

# Faith Lesson Plan and Faith Activity

## Signs of Grace Session 7- Celebrating Reconciliation

### Grade 2

#### Doctrinal Content

The Sacrament of Reconciliation requires that the penitent be willing, contrite of heart, confess their sins, and humbly make satisfaction for their sins. The penitent must show contrition or sorrow for their sins. Perfect contrition comes from a love of God and a desire never to hurt or grieve him. Imperfect contrition arises from a fear of hell or other punishment or a recognition of the ugliness of sin. Prior to receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation, an examination of conscience must be made. The penitent must confess their sins to the priest, especially mortal sins. The penitent must make satisfaction for their sins through an act of penance. When the priest speaks the words of absolution, he is forgiving sins in the person of Christ. (CCC 1448-1460)

#### Objectives

- The Seven Steps for Going to Confession.
- The Examination of Conscience: We ask the Holy Spirit to reveal our sins and to help us make a good confession.
- Confession of sins: We tell the priest our sins, starting with the most serious sins.
- Penance: We receive penance from the priest to make satisfaction for our sins.
- Absolution: The priest gives us absolution for our sins and the Holy Spirit comes to forgive us our sins.

#### Let Us Pray

*Make the sign of the cross.*

**Say:** Dear Holy Spirit, thank you for filling my heart with your love. Thank you for calling me to return to you. Please help me to recognize and be truly sorry for my sins, confess them, and to draw closer to you. Amen. (*Student guide pg 89*)

*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.*

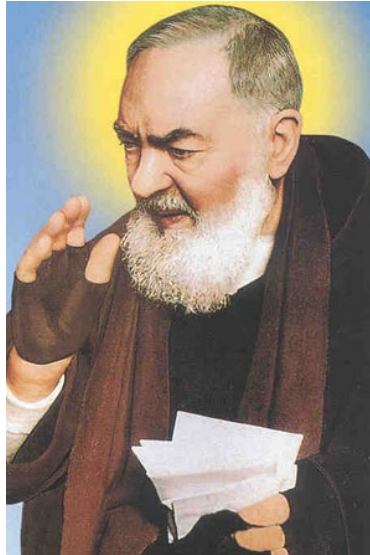
“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit in me!” (Psalm 51:10)

#### New Memory Verse (*Student guide pg 99*)

“Draw near to God and he will draw near to you.” (James 4:8)

**Saint of the Day - Saint Padre Pio (1887-1968); Feast Day Sept 23; Patron of Youth & Civil Defense Volunteers** (*Student guide pg 99*)

**Display the following.**



- St. Padre Pio heard God's call to become a priest when he was 15 years old. He loved Jesus very much and his "yes" to God made his friendship with God even stronger.
- St. Padre Pio wanted to so badly to be like Jesus that Jesus gave him the Stigmata. The stigmata is a special gift that few people receive where they share Jesus' suffering by receiving the wounds of Jesus.
- St. Padre Pio wanted to share God's forgiveness and love with as many people as possible so he would spend several hours every day hearing confessions and forgiving people's sins so they could come closer to Jesus.

**Say:** Do you remember the last time you told someone "I'm sorry"? Sometimes it is hard to apologize, but it is always worth it. It feels so good to hear someone say, "I forgive you," and know that any mistakes are in the past. We have this conversion with God in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Because this conversion is so important, the Church gives us specific steps to follow when we go to Confession.

### Let's Watch

**Watch:** How to Make a Good Confession.

<https://watch.formed.org/signs-of-grace/season:1/videos/for-children-how-to-make-a-great-confession> (12:36)

**Ask:** (*encourage the Children to answer*)

What is penance? *Penance is a small act of love that expresses our sorrow for our sins. Penance also helps to repair the harm caused by sin and helps us recover our spiritual health by making amends for sin.*

What makes you nervous about going to Confession? *Answers will vary.*

What makes you excited about going to Confession? *Answers will vary.*

## Let's Read God's Word (Student Guide pg 90-91)

**Say:** Remember how Jesus used stories called Parables to help us understand big and important things about God and his kingdom? We are going to read the story of the Prodigal Son. Listen to the story Jesus told and see if you can figure out what big and important thing Jesus is trying to tell you.

### **Proclaim:**

#### **The Prodigal Son**

Once, a father had two sons. The younger son did not want to stay home. "Give me my half of your money," the son said.

The father sadly gave the younger son the money. The son went to a city far away. He wasted all his money.

The son needed more money, so he got a job feeding pigs. He did not like his job. He was sad and cold and all alone.

He said, "I will go home to my father. I will beg him to give me a job as his servant." The son started to walk home.

One day, the father saw his son far away. The father ran to meet him. The son fell into his arms and cried, "I am sorry I have sinned. I am not good enough to be your son."

The father hugged his son. He threw a big party. The older son said, "That's not fair. He disobeyed you!" But the father said, "He has come home. We must welcome him." **Based on Luke 15:11-32**

**Ask:** (Encourage children to answer)

What do you think the big and important thing Jesus is trying to tell us is? *Answers will vary. Jesus wants us to know that no matter what we do God the Father is waiting for us to come back to him*

and celebrates our return when we finally do come back to him. We do not have to be afraid of the Father. We do not have to be afraid to tell the Father we have sinned and that we are sorry.

How does this story help us understand God and the Sacrament of Reconciliation? Answers will vary. The father was looking for the son and ran to meet him. God always wants us to return to him and comes to us offering forgiveness.

Why do you think the younger son left home? Answers will vary. He wanted to have fun. He only cared about what he wanted.

