prayed every day?
- Have I prayed my morning prayers and night prayers?
- Have I prayed with my parents and family?
- Have I been moody and rebellious about praying and going to church on Sunday?
- Have I asked the Holy Spirit to help me whenever I have been tempted to sin?
- Have I asked the Holy Spirit to help me do what is right?

## prayer of SORROW

Lord Jesus, you are a friend of sinners.  
I am a sinner: have mercy on me.  
Amen.

or

O my God, I am very sorry that I have sinned against you; because you are so good and with the help of your grace, I will not sin again. Amen.

Text: © Fr Thomas Weinandy.

## Responsibilities to others

- Have I been obedient and respectful to my parents?
- Have I lied or been deceitful to them or to others?
- Have I been arrogant, stubborn or rebellious?
- Have I talked back to parents, teachers or other adults?
- Have I pouted and been moody?
- Have I been selfish toward my parents, brothers, and sisters, teachers, or my friends and schoolmates?
- Have I gotten angry at them?
- Have I hit anyone?
- Have I held grudges or not forgiven others?
- Have I treated other children with respect or have I made fun of them and called them names?
- Have I used bad language?
- Have I stolen anything?  
Have I returned it?
- Have I performed my responsibilities, such as homework and household chores?
- Have I been helpful and affectionate toward my family?
- Have I been kind and generous with my friends?

# parenting points

## The difference between 'I'm sorry' and 'forgive me?'

Saying 'sorry' is different to asking for 'forgiveness'. When we say sorry to someone, it is an 'I-centred' statement expressing sympathy, but not necessarily inferring that we take any responsibility. As such, it requires nothing from the person to whom we say it. It is always good to say 'sorry' but it is nowhere near as hard to do, or as effective, as asking for forgiveness.

Asking for forgiveness is an act of vulnerability; not only does it put us in a position of accepting responsibility for hurting the other, it is a request to be invited back into unity with the person we have hurt. Full reconciliation can only occur in a relationship when we say sorry and ask for forgiveness. This is the basis of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, but applies equally to any intimate relationship such as with a spouse, a child or family and school/parish community members.



## Five Ways to Lead by Example

### ONE

#### Practice Repentance.

When you hurt or disappoint your spouse or a family member, accept responsibility, apologise and ask for forgiveness. Your willingness to admit your faults is a powerful role model.

### TWO

#### Practice Humility:

Nothing interferes more with our willingness and capacity to seek reconciliation than pride. Humility is the counter point of pride so seek it in prayer and meditation.

### THREE

#### Practice Mercy.

When others are wounded, listen compassionately and help them move towards forgiveness.



### FOUR

#### Practice Forgiveness.

Resist the temptation to hold onto grudges against others who have hurt you. Living under the burden of resentment and unforgiven wounds is like a cancer – it destroys our joy and leads us to act in ways that harm others.

### FIVE

#### Practice the Sacrament:

Go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation yourself. If it's been awhile, remember how the Father of the Prodigal Son waited for his return. Our Father in heaven awaits your return with the same urgency. Not sure what to do? Just let the priest know and he'll guide you, or you can use our guide on page 21.

# preparing YOUR CHILD FOR THEIR FIRST reconciliation

## 1. Talk about it.

In the lead up to their First Reconciliation use your family mealtime to talk about God's mercy and love. Talk about people you know who are very forgiving and compassionate. Share a time when you needed forgiveness.



## 2. Prepare yourself.

Forgive someone against whom you hold resentment. Reflect on how your resentment is making you hurt others. Make a decision to let go and forgive.



## 3. Set an example.

Go to reconciliation yourself, at your child's reconciliation if possible, or immediately before or after. If you are a non-Catholic parent, and it is offered in your parish, go forward for a blessing from the priest.

## AFTER THE

# big day...

Much like a wedding, your child's First Reconciliation is the first day of the rest of their faith journey. So how do we continue to nurture, encourage and guide our children until they can take adult responsibility?

### Do...

- ...affirm your child's worthiness. Your child needs to know their inherent goodness and their power to love and make loving choices.
- ...take him/her to the Sacrament of Reconciliation at regular intervals during the year, especially during Advent and Lent.
- ...find some child-friendly movies and books with forgiveness and reconciliation as a theme to watch and read.
- ...forge a habit of regular Reconciliation yourself. If you don't have a regular habit, your kids won't either.

### Don't...

- ... use the Sacrament as a threat or punishment! (eg. "If you do that again, I will send you to Confession!") Treat the Sacrament with respect, as a special gift to experience God's mercy and love.
- ... guilt-trip your children into going to Reconciliation. Keep inviting and creating the opportunity and let God do the rest.
- ... neglect your own spiritual growth. We cannot lead where we have not been and sometimes we can be more committed to our child's growth in holiness than we are to our own!



