

## **We Pray:** **The Sign of the Cross**

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



# **We Listen: God Forgives Us**

**The Bible tells a story about the first sin. This story helps to explain why people need God's forgiveness. In the Bible we read:**

When God created the first man and first woman, he also created a wonderful garden for them.

Then God said to the man and the woman, "You may eat the fruit on all the trees that grow here. But do not eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil."

The man and woman obeyed God. But then one day, there was a serpent in the garden. This serpent was sly and wicked. The serpent asked the man and woman why they did not eat from the tree of knowledge.

"We can eat all the fruits of all the trees except that one," answered the woman.

"Well," said the serpent, "God only said that because he does not want you to become as powerful and wise as he, knowing what is good and what is evil." This was a terrible lie.

The man and the woman believed the serpent's lie. So they took a piece of fruit and ate it.

Suddenly, they were no longer happy. They felt shame. They knew they had done wrong.

God still loved the people he had made, but they could no longer live in the beautiful garden. God had to send them away.

Based on Genesis 2:7-9, 15-17; 3:1-24

## **With My Family**

Visit the website of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) to read about the first sin of human beings. Click on the Bible tab at the top of the page. Then click on Genesis, then Chapter 3. Read and talk about the Scripture passage.



# Activity 1

When one person does something hurtful to another person, the two people need to come together and make peace. **Draw** a picture that shows two people making peace.



## **We Learn:**

### **Jesus Gives Us the Sacraments**

A sin is something we say, do, or think that does not follow God's will. Sometimes we sin by not doing something we should. When we sin, we disobey God. We turn away from him and fail to act with love for him and for other people as Jesus did. We offend God and hurt our relationship with him and with other people.

The first sin of humankind is called Original Sin. This sin has been passed on to all of us. We are born with it. Original Sin weakens us and makes it harder for us to do what is right.

We don't know why God allows sin in the world, but we are certain that he always loves us. He loved us so much that he sent his Son, Jesus Christ, into the world. Jesus died on the cross and rose again to free us from sin. When we are sorry for our sins, Jesus brings us back to God our Father. God forgives our sins. When God forgives us, we are reconciled with God and others. We are brought back together with God. One day, when we meet God face-to-face in Heaven, we'll understand his loving plan for the world and why allowing sin was part of it.

Jesus is the greatest sign of God's love. But Jesus gave seven more great and holy signs to God's people, the Church. These signs are called Sacraments. The Sacraments join us to Jesus so that we can follow him more closely. They give us grace, the free gift of God's own life in us. Grace makes us his children and helps us to stay away from sin and to do good works.

## Activity 2

When we are reconciled with God and others, we are peaceful and happy. **Draw** yourself and your family being peaceful and happy together.



# **We Learn:**

## **The Sacrament of Reconciliation**

We celebrate the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist, all through our lives. The three Sacraments that begin our life in the Church are the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist. We call these the Sacraments of Christian Initiation.

In the Sacrament of Baptism, we were baptized with holy water. Baptism united us to Jesus and gave us the Holy Spirit. We became members of God's people, the Church. The Church is the Body of Christ. All the members are united to Christ and to one another. Think of your own body and all of its parts. Think about your head, your eyes, your mouth, your hands, your feet, and your heart. The parts do many different things, but they are all important. And if they weren't part of a whole body, they would have no life. This helps us understand what it means to be a member of the Church, a member of Christ's body. Every member is united with Christ and all the other members. Each is different, but each is important. Every person has gifts that can help others follow Jesus.

In Baptism, all sins, including Original Sin, are washed away. Sins that we commit after Baptism are forgiven through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. If we choose to sin, we not only hurt our relationship with God. We also hurt our relationship with all of God's people, the Church. Jesus gave us the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation to bring us back to God when we sin. When we receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, grace, God's own life in us, brings us back together with God and with one another.

