

## February LIFT 2019-20

### Level 1-3 Home Assignment

**Directions:** Work with your child through the take home assignment. It isn't a writing assignment but an opportunity to experience together what we discussed at LIFT. Jot down notes about the things you talk about and email me a summary to [dremaley@holyeucharist.org](mailto:dremaley@holyeucharist.org).

**Theme:** The Sacrament of Reconciliation

- Objectives:**
1. Be able to retell the story of the prodigal son and connect it to the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
  2. Consider how we can reach out to people in our lives who are excluded or alienated by sin.
  3. Describe the Sacrament of Reconciliation and how it effects us.
  4. Recall the Sign of the Cross, the Our Father prayer and the Hail Mary.
  5. Recall the definition of a sacrament: God gives us grace through physical signs and symbols called the Sacraments.

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### Activities

#### Liturgical Calendar Connection

Questions to consider: Explain that the church uses different colors to show what church (liturgical) time of year we are in. What color is connected to Ordinary Time? (green) Remember, ordinary usually means "regular" or "plain" but the way that we are using it here means "order" as in the order of counted weeks.

Here is another question...what liturgical season is coming next? Hint we will be preparing for Easter. (Lent).

#### Quick Review of Sacraments

All this year we will be working our way through the sacraments.

What are the Sacraments of Initiation? [Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist]

What are the Sacraments of Healing? [Anointing of the Sick, Reconciliation]

Sacraments of Vocation? [Marriage and Holy Orders]

Are the sacraments just a symbol or a sign? No! God gives us grace through physical signs and symbols called the Sacraments. We are actually changed when we receive each one of the sacraments.

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## **Sacraments of Healing**

Last month we discussed the Sacrament of the Sick. This month we are going to discuss another Sacrament of Healing...the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The Sacrament of the Sick heals our bodies and gives us spiritual strength to handle our illnesses while the Sacrament of Reconciliation heals us from the separation we experience from God, others and ourselves when we sin.

### **Why do we need the Sacrament of Reconciliation?**

- Think about a time when you made a wrong choice (committed a sin). [Let this question hang out there and let them recall an experience. Then begin with sharing a story from your own childhood. This topic cuts close to the bone so they might not open up and share on this topic.] Talk about your own experience as a child. Explain how you felt in your heart. Did you hurt someone else by this choice? How did you make things right again?
- When we sin, we hurt other people and God by our choices. There are consequences for our actions. Maybe someone is mad or sad or physically hurt. What can we do to make this right? [ask for forgiveness] To take responsibility for our actions and make things right with others and God, we ask for forgiveness; sometimes, we have to forgive ourselves too.
- What do you need to do when you ask someone for forgiveness? When we ask for forgiveness, three elements are important: (1) I'm sorry; (2) Please forgive me; (3) I won't do it again. If anyone of these elements is missing from asking forgiveness, it doesn't feel like a true apology.
- Jesus gives us, through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, an amazing opportunity to receive forgiveness for hurting ourselves, others, and God. Jesus is a merciful God who will always forgive our sins when we ask for forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation because His love for us is greater than all sin.

Our God is a God of deep love and unending mercy. He desires that not one of us be lost or far from Him. Through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, He continually reaches out to us with His arms of pardon and peace. Nothing we can confess is unforgivable or beyond His mercy.

Let's look at a story of forgiveness:

### **The Storybook Bible "Running Away"**

- How do you think that father felt when his son asked to have his inheritance before his father died? This would have been a grave insult at the time. [sad, hurt, worried]
  - Did the son care about how his father felt? How can you tell?
  - How would you describe the state of the father and son's relationship? [broken, hurt]
  - How did the son feel after he had squandered (wasted) his inheritance and was poor and suffering? [sorry, servants are better off than he]
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- How do you think the father in the story felt after the son returned and asked for his forgiveness? [overjoyed] What is another way that the father could have reacted? Why?
  - How do you think the son felt after his father not only accepted his apology, but also threw him a magnificent banquet?
  - How would you now describe the relationship between the father and the son now? [healed, maybe stronger]
  - Jesus tells parables-earthly stories with heavenly meanings-to help us understand things. Who does the son represent in the story? Who does the father represent in the story? If the father in the story represents God, what does this tell us about God and forgiveness? [Just as the father in the story longed for the return of his son, was filled with joy at his return, and forgave his son, God the Father longs for us, is joyful when we return and always forgives us – no matter what our offense against him. We need only to come to Him with a contrite heart (sorry for what we have done) and ask for His forgiveness. Note: the father doesn't treat the son as he deserves to be treated; he treats him with love and mercy.]

### **The Sacrament of God's Forgiveness**

Handout the worksheet and give them time to color it as you talk about the following ideas:

- The Sacrament of Reconciliation consists of two essential elements:
  - The action of the person seeking the sacrament
  - The action of God through the priest
- This is what we do...Three actions of the penitent:
  - Contrition (sorrow for our sins)
  - Confession of sin (telling what we did wrong)
  - Satisfaction (penance-doing the action the priest recommends to make things right)
- This is what God does...Three actions of God through the minister of the Church (priest):
  - Absolutions of our sins (forgiveness for sins)
  - Determination of penance (what the penitent will do to make things right)
  - Prayer for the sinner

Ask you group who has received the Sacrament of Reconciliation. [Most Level 2 kids received it this Advent. Level 1 will begin preparation next year and most Level 3 kids haven't received it since their First Reconciliation.] Ask them to share their experiences of the sacrament.

### **Steps to a Good Confession**

Hand out the worksheet packet with the Personal Examination of Conscience and the Steps to a Good Confession. Read through the steps and model for them what it looks like. Let them consider what obstacles are in their way to receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Also, let them know that if they don't remember the Act of Contrition. No worries. They can bring a card with the prayer on it into the confessional or they can say their own from the heart. It just needs to say:

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- I'm sorry
  - Please forgive me
  - With your help, I will try to do better

**“You Forgive Me”**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LO-2fm7IKcU>

**Closing Prayer**

End with the Sign of the Cross and the Our Father and Hail Mary prayers. Cards will be in the room for you to use. Please leave them for the next group.

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