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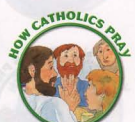
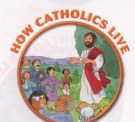
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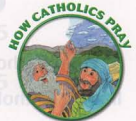
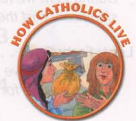
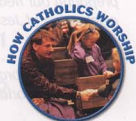
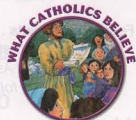
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We Ask God's Forgiveness

UNIT 2

God is always ready to forgive us when we sin. God calls us to be sorry for the wrongs we have done. He wants us to forgive others who have wronged us.

*Rejoice with me because
I have found my lost sheep.*

Luke 15:6



God is like a shepherd who is happy to find his lost sheep. God rejoices when we are sorry for our sins.

Psalm 51: Be Merciful, O Lord

Psalm 51

REFRAIN

Music by Marty Haugen



VERSE

1. Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness,
in your compassion, blot out my offense.
O wash me more and more from my guilt and my sorrow,
and cleanse me from all of my sin.
Refrain
2. My offenses, truly I know them,
and my sins are always before me;
against you alone have I sinned, O Lord,
what is evil in your sight I have done.
Refrain
3. Create in me a clean heart, O God,
put your steadfast spirit in my soul.
Cast me not away from your presence, O Lord,
and take not your spirit from me.
Refrain
4. Give back to me the joy of your salvation,
let your willing spirit bear me up
and I shall teach your way to the ones who have wandered,
and bring them all home to your side.
Refrain

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Take Home



We Can Choose What Is Good

Saint Thomas Aquinas, a Dominican priest and great theologian, proclaimed that humans always tended toward the good. But how do we figure out what the good is? It may feel good to finish the last of a box of candy, but others in our family might not see it as good. We try to form a good conscience to help us identify what is good and then try to conform our behavior to our conscience.

Being Catholic helps us understand that God gives us free choice, and yet he is always ready to forgive us when we choose to sin.

ACTIVITY

Pick-up Sticks Did you ever play pick-up sticks? If so, you know that the sticks fall and you have to pick them up moving only the stick you are taking away. Play pick-up sticks with your child. Discuss how the game is like making moral choices. You need to choose carefully in order to succeed.

WEEKLY PLANNER

On Sunday

During the Penitential Rite, reflect on the choices you made during the week. Thank God for his guidance.

On the Web

www.blestarewe.com



Visit our Web site for the saint of the day and the reflection question of the week.

Saint of the Week



Saint Peter of Saint Joseph Betancur
(1619–1667)

Peter lived as a shepherd. He moved to the city to become a Third Order Franciscan. In 2002, San Pedro de San Jose Betancur became the first canonized native of Guatemala.

Patron Saint of: Guatemala
Feast Day: April 18



A Prayer for the Week

Lord, thank you for giving us the freedom to choose. Help us to use this gift to make right choices. Help us to be caring like Saint Peter of Saint Joseph Betancur. Amen.

Take Home



† Scripture Background

In the Time of Jesus

Inheritance Israelite tradition held that the eldest son would inherit the property and holdings of the father.

The primary aim was to preserve the territory within each clan. Further biblical legislation also established the right of the firstborn to inherit twice as much as his brothers. In the Parable of the Forgiving Father, the younger son has already taken his share. So when the elder son is told that all that the father has is his, it literally means everything.

You can read this parable in Luke 15:11–32.



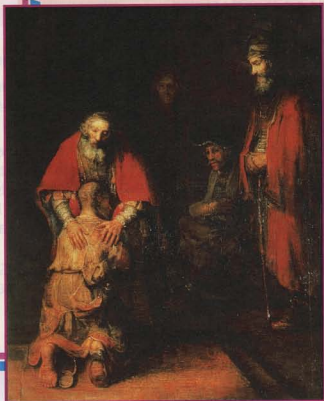
OUR CATHOLIC TRADITION

in Art

Return of the Prodigal Son

The Rembrandt painting titled *Return of the Prodigal Son* depicts the story Jesus told of the young man who left his family and squandered his fortune. Thinking he would be better off as a servant on his father's farm than living as he was—poor, hungry, and alone—he returned home. As this painting shows, his father welcomed him back as a son, not as a servant.

Henri Nouwen based his book, *The Return of the Prodigal Son* on Rembrandt's painting.



5 We Can Choose What Is Good



Love the LORD, your God, and obey his word.

Based on Deuteronomy 30:20

Share

We make many choices every day. Some choices are easy, but some are hard. Some are right, but others are wrong.

Draw a happy face for each good choice below.

Draw a sad face for each bad choice.



1. Tom does not share with his friends.



2. Juanita tells her dad the truth.



3. Wes obeys his mom and turns off the TV.



4. Mary takes a dollar that is not hers.

How do we know what is right and wrong?



