

## February LIFT 2019-20 Level 6-8 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 sacraments just a symbol or a sign? No! Remember: God gives us grace through physical signs and symbols called the Sacraments. We are actually changed when we receive each one of the sacraments.

#### 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

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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:

### **Read the story of the Prodigal Son, Luke 15:11-32**

11 And he said, "There was a man who had two sons. 12 And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.' And he divided his property between them. 13 Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. 14 And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to[a] one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. 16 And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything.

17 "But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! 18 I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants."' 20 And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. 21 And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'[b] 22 But the father said to his servants,[c] 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. 23 And bring the fattened calf

and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. 24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to celebrate.

25 “Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. 27 And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.’ 28 But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, 29 but he answered his father, ‘Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. 30 But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!’ 31 And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. 32 It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.’”

### Questions to consider:

- 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.
- 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?
- How did the son feel after he had squandered (wasted) his inheritance and was poor and suffering?
- How do you think the father in the story felt after the son returned and asked for his forgiveness? 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?
- 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 in the story didn’t give the son what he deserved...he showed him mercy and love.]

### Jesus Welcomes Sinners Who Ask For Forgiveness

At the time of Jesus, Jewish laws were strong and clear about sin. Sin meant being unclean as well as being separated from the community. In contrast to these purity laws, Jesus showed loving kindness for sinners and love for those who asked for forgiveness.

Use the handout

Break the kids into four groups and have each one look up one Bible verse. Have them read it and explain how the scripture shows Jesus as a role model for us.

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Luke 15: 1-2

Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. <sup>2</sup> And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

Mark 2:13-17

<sup>13</sup> He went out again beside the sea, and all the crowd was coming to him, and he was teaching them. <sup>14</sup> And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he rose and followed him.

<sup>15</sup> And as he reclined at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners were reclining with Jesus and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. <sup>16</sup> And the scribes of <sup>[a]</sup> the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, said to his disciples, "Why does he eat <sup>[b]</sup> with tax collectors and sinners?" <sup>17</sup> And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."

Luke 19: 5-10

And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today." <sup>6</sup> So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully. <sup>7</sup> And when they saw it, they all grumbled, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." <sup>8</sup> And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold." <sup>9</sup> And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. <sup>10</sup> For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

Luke 17:3-4

<sup>3</sup> Pay attention to yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him, <sup>4</sup> and if he sins against you seven times in the day, and turns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' you must forgive him."

Have them individually reflect on how Jesus reintegrated sinners into the community of the People of God. Then have them consider how they can do the same in their home, school, sport community.

### **Sophia Stetchpad: Confession**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CDyMHg8HkSE>

This video talks about receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

### **Effects of Sacrament of Reconciliation**

- The relationship with God is restored and strength is given to sin no more
  - The dignity of the individual and blessings given to the adopted sons and daughters of God is restored
  - The individual gains an intimate friendship with God and reconciled with the Church, repairing and restoring relationships with others
  - Sacrament of Reconciliation reconciles the individual with himself and enables him to regain his true identity as a child loved by God
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## **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:

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

## **Father Mike Schmitz Video “Why Confess My Sins to a Priest?”**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xtvjmsPmVpw>

This is another great video on the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Gets at some of the reasons why people don't use the Sacrament of Reconciliation so it will provide lots of opportunities for conversation.

## **The Veil Removed**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OOLZDaTglaM&t=24s>

This is a short 5 minute film that shows how during Mass, Heaven and earth are united. A really beautiful reflection on the Eucharist as God bending down to us.

## **Closing Prayer**

End with the Sign of the Cross and the Our Father and Hail Mary prayers.

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