

Family Guide
Reconciliation: Pardon and Peace
Primary Level

Introduction to the *Reconciliation: Pardon and Peace Family Guide*

RCL Benziger's *Reconciliation: Pardon and Peace Family Guide* will help you to teach your child about God's forgiving love and how Catholics celebrate the Lord's mercy and peace in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Not only will you be preparing your child to celebrate Reconciliation for the first time, you will also be building a solid foundation for the life-long journey of conversion, through which we are called to turn away from sin and to live as God's children.

Here are a few tips for using the Family Guide to prepare your child to celebrate Reconciliation for the first time.

- Plan on completing one chapter a week.
- Set a regular and convenient time to meet each week. This will ensure that your learning sessions are a priority.
- Plan where you will meet in your home. Choose a place where you can work together without interruptions or distractions.
- Download the weekly lesson and chapter activity sheet for each lesson. Note: There is no activity sheet for chapter 8.
- Read the weekly lesson plan and the chapter in the child's book before your session.
- Before each learning session, gather the supplies you will need. These are listed under "Materials Needed" in the family lesson plans.
- If you wish to incorporate the music, story books, and videos or DVD's suggested under "Additional Resources You Can Use" in the family lesson plans, check to see if they are available from your parish Resource Center or local library. You may want to order your own Reconciliation music CD from RCL Benziger. You can do this easily by calling 1-877-275-4725 and requesting item number B5215.
- Participate in any and all parish events planned for families and children participating in the First Reconciliation Program.

Remember that preparing your child for the celebration of First Reconciliation is a privilege. It affords you a unique opportunity to grow closer to your child, to share your faith, and to deepen your personal relationship with the Lord. Enjoy this precious time!

Chapter 1

God's Love

Dear Parent,

Preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation begins with an appreciation for our Baptism through which Original Sin and personal sins are forgiven and we are reborn into new life in Christ. There is a strong connection between the Sacraments of Baptism and Reconciliation. In them we acknowledge our sinfulness and celebrate God's forgiveness and love. We experience God's pardon, peace, healing, and mercy.

In chapter 1, you and your child will explore the Parable of the Lost Sheep. This parable is all about God's faithful love. As the children prepare to celebrate Reconciliation for the first time, it is important that they begin to understand that no matter how far they may stray from living as God calls them to live, God will always love them and welcome them back. The love and forgiveness you show for your child on a daily basis will serve as a powerful sign and example of God's everlasting love for all his children.

Chapter Goals

After completing this lesson, your child will be able to

- Give examples of God's love.
- Explain that Jesus came to bring people back to God's love.
- Identify Baptism as the Sacrament that takes away Original Sin and gives the new life of God's grace.

Materials Needed:

- *Reconciliation: Pardon and Peace* primary-level child's book
- Pencil or crayons
- A small, clear bowl of water
- Chapter 1 activity sheet, downloaded from the website

Additional Resources You Can Use

- "Psalm 100: We Are God's People" from the *Reconciliation: Pardon and Peace* music CD for use with the prayer service on page 11.
- **Smith, Cyncie.** *The Joyful Shepherd* (New Hope Publishers, 1-800-968-7301 or www.newhopepubl.com). A delightfully illustrated retelling of the Parable of the Lost Sheep, with an emphasis on the shepherd's joy.
- **Hazen, Barbara Shook.** *Even If I Did Something Awful* (Aladdin). A story of unconditional love.

Family Lesson Plan

Get Started

- Open the child's book to page 5. Read aloud the chapter title.
- Together, prayerfully read the Scripture verse from Romans.
- Read with your child the story "Everyone Is Here" and discuss the questions.

Share the Scripture Story

- Read aloud the title on page 6 and have your child find the picture of the sheep. Discuss how a shepherd cares for his flock.
- Read together “The Lost Sheep” and discuss the “Let’s Talk” questions on page 7.
- Have your child complete the chapter 1 activity sheet. Point out that the sheep is a reminder of God’s never-ending love for us.
- Summarize by having your child repeat the “Word of God” verse.

