

FULL NAME \_\_\_\_\_

# FAMILY HANDOUT 5



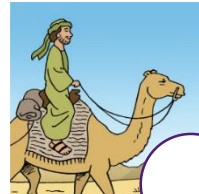
When you upset a friend, you must say sorry so that you can continue being friends. When we sin it not only may hurt others, but ourselves and so our friendship with God. The Church helps us celebrate God's forgiveness through the sacrament of Reconciliation – a sacrament of **healing**. In this handout, we will be discovering the steps of reconciliation: how we can go back to God after we have turned away from him by not loving others the way Jesus taught us.

## THE PRODIGAL RETURNS



Do you remember what happened to the younger son in the parable of the Prodigal Son? Match each description with a picture.

- |                                 |                     |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. he asked for his inheritance | 6. he turned back   |
| 2. he left his father           | 7. the father ran   |
| 3. he spent his money           | 8. he said sorry    |
| 4. he lived with the pigs       | 9. he was forgiven  |
| 5. he came to his senses        | 10. they celebrated |



Jesus himself forgave the sins of many people; it was more important to him than his miracles. He was bringing about the kingdom of God, where all wounds are healed and all tears are wiped away. When we go to a priest and confess, it is Jesus himself who heals our wounds through his forgiveness.



Children read what's in the coloured boxes

Jesus expresses beautifully what happens in the sacrament of Reconciliation in the parable of the Prodigal Son: we go astray; we are lost and can no longer cope.

But our Father waits for us; he forgives us when we come back; he takes us in again, forgives our sins.



The Parable of the Prodigal Son represents our relationship with God, the Father.



Try to spend 5 minutes on this page 1

# HE CAME TO HIS SENSES



The lost son in the Parable of the Prodigal Son, ended up alone with the pigs. While he was alone, **he came to his senses** and realised how he had turned away from his father – how he had sinned.

We also must spend time in quiet to think about the ways we have sinned. We can ask God, through the help of his Holy Spirit, to be honest with ourselves. The time we spend preparing to confess our sins is called the **Examination of Conscience**.



This is a special examination of conscience based on the Lord's Prayer.

Spend time looking through the questions together. The questions can help you pause and think about good and bad choices you may have made.

You can write or draw your answers on a separate page. Take your time.

You can do this at the end of the day as part of your night prayer.



**YOUCAT**  
for  
Kids

Question  
148: How  
can I pray  
in the evening? (p.210)



**OUR FATHER**  
IN HEAVEN, HALLOWED  
BE YOUR NAME.

Do I think about God every day?

Do I speak to God every day through prayer?

Do I worship God at Mass every week?



**YOUR KINGDOM COME,  
YOUR WILL BE DONE,  
ON EARTH AS IN HEAVEN.**

Do I live how Jesus shows us how to live?

Am I kind to others?

Do I share with others?

Do I show respect to my parents, teachers and friends?



**GIVE US TODAY OUR  
DAILY BREAD.**

Am I sometimes greedy?

Do I appreciate what God has given me?

Do I think of ways to help those who have no food?

Do I take things that do not belong to me?



**FORGIVE US OUR SINS,  
AS WE FORGIVE THOSE  
WHO SIN AGAINST US.**

Do I say I am sorry when I have been wrong?

Do I forgive when someone does something bad to me?

Do I help solve problems between my friends or do I cause more trouble?

Do I say bad things about people who have hurt me?

**LEAD US  
NOT INTO  
TEMPTATION,  
BUT DELIVER US  
FROM EVIL.**

*Question 148*

Do I play fairly in sports and games?

Do I cheat in school?

Do I tell the truth?

Do I let others tempt me to do things I know I should not do?



# HE TURNED BACK



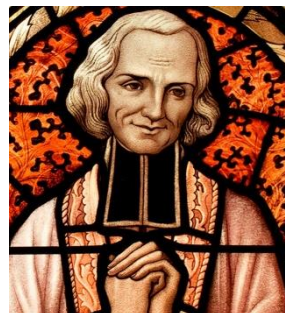
After the Prodigal Son came to his senses, he started travelling back home. Sometimes, we can make ourselves feel better after we have sinned by just thinking about it. However, that feeling does not last and we can find ourselves repeating the sin again and again. The Prodigal Son did not just think about it, he got up and travelled the long journey back home to say sorry to his father.

