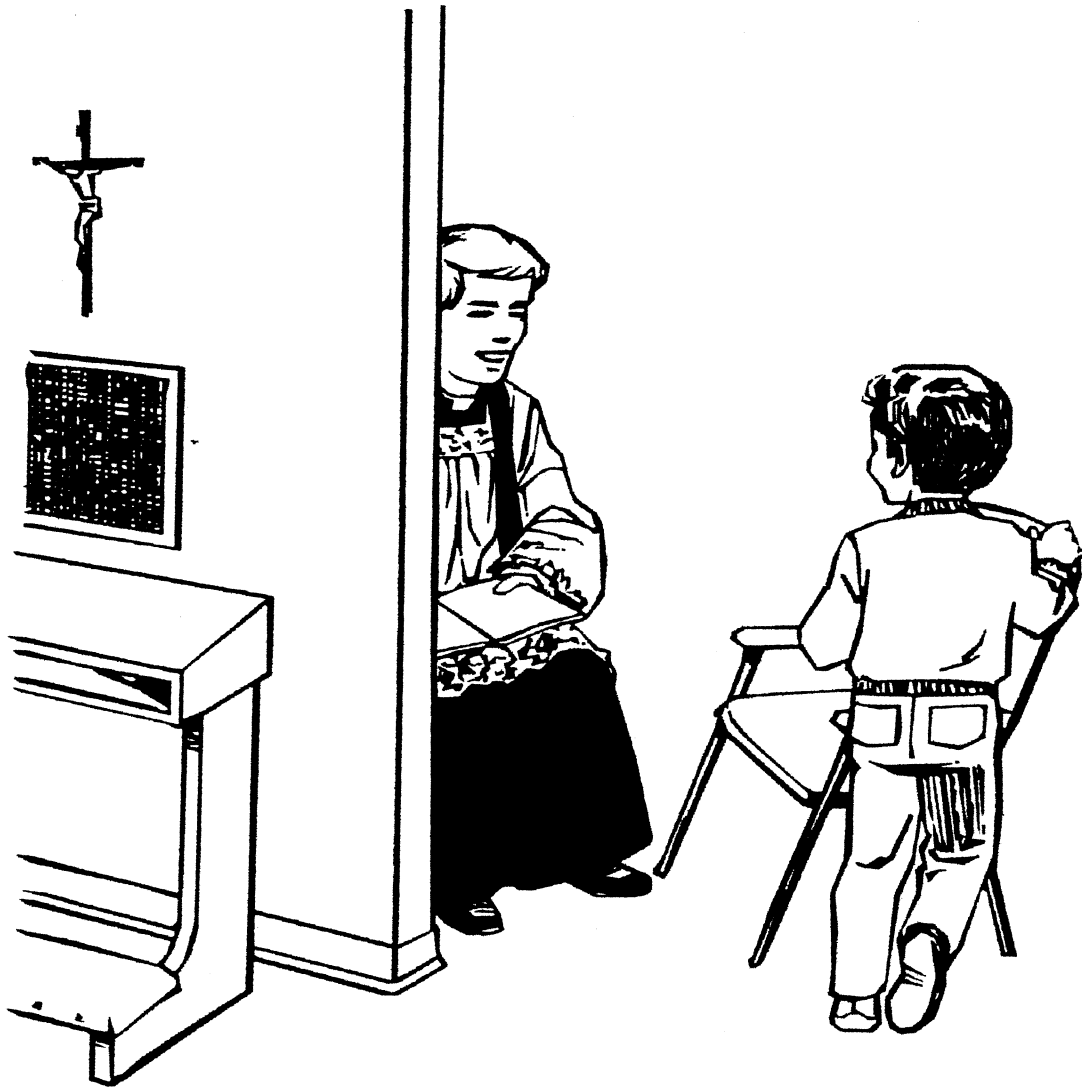


# PENANCE



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parents,

In preparing your child to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, I am asking you to please read or tell your child some of the stories of God's love captured in the Bible and complete the take home pack with your child. The pack should be returned to your child's teacher for the week starting Dec 14<sup>th</sup>

There are many stories of forgiveness and healing. Share some of your own favorite stories. The life of Jesus and the parables He taught are a rich source of wonderful stories that are helpful to children preparing for Reconciliation. We will be using the story of the Good Shepard as our theme on the actual day of reconciliation.

**Please read the following stories to your child:**

The Lost Sheep (Luke 15)

The Paralyzed Man (Matthew 9)

The Woman at the House of the Pharisee (Luke 7)

The Woman at the Well (John 4)

After telling or reading the story, discuss it with your child. Ask him/her to retell the story to you using their own words.

I hope you enjoy these Bible discussions and activities with your child.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "M. J. ...".

# The story of the Prodigal Son.

Jesus told us the story of the Prodigal Son to teach us about God's love and mercy that we receive in the Sacrament of Penance. The story goes something like this...

There once was a man who had two sons. The younger son no longer wanted to live on the farm or do all that his father told him to do. So, one day, he said to his father: "Father, give me the share of your land that is to be mine. I want all that I would receive after your death now." The Father was saddened by this, but he respected his son's wishes. His son could choose to go any time. So the father gave to his younger son the money he would leave for him after his death. The younger son took all he had and left the farm and went into a far off country.