Explore Catholic Teaching

- Read aloud the first paragraph from “God Saves” on page 8. Discuss with your child why people might turn away from God. Help your child understand that Adam and Eve made a choice to turn away from God. Then read and discuss the rest of page 8.
- Help your child learn about the connection between Baptism and Reconciliation by reading and discussing page 9.
- Turn to page 74 in the “A Little Catechism” section of the book. Review the description of Baptism.
- Pray together the prayer in the “We Celebrate” box on page 9. Ask your child to underline the names we use to describe the persons of the Holy Trinity: *God* and *Father*; *Lord Jesus Christ*, and *Holy Spirit*.

Complete the Activity

- Explain the story-writing activity on page 10 and have your child complete it.
- Read aloud “Parish Connections.” The next time you go to church, be sure to have family members sign themselves with holy water as a reminder of their Baptism.

Celebrate

- Place the bowl of water on the prayer table. Extend your hands over the water and ask your child to do the same as you recite the following words: “Loving God, we ask you to bless this water. May it remind us of our Baptism when we were freed from sin and given new life. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”
- Use the water to bless yourself with the Sign of the Cross.
- Pray together “Psalm 100: We Are God’s People” on page 11. Play “Psalm 100” from the music CD and sing along using the lyrics found on page 91.

Share the Home and Family Page

- Read, discuss and complete page 12.
- Visit www.christjesustheway.com for online activities and articles to help prepare your child for Reconciliation. Click on the whole parish link and choose sacrament preparation.

Chapter 2

Loving God

Dear Parent,

In Chapter 1 you and your child reflected on how much God loves us. In this chapter, your child will learn that Jesus taught us the Great Commandment to help us understand how God wants us to live. Living according to God's Law requires us to love God, our neighbor, and ourselves.

Long ago, God established the Covenant with his people. God chose us to be his people. We respond by choosing to live according to God's commands. The Covenant is fulfilled in Jesus, the New and Everlasting Covenant, who came to teach us how to live. Jesus taught us that living with love is the way to eternal life, or happiness forever with God.

As you study Chapter 2 with your child, emphasize that God's laws and all moral teachings are rooted in love. Help your child to understand that God knows what is best for us and wants each of us to be happy forever. We can only be truly happy when we live with love.

Chapter Goals

After completing this lesson, your child will be able to

- Identify ways to show love for God and others.
- Learn the Great Commandment.
- Understand that we keep the Covenant by following God's Law.

Materials Needed:

- *Reconciliation: Pardon and Peace* primary-level child's book
- Pencil or crayons
- A candle and matches for use with the prayer on page 19
- Chapter 2 activity sheet, downloaded from the website

Additional Resources You Can Use

- "Christ Be Our Light" from the *Reconciliation: Pardon and Peace* music CD for use with the prayer service on page 19.
- *The Blown-Around Room/God's Rules for Me* (Pauline Books and Media, 1-800-876-4463). This video shows the consequences of not following rules.
- **Brown, Margaret Wise.** *The Runaway Bunny* (Harper/Collins). The story of a mother bunny reassuring her little one that her love is present wherever the bunny goes.

Family Lesson Plan

Get Started

- Open the child's book to page 13. Together, prayerfully read the verse from Psalm 143.

- Read “Mom’s Rule” aloud and use the questions to discuss the story. Help your child understand that God wanted Eric to obey his mother and that God wanted Eric’s mom to keep her children safe.

Share the Scripture Story

- Read aloud the Scripture story from Luke on pages 14 and 15.
- Use the “Let’s Talk” questions to discuss the meaning of the story.
- Ask your child to explain how it feels to break a rule or choose to do something they know is not right. Read aloud the “Word of God” on page 14. Explain that the peace of mind we feel when we follow God’s Law is a sign of God’s love for us.

Explore Catholic Teaching

- Read “Loving God” on page 16 with your child.
- Turn to page 85 and discuss the meaning of each of the Ten Commandments in the “A Little Catechism” section.
- Return to page 16 and read together “The Great Commandment.” Review the concept of covenant by having your child read aloud “This We Believe.”
- Focus on the activity at the bottom of page 17 and have your child complete it. Affirm your child’s ideas for showing love for God and others. Reinforce the teaching of the Great Commandment by working with your child to complete the Chapter 2 activity sheet.

Complete the Activity

- Point out that Jesus’ followers are called to love others as he did. Emphasize that this means making real choices every day. Then have your child complete the maze activity on page 18.
- Use the question at the bottom of the page to help your child understand the consequences of failing to act with love.
- Read aloud the “Parish Connections” and “Catholic Practices” boxes. Discuss other ways we can honor specific Commandments.

