

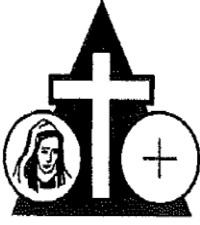
St. Mary & St. John the Baptist



First Reconciliation

RECONCILIATION PARENT MEETING

1. Opening prayer – Read Luke 15: 11-24
2. Introductions
3. Welcome - Please check the information on the Candidate sheet being passed around.
4. Father Paul to say a few words.
5. Explain the Reconciliation Vest – Compare to the Prodigal Son story (Opening prayer)
6. Baptismal certificates if not baptized at St. Mary or St. John the Baptist
Please get me a copy of your Baptismal certificate as soon as possible. This information is needed before any sacraments can be received by any candidate.
7. Please hand in the form that was attached to the letter that you received.
Don't have it...I have some here.
8. Sacramental Fees – There is a \$30.00 Sacramental fee for First Reconciliation and also a \$30.00 fee for First Communion. This fee is for both the Faith Formation program and the Grade School.
9. Reconciliation Pamphlet
 - a. Letter from Father Paider
 - b. Two types of sin
 - c. An examination of conscience
 - d. Six steps of reconciliation
 - e. How to receive the sacrament of reconciliation
 - f. Traditional prayers, Beatitudes, the Ten Commandments, etc...
 - g. Instructions for the vest
 - h. Special dates calendar Last page
- 10. First Reconciliation Important dates (check current calendar for exact dates)**
 - Parent/Candidate “**Church Search**” at St. Mary church on Wednesday night at 6:05 pm in October.
 - **Rite of Acceptance** for First Reconciliation and First Communion at the 9 am Mass at St. John's (for all candidates) in October.
 - **Reconciliation Retreat** – Saturday in November at the St. Mary Grade School Cafeteria from 9 am until noon.
 - **First Reconciliation** is on Wednesday evening in early December at St. Mary Church at 6 pm and is open to all parish members.
11. I have the **CD by Father Larry Richards on Confession**. Please, listen to it.
12. Faith Formation parents are you working on your “Reconciliation” Books?
13. Questions?
14. Closing Prayer - “A Call to Reconciliation”



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Two Parishes – One Faith

Dear Parents,

The Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us:

“Christ instituted the sacraments of the new law. There are seven: Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Penance, (Reconciliation), the Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders and Matrimony. The seven sacraments touch all the stages and all the important moments of Christian life: they give birth and increase, healing and mission to the Christian’s life of faith.” (CCC#1210)

This year with joy, your child will be preparing for another important Sacrament on their faith journey; the Sacrament of Penance or Reconciliation. This is much more than just a “prelude” to First Holy Communion, but is an invitation to recognize and acknowledge our human sinfulness and the reality of the tremendous mercy of God embracing us within this Sacrament.

On the day of our baptism, as St. Paul reminds us, we, “Put on Christ.” (Galatians 3:27). Because of the sin of our first parents, (original sin), human nature is weak and is prone to sin. This inclination to sin is what Mother Church has traditionally referred to as concupiscence. On our journey of faith, the Sacrament of Penance or Reconciliation is an intimate encounter with the Risen Christ present to us through the priest confessor. As Catholics, we confess our sins to a priest because his presence in the sacramental setting is two-fold. First, he represents the community of faith, the Church. When we sin we affect the harmony and unity of the community. Secondly, by virtue of his ordination, the priest represents Christ Himself. He literally acts “in persona Christi,” in the very person of Jesus Christ. So it is Christ Himself who forgives us when we receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Our Lord instituted this Easter Sacrament to assist us in growing in holiness and as a means of shepherding us to our ultimate goal of Eternal Life.

Within the Christian family, husband and wife know the importance of forgiveness and asking for forgiveness. It is also within the family setting that children learn the importance of acknowledging transgressions and seeking forgiveness and reconciliation with trust and confidence.

It is my hope and prayer for your family, that as you journey with your child in preparing for this wondrous Sacrament of Divine Mercy, you will have a renewed appreciation of Christ’s compassion reaching out to us within the Sacrament of Penance or Reconciliation; Christ himself reconciling our relationships with one another and our relationship to His Eternal Father.

In Christ,

Rev. Paul J. Paider



Types of Sin

A. **Venial Sin** – is a small sin. It weakens your relationship with God.

To have this sin forgiven you can

1. Go to Reconciliation (Confession)
2. Talk to God and say “I am sorry”
3. Go to Mass and say the “Lord have Mercy”
4. Go to Communion.

