

HOLY NAME FAITH FORMATION

GRADE 2 ~ 2017-2018

FIRST PENANCE/RECONCILIATION

Tuesday, January 30, 2018

7:00 p.m. Holy Name Church



PREPARING YOUR CHILD TO CELEBRATE RECONCILIATION

At the Second Vatican Council, the Church taught that the family is the “domestic church” and, indeed, that parents “by word and example, (are) the first heralds of the faith with regard to their children.” (Lumen Gentium, 11). Taking an active part in your child’s spiritual formation is your **right** and your **dignity** as Christian parents. In the preparation process in this parish, we respect and abide by this reality. In the journey toward the reception of the Sacrament of Penance you will be the primary “herald” to your children of God’s forgiving and reconciling love. The Faith Formation Program and parish community will lead and assist you in the process.

WE MAKE A COMMITMENT TO:

- Provide for you, and guide you through, a program which will prepare your child to understand and celebrate the Sacrament of Penance.
- Provide you with the support you need to enrich your faith life as a family.
- Pray as a parish community for you and your children.

WE ASK THAT YOU MAKE A COMMITMENT TO:

- Attend a parent meeting at which we will reflect with you about the meaning of the Sacrament of Penance.
- Prepare your child to participate in the sacrament using the information provided.
- Bring your child to class every week.
- **Attend Mass regularly.**
- Make every attempt to practice reconciliation and forgiveness in your home.

Holy Name Mass Schedule

Saturday: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday: 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m.
12:00 noon

Individual Sacrament of Penance/Reconciliation Times:

Saturday: 3:00 p.m., and by appointment

I. Is Your Child Ready for the Sacrament of Penance?

Readiness for the Sacrament of Penance is not linked solely to age or grade. The Church judges that it is not until about the age of seven years that a child is likely to possess the moral reasoning ability to participate in the Sacrament of Penance with adequate comprehension. However, each child matures differently and some need more time than others. You, as a parent, are the best person to judge your child's readiness. The following questions may provide some guidance in making this determination:

- Does your child understand that there is a God who loves him/her unconditionally and wants to be in relationship with him/her?
- Are they aware that they need to "work on" this relationship? (prayer, attending Mass regularly, being actively involved in acts of mercy/service to others)
- Do they believe that God's love for them will never cease, even if they fail to do loving things?
- Do they understand the difference between a sin and a mistake (that sin involves knowing that an action is hurtful or wrong and choosing to do it anyway?)
- Are they able to forgive others when they have been hurt?
- Have they experienced love and forgiveness in the family?
- Do they feel truly sorry when they know that they have hurt someone?
- Do they apologize not because of fear of punishment but because they feel sorrow for their actions?
- Do they show positive signs of being an agent of reconciliation – helping heal divisions at home, among friends, in their family?
- Do they understand the difference between loving and unloving choices?

II. Suggestions for Preparing Your Child to Celebrate First Penance

Listed below are some additional things that you can do at home to enrich the preparation process:

- Read stories from the Bible about forgiveness and reconciliation to your child. Bedtime is a good time to do this. You may want to purchase a children's Bible so that the language is more accessible for your child. The following are some particularly good Bible stories and passages:
 - The Story of Zacchaeus: Luke 19: 1-10
 - The Prodigal Son: Luke 15: 11-32
 - The Lost Sheep: Luke 15: 3-7 or Matthew 18: 10-16
 - The Lost Coin: Luke 15: 8-10
 - The Great Commandment: Mark 12: 28-31

- Do some Christian service together. Talk about how we are all responsible for the healing and reconciling work of building the Kingdom of God.
- Develop strategies for “discipline” in your family that reflect an understanding that people grow through love and not punishment. Praise the good behavior more than you condemn bad behavior. Challenge your children to be the best they can be.
- Explain the reason “why” something is wrong rather than simply telling your child not to do it. Talk about the consequences of unloving acts.
- Say “I am sorry” to your children. The best way to teach children about conversion and reconciliation is to model it in our own families.
- Do a family examination of conscience together. Ask questions like: How does our family show love to one another? To others at school and in our work place? What does our family do to help make a positive difference in the world? How do we give God an important place in our family life?
- Go to Mass together on a weekly basis. Celebrating all that God has gifted us with, as a community, through the Liturgy of the Word, and the Liturgy of the Eucharist, will help to deepen your faith life and your child’s faith life.
- Practice praying the Act of Contrition together:
“My God, I am sorry for my sins, with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior, Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In His name, my God, have mercy. Amen.”
- *In addition to attending Mass on a weekly basis, another important way you can help your child appreciate his/her call to reconciliation is to deepen your own appreciation of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. If you have not been able to participate in this sacrament, or if you have not been closely involved in the Holy Name Parish Family life, for whatever reason, this is the perfect opportunity to re-establish your connection and to renew your own faith commitment. There is usually a communal celebration of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent. The sacrament is also celebrated very Saturday beginning at 3:00 p.m., or by an appointment.*

Finally, we want you to know that we are aware that family life is busy and overwhelming at times. We know that being faithful to a process such as this may not always be easy. We assure you, however, that your child will remember these family times together more vividly than any formal class instruction and your family will grow in a deeper understanding of their faith.

The following is an Examination of Conscience that you might find helpful:

~ Examination of Conscience ~

1. Make the Sign of the Cross.
2. Pray the "Our Father"
3. Pray to the Holy Spirit: "Lord please help me to recognize the sins I have committed, to sin nor more, and to make a good confession."
4. Examine my life based on the 10 Commandments:

With God's Family:

- Do I always pray or talk with God?
- Do I say God's name with love and respect?
- Do I go to Mass on Sunday and on other Holy Days of Obligation?
- Do I obey and believe in God?

With My Little Family:

- Did I love and help my parents?
- Did I talk nicely to my grandparents, parents, brothers and sisters?
- Did I tell the truth?
- Did I do what my parents asked me to do?

With My Big Family:

- Did I obey my teacher?
 - Did I love and help my friends and others?
 - Did I always talk nicely about my friends and others?
 - Did I fight with others?
 - Did I steal or tell someone else to steal?
 - Did I ever cheat on tests or schoolwork?
 - Did I hate anyone?
 - Did I refuse to forgive others?
5. I admit my sins.
 6. I am very sorry and promise not to sin again.
 7. I say sorry to God and everyone.
 8. I go to the priest and make my confession.
 9. I do my penance.
 10. I thank God.