Celebrate

- Light the candle on the prayer table.
- Pray together “Give Us Light” on page 19.
- Conclude by listening to “Christ Be Our Light” from the music CD. The lyrics for this song can be found on page 91.

Share the Home and Family Page

- Read, discuss and complete page 20.
- Visit www.christjesustheway.com for online activities and articles to help prepare your child for Reconciliation. Click on the whole parish link and choose sacrament preparation.

Chapter 3

Refusing to Love

Dear Parent,

God gives us his grace—God’s very life in us, his faithful love, his mercy and forgiveness, and his help to grow in holiness. Free will is another powerful gift from God. God does not force us to choose his way of love. We have the power to decide to follow God’s Law or to turn away from God’s love.

Sin is a conscious choice to do what we know is wrong and against God’s Law. Yet, God’s mercy is stronger than any sin. When we are truly sorry for our sins, God is always ready to forgive us. We celebrate God’s forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. This Sacrament is also called Penance.

As you work together on Chapter 3, help your child understand the difference between sin and an accident or a mistake. Emphasize that although we all sin, we can be reconciled with God and others through the Sacrament of Penance.

Chapter Goals

After completing this lesson, your child will be able to

- Define sin and the different types of sin.
- Describe how sin hurts our relationship with God and others.
- Explain that the Church celebrates God’s forgiveness in the Sacrament of Penance.

Materials Needed:

- *Reconciliation: Pardon and Peace* primary-level child’s book
- Pencil
- Chapter 3 activity sheet, downloaded from the website

Additional Resources You Can Use

- “Change Our Hearts” from the *Reconciliation: Pardon and Peace* music CD for use with the prayer service on page 27.
- **Names of Sin** (St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1-800-488-0488 or www.AmericanCatholic.org). This video shows a girl who needs to seek forgiveness
- **Steptoe, John.** *Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters* (Lothrop, Less, and Shepherd Books). A story showing that love toward the least ones has its own reward.

Family Lesson Plan

Get Started

- Open the child’s book to page 21. Read aloud the chapter title.
- Prayerfully read the Scripture verse from Psalm 95.
- Ask your child to help you read the poem.
- Discuss the questions together.

Share the Scripture Story

- Introduce the Scripture story by reading aloud the first paragraph on page 22. Ask your child to listen for the reason the people in the Scripture story might be surprised.
- Read together the story from Matthew 25. Help your child understand that the king in the story represents Jesus.
- Emphasize that Jesus teaches us that when we fail to show love for our neighbor, we fail to love God.
- Work with your child to complete the “Loving Choices” activity on page 23.

Explore Catholic Teaching

- Read aloud the first paragraph on page 24. Point out the photographs on the pages and invite your child to describe if the children in the pictures are saying “yes” or “no” to God’s love.
- Read the last two paragraphs on page 24. Ask your child to repeat the definition for “sin.” Clarify the definition by turning to the “A Little Catechism” section on page 86 and reading aloud Question 1.
- Together read “Sin Hurts” and “Celebrating Forgiveness” on page 25. Emphasize that penance and reconciliation are both aspects of forgiveness.
- Invite your child to complete the chapter 3 activity sheet.

Complete the Activity

- Explain the directions to the activity on page 26 and have your child complete it.
- Invite your child to read aloud the “Parish Connections” box. Explain that we call this part of the Mass the “Penitential Rite.” Point out that we reconcile with God and the assembly at the beginning of every Mass.

Celebrate

- Ask your child to close their eyes and listen carefully as you read aloud the meditation on page 27.
- Quietly listen together to “Change Our Hearts” from the music CD. The lyrics for this song can be found on page 91.
- Conclude the prayer by sharing a sign of peace.

Share the Home and Family Page

- Read, discuss and complete page 28.
- Visit www.christjesustheway.com for online activities and articles to help prepare your child for Reconciliation. Click on the whole parish link and choose sacrament preparation.

Chapter 4

Loving Choices

Dear Parent,

Developing a well-formed conscience is essential to our life-long journey of conversion to Christ. Conscience is a loving gift from God that helps us to make good moral choices. Our conscience is formed and guided by help from God, including the grace of the Holy Spirit, Scripture, Ten Commandments, and the teachings of the Church.