Now the younger son was not very good with money, and spent it all very quickly on things that would not please the father. In fact, the way he spent his money was very offensive to the father and hurt him very much. After he spent all his money, a famine hit this country and the son had to work very hard just to have food to eat.

One day, the younger son realized that his father's servants had a better life than the one he was living. They had lots of food, but he was always hungry. So, this son decided to return to his father, and confess or tell him his sins, and tell his father that he is sorry. The younger son started on his way home.

Now back on the farm, the father longed for his younger son to return to him, for he loved him very much! He would watch and wait for his son to return. One day, the father saw his son coming and he was filled with joy and love. He ran to his son, hugged and kissed him. The son told his sins to his father and told him that he was sorry.

The father was so excited and overjoyed at the return of his son, that he sent his servants to bring his best robe and a ring to put on his finger and shoes on his feet. They cooked a great feast and had a big party. His father knew that his son was lost and dead because of sin, but now that he has confessed his sins and returned to his father, he is home and alive with grace.

The same will happen to you when you go to confession. Sometimes we are weak and sin, and this saddens God our Father greatly. He waits for us to return to Him because He loves us. When we confess our sins and are sorry, God forgives us and is happy that we have turned away from sin and back to God. This is what we do in the Sacrament of Penance.

# The Story of the Prodigal Son

## Questions

1. Who tells us this story and why?
2. Write about the family in this story. How many people? Who are they? Where do they live?
3. What did the younger son want?
4. Did the father allow him this?
5. Where did the son go, and what happened to him?
6. Why did the son decide to return home?
7. What did he tell his father?
8. What happened when he returned home?

# The Sacrament of Penance

The Sacrament of Penance is also called the Sacrament of Confession or the Sacrament of Reconciliation (CCC 1423-4). All of these titles are good. This sacrament is a sacrament of healing (CCC 1421), for in Confession, we heal our relationship with God, His Church and we heal our souls!

We go to Confession because we are sinners. In Baptism all our sins are washed away, but we are still tempted to sin (CCC 1428). We often sin and this offends and hurts God. When we sin, we turn away from God and from His Church. We do this by breaking God's laws (the Ten Commandments). We need to turn back to God and the Church by seeking forgiveness in the Sacrament of Penance.

To make a good Confession, we must prepare by learning about God's laws. We look at our own lives to see which laws we have broken. The Holy Spirit will help us become ready. We can then go to a priest and make a good confession. In the Name of God and His Church, Christ will forgive you through the priest and this will take away your sins (CCC 1459). The priest will also give you a Penance that will help you to make up for your sins (CCC 1459). A Penance is often a prayer, a work of charity, or a sacrifice (giving up something you like) (CCC 1460).

After you have gone to the Sacrament of Reconciliation, you are reconciled (forgiven and accepted fully) again with God and with His Church (CCC 1468-9).

The Sacrament of Penance will help you to live a holy life following God's laws. You will receive grace to overcome your sins too. Confession will help you to prepare for your judgment when you meet God (CCC 1470). Every confession is like a little judgment where you tell God you are sorry for your sins and He forgives you. When you are before God, you will be responsible for your actions, words and works you should have done. By going to confession often, you will not need to be judged for the things you have already confessed at the end of your life.

The Sacrament of Penance will heal your soul from sin and your relationship with God and neighbor. What a gift!



# Questions about Penance

1. List three names for this Sacrament.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

2. This sacrament is a sacrament of \_\_\_\_\_. (growing, healing)

3. Why do we go to confession?

4. Who do we offend or hurt when we sin?

5. How do we sin?

6. What must we do to prepare for a good Confession?

7. What two things will a priest do for you in this Sacrament?

- 1.
- 2.

8. What will this Sacrament help you to do?

9. At the end of this life, what will this Sacrament help prepare you for?

10. What will this Sacrament heal?

# Word Search

P P O H T L A W P S O U L Y  
R E C O N C I L I A T I O N  
E N O L J H S O N C U T E N  
P A M Y U A C F O R G I V E  
A N M S D R M H E A L I N G  
R C A P G I W Y A M T S I C  
E E N I M T O F F E N D S H  
M N D R E Y O R T N D W A U  
S T M I N T E M P T E D Y R  
T W E T T M S M G R A C E C  
C O N F E S S I O N O L M H  
O R T H U R T S D P R A Y D  
A K S I N S A C R I F I C E  
L P R I E S T M J E S U S T

Can you find these words in this puzzle? Circle them.

Find them in the text called "The Sacrament of Penance" and put a box around them. Use the color purple.

CHARITY  
CONFESSION  
GRACE  
HURTS  
LAW  
PRAY  
RECONCILIATION  
SIN  
TEN

CHURCH  
FORGIVE  
HEALING  
JESUS  
OFFENDS  
PREPARE  
SACRAMENT  
SOUL

COMMANDMENTS  
GOD  
HOLY SPIRIT  
JUDGEMENT  
PENANCE  
PRIEST  
SACRIFICES  
TEMPTED  
WORK

**Draw a picture of you sad because of your sins.**

**Draw a picture of you happy with God after Confession.**