We too need to respond physically once we have come to our senses about our sin. The Church gives us that opportunity through the sacrament of Reconciliation.



In Lent, you and your family are invited to a Reconciliation Festival. You will be able to reflect on God's love and forgiveness together and, when you are ready, receive the sacrament of Reconciliation for the very first time.

We call it a festival because it is a very special celebration, full of colour and happiness!



*"After a fall,  
stand up again  
right away! Do  
not leave sin in  
your hearts for  
even a  
moment."*

*St John Vianney*



What do you think receiving the sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time will be like? Parents share what receiving the sacrament was like for you.

Try to answer the questions together





# HE CONFESSED



The son returned home to his father. After his father ran to him and embraced him, the son looked his father in the eye and said he was sorry.

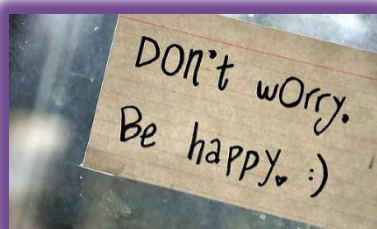
When we sin, it is like when you fall out with someone and you cannot look the other person in the eye. We need to say sorry to that person. We need to look them in the eye, as we say sorry. The Holy Spirit helps us to do this.



Chat together about what has happened this week that you might want say sorry for? How might you say it to Jesus?

The sacrament of Reconciliation gives us the opportunity to look Jesus in the eye. **The priest represents Jesus.**

The priest also **represents the whole community of the Church, the Body of Christ**, which we are members of through our baptism. Sin can hurt other people in some way, even if you cannot see how it does. So, **the priest speaks the words of forgiveness on behalf of everyone.**



The priest will not tell anyone what you tell him; he promises to keep it secret. Be honest and open with the priest. His job is to remind you how much Jesus loves you and that Jesus forgives you.



Question 86: Why should I confess to a priest? (p.138)

Question 84: May the priest reveal what he has heard in confession? (p.136)

## PENANCE

“

Later Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, 'See, you have been made well! Do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse happens to YOU.' John 5:14

”

A **penance** is a task given to us by the priest after we confess our sins. It helps us turn our hearts back to God. It helps us turn away from sin. God created us and loves us and wants us to be more like him, so he sent his Son to show us the way and his Holy Spirit to guide us. The penance you are given will help you with this.

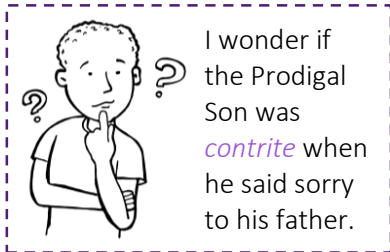
Your penance might be an action, a prayer, or some other way to help you change your life and avoid sin in the future.



# ACT OF CONTRITION



"Return of the Prodigal Son"  
by Bartolomé Esteban Murillo



You will be asked to say this prayer aloud after the priest give a penance. **Don't worry** if you don't remember the order of everything, the priest will help you.



Try to learn this act of contrition

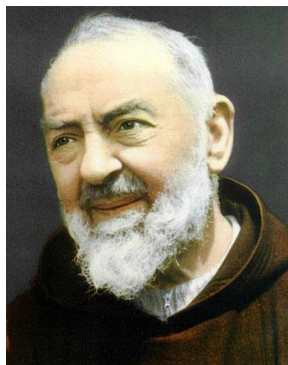
Dear God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. I know you love me very much. Please help me to do my penance, to do better, and to avoid anything that might lead me to sin. Amen.

Take your time learning this prayer

# ABSOLUTION

*"Love Jesus! Have no fear! Even if you had committed all the sins in this world, Jesus repeats these words to you: "Your many sins are forgiven, because you loved much."*

St Padre Pio of Pietrelcina



Absolution is a very special prayer that the priest speaks aloud. This prayer promises that you are forgiven!