Your child needs help and guidance to develop good moral reasoning skills. In this chapter you will have the opportunity to explore choices and consider consequences together. This will help prepare your child to begin to make moral choices on their own. Assist your child in this process by affirming their increasing ability to choose to do what is right, just, and loving in their daily lives.

Chapter Goals

After completing this lesson, your child will be able to

- List three steps in making good moral choices.
- Apply moral decision-making skills to concrete situations.
- Understand what it means to examine their conscience.

Materials Needed

- *Reconciliation: Pardon and Peace* primary-level child's book
- Chapter 4 activity sheet, downloaded from the website

Additional Resources You Can Use

- "Children of God" from the *Reconciliation: Pardon and Peace* music CD for use with the prayer service on page 35.
- **Carlson, Nancy.** *Harriet and the Garden* (Carolrhoda Books). A story about a girl with a guilty conscience who feels better when she confesses her guilt.
- **Sheindlin, Judy.** *Judge Judy Sheindlin's Win or Lose by How You Choose* (HarperCollins). A book by TV's Judge Judy that presents realistic dilemmas and witty multiple-choice answers.

Family Lesson Plan

Get Started

- Open the child's book to page 29.
- Pray together the verse from Psalm 119.
- Read and discuss "You Decide." Help your child consider the two choices Lisa can make and the consequences of both.

Share the Scripture Story

- Together read “On Solid Rock” on page 30. Discuss the question at the bottom of the page. Help your child recognize that when we make good choices, we are like the wise people Jesus mentions in the story.
- Discuss the choices in the “What Is the Message?” stories on page 31. If possible, invite other family members to join you in acting out each scene.
- Help your child to understand that making choices in real life is sometimes difficult.

Explore Catholic Teaching

- Read pages 32 and 33 together and discuss the “Let’s Talk” questions.
- Summarize your discussion by reading aloud the “Catholic Practices” statement.
- Reinforce the importance of making good moral decisions by turning to page 71 in “A Little Catechism” and reading together Statements 17 and 18.
- Emphasize that the Commandments, the teachings of Jesus, and God’s Word all help us to know right from wrong.

Complete the Activity

- Invite your child to complete the “On Rock or Sand” choices activity on page 34.
- Afterward, discuss the choices your child made. If they had difficulty making the right choice in any of the situations, review the steps for making moral choices.
- Have your child complete the chapter 4 activity sheet.
- Conclude the activity by reflecting on “An Examination of Conscience” on page 87 in “A Little Catechism.” Pause after each question to allow your child to reflect on how they are living as a child of God.

Celebrate

- Pray together the litany on page 35.
- Join hands as you pray together the Lord’s Prayer.
- Conclude by singing along to “Children of God” from the music CD. The lyrics for this song can be found on page 92.

Share the Home and Family Page

- Read, discuss and complete page 36.
- Visit www.christjesustheway.com for online activities and articles to help prepare your child for Reconciliation. Click on the whole parish link and choose sacrament preparation.

Chapter 5 Returning to Love

Dear Parent,

In this week's lesson, you and your child will read the Parable of the Loving Father. Through this familiar story your child will come to see that the actions of the father toward his son reveal God's love and mercy for all his children who return to him seeking forgiveness. Use this opportunity to help your child appreciate that we can ask for and receive God's forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

In this session, you will also introduce your child to the ways in which we return to God's friendship after we have sinned. As your child learns about contrition, confessing one's sins to a priest, and doing a penance as a sign of our willingness to make up for our wrong-doing, emphasize that we can always come to God with our sorrow.

Chapter Goals

After completing this lesson, your child will be able to

- Retell and share the meaning of the Parable of the Forgiving Father.
- Name the steps of Reconciliation.
- Begin to learn the Act of Contrition.

Materials Needed

- *Reconciliation: Pardon and Peace* primary-level child's book
- Note paper, pencil
- Chapter 5 activity sheet, downloaded from the website

Additional Resources You Can Use

- "Psalm 103: The Lord Is Kind and Merciful" from the *Reconciliation: Pardon and Peace* music CD for use with the prayer service on page 43.
- **Sendak, Maurice.** *Where the Wild Things Are* (HarperCollins). This book describes the adventures and return of a prodigal son.
- **Wilhelm, Hans.** *Let's Be Friends Again* (Hodder & Stoughton General Division). The story of a boy who manages his anger toward his sister and wants to be friends with her again.