Hear & Believe

✚ Scripture The Forgiving Father

Once there was a man who had two sons. The younger son said, "I know you plan to give me money when I am older. May I have it now?" So his father gave him the money.

The boy moved far away. Soon, he had spent every cent! He was hungry and had no place to live.

The boy was sorry for the wrong choices he had made. He had wasted the money and hurt his father. The boy made up his mind to go home. He would ask his father to forgive him.

While the boy was still far from home, his father saw him. He ran to greet his son. "I'm sorry," the boy said, but his father had already forgiven him. The man hugged his son. Then he gave the boy a big "welcome home" party.

Based on Luke 15:11–24



Knowing Right from Wrong

God lets us choose what to do. We call this **free choice**. The boy in the story knew he had done wrong. His **conscience** told him so. Our conscience tells us what is right or wrong.

Our Church Teaches

We **sin** when we choose to do hurtful things on purpose. When we sin, we hurt our friendship with God and with other people. He wants us to be sorry for our sins. God loves us very much. When we do wrong, he is ready to show us mercy. God is ready to forgive us.

We Believe

God gives everybody a conscience. God wants us to choose good and stay away from what is evil.

Faith Words

conscience
Our conscience helps us know right from wrong.

sin
To sin is to choose to do hurtful things on purpose. Sin is disobeying God.

How can we practice making good choices?



Respond

Making Good Choices

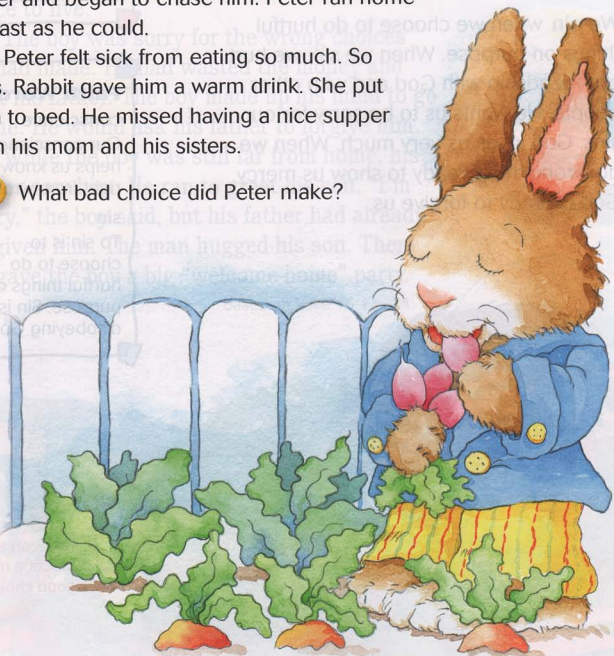
Mrs. Rabbit said, "Peter, you and your sisters may play outdoors. But stay away from Mr. McGregor's garden!"

Peter's sisters obeyed their mother. Peter made a bad choice. He went into the garden and ate a lot of vegetables. Mr. McGregor saw Peter and began to chase him. Peter ran home as fast as he could.

Peter felt sick from eating so much. So Mrs. Rabbit gave him a warm drink. She put him to bed. He missed having a nice supper with his mom and his sisters.



What bad choice did Peter make?



Activity

We can practice making good choices every day. Unscramble the letters to complete the sentence for each picture.



t h g i f

Joey chooses not to _____

_____ i _____ h _____.



r h a s e

Tonya is happy to _____

_____ h _____ r _____.



t r t u h

Lily decides to tell the _____

_____ t _____ t _____.

How can we
celebrate the
gift of free
choice?



Prayer Celebration

A Prayer of Action

Doing good actions is a type of prayer.
When we act in good ways, we praise God.
We thank God for the gift of free choice.

Celebrate making good choices.
Pray this prayer together.

Dear God,

Thank you for the gift
of free choice.

Help us use this gift
to choose what is good.

Help us to (add own action).

Amen.

A Circle the words that best complete the sentences.

1. God gives us a _____ to help us know right from wrong.

conscience free choice sin

2. When we do hurtful things on purpose, we _____.

forgive love sin

3. God lets us choose what to do.

We call this _____.

conscience free choice sin

4. God wants us to be _____

for our sins.

angry happy sorry

**B Draw a line to connect the parts of each sentence.**

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. The boy who left home knew | • | • the gift of free choice. |
| 2. Before the boy said, "I'm sorry," | • | • he had done wrong. |
| 3. We thank God for | • | • his father had forgiven him. |

Faith in Action

A Parish Council Members of a parish council help the pastor. They help him make choices for the parish. They plan programs. They may decide ways to improve the church building. The pastor and the parish council try to make good choices.

In Everyday Life



Activity Some families meet together to make choices. They listen to the needs of one another. Talk about ways family meetings can be helpful.

In Your Parish



Activity One parish has chosen how to spend its money. Find their choices.