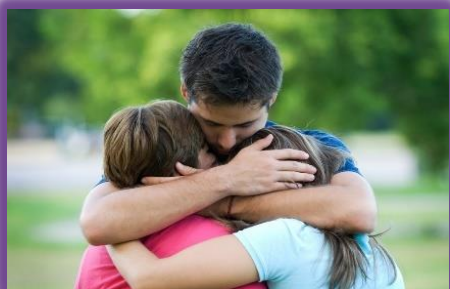


"God the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of your son, you have reconciled the world to yourself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins.

Through the ministry of the church may God give you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father and the Son, and the Holy Spirit."



# FORGIVENESS



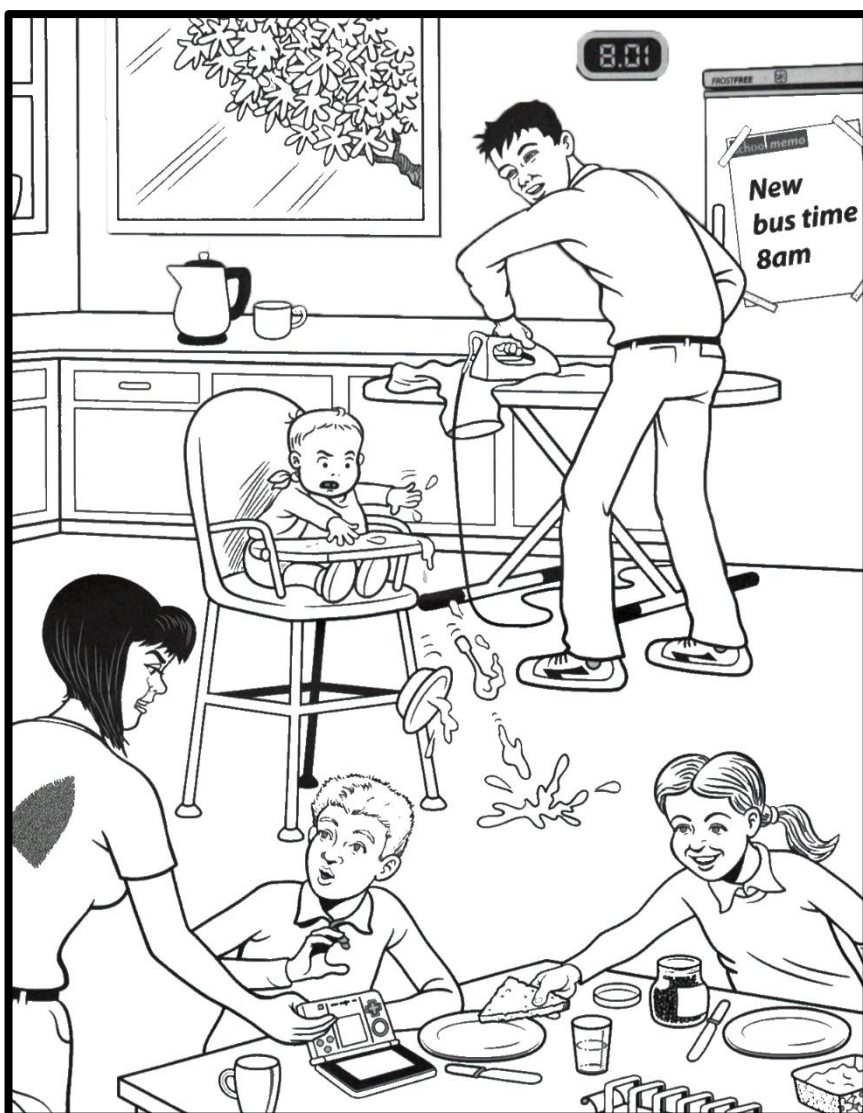
God calls us to ask for forgiveness and to forgive each other. Did you know that we practice forgiveness all the time at home and at school?

Here is something Jesus told his disciples – his followers, about forgiveness, from the Gospel of Matthew:

“

Peter came to Jesus and asked, 'Lord, if another [person] sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. Matthew 18:21-22

”



At the time of Jesus, the number seventy-seven was used to show a really massive number.

What is the biggest number you can think of? Can you imagine forgiving someone that many times?