Family Lesson Plan

Get Started

- Open the child's book to page 37 and read together the chapter title. Prayerfully proclaim the verse from Psalm 41.
- Invite your child to describe what they see happening in the illustration.
- Have your child read aloud the poem, "The Right Words." Then discuss the questions on page 37.

Share the Scripture Story

- Read together the story “Going Home” on pages 38 and 39. Invite your child to point out the pictures on these pages that match each section of the story.
- Ask your child to imagine being the son in the story and then describe what the son felt as the story unfolds. Then do the same by discussing what the father might have been feeling at various points in the story.
- Have your child respond to the “Let’s Talk” question. Summarize by reading aloud the “Word of God.” Emphasize that we can always turn to God for guidance and help.

Explore Catholic Teaching

- Read, discuss, and complete pages 40 and 41.
- Have your child find and underline the words *contrition* and *penance*. Clarify the meaning of these words.
- Slowly read aloud “We Celebrate.” Point out that these words are part of the Rite of Reconciliation.

Complete the Activity

- Explain the directions to the activity on page 42 and have your child complete it.
- Direct attention to the “Catholic Practices” box. Remind your child when and why we celebrate Lent.
- Allow time for your child to write their note to God. The completed letter can be used as a bedtime prayer for the next week.
- Review the process for celebrating Reconciliation by helping your child complete the chapter 5 activity sheet.

Celebrate

- Introduce the Act of Contrition on page 43. Help your child begin memorizing the prayer by praying it daily. Another help in memorizing the prayer is to omit key words as you pray the prayer aloud and ask your child to supply the missing words.
- Turn to the “We Pray” section of “A Little Catechism” on page 88. Point out that the Act of Contrition is also located in this section.
- Listen to “Psalm 103: The Lord Is Kind and Merciful” from the music CD. The lyrics for the song can be found on page 92.
- Conclude by praying together the Act of Contrition.

Share the Home and Family Page

- Read, discuss, and complete page 44.
- Visit www.christjesustheway.com for online activities and articles to help prepare your child for Reconciliation. Click on the whole parish link and choose sacrament preparation.

Chapter 6 Celebrating God’s Love

Dear Parent,

In the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Penance, we express sorrow for our sins and our strong intention to sin no more. We make our confession to God through a priest and say that we will try to do what is right and good in the future. During the celebration of this Sacrament, we also listen to the words of forgiveness and encouragement spoken by the priest. We are forgiven by God and experience pardon and peace. We are reconciled with God, ourselves, and with each other.

As children learn more about the Rite of Reconciliation, they may express concern about the necessity of sharing their sins with a priest. Emphasize that anything they tell a priest is confidential. Help your child to recognize that the priest represents God’s love and care and that the priest forgives, or absolves us from, our sins in the name of God and in the name of the Church community.

Chapter Goals

After completing this lesson, your child will be able to

- Share the story of how Zacchaeus became a friend of Jesus.
- List the steps in the Rite of Reconciliation.
- Understand that in Reconciliation we are absolved from sin in the name of God and of the Church.

Materials Needed

- *Reconciliation: Pardon and Peace* primary-level child’s book
- Drawing paper
- Water color paints or markers
- Index card and pencil
- Chapter 6 activity sheet, downloaded from the website

Additional Resources You Can Use

- “Give Us Your Peace” from the *Reconciliation: Pardon and Peace* music CD for use in the prayer service on page 51.
- **Ricky’s First Reconciliation** (Twenty-Third Publications). This video shows a young boy celebrating Reconciliation with his family.

Family Lesson Plan

Get Started

- Pray the verse from Psalm 32 on page 45.
- Read the story “All Better Now.”
- Give your child time to complete an “all better” picture. Discuss different ways we can get over angry or sad feelings.

Share the Scripture Story

- Read the story “Saved” on pages 46 and 47. Use the “Let’s Talk” questions to help your child recall the details of what happened in the story of Jesus’ meeting with Zacchaeus.
- Invite your child to name specific ways they can become better friends with Jesus.
- Emphasize that this story, like the stories of the Lost Sheep and the Forgiving Father, helps us understand that Jesus came to look for and to save people who are lost, who have sinned.

