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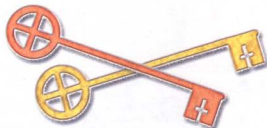
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We Remember God's Love and Forgiveness

Getting Started

The focus of Chapter 2 is on reconciliation with God and with others in the celebration of the Sacraments of Baptism and Penance.

Faith Background

God created us out of love to live in a relationship with him and with others. Through the story of the first humans in Genesis, we learn that our ancestors chose by their own free will to disobey God, and that by this act sin entered the world. Every person is born with and is affected by this sin, which we call original sin. But God loves us so much that he continues to call us back to the life of grace. Baptism cleanses us from sin. It is in Baptism that we first receive grace, the gift of God's life within us. Through Baptism we become members of the Church, and we begin to participate in the sacramental life of this faith community.

After we are baptized, we sometimes make choices that hurt or even break our friendship with God. We commit sin. Sin separates us from God and from one another. But Jesus taught us by his actions and in his stories that we can always reconcile with God. Jesus also gave us a way to receive God's forgiveness. The Church celebrates God's forgiveness in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.



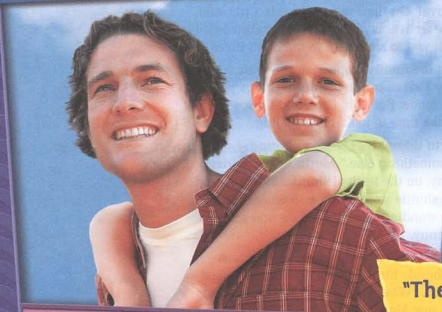
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For further reading and reflection, see the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, paragraphs 1263, 1265, 1428, and 1440.

For additional activities, visit Sadlier's www.webelieveandcelebrate.com.

We Remember God's Love and Forgiveness

2



"The LORD is my shepherd."

Psalm 23:1



19

Introduce the Chapter

Gather for prayer. Light a candle. Read aloud the title of the chapter. Pause for a moment and invite reflection about God's gifts of love and forgiveness. Then proclaim together the psalm verse on page 19.

Explain that the person who wrote Psalm 23 lived many, many years before Jesus was born. In that time there were shepherds who were kind and took care of their sheep. The psalm writer called God his shepherd because the writer believed that God loved and cared for his people, like a shepherd for his sheep. God looked out for everyone and tried to protect his people from harm.

Direct attention to the photograph on page 19. Invite discussion by asking the following questions:

Why do you think the father is carrying his son? (Responses might include that the boy is tired, that the son might have hurt his foot or his leg, or that the father and son are playing a game.)

How do you think this father and son feel about each other? (They look as if they love and care about each other.)

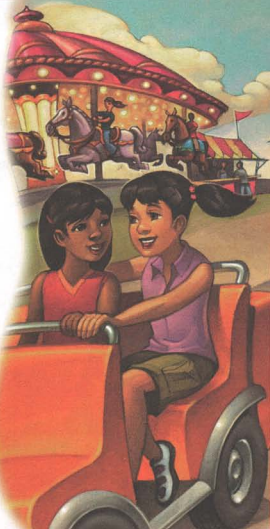
We Gather

Last week Marta Cruz, her dad, and her brother Carlos went to Parktown's Family Festival. On their way there, Mr. Cruz said, "The festival is going to be very crowded. I want you to stay close to me at all times."

First the family stopped at the craft stands. They looked at the beautiful things people had made. Both Mr. Cruz and Carlos wanted to take time to look at everything.

Marta thought, "This is so boring. I want to do something else." Marta saw her friend, Jenny, on the festival shuttle. Marta waved. The shuttle stopped close to where Marta was standing. She hopped on and sat next to Jenny.

When Mr. Cruz noticed that Marta was not beside him, he was worried. He asked Carlos, "Where is Marta?" They looked up and saw Marta on the shuttle. The driver was just pulling away. Mr. Cruz said, "Hurry, Carlos! I think we can catch the shuttle."



