

Faith Lesson Plan and Faith Activity

Signs of Grace Session 6- The Sacrament of Reconciliation

Grade 2

Doctrinal Content

Those who approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation are pardoned by God's mercy and reconciled with Christ and his Church. This Sacrament is called the Sacrament of Penance, Confession, Reconciliation, and Conversion for the penitent must make amends for their sins, must tell their sins to the priest, they are reconciled to Christ and his Church, and strive not to sin again through a change of life. Only God can forgive sins, however Christ has passed on his healing work of forgiveness to his successors the Apostles and to their successors (priests and bishops). In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the priest stands in the person of Christ to forgive the sins of the penitent. (CCC 1422-1424, 1441-1470)

Objectives

- Jesus forgives our sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Jesus institutes the Sacrament of Reconciliation so we can know his forgiveness and mercy: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." (Jn 20:22-23)
- Jesus is really present and acting through the priest to forgive our sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- The Sacrament of Reconciliation forgives our sins, restores sanctifying grace, and gives us grace to avoid future sins.

Let Us Pray

Make the sign of the cross.

Say: Dear Jesus, Thank you for your love and mercy. Thank you for the gift of your Holy Spirit. Please help me to turn back to you when I sin. And please give me the grace to avoid sin in the future. In your holy name we pray. Amen. (*Student guide pg 75*)

Pray the Act of Contrition

Make the sign of the cross.

Memory Verse Review

Encourage each child to recite from memory the verse from last week. Give a reward when appropriate effort is given to reciting the memory verse.

"Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your father who is in Heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

New Memory Verse *(Student guide pg 85)*

“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit in me!” (Psalm 51:10)

Saint of the Day - Saint Faustina Kowalska (1905-1938); Feast Day Oct 5th; Patron of Mercy
(Student guide pg 85)

Display the following.



- St. Faustina was born in Poland just before WWII. She was the third of 10 children. As a young girl St. Faustina wanted to become a Nun, but her parents would not allow her, so she worked as a housekeeper.
- At 20 years old, she joined the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy.
- One evening, Jesus appeared to her and told her to have a picture painted of what she saw. This image showed Jesus' love and mercy on sinners and how he desires for us to trust completely in him. He also asked that the Church have a feast honoring his Mercy on the 2nd Sunday of Easter. This is called Divine Mercy Sunday.
- This reminds us that Jesus loves us and will forgive us no matter what sins we commit if we will just turn to him and tell him we are sorry.
- Jesus appeared to her many times, and she wrote down everything he told her. Therefore, she is sometimes called the “Secretary of Divine Mercy.”

Say: Do you like to help fix things? Whether it is a broken toy that you're able to get working again, something around the house that you helped your mom or dad fix, or even a mess that you helped clean up- it can be fun and exciting to take something old or broken or messy and make it new and clean. That's what Jesus does for us in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. He takes our hearts, broken and messy with sin, and he makes them new and clean. Sin hurts our relationship with God and others, but Jesus heals us in this sacrament. He makes all things new.

Read the Paragraph together and ask the children to write their own prayer asking Jesus to prepare them for Reconciliation. Ask them to draw a picture of themselves talking to God.

Let's Read God's Word (Student Guide pg 76)

Say: Do you ever wonder how we know that Jesus gives the priest the power to forgive your sins in Confession? Let us read one story in the Bible that helps us believe in the grace found in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. It takes place on the evening of Easter Sunday. Jesus appears to his apostle to talk with them, but they are afraid.

Proclaim: "On the evening of that first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' When he had said this, he showed them his hands and side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you.' And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'" (Jn 20:19-23)

Ask: (Encourage children to answer)

How do priests carry out Jesus' command to forgive sins? *They teach us about Jesus and celebrate the Sacraments of Baptism and Reconciliation.*

What do the Apostles receive when Jesus breathes on them? *He gives them the Holy Spirit*

What does this give them the power to do? *The Holy Spirit gives them the power to forgive sins.*

Let's Do Activities (Student Guide pg 82-83)