In our families we are called to love each other and forgive each other every day.

Circle the 6 opportunities for forgiveness you can find in the picture.

**YOU**CAT  
for  
Kids

Question 85: What does confession do to me?  
(p.137)



*It is not possible to live without forgiveness, or at least you cannot live well, especially in the family.*

Pope Francis





# SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: STEP BY STEP



Spend some time reading this together...

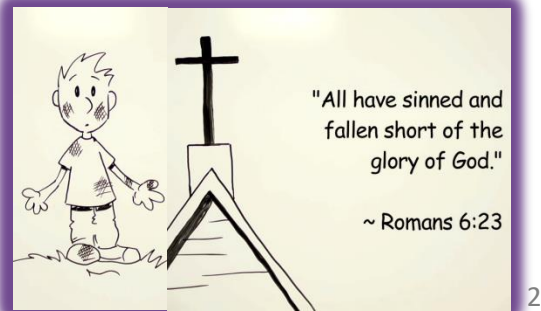
## We were baptised!

When we are baptised, we are washed free of all sin.



## But...

We still keep sinning.  
Sins separate us from God.



## Receiving mercy

A great way to receive God's mercy is through the sacrament of Reconciliation. Reconciliation starts in our hearts.



## So what do we do?

We turn to the mercy of God.  
Only God forgives sin.



## Examination of Conscience



5

## We examine our conscience

Take some time in quiet prayer to think about the things you have done to separate you from God, and things that what you have failed to do.



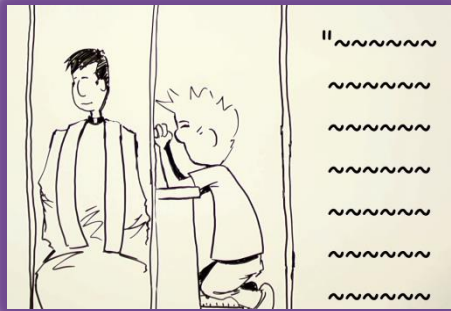
## Now we are ready

Now you are ready to see a priest. First, the priest welcomes and you make the sign of the cross together. You then say something like "Bless me, Father, for I have sinned."



6





7

## Be honest with Jesus

Then tell the priest, who represents Jesus the ways you have sinned.

- The priest will not tell anyone what you tell him. It's a safe space.
- Be honest and open with the priest.
- He represents Jesus. His job is to remind you how much Jesus loves you and that Jesus forgives you.



## We are given a penance

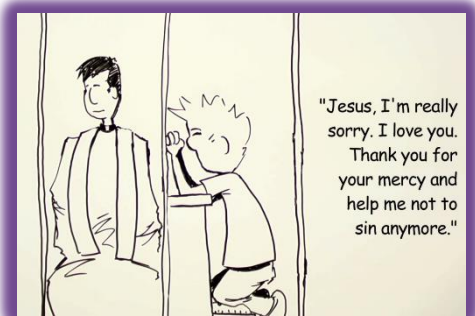
The priest gives you a penance to right the wrong. Your penance might be an action, a prayer, or some other way to help you change your life and avoid sin in the future.



8

## We apologise

Then the priest will ask you to apologise and ask for forgiveness by saying an act of contrition.

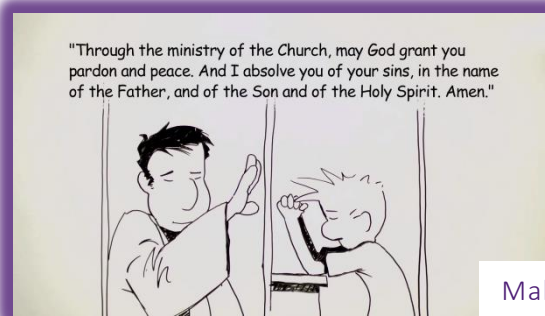


9



## Receive forgiveness or absolution

Absolution is when the priest offers you God's forgiveness after you have confessed your sins.



10

Make the sign of the cross



## That was great!

Don't forget to do your penance to turn your heart back to God. Don't forget to SMILE... God loves you and he has forgiven you!



11



Role play the steps of reconciliation.  
Take it in turns to be the priest.