Explore Catholic Teaching

- Read about and discuss each step of the Rite of Reconciliation on pages 48 and 49. Help your child understand the meaning of the words *penitent* and *absolution*.
- Role-play the Rite with your child or other family members. When it comes time to name, or confess sins, tell your child to silently think of their sins and do not say them aloud. Remind your child that the sins we confess in the Sacrament of Penance are private.
- Turn to page 77 in the “A Little Catechism” section. Have your child compare the words we use in the Penitential Rite at Mass with the words we pray during the celebration of Reconciliation.
- Summarize by reading together “This We Believe.”

Complete the Activity

- Have your child use an index card to list the steps for celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Post it in a place where it can be reviewed daily.
- Use the chapter 6 activity sheet to review the steps for celebrating Reconciliation.
- Read together “Finish the Story” on page 50. This activity will help your child consider what happens after the celebration of the sacrament and how it feels to make a fresh start.
- Read aloud the “Parish Connections” box. Refer to a parish bulletin for information of when Reconciliation is celebrated in your parish.

Celebrate

- Pray together the “Lord, Have Mercy” litany on page 51.
- Quietly listen to the song “Give Us Your Peace” from the music CD. The lyrics can be found on page 93. Remind your child that one way Jesus shows us how much he loves us is through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Conclude by praying together the Act of Contrition on page 88. Continue to help your child to memorize this prayer before the First Reconciliation celebration.

Share the Home and Family Page

- Read, discuss, and complete page 52.
- Visit www.christjesustheway.com for online activities and articles to help prepare your child for Reconciliation. Click on the whole parish link and choose sacrament preparation.

Chapter 7 Showing Love

Dear Parent,

Jesus calls all of us followers to a conversion of the heart—to realize that we need to change our lives and to turn away from what is keeping us from doing what is right. Recognizing our need for conversion is the first step toward experiencing pardon and peace.

Chapter 7 presents you with an opportunity to foster your child’s awareness of living as Jesus calls us to live. Encourage your child to make good choices, even when it is not easy; support their efforts to be generous and charitable. Urge them to practice self-control. Be an example of kindness and love for them. Help them see the consequences of their actions. Emphasize how important it is to forgive others as God forgives them.

Chapter Goals

After completing this lesson, your child will be able to

- Describe the effects of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Define *virtue* and give examples of how we can practice virtues.
- Explain the connection between being forgiven and forgiving others.

Materials Needed

- *Reconciliation: Pardon and Peace* primary-level child’s book
- Index card and markers
- Construction paper and crayons or markers
- Chapter 7 activity sheet, downloaded from the website

Additional Resources You Can Use

- “Somos el Cuerpo de Cristo/We Are the Body of Christ” from the *Reconciliation: Pardon and Peace* music CD for use in the prayer service on page 59.
- **Bitney, James.** *All Things New: A Celebration of Forgiveness* (St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1-800-488-0488 or www.AmericanCatholic.org). This book shows that Reconciliation is a celebration of conversion.
- **Zolotow, Charlotte.** *The Quarreling Book* (HarperTrophy). This book shows how anger, then happiness can be passed from person to person.

Family Lesson Plan

Get Started

- Pray together the verse from 1 John on page 53.
- Read with your child “Pass It Around” and complete the activity.
- Emphasize that God wants his love for us to be a sign of how we are love others.

Share the Scripture Story

- Read the story “Great Love” on pages 54 and 55.

- Discuss the meaning of the story using the “Let’s Talk” questions.
- Help your child recognize the powerful relationship between forgiveness and love.
- Proclaim the “Word of God” from Psalm 119. Encourage your child to always seek, or try to follow, God’s commands.

Explore Catholic Teaching

- Read “Love and Grace” on pages 56 and 57. Make sure your child understands the meaning of the words *conversion* and *virtues*.
- Complete the activity on page 57 by working with your child to create a list of virtues on a separate piece of paper. The list may include patience, kindness, love, honesty, respect, peace, caring, courtesy, gentleness, joy, thankfulness, forgiveness, and so on. Have your child choose two of the virtues and explain how they can live those virtues at home and school.
- Summarize by reading aloud “This We Believe.”
- Turn to page 80 in the “A Little Catechism” section. Review what we do in the Sign of Peace at Mass. Emphasize that this ritual is one way we share God’s love, forgiveness, and peace with others at Church before receiving Jesus in the Eucharist.