B. **Mortal Sin** – is a serious sin. It cuts off your friendship with God.

You **MUST** go to Reconciliation to have your sin forgiven.

1. For a sin to be a Mortal sin it must be serious.
2. You must **know** the sin is serious.
3. And you must choose to commit the sin anyway.



Mortal versus Venial Sin

A serious, grave or mortal sin is the knowing and willful violation of God's law in a serious matter, for example, idolatry, adultery, murder, slander. These are all things gravely contrary to the love we owe God and, because of Him, our neighbor. As Jesus taught, when condemning even looking at a woman lustfully, sin can be both interior (choices of the will alone) or exterior (choices of the will carried into action). A man who willfully desires to steal, murder or some other grave sin, has already seriously offended God by choosing interiorly what God has prohibited.

Mortal sin is called mortal because it is the "spiritual" death of the soul (separation from God). If we are in the state of grace it loses this supernatural life for us. If we die without repenting we will lose Him for eternity. However, by turning our hearts back to Him and receiving the Sacrament of Penance we are restored to His friendship. Catholics are not allowed to receive Communion if they have unconfessed mortal sins.

Venial sins are slight sins. They do not break our friendship with God, although they injure it. They involve disobedience of the law of God in slight (venial) matters. If we gossip and destroy a person's reputation it would be a mortal sin. However, normally gossip is about trivial matters and only venially sinful. Additionally, something that is otherwise a mortal sin (e.g. slander) may be in a particular case only a venial sin. The person may have acted without reflection or under force of habit. Thus, not fully intending the action their guilt before God is reduced. It is always good to remember, especially those who are trying to be faithful but sometimes fall, that for mortal sin it must not only be 1) serious matter, but 2) the person must know it is serious and then 3) freely commit it.

These two categories of sin are explicitly to be found in Sacred Scripture. In the Old Covenant there were sins that merited the death penalty and sins that could be expiated by an offering. This Law was a teacher that prepared the way for the faith (Gal. 3:24). In the New Covenant these material categories are replaced by spiritual ones, natural death by eternal death. There are thus daily faults for which we must daily ask forgiveness (Mt. 6:12), for even the "just man falls seven times a day" (Prov. 24:16), and mortal faults that separate the sinner from God (1 Cor. 6:9-10) for all eternity.

Answered by Colin B. Donovan, STL



EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

1. I am the Lord your God. You shall have no other gods before me.
Do I pray every day?
Do I put my trust in superstitions, good luck charms, rather than in God alone?
Do I worship only God?
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
Have I used the words “God” or “Jesus” to someone because I was mad?
Have I used bad words?
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord’s Day.
Have I missed Mass on Sunday when I wasn’t sick?
Do I pay attention during Mass?
Do I make it hard for others to hear or pay attention?
Do I avoid unnecessary work on Sunday?
Do I make Sunday a day of prayer and rest?
4. Honor your father and mother.
Do I obey my parents?
Have I mistreated them by what I said or what I did?
5. You shall not kill.
Do I hit others or hurt their bodies?
Do I try to get along with my brothers and sisters?
Do I say mean things, or make fun of others to hurt their feelings?
Do I say mean things about others behind their backs?
Have I stopped speaking to anyone?
Do I encourage others to do bad things?
Have I wished bad things to happen to anyone?
6. You shall not commit adultery.
Do I treat my body and other people’s bodies with respect?
Do I look at television shows, movies or pictures that are bad?
Am I modest in the clothes I wear and in what I say?
7. You shall not steal.
Have I taken things that are not mine from a store, school, home, or another person?
Have I ruined another person’s property on purpose, for fun?
Do I return things that I borrow? In good condition?
8. You shall not lie.

Am I honest in my schoolwork?
Do I cheat or copy other people's work?
Do I tell lies to make myself look good?
Do I tell lies to protect myself from punishment?
Do I tell lies that make another person look bad or get them in trouble?

9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

Do I allow my parents to spend time with one another, or do I get jealous and want them to pay attention only to me?

Do I get mad when I have to share my friends?

Are there kids I will not play with or be mean to because they look different?

10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

Am I jealous or envious of the things my friends have?

Am I jealous because my friends can play sports better than I can?

Am I thankful to God and my parents for what they have given me?

Do I share the things I have with my family, friends and poor people?

THE SIX STEPS OF RECONCILIATION:

1. **PRAY TO THE HOLY SPIRIT:** Which means to ask God to help you make a good confession.
2. **EXAMINE YOUR CONSCIENCE:** Which means to think about your actions to see which of them are sins.
3. **CONFESS YOUR SINS TO THE PRIEST:** Which means to honestly talk to the priest about your sins.
4. **ACCEPT A PENANCE:** Which means that you are promising to do a particular action that will help you be a better person,
5. **SAY AN ACT OF CONTRITION:** Which means to say a special prayer that means "I am truly sorry. I want to be better."
6. **RECEIVE ABSOLUTION:** Which means that Jesus forgives me from all my sins.