20

We Gather

Introduce the story by asking: *Have you ever visited a fair or event with family and friends? What did your parents or grandparents tell you before you got there?*

Invite careful listening to the story about a family going to a festival. Read the story aloud; then ask:

What did Marta decide to do that separated her from her family? (Because she was bored, Marta decided to join her friend on the festival shuttle.)

What did Marta's father and brother do to get Marta back with them? (They ran after the shuttle and got Marta off at the next stop.)

How did Marta's father and brother explain to her that they loved her? (They told her that they were very upset to have been separated from her because they thought they had lost her.)

What should Marta have done if she wanted to join her friend on the shuttle? (She should have asked her father's permission and not have wandered off by herself.)

Point out that Marta could have gotten lost. She could have been separated from her family for a long time.



Carlos and his dad ran. They reached the shuttle just as it stopped near the amusement rides. Mr. Cruz told Marta to get off the shuttle. He said, "Marta, what were you thinking? Carlos and I were really upset when we thought we lost you. We love you and we don't want to get separated from you again!"

Marta was happy to be with her family again. They celebrated by

(fill in your answer)

Here is one thing my family likes to do together.



21

Reread the last paragraph of the story and discuss ways the family could celebrate being together again. (Possible responses include going on a ride together or sharing a festival treat like popcorn or pizza.) Then help your/each child write an ending for the story.

Direct attention to the activity below the story on page 21. Explain that the activity may be completed by writing about and/or drawing a picture of a family activity. When the activity has been completed, invite sharing.

Scrapbooking Option

Help your/each child affix on colored card stock the photograph chosen or picture drawn for the activity on page 21. Trim around the mounted picture to make a frame. Affix the mounted picture to the space provided on page 21. Affix the picture's caption on a strip of card stock. Then affix the mounted caption below or beside the picture on page 21. You may want to add other decorations to the page (glitter, clip art, stickers, stamp designs).

We Share God's Word

Jesus told stories to teach people about God's love. He talked about things his followers knew about. One day Jesus told this story.

 Luke 15:4-6

Reader 1: There was a shepherd who took care of a flock of one hundred sheep. One day one of the sheep wandered away from the flock.

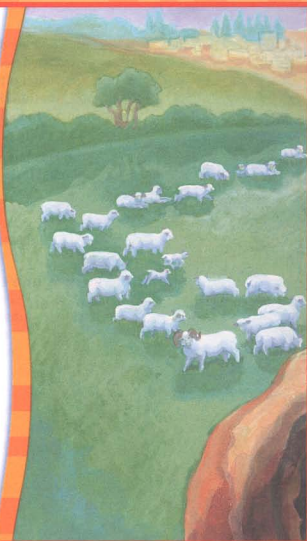
Reader 2: When the shepherd found out the sheep was missing, he left the other ninety-nine sheep. He searched and searched until he found the lost sheep.

Reader 3: The shepherd was very happy that he found the lost sheep. He put the sheep on his shoulders and carried it home.

Reader 4: When the shepherd reached home, he called together his friends and neighbors. He said, "Rejoice with me because I have found my lost sheep." (Luke 15:6)

Jesus told this story to help his followers to understand God's love and forgiveness. He wanted us to know that every one of us is special to God.

22



We Share God's Word

Explain that Jesus' followers knew a lot about shepherds. Point out that the story you are about to share is one that Jesus told to teach us about God's love. Then read aloud the first paragraph on page 22.

Describe a shepherd's job as a very important and sometimes difficult one. Explain that many shepherds took care of about a hundred sheep at a time. Sometimes shepherds would travel far to find good fields for the sheep. Shepherds who wanted to do a good job were with the sheep night and day. These shepherds knew each sheep in their care. They made sure that the sheep had enough food and water.

Shepherds tried to watch out so that individual sheep did not wander too far from the flock. They protected the flock from attacks by wild animals.

Read aloud the Gospel story on page 22. After reading, pause for a few moments to reflect on the story. Then read the last paragraph on page 22.

Discuss the Scripture story by asking:

What happened to one of the hundred sheep? (It wandered away from the flock and got lost.)



23

What did the shepherd do? (He left the ninety-nine other sheep and went in search of the one that was lost. He knew the ninety-nine sheep would be safe until he returned.)

When he found the lost sheep, how did the shepherd feel? (He felt very happy.)

When the shepherd got home, what did he do to celebrate his joy at finding the lost sheep? (He called together his friends and neighbors to celebrate with him.)

Direct attention to the illustration on pages 22 and 23. Talk about the trouble the shepherd must have gone to as he tried to find the lost sheep.

Suggest a retelling of the story in the form of a comic strip, using drawings and speech balloons. Share these with family and friends.

We Believe and Celebrate

God loves each of us very much. He wants us to stay as close to him as possible. But this is not always easy to do.

The first humans did something they knew was wrong. They sinned and lost their share in God's life. That first sin is called **original sin**. And ever since then, all people are born with original sin. Because of original sin, suffering and death came into the world. Also, people sometimes find it difficult to do what God wants.

Sometimes we do not show our love for God, ourselves, and others. We choose not to obey God's commandments. We sin. **Sin** is any thought, word, or act that we freely choose to commit even though we know that it is wrong.

When we sin we turn away from God and one another. But Jesus leads us by showing us ways to come back together again.

Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd." (John 10:14) Jesus, our Good Shepherd, leads us to reconciliation with God and others. The word *reconciliation* comes from a word that means "coming back together again."



24

We Believe and Celebrate

Note: For this presentation keep your explanation of original sin as simple as it is in the presentation in the second paragraph.

Read aloud the first three paragraphs on page 24. Emphasize that we sin only when we choose to do something wrong or do it on purpose. Mistakes and accidents are *not* sins. Discuss the following situations:

- Sharon was helping her older brother put dishes away. When she picked up her family's special party plate, it fell on the floor and broke into many pieces.
- Kyle was upset because his father would not let him ride his bike until he had helped with the dishes. Kyle threw a glass to the floor. The glass broke.

Explain that Sharon did not break the plate on purpose. It was an accident. Sharon did not choose to break the plate. Point out that Kyle, on the other hand, became angry and chose to break the glass. He did not want to do what his father asked. Kyle chose to do the wrong thing.

Direct attention to the picture of Jesus, the Good Shepherd. Read aloud the last two paragraphs on page 24. Emphasize how wonderful Jesus is to give us ways to reconcile with God and with others.

Check comprehension of the text by asking: *What keeps us from staying close to God? (sin) What is sin? (Sin is any thought, word, or act that we freely choose to commit even though we know that it is wrong.)*



Jesus gives us ways to receive God's forgiveness. The first way we receive and celebrate God's forgiveness is in the Sacrament of Baptism. We are either placed in water, or water is poured over us. We receive a share in God's life. God's life in us is **grace**.

In Baptism original sin and all other sins are taken away. Through the waters of Baptism, we become children of God and members of the Church.



25

Who leads us back to God and to one another? (Jesus, the Good Shepherd) What word means "coming back together again"? (reconciliation)

Read aloud the two paragraphs on page 25. Then check comprehension by asking: *What is the first way we receive and celebrate God's forgiveness? (the Sacrament of Baptism) What do we call a share in God's life? (grace) What happens at Baptism? (Baptism takes away original sin and all other sins. In Baptism we become children of God and members of the Church.)*

Stress that it is at Baptism that we first receive God's forgiveness.

Note: Baptism can be celebrated by pouring water over the head of the person being baptized, or by immersion, being placed in the water. In Baptism by immersion the celebrant can immerse, or plunge, the person completely in the water of the baptismal pool three times, or can pour water over the person three times.

Faith Words

original sin The first humans disobeyed God; we call this first sin original sin.

sin A sin is a thought, word, or act that we freely choose to commit even though we know it is wrong.

grace Grace is God's life in us.

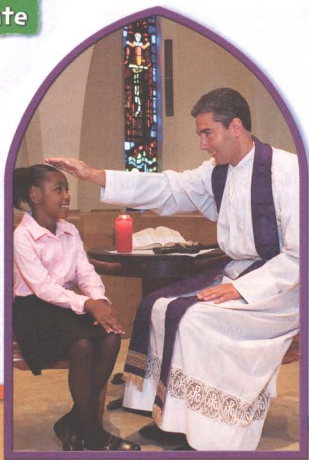
We Believe and Celebrate

After we are baptized, there are many times in our lives when we need to ask God to forgive us. We can do this in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. In this sacrament, which we can call the Sacrament of Penance, we ask God for and receive his forgiveness of our sins.

Some sins are more serious than others. These are called mortal sins. To commit a mortal sin, a person knows it is very seriously wrong and freely chooses to commit it anyway. People who commit mortal sin break their friendship with God. They no longer share in God's grace. People who commit mortal sins must receive God's forgiveness in the Sacrament of Penance.



26



We Believe and Celebrate

Explain again that we first receive God's forgiveness in the Sacrament of Baptism. Point out that we also celebrate God's forgiveness in another sacrament. Then read aloud the first paragraph on page 26.

Explain that sin is any thought, word, or act that we freely choose to commit even though we know that it is wrong. Then read aloud the second paragraph on page 26 and the paragraphs on page 27.

Direct attention to the photograph on page 27. Ask for ideas about what these children might be praying about. Suggest that perhaps they are asking God to forgive their sins. Emphasize that God is always ready to forgive us if we are sorry.

Venial sin is less serious than mortal sin. People who commit venial sin hurt their friendship with God. But they still share in God's grace.

Yet any sin which we commit hurts our friendship with God and others. So we should ask for God's forgiveness for all of our sins in the Sacrament of Penance.

When We Celebrate

We celebrate the sacrament of forgiveness. It is also called the:

- sacrament of conversion
- Sacrament of Penance
- sacrament of confession
- Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Children who are baptized as infants must celebrate the Sacrament of Penance for the first time before their First Holy Communion.



27

Review the concepts presented on pages 26 and 27 by asking the following questions:

What happens in the Sacrament of Penance? (We are sorry and ask God for and receive his forgiveness for our sins.)

What type of sin is very serious? Why? (Mortal sin is very serious because people who commit mortal sin break their friendship with God.)

How is venial sin different from mortal sin? (Venial sin is less serious than mortal sin. People who commit venial sin hurt their friendship with God but still share in God's grace.)

Which sins should we ask God's forgiveness for in the Sacrament of Penance? (We should ask God's forgiveness for any sins we commit.)

Call attention to *When We Celebrate* on page 27. Read the other names for the Sacrament of Penance. Point out that those who were baptized when they were infants must celebrate the Sacrament of Penance for the first time before First Holy Communion.

We Respond

Jesus wants me to share his stories about God's love and forgiveness.

Here is one story that I can share ...



28

We Respond

Introduce the activity on page 28 by recalling what Jesus' story of the lost sheep teaches us about God's love and forgiveness. Then read the sentence at the top of the page. Help your child/children name other stories told by Jesus or stories about Jesus that teach us about God's love and forgiveness. These might include the story of the Forgiving Father (Chapter 3) and the story of Zacchaeus (Chapter 4). List these and other story titles on the board or on a sheet of chart paper.

Explain that the activity on page 28 may be completed by drawing a picture of and/or writing about one of Jesus' stories about God's love and forgiveness.

Scrapbooking Option

Invite your/each child to draw a picture to show a favorite part of one of Jesus' stories about forgiveness. On lined writing paper help your/each child to write one or two sentences about the story. Mount the picture and the writing paper to pieces of colored paper or card stock. Affix these to the space provided on page 28.

**My family can pray to Jesus, our
Good Shepherd.**

Here is my family's prayer ...



29

Read the introduction to the activity on page 29. Together, look again at the Scripture illustration on page 23 and the photograph of the stained-glass window on page 24. Help your/each child write a brief prayer (one or two sentences) and draw a picture of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, in the space provided. Encourage your/each child to pray these words often while preparing to celebrate First Penance.

Scrapbooking Option

With your child/children write a brief prayer to Jesus, the Good Shepherd. Have your/each child copy the prayer on lined writing paper. Mount the prayer on colored paper or card stock and trim to fit on the left side of page 29. You may want to have your/each child draw a picture of Jesus, the Good Shepherd. Mount the picture on colored paper and affix it to the right side of page 29. Also help your/each child add other decorations to pages 28 and 29: stickers, clip art, ribbon, glitter, stamp designs.

Help your/each child make a bouquet holder for the page. Instructions and a diagram are on First Penance Project Card 2B.
See www.webelieveandcelebrate.com.

We Respond in Prayer

† **Leader:** Jesus, through the Sacraments of Baptism and Penance, we share in God's love, and we receive and celebrate God's forgiveness. Thank you for these sacraments.

All: Jesus, we thank you for sharing God's love and forgiveness.

Leader: Jesus, you told us that you are our Good Shepherd. We believe that you never want us to be separated from you.

All: Jesus, you are our Good Shepherd. We are the sheep of your flock.

Leader: Let us now sing to Jesus, our Good Shepherd.

♪ The Good Shepherd

Jesus is the Good Shepherd,
he knows his sheep and he loves them.
Jesus is the Good Shepherd;
he loves us all, he loves us all.

Jesus calls our name:

(Sing your name two times.)
and we come to him
running and running and
running and running
because we love him.



30

We Respond in Prayer

Prepare to pray. On the prayer table place a bowl of holy water, a cross, and, if possible, a picture of Jesus, the Good Shepherd.

Play "The Good Shepherd," #2 on the *We Believe & Celebrate* CD. If the CD is not available, practice saying the words of the song aloud together. Explain that each person should sing his or her name after the line "Jesus calls our name."

Begin the prayer celebration by inviting your/each child to dip his/her fingers in the holy water and then pray together the Sign of the Cross.

Lead the singing or reciting of "The Good Shepherd." As you sing, you might also play the song at a low volume.

Encourage your/each child to pray to Jesus, the Good Shepherd, often during the coming week.

Encourage family participation in completing the *Sharing Faith with My Families* activities for Chapter 2, child's text, pages 83–84.

Family Time, page 30A, includes enrichment activities for the family and materials that may be needed for children's work on the next chapter. (To the catechist: Duplicate this page for the families who are not using the guide.)

FAMILY TIME



Nurture a Virtue

In this chapter your child was reminded that Jesus is our Good Shepherd. He is the shepherd who knows and loves us, his sheep. Being a sheep in the flock of the Good Shepherd is a positive virtue. Good sheep listen to the voice of their shepherd. As a family, discuss how you will listen to the voice of Jesus, the Good Shepherd. Each evening this week have the family pray together the prayer on page 29.



Clocks and Calendars

It takes time and energy for families to grow and stay close. Indeed, growing and staying close is an ongoing process that can take some planning in today's world of busy schedules and limited resources. Over the next month evaluate the time your family spends together. Make some decisions about ways to realign your calendar to allow family members to stay close and free of conflict.



Prayer Pointers

Together with your child, read and reflect on the lyrics to the song in the Chapter 2 prayer celebration. Together, choose one or two favorite lines and print them on a large sheet of paper. Display this song sheet in your family's prayer space to pray during the week.



Next Time for Chapter 3

Materials

Prayer

- Bible
- cross or crucifix
- *We Believe & Celebrate* CD
- party streamers (optional)

Activities

- costumes and props for Scripture dramatization
- colored markers or pens

Scrapbooking Preparations

We Gather (page 33)

- Find a head-and-shoulders photograph of your child, or have your child draw a head-and-shoulders self-portrait.
- From light-colored paper or card stock cut out one or two speech balloons.

We Respond (pages 40–41)

- Have available photos or magazine pictures of favorite places to pray, index cards or writing paper, card stock or colored paper.
- Have three-inch squares and four-inch squares of colored paper or card stock and other decorations.

For additional scrapbooking materials and directions, refer to First Penance project cards 3A and 3B.
www.webelieveandcelebrate.com