### **Celebrating the Sacrament**

The Sacrament of Reconciliation begins with the priest greeting us and welcoming us. Then we pray together, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," as we make the Sign of the Cross. The Sign of the Cross reminds us of our Baptism. It reminds us of God's life in us. It reminds us that Jesus died and rose for us. It reminds us that we belong to God.

Making the Sign of the Cross also reminds us about who God is. He is one God in three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This mystery is called the Trinity. It is at the center of our faith.



## Activity 3

**Write** one word that describes a feeling that the Sacrament of Reconciliation can give you.

**Decorate** the space around your word.



# Heart to Heart: Forgiveness

Sometimes people hurt our feelings. Did any of your classmates ever play a game and not let you play? Think about the way you felt. It is especially hard when someone we love and care about hurts our feelings. Yet, sometimes we are the ones who hurt someone else's feelings. And then, when we think about what we did, we feel terrible.

When this happens, we need reconciliation. We need to forgive and we need to be forgiven. For this to happen, someone needs to say, "I'm sorry," and someone else needs to say, "I forgive you."



## Activity 4

In the "Before Reconciliation" space on top, **draw** two people who are angry with each other or hurting each other. In the "After Reconciliation" space on the bottom, **draw** the same two people after they forgive each other and are reconciled.

Before Reconciliation

# RECONCILIATION

After Reconciliation



## **We Prayer: We Praise the Trinity**

Leader: God, our Father, you created us out of love. You never stop loving us even when we sin.

All: Glory be to God the Father.

Leader: You sent your Son, Jesus, to teach us how to live and to show us how to forgive.

All: Glory be to God the Son.

Leader: You send your Holy Spirit to be our helper and guide and to give us the grace we need to turn away from sin.

All: Glory be to God the Holy Spirit.

Leader: For these wonderful gifts, we pray,

All: 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.



# Lesson 1 Objectives

**We Listen** - To learn the Scripture story about the first sin and the need for forgiveness.

**We Learn**- To realize that God loves us very much and is always ready to forgive us.

**We Learn**- To understand that Jesus gives us the Sacrament of Reconciliation to bring us back to God when we sin.

**Heart to Heart**- To reflect on and share times when we need to forgive and be forgiven.



# 1

## Opening Prayer

*(student packet: page 1)*

**Say,** "Watch as I light the candle."

"Let us begin our prayer In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."



## 2

## We Listen

*(student packet: pages 2)*

*Look at the illustration.*

**Say,** "This picture shows Adam and Eve, the first people God created. God loved them very much."

**Ask,** "What do you like about the place where Adam and Eve lived?" *(Responses may vary. Guide the children in recognizing that it is a beautiful garden.)*

**Say,** "Look at the picture as I read aloud the Scripture about Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden."  
*Read the Scripture passage.*

**Say,** "Adam and Eve were happy living in the Garden of Eden."

**Ask,** "What did they do that caused them to be unhappy?" *(They disobeyed God and ate from the tree of knowledge of good and evil.)*

**Say,** "They were unhappy because they had turned away from God's love."

"Adam and Eve forgot how much God loved and cared for them. They hurt their friendship with God by disobeying his rule."



# 3

## Activity 1

*(student packet: page 3)*

**Say,** "When one person does something hurtful to another person, the two people need to come together and make peace. "

"Taking something that doesn't belong to us or calling someone names would be things that would lead us away from God. Can you think of other ways people might hurt their relationship with God and with others?"

**Ask,** "How can we make peace?" *(being sorry, asking for forgiveness, doing something good that makes up for what we did wrong, sharing a symbol of peace by a handshake, giving a high-five, sharing a game, etc.)*

**Say,** "Take a few minutes to draw a picture that shows two people making peace."



# 4

## We Learn

*(student packet: page 4)*

*Read aloud the first paragraph.*

**Say,** "Sin is deliberately doing, saying, or wanting something that we know is against God's will. Sin harms our friendship with God and the special bond we share with one another as children of God."