Why do you think he came home? Answers will vary. He came home because he was miserable because of the mistakes he made. He realized his life was better with his father.

How did the father treat his son when he returned? Answers will vary. He was happy to see him and wanted to celebrate his return. He welcomed his son.

### Let's Do Activities (Student Guide pg 96)

#### Display & Complete the Following

Session 7  
Celebrating Reconciliation

Let's Do Activities

**Seven Steps**

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is not hard or scary! Remember that even if you forget something, the priest will help you.  
Below are the steps to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. See if you can put them in order from 1-7!

- RECEIVE PENANCE** – After you tell your sins, the priest will talk to you and give you a penance to do after Confession.
- EXAMINE YOUR CONSCIENCE** – Before your confession, ask God to help you to have true sorrow for all your sins. Then think about your sins. Ask yourself: *Have I broken any commandments? How have I failed to love God as I should? How have I hurt others?*
- ABSOLUTION** – Last, the priest will pray the prayer forgiving you of your sins. He will hold his hands over your head. Together you will make the Sign of the Cross and then you can say, "Thank you, Father." And then you can go in peace!
- CONFESS YOUR SINS** – Then you tell the priest your sins. Don't be afraid to tell him all your sins, starting with the worst ones. When you are finished, say, "I am sorry for these and all of my sins."
- GREET THE PRIEST** – When you first go into the confessional, start with the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. This is my first confession."
- DO YOUR PENANCE** – After you leave the confessional, kneel down at a pew in the church and pray the penance that the priest gave you. Or if he gave you something to do, do it as soon as you can!
- ACT OF CONTRITION** – After the priest gives you your penance, he will ask you to say your Act of Contrition. You can say it from memory, read it, or even tell God you are sorry from your heart using your own words.

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### Let's Learn About Our Faith (Student Guide pg 92-94)

**Say:** God is like the father in the story Jesus told. God in his great mercy is watching and waiting for us to turn back to him after we sin. In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, he runs out to meet us. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a very important conversation with God and so it requires certain things.



**Ask:** Who knows the 3 things that we are required to do in the Sacrament of Reconciliation? (*Repent, Confess, & do Penance*)

**Say:** The Sacrament of Reconciliation requires us to do 3 things: 1) to be sorry and repent of our sins, 2) to confess our sins to a priest, and 3) to do **PENANCE** to repair the damage caused by our sins. When we repent of our sins and seek forgiveness, we are called **PENITENTS**.

Before we go to confession, we have to get ready. We do this by making an **EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE**. This means looking at our words and actions to determine how we may have sinned. We ask the Holy Spirit to reveal our sins to us and to help us make a good confession.

When we make our confession, we tell our sins to the priest starting with the most serious ones. Remember there are 2 kinds of sins.

**Ask:** Who remembers the 2 kinds of sins? (Mortal and Venial)

What is the difference between these kinds of sins? (Mortal sin breaks our relationship with God and the Church. Venial sin harms our relationship with God and the Church but does not break it.)

**Say:** We must confess all mortal sins to a priest, telling him what the sin was and how many times we did it, in order to receive God's forgiveness for those sins. We should also confess our venial sins. It's important to confess all the sins we can remember, but it's okay if we accidentally forget a venial sin. Everything we say in Confession is completely secret. The priest may never tell anyone else the sins that we confess.

After we confess our sins, the priest may offer some advice on how to avoid sin in the future. Then the priest will give us our penance. This is usually a prayer or a good deed to help us draw closer to God and to repair the harm caused by our sin to ourselves and to other people. It also helps us to build good habits and to be better followers of Jesus. Then the priest will ask us to make our act of contrition, the special prayer that tells God we are sorry. God wants us to be sorry for our sins because we love him and want to obey him. This is called **PERFECT CONTRITION**. But sometimes we're sorry for our sins because we are afraid of being punished or because we see the ugliness of sin. This is called **IMPERFECT CONTRITION**. God still forgives us in the Sacrament of Reconciliation if this is the reason, we are sorry.

After we make our act of contrition, the priest says the **WORDS OF ABSOLUTION** or forgiveness and our sins are forgiven. Only the priest can forgive sins in Jesus' name. Because the priest has been ordained, Jesus is truly present in the priest during the sacrament to forgive our sins.

We should go to confession often. God's mercy is shown to us in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Not only do we receive God's mercy, but we also receive his strength to help us not to sin again.

**Ask:** Why does the examination of conscience help us make a better confession? *Answers will vary. Looking closely at our words and actions help us to recognize how we have sinned. Seeing how we have sinned and hurt God can make us contrite, it can also help us know what we need to confess.*

Why should we go to Confession often? *Answers will vary. Accept all reasonable answers*

**Key Words**

**Penance:** An act done to repair the damage caused by our sins, usually through prayers or good works.

**Penitent:** The sinner who repents of sin and seeks forgiveness

**Examination of Conscience:** Looking at our words and actions to determine how we may have sinned.

**Perfect Contrition:** When we are sorry for our sins because we love God and are sorry for having offended him.

**Imperfect Contrition:** When we are sorry for our sins because we are afraid of being punished or because we recognize the ugliness of sin.

**Words of Absolution:** The words said by the priest that forgive us of our sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

**Do you recall the memory verse?**

“Draw near to God and he will draw near to you.” (James 4:8)

**Faith Activity-** Make the 7 steps to a good confession booklet in the student activity book

**Materials**

Colored pencils

Scissors

Stapler

Student activity book