Complete the Activity

- Help your child complete “The Reconciliation Tree” activity. Possible answers might include love, forgiveness, peace, friendship, and happiness.
- Using an unlined index card, ask your child to follow the directions to make a Forgiveness Bookmark.
- Read aloud the “Catholic Practices” statement. Remind your child that they learned about mortal sin on page 25 in chapter 3. Reiterate that mortal sin is very serious and turns us away from our relationship with God.
- Reinforce the importance of forgiving others by having your child complete the chapter 7 activity sheet.

Celebrate

- Help your child make a paper heart and write on it a prayer thanking God for loving and forgiving them.
- Pray the “A New Heart” litany on page 59.
- Invite your child to read aloud their original prayer.
- Conclude your prayer experience by listening to “Somos el Cuerpo de Cristo/We Are the Body of Christ” from the Reconciliation CD. The lyrics are found on page 95.

Share the Home and Family Page

- Read, discuss, and complete page 60.
- Visit www.christjesustheway.com for online activities and articles to help prepare your child for Reconciliation. Click on the whole parish link and choose sacrament preparation.

Chapter 8

Living Reconciliation

Dear Parent,

Chapter 8 is designed to be presented after the children have celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time. The purpose of this chapter is to help the children reflect on their experiences of celebrating the Sacrament and to recall the different parts of the Rite. This process is called “mystagogy.” It is an opportunity for children to grow in their understanding of God’s presence in our lives through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

As you work through this session with your child, encourage them to talk freely about what they felt as they celebrated Reconciliation. Share with them your feelings about helping them prepare for the Sacrament and what you felt and experienced on the day of the celebration.

In the months and years ahead, take advantage of family Reconciliation opportunities in the parish. Help your child appreciate that we can always seek God’s love and forgiveness in this Sacrament of love and healing.

Chapter Goals

After completing this lesson, your child will be able to

- Identify the main parts of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Explain what happens in each part of the Rite of Reconciliation.
- Recognize that through Reconciliation we experience a new beginning and grow closer to Jesus.

Materials Needed

- *Reconciliation: Pardon and Peace* primary-level child’s book
- Drawing paper and writing paper
- crayons or markers
- a Bible

Additional Resources You Can Use

- “Go Make a Difference” from the *Reconciliation: Pardon and Peace* Music CD for use with the prayer service on page 67.
- Instrumental music for the guided meditation.

Family Lesson Plan

Get Started

- Pray together the Scripture verse from Luke on page 61.
- Read “Forgiveness” to help your child understand the purpose of this session.
- Invite your child to complete the sentences on page 61. Page through the book together to recall the Bible stories of forgiveness you’ve read.

Recall the Experience of Celebrating Reconciliation

- Read together “We Remember” and “Word of God” on page 62. Remind your child that the Sacrament of Reconciliation is a community celebration, involving family and the parish.
- Pages 63 and 65 are designed to be used as a guided meditation for you and your child to share together. If possible, play soft instrumental music as a background during the experience. Have both drawing paper and writing paper on hand for your child to use to respond creatively to the reflection questions.
- Move slowly through each element of the Rite. Pause after reading the questions in each section to allow your child time to think and respond.

Understand Our Mission

- Read with your child “A New Beginning” on page 66.
- As you discuss the questions on this page, help your child recognize that through the Sacrament of Reconciliation we are called to carry on Jesus’ healing mission in the world.
- Have your child name at least one concrete way they will live differently because of receiving Jesus’ forgiveness. Possible responses may include: being a kinder person, forgiving others, trying to be a peacemaker, and so forth.

Celebrate

- Pray together “Doing the Work of Jesus” on page 67.
- Use the Bible to proclaim the reading from 2 Corinthians 5:17–21.
- Invite your child to respond to the “Reflection” question. Affirm your child’s ideas for being an ambassador for Christ.
- Read together the prayer at the bottom of page 67. Sing “Go Make a Difference” from the music CD. The lyrics are found on page 94.
- Conclude by signing your child’s forehead with the Sign of the Cross, inviting them to carry on Jesus’ healing work at home, in the neighborhood, and at school.

Share the Home and Family Page

- Read, discuss, and complete page 68.
- Visit www.christjesustheway.com for online activities and articles to help prepare your child for Reconciliation. Click on the whole parish link and choose sacrament preparation.