*Read aloud the second paragraph.*

**Ask,** "What did Adam and Eve pass on that causes us to sometimes disobey God?" *(Original Sin)*

**Say,** "Can you remember what the first sin was?"

*Read aloud the next paragraph.*

**Say,** "God sent his Son Jesus to show us how to avoid sin and follow God's will. Out of love for us, Jesus lived among us, died, and then rose from the dead to save us from sin."

**Ask,** "What happens when God forgives us?" *(We are reunited with God and others.)*

*Read aloud the remaining text.*

**Ask,** "What did Jesus give to the Church to help our relationship with God grow stronger?" *(the Sacraments)*

**Say,** "When we are close to God, we are better able to avoid sin. God's grace helps us to love and forgive others as Jesus taught us."

"Sacraments are effective signs. They do what they say they will do. They give us grace, or God's life. Jesus gave them to the Church, and the grace we receive in the Sacraments comes from Jesus himself by the power of the Holy Spirit."



# 5

## Activity 2

*(student packet: page 5)*

**Say,** "When we are reconciled with God and others, we are peaceful and happy. Can you think of times when families might be peaceful and happy together?" *(at a family reunion, at a birthday party, on a family vacation, or even helping out together at home.)*

**"Draw yourself and your family being peaceful and happy together."**



# 6

## We Learn

*(student packet: page 6)*

*Read aloud the first paragraph.*

*Briefly explain each Sacrament of Christian Initiation. (Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation)*

*Have the children name the Sacraments of Christian Initiation, and list them on the board.*

*Read aloud the second paragraph.*

*Invite a volunteer to circle the Sacrament listed on the board in which we become members of the Church.*

**Say,** "The Sacrament of Baptism is the first Sacrament we receive. In Baptism all our sins are forgiven, including Original Sin."

*Read aloud the third paragraph.*

**Say,** "Baptism joins us to Christ and to one another. When we sin, we hurt the oneness we share with Christ and with all the members of the Church."

**Ask,** "Why do we receive the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation?" *(to receive God's forgiveness for sins we commit after Baptism, to bring us back to God and the Church)*

*Read aloud the last two paragraphs.*

**Say,** "Let's pray the Sign of the Cross, the prayer that begins the Sacrament of Reconciliation and all the Sacraments of the Church." *You may wish to draw three interlocking circles on the board with the names of the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*



# 7

## Activity 3

*(student packet: page 7)*

**Say,** "Write one word that describes a feeling that the Sacrament of Reconciliation can give you. Decorate the space around your word."

*Arrange the children in pairs to work together to share what they know about the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.*

*Brainstorm words the children might choose: happy, peaceful, joyful, loving.*

*When the children are finished, share each one's words and artwork with the entire group. As a group, review the importance of the Sacrament.*



**Say,** "A 'heart-to-heart' talk is a serious and truthful conversation. This page presents a heart-to-heart talk about hurt feelings and the need for reconciliation."

*Read the paragraph aloud.*

**Ask,** "Has something like this ever happened to you? Have you had hurt feelings about something?"  
*(Ask volunteers to share.)*

**Ask,** "Have you ever hurt someone's feelings? What happened when you did?" *(Ask volunteers to share.)*

**Ask,** "Were you able to receive or give forgiveness when you or someone else had hurt feelings? How did you do it?" *(Choose volunteers to share.)*

**Say,** "It is very important to talk with a parent or trusted adult when feelings are hurt. Parents or other adults can help make the situation right again."



# 9

## Activity 4

*(student packet: page 9)*

**Say,** "In the 'Before Reconciliation' space on top, draw two people who are angry with each other or hurting each other. In the 'After Reconciliation' space on the bottom, draw the same two people after they forgive each other and are reconciled."

*To help the children identify situations to draw, brainstorm ideas about negative situations between people that need reconciliation.*

*Have the children complete the activity.*



# Closing Prayer

*(student packet: page 10)*

**Say,** "This closing prayer is a prayer of praise to the Blessed Trinity. I will be the Leader and you should read the parts for "All."

*If you wish, have the children practice their parts.*

*Lead the children in praying the prayer.*