HOW TO RECEIVE THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

1. Students should pray to the Holy Spirit and think about what they have done wrong. Think about the TEN COMMANDMENTS, BEATITUDES, and THE LAWS OF THE CHURCH, to determine what areas they need to work on because of falling into a bad habit.
2. Enter the Reconciliation room, or designated area. The priest will greet you.
3. The student (penitent) begins with the Sign of the Cross, and saying, “Bless me Father, for I have sinned. My last confession was ___? ___” or “Bless me Father, for I have sinned. This is my first confession.”
4. Confess your sins. Tell the priest about how often you committed that sin: for example “I lied to my mother about 6 times.” This helps the priest to know if you have fallen into a bad habit.
5. After you are done confessing your sins, please tell the priest, “That’s all Father”. This lets the priest know that you are finished confessing your sins.
6. The priest will offer you words of advice and encouragement after you are done confessing your sins.
7. Then he’ll give you a penance, which is to make up for what you have done wrong. Penance can be some form of prayer (like the Our Father or Hail Mary), or to do some good action (Father will tell you what to do).
8. The priest will tell you to say the Act of Contrition (Sorrow). Please say it out loud.
9. The priest will say the words of absolution in the name of Christ. When he makes the sign of the cross over you, make the sign of the cross too.
10. The priest will dismiss you with a prayer of final words. Please respond with “Thank you Father” or “God bless you, Father”.
11. You then leave the Reconciliation room, and go to your pew and say your penance the priest gave you.

***Please know that if you get messed up it is **ok**. You might forget what you wanted to say, or even forget the steps. The priests will help you through it. He even helps adults through it!

COMMON CATHOLIC PRAYERS

The Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer (OUR FATHER)

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name;
Thy kingdom come;
Thy will be done on earth as it is in
Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against
us; and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of Grace, the Lord is
with thee. Blessed art thou among
women, and blessed is the fruit of thy
womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of
God, pray for us sinners, now and at the
hour of our death. Amen.

An Act of Contrition

Father, I am sorry, for all my sins.
I am sorry for the wrong things I have
done. I am sorry for the good things
I have failed to do. I will try to do
better. Help me to love others. Amen.

Glory Be

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the
beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

The Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus
Christ, His only Son, our Lord: Who was
conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the
Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius
Pilate, was crucified, died and was
buried. He descended into hell; the third
day He rose again from the dead; He
ascended into heaven, is seated at the
right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence He shall come to judge the
living and the dead. I believe in the Holy
Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the
communion of Saints, the forgiveness of
sins, the resurrection of the body, and
life everlasting. Amen.

Grace before Meals

Bless us, O Lord, and these Thy gifts,
which we are about to receive, from Thy
bounty; through Christ Our Lord. Amen

Grace before Meals

We give you thanks almighty God,
for all the benefits, we have received,
through Christ our Lord. Amen

Guardian Angel Prayer

Angel of God, my Guardian dear. To
whom God's love, commits me here.
Ever this day, be at my side, To light, to
guard, To rule, and guide. Amen.

Bedtime Prayer

Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray the
Lord, my soul to keep. Guard me safely
through this night. Wake me with the
morning light. God bless...*(Mom, Dad,
John, etc..)*. Amen.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR RECONCILIATION VEST

Each of you will be receiving a purple reconciliation vest for your child to decorate for their First Reconciliation. The idea is based on the story of the prodigal son that left home and squandered the money his father had given him. Then his father gave him the beautiful robe when he returned; just as you will put the vest on your child when he/she returns from their First Reconciliation.

This is meant to be a “family project”. Please try to do this together. Please make sure that your child helps with the design, items that will be used, etc.

You can use whatever you wish to decorate the vest. Some ideas would be buttons, fabric paints, felt fabric, sequins and/or embroidery. It is completely up to you as a family what you will do. Be creative!

The front of the vest should be designed with the sacrament kept in mind, like the cross, praying hands, hearts, sheep, tear drop, bible, etc.

The back of the vest can be done with more of the individual’s likes, hobbies, name, etc.

You may send your vest to school, or faith formation class as soon as you have completed it.

If you have any questions concerning the vest or anything else, please feel free to call the Faith Formation Office at 725-7714, email Joanne or contact your teacher.

God’s blessings to you,

Joanne Vanness

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