# WORKSHEET 4 NOTES

Return worksheet at any weekend Mass, the weekend following Workshop 4

## Purpose of Worksheet:

- The child is invited to reflect on the Gospel story of Jesus' meeting with the Centurion (Roman Official) whose servant was sick.
- The child is invited to complete the following worksheet.

**GATHER:** A parent or adult family member is invited to find a time to sit down with their child and encourage them to complete their worksheet.

Using a Bible or Bible App look up and read these verses in the Bible with your child:

Matthew chapter 8, verses 5 – 13 *or*

Luke chapter 7, verses 1 - 10

Why not install a Bible App on your phone or tablet? The **Faithlife Study Bible** is a great one, available on Android & iOS

## Background material for parents and adult family members to help their child complete their worksheet

What is the Gospel story of Jesus' meeting with the Centurion all about?

What relevance does it have to 1st Reconciliation?

As we see in Matthew chapter 8, verses 5 - 13 and Luke chapter 7, verses 1 - 10: The Roman Centurion asks Jesus to cure his servant. Even though the Centurion was a gentile (non-Jew), he believed in Jesus and that Jesus could cure his servant. Jesus admired the Centurion's faith, and because of this faith Jesus wanted to go to the Centurion's home to cure his servant. The Centurion (non-Jew), however, knew that Jews were not allowed according to their practices to go into the homes of non-Jewish people (Gentiles). The Centurion also did not think he was worthy (as a non-Jewish person) to have Jesus enter his house. So, Jesus cured the servant without going to the Centurion's house.

In the new translation of our Missal, we pray the Centurion's word before we receive Holy Communion. We tell Jesus that, because of our sinfulness, we are not worthy to receive him in his Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion. However, Jesus will not avoid us because of our sins, he comes to us with his mercy and compassion because we believe.

Like other well-known parables like the Lost Sheep and the Prodigal Son (passages we often associated with the Sacrament of Reconciliation) this Gospel story of Jesus' meeting with the Centurion also reminds us of God's forgiveness.

**ACT:** The 'family orientated' task that the child, supported by the rest of their family is asked to complete every day this week... is to once again find some time each day to gather near this 'sacred space' and assist your child to learn the PRAYER OF SORROW.

ALSO TO FIND ONE TIME THIS WEEK AS A FAMILY TO PRAY TOGETHER

"THE FAMILY RECONCILIATION PRAYER".

# Family Reconciliation Prayer

---

Leader: We are a Catholic family who gather together...

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Leader: Loving God, sometimes we fail to love you and to love one another.  
Forgive us and help us to forgive others.

All: Amen.

Leader: Once Peter asked Jesus how many times he should forgive someone.

Peter: Is seven times enough?

Jesus: No, not seven times, but seventy times seven times.

Leader: That means always forgive.  
Let us ask God to forgive us.

*Each person reads one of the following lines:*

We are sorry for the times when we got angry with one another.

We are sorry that we didn't always help, or failed to do our chores.

We are sorry for being disobedient, back chatting, or disrespectful to one another.

We are sorry for the time we made fun of others.

We are sorry for \_\_\_\_\_

Leader: Let us bow our heads and ask God to forgive us.

*(pause for silent prayer)*

Let us also take time to forgive one another.

*(pause for silent prayer)*

Let us join hands and pray as Jesus taught us to pray.

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread  
and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us  
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Leader: Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, God forgives our sins.  
Loving God, help us live the ways your Son Jesus taught us to live.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

# Common Prayers

---

## **Sign of the Cross**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## **Our Father**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be  
thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be  
done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive  
us our trespasses, as we forgive those who  
trespass against us and lead us not into  
temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
Amen.

## **Hail Mary**

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with  
thee. Blessed art thou among women and  
blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us  
sinners now and at the hour of our death.  
Amen.

## **Doxology (Glory Be)**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever  
shall be, world without end. Amen.

## **Prayer of Sorrow** Option 1

Lord Jesus, you are a friend of sinners.  
I am a sinner: have mercy on me. Amen.

## **Prayer of Sorrow** Option 2

O my God, I am very sorry  
that I have sinned against you  
because you are so good  
and with the help of your grace  
I will not sin again. Amen.

## **Act of Faith**

Lord God, I believe in you and all that your  
Church teaches, because you have said it,  
and your word is true. Amen.

## **Act of Hope**

Lord God, I hope in you for grace and for  
glory, because of your promises, your  
mercy, and your power. Amen.

## **Act of Love**

Lord God, because you are so good, I love  
you with all my heart, and for your sake I  
love my neighbor as myself.

*Parents are asked to ensure that all children preparing for their 1st Reconciliation are able to say the following prayers:*

- The Lord's Prayer
- Hail Mary
- Doxology (Glory be)
- Prayer of Sorrow (option 1 or option 2).

These prayers will often be given to the child by the priest as their penance after receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation.