

Together  in Jesus

FIRST RECONCILIATION

MY FAMILY
ACTIVITY & MEMORY BOOK

SAMPLE
Pflaum Publishing Group

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Background for Parents and Caregivers

Throughout the Gospels, Jesus continually teaches us about God's limitless forgiveness. Today we experience that overwhelming forgiveness when we celebrate the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. The sacrament includes sorrow (contrition) for sin, a firm purpose not to sin again, penance, and absolution.

God Is a Forgiving Father

These moments or portions of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation are foreshadowed in Jesus' Parable of the Forgiving Father (see Luke 15:11–32). This parable is an emphatic illustration that God continually welcomes and meets us more than halfway—and forgives and forgets.

After the younger son breaks his relationship with his father and wastes his inheritance, he comes to his senses and is sorry, not just for his predicament but because he has hurt his father. He is willing to accept some form of penance to make restitution for the damage he has done their relationship.

Likewise, when we come to our senses after we have done wrong, we experience conversion and a deep desire to change our behavior, to turn back to God and not sin again (see CCC, 1490). Because we desire to be in a close relationship with God—and with all God's family, especially those we have hurt—we want to make up for the wrong we have done and repair the hurt we have caused others. Our promise to sin no more and accept a loving penance helps us to grow closer to God and to become more Christlike in all we do.

“Three conditions are necessary for Penance: contrition, which is sorrow for sin, together with a purpose of amendment; confession of sins without any omission; and satisfaction by means of good works.” –Saint Thomas Aquinas

Scan the code to view the
Parent Guide for Lesson 4.



LESSON 4 SCRIPTURE ACTIVITY

LUKE 15:11-24

This Gospel story is often called the Parable of the Prodigal Son. It's really about the story of the forgiving father. Even though we learn from the two sons how *not* to behave, we learn most about the marvelous love and forgiveness of the father. God is like that father.

Draw a picture of a time when someone forgave you.

Draw a picture of a time when you forgave someone.

Using colorful crayons, markers, or paint, show how God's forgiveness makes you feel.



LESSON 4 DOCTRINE ACTIVITY

The story of the forgiving father is similar to what we do today when we celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Here are some words about the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Draw a line from the meaning to its word.

Words about the Sacrament of Reconciliation	Meaning of the words
Sin	Doing the opposite of what God has called us to do
Penance	A prayer of sorrow and promise to sin no more
Confession	A prayerful review of our past thoughts, words, and actions to see if we're following God's laws
Absolution	Sadness that comes when we have done something wrong
Sorrow	The forgiveness we receive from God through the priest in the Sacrament of Reconciliation
Act of Contrition	The prayers or good works that the priest asks us to do after we have confessed our sins
Examination of Conscience	Telling the priest our sins

LESSON 4 FAMILY ACTIVITY

In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we are sorry for our sins and promise to do better and to avoid sin in the days, weeks, and months ahead. Part of that firm promise is a decision to do something good instead.

Together as a family, decide what each person (below) could promise to do so they don't continue their wrong behavior.



FAMILY PRAYER

Invite family members to finish each prayer (and to come up with more).

God of Truth, when we feel like lying, we promise to _____.

Giving God, when we want to be selfish and just think of ourselves, we promise to _____.

Josh said mean and untrue things about a classmate behind his back.

Emma borrowed her friend's book but didn't take very good care of it.

Abby got a new game for her birthday but wouldn't let her brother and sister play with her.

Tommy didn't like what his dad asked him to do, so he screamed and slammed doors.