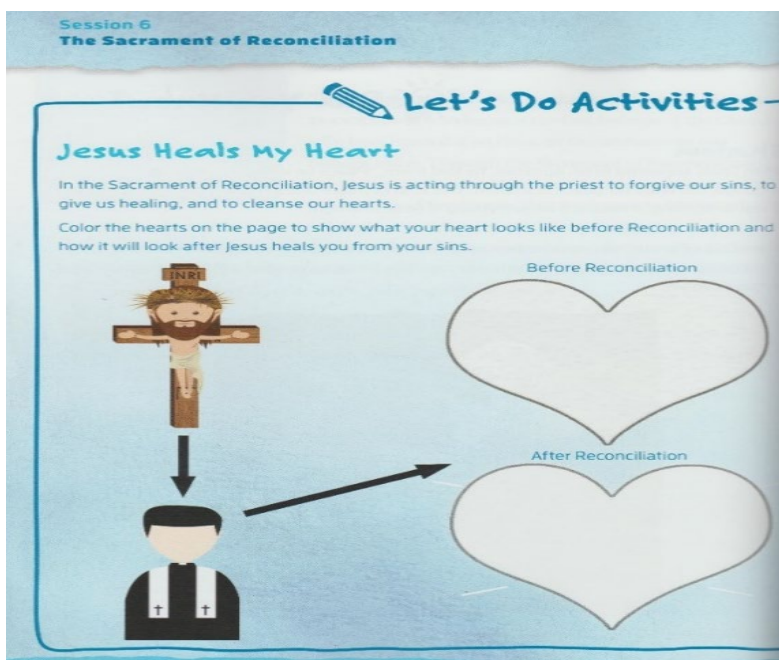
Display & Complete the Following

Session 6
The Sacrament of Reconciliation

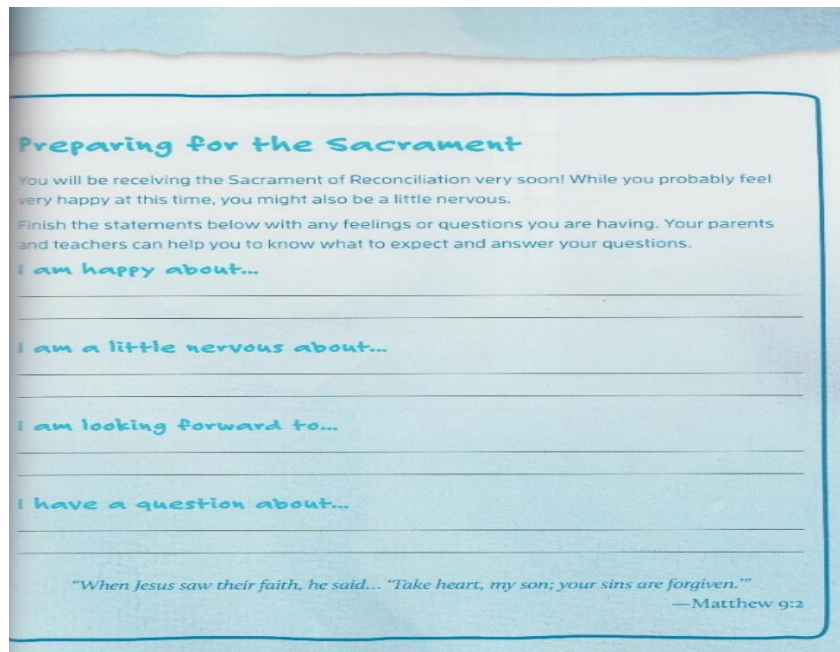
Let's Do Activities

Jesus Heals My Heart

In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, Jesus is acting through the priest to forgive our sins, to give us healing, and to cleanse our hearts.
Color the hearts on the page to show what your heart looks like before Reconciliation and how it will look after Jesus heals you from your sins.



The activity page features a central illustration of a priest in a black and white cassock with a white sash, standing below a wooden crucifix. An arrow points from the priest towards two large, empty heart shapes on the right. The top heart is labeled 'Before Reconciliation' and the bottom heart is labeled 'After Reconciliation'. The page is titled 'Session 6 The Sacrament of Reconciliation' and 'Let's Do Activities' with a pencil icon. The main heading is 'Jesus Heals My Heart'.



Let's Learn About Our Faith (Student Guide pg 78-80)

Say: The grace that we receive in Baptism forgive Original Sin and makes us children of God. But when we sin after Baptism, we damage our relationship with God, and we need his grace to repair our friendship. God wants to show us his mercy, and so he always calls us back to himself when we sin.

God forgives our sins and gives us his grace and mercy in the **SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**. This is called the Sacrament of Reconciliation because we are reconciled (restored to friendship) to God when our sins are forgiven. It is also called the **SACRAMENT OF PENANCE** because when we receive the sacrament, we do penance to repair the damage caused by our sins. The priest gives a penance in Confession, which normally involves saying prayers or doing good deeds. It is sometimes called the **SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION** because we must confess, or tell, our sins in order to be forgiven. It is also called the **SACRAMENT OF CONVERSION** because it points to our conversion, our turning back to God after we sin.

