

Preparing for **RECONCILIATION** at St. Peter Parish



The Sacrament of Reconciliation, or Penance, is a wonderful opportunity to heal the brokenness in our relationship with God that comes with sin. Children of about seven years of age are not really capable of meeting the standards for serious sin, and some might question whether they are capable of any sin at all. But the truth, for every human person, is that the reality of sin will come soon enough. When it does, we need to be prepared to seek God's forgiveness, to receive His forgiveness, and to strive to do better.

Preparing your child for Reconciliation is a family process, supported and encouraged by the parish Faith Formation programs. These guidelines will help ensure that you have the information you need to talk about this beautiful experience with your child, and to grow together in your understanding of Reconciliation and your love for Christ and the Church.

In order to celebrate Reconciliation, your child - or any person - must prepare with an examination of conscience, a sense of true sorrow for sin, a firm resolution to avoid sin in the future, and then the sacrament itself. Reconciliation includes a confession of sin, absolution from sin given by the priest in the name of Christ, and the assignment of a penance - some prayer or action that helps to signify the resolution to turn away from sin.

Everyone who is prepared to celebrate a sacrament may do so. The preparation is not a way of "earning" the sacrament; rather, the sacrament is God's gift to us. Our preparation is the way we show gratitude for God's goodness, by striving to appreciate as best we can the gift we are given.

To be fully prepared for reconciliation, your child will learn the concepts of sin, sorrow, forgiveness, and the celebration of forgiveness. In Faith Formation, these topics recur in the years following this one, so as your child grows in the ability to understand the concept of responsibility for one's actions and the choosing of right or wrong, they will be able to put these important concepts into practice.

To ensure the best possible preparation for your child, you are asked to see that he or she knows, understands, or is familiar with the following. The parish Faith Formation program, the First Reconciliation materials, and your own formation will help you to have the information and tools you need to support your child's preparation for this sacrament.

For questions and assistance in supporting your child's preparation for First Reconciliation, please contact me at anytime.

God Bless,

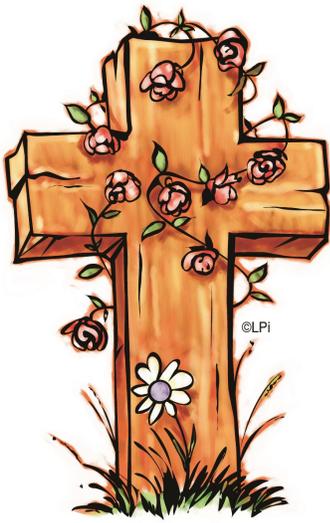
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WORSHIP

- ◆ Weekly participation at Mass (Faith Formation class does not replace Mass, even though both are on Sunday) and Holy Days of Obligation.



KNOWLEDGE OF THE SACRAMENT

Your child should be able to respond in an age-appropriate way to these questions:

- ◆ What does Reconciliation mean to you?
- ◆ How might you be different, once you have celebrated Reconciliation?
- ◆ Why do you think Jesus provided a way for us to know our sins are forgiven?
- ◆ Why do you want to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation?

Faith Formation classes will help your child, Adult Formation will help you, and the *Reconciliation materials* will help both, to develop appropriate responses to the above questions.

PARTICIPATION

- ◆ Faith Formation, 3rd Sun. of the month (except Apr. is 2nd Sun.) from 9:15a to 1:15p
- ◆ Parent/Child Meeting, Sunday, October 7 at 9:30a
- ◆ Parent/Child Meeting, Sunday, January 6 at 9:30a
- ◆ Parent/Child Retreat, Saturday, March 2 from 10a until lunch
- ◆ First Reconciliation Service, Saturday, March 2 following the retreat.

CATHOLIC LIFE

- ◆ Perform one service project of your choosing.

This includes acts of kindness, rooted in faith, in everyday life. The Corporal Works of Mercy serve as a guide, but parents will need to adapt these principles to apply them to children.

Feed the hungry
Shelter the homeless
Clothe the naked
Visit the sick and imprisoned
Bury the dead
Give alms to the poor

- ◆ Learn and understand the Ten Commandments
- ◆ Be able to discuss, at an age-appropriate level, what these mean in your child's life.

PRAYER

Know common Catholic prayers. Ideally, pray together each day, perhaps at bedtime or on the way to school.

- ◆ Sign of the Cross
- ◆ The Lord's Prayer (Our Father)
- ◆ The Hail Mary
- ◆ The Doxology (Glory be...)
- ◆ Act of Contrition