



## Generations of Faith at Home

Sacraments: Celebrating the True *Presents* of Jesus  
A Study of the Seven Sacraments of the Church

### WELCOME to Generations of Faith at Home

*Recent documents from the U. S. Bishops challenge all members of the Catholic Church to embrace the practice of lifelong learning of the faith. At every age, there is something to be learned and experienced on an individual's journey of faith. Generations of Faith offers a unique experience for all members of our faith community to learn and grow together in relationship with Jesus and His Church. Our focus for our 4<sup>th</sup> season of Generations of Faith is on the Seven Sacraments. For each session this bulletin and the home kit materials will provide information to support the monthly theme and ideas to continue to enrich your faith life at home.*



#### JOIN US For This Event— A Parish Wide Advent Reconciliation Prayer Service

This month we are studying about the wonderful gift from Jesus, **the Sacrament of Reconciliation**, where we experience His real presence through the words of forgiveness that come through the mouth of the priest confessor. Our sins are erased, and the relationship that we seek with our loving God is restored to fullness.

The Preparation session is readying us to celebrate the Sacrament as part of a Parish wide Advent Reconciliation Prayer Service on Sunday afternoon the 9<sup>th</sup> of December at 2pm in the church. Eleven priests will be available to hear confessions following the service.

*All ages* are encouraged to participate in the Prayer Service, although only children in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade First Communion class, and adults and children who have already made their 1<sup>st</sup> confession can participate in individual confession.

Advent is a time of preparation for the coming of Jesus at Christmas. Won't you consider preparing yourself spiritually for the birth of the Lord? Please plan to join our Church family as we all seek forgiveness. †

#### The Sacrament of RECONCILIATION

This sacrament of forgiveness is all about relationship. God has created us to be in relationship with Him. When we make choices

that are contrary to love, the friendship that God seeks to have with us slowly erodes. St. Ignatius Loyola said, "God created me out of love, and my salvation is found in my living out a return of that love. All my choices then must be consistent with this given direction in my life."

When we recognize that by our poor choices Jesus is not being given priority in our life, we are being blessed by the grace to seek to restore our relationship with Him. Jesus Christ made that possible through His saving act on the cross. He also saw to it that His disciples and future priests were given His authority to remove sin in His name. That wonderful gift is called the Sacrament of Reconciliation. †

## How to NURTURE Forgiveness and Reconciliation in Your Family

- ▶ Be patient—send up a prayer for patience if you are about to lose your temper.
- ▶ Accept an apology without saying, “I told you so.”
- ▶ Say “I’m sorry” when you are wrong.
- ▶ Celebrate acts of forgiveness with a hug, a special treat, etc.
- ▶ Bake a forgiveness treat and put a candy heart in the center.
- ▶ Invite a friend who has been unkind to come to your house.
- ▶ Talk about your feelings: your own and your child’s.
- ▶ Hold a family pow-wow to talk about grievances and ways to work them out.

*“Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, just as God has forgiven you in Christ.” Ephesians 4:32 †*

### Apologize: try this 4 step method

1. Acknowledge and take responsibility for the bad behavior.
2. Express your sorrow or remorse.
3. Make an effort to repair the damage as much as possible.
4. Assure the person that it won’t happen again.

~From

*“Apologize Your Way to Better Health”  
Catholic Digest, January 2007*

Even now, says the Lord, return to me with your whole heart, with fasting, and weeping, and mourning; Rend your hearts, not your garments, and return to the LORD, your God. For gracious and merciful is (God), slow to anger, rich in kindness, and relenting in punishment.

~Joel 2:12-13



## STUDYING the Sacraments using the *U.S. Catechism for Adults*

For this study we will be using Chapter 18 “The Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation: God is rich in Mercy.” Pp. 233-247.

Read the story of Augustine. What does his story tell us about reconciliation? Are there any parallels in your life story?

From your reading, answer the following questions:

- Has your understanding of the sacrament changed? In what way?
- How has the sacrament as it is practiced today different from your past experience?
- What does this sacrament have to do with our relationship with God? With the Church?
- How would you explain the sacrament to people of other faiths?
- Why do you think that people need to have the burden of sin and guilt lifted from their hearts?
- How can Scripture help us to discern the reality of sin in the world? †

## SCRIPTURE and Sacraments

The following are scriptural references that support the study of the Sacrament of Reconciliation:

**Our Father**  
Matthew 6:12

**Peter’s Authority**  
Matthew 16:19

**Need to Repent**  
Mark 1:15

**Jesus’ Call to Sinners**  
Mark 2:17

**Disciple’s Authority**  
John 20:21-23

**Ministry of Reconciliation**  
2 Corinthians 5:18-19

**Need to confess sin**  
1 John 1:8-9

### A Prayer for Forgiveness

For the times I lacked compassion and concern for others, forgive me Lord.

For not sharing my resources of time talent and treasure, forgive me Lord.

For holding grudges and refusing to have a forgiving heart, forgive me Lord.

For failing to see your face in the homeless and helpless, forgive me Lord.

For believing that I could save myself, forgive me Lord.

For not living fully for you, forgive me Lord.

For doubting that you can and will forgive me unconditionally, forgive me Lord.

For doubting that You love me with an everlasting love, forgive me Lord.

~Adapted from  
*Prayers for Every Time in a Woman’s Life*