Only God can forgive sins. God sent his Son in to the world to forgive our sins. Jesus forgave people's sins during his time on earth, and he wants to forgive our sins, too. After his **RESURRECTION**, Jesus gave his Holy Spirit to his Apostles so that they could forgive sins in his name. This was the beginning of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The Apostles then handed on this special power to their **SUCCESSORS**, who became the first bishops of the Church, who have handed it on through the centuries to our bishops today. Through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, our bishops, and priests (who are the coworkers of bishops) carry on the mission of forgiveness that Jesus gave to his Apostles.

When we go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we see and hear the priest, but it is really Jesus who is listening to us and forgiving our sins. Jesus is really present, and he acts through the priest to offer us his mercy and forgiveness.

In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, God forgives all our sins. There is no sin that God will not forgive if we are sorry for it. If we have committed a mortal sin, the Sacrament of Reconciliation restores God's Sanctifying grace in our soul. But this sacrament not only forgives sins, it also gives us the grace to fight against temptation and to avoid future sins.

Ask: What does God want to do for us in the Sacrament of Reconciliation? *Through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, God wants to show us his love. He does this by forgiving our sins, restoring sanctifying grace in our souls, repairing the wounds caused by our sins to our relationship with him and the Church, and gives us the grace to avoid sin in the future.*

Why do you think this is so important to God that he made it a sacrament? *Answers will vary. Accept all reasonable answers*

Who is present and acting through the priest in the Sacrament of Reconciliation? Jesus is present and acting through the priest to forgive our sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Key Words

Sacrament of Reconciliation: The sacrament in which we are reconciled to God when our sins are forgiven after Baptism.

Sacrament of Penance: Another name for the Sacrament of Reconciliation that points to the penance we must do to repair the damage caused by our sins.

Sacrament of Confession: Another name for the Sacrament of Reconciliation that points to the need to confess, or tell, our sins.

Sacrament of Conversion: Another name for the Sacrament of Reconciliation that points to our conversion, our turning back to God after we sin.

Resurrection: When Jesus rose from the dead to new life.

Successors: The bishops to whom the Apostles passed on their leadership of Christ's Church.

Do you recall the memory verse?

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit in me!" (Psalm 51:10)

Faith Activity- Tour of the Confessional & Reconciliation skit (Chapel).

Reconciliation Skit

Materials needed:

- Copies of the Reconciliation Skit found in the Student Activity Book
- Two chairs
- A purple "stole" to hang around the priest's neck (dad's ties work great for this)
- Any other items that would make your "confessional" a nice sacred space such as a crucifix and a Bible

Now that the students have studied sin, you can begin to familiarize them with the actual Sacrament of Reconciliation. Practice this often in the weeks ahead so all the students get a chance to practice.

Assemble ahead of time a little pretend confessional, which could be as simple as two chairs, but you can use your creativity. Have a student volunteer to be priest or a child. If the student will have trouble reading the priest's part, then you can play the part of the priest to make it easier.

Perform the skit a few times with different students. This will help them overcome many of the fears of the unknown with regard to the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

RECONCILIATION SKIT

The priest is seated in the confessional and a student walks in and sits down.

The priest and the student make the sign of the cross together.

Student: Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. This is my first confession. My sins are; I hit my brother. I lied to my mom. I took my sister's game without asking. I am sorry for these and all the sins I have forgotten.

Priest: When you are mad at your brother, why not try to think of some other way to communicate your frustration. Rather than hitting him, count to 10 to help you calm down, then try telling your brother what's wrong, or ask one of your parents to help in the situation. Ok? Now ask Mary and the saints to pray for you.

Priest: For your penance, I want you to say an Our Father, a Hail Mary, and a Glory be prayer. Also, do an act of kindness for your brother. Now, please say your Act of Contrition.

Student: O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended You. And I detest all my sins because of Your just punishments, but most of all because they offend You, my God, who are all-good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of Your grace to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen.

Priest: Now I will give you absolution from your sins.

The priest holds his hands above the student's head and prays the prayer of absolution.

Priest: God, the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son has reconciled the world to himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God give you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins.

The priest and student make the sign of the cross together as he says:

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

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good.

Student: His mercies endure forever. Thank you, Father!

The student leaves the confessional immediately kneels down to silently pray his or her penance. They can also thank God for the gift of the Sacrament of Penance.