

# SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Celebrating well



SESSION 2 for PARENTS

# Gathering Once More



As we begin this session take time to share with the person beside what stays with you from the previous parents session?

What was helpful for you?

What would you like to hear more about?

## PRAYER TOGETHER:

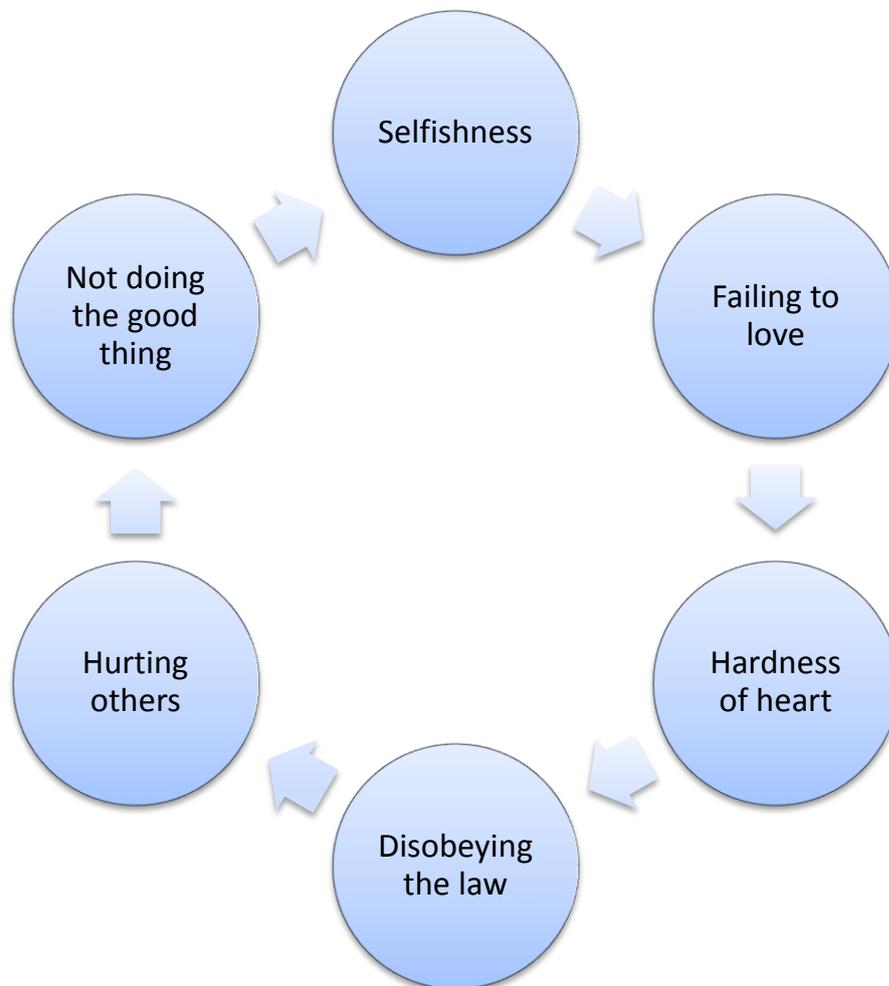
Loving God help us to teach our children  
that you love us totally and unconditionally.  
Help us to encourage our children to grow in love  
and to learn how to say sorry  
knowing that you always forgive.  
Give us the courage to pray with our children  
and to share our faith with them  
as we journey together.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. AMEN



## THE S WORD - Sin in our lives?

As you help your child to prepare for their first celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation how will you talk to them about the reality of sin in our lives and in our world?

WHICH OF THESE DESCRIPTIONS BEST ECHOES YOUR UNDERSTANDING of SIN?



What would you add to this or change?



## SIN and CHOICE

Every day we make all sorts of choices, some right, some wrong.

- When I choose to put myself first at the expense of other – it can lead to sin
- When I choose to go against what I know is right – it can lead to sin
- When I choose to ignore the place of God in my life – it can lead to sin
- When I choose to ignore the needs of others – it can lead to sin

Sin  
is when I choose  
to walk away  
from God –  
the God  
who gives  
me life

How could you share this with your child in an accessible way?

Are there other helpful way/s you might talk to your child about sin in our lives and in our world?



## LISTENING TO OUR INNER VOICE - CONSCIENCE

When we take time to reflect and pray we hear the voice of God calling us to return to him. As we grow and mature we learn to listen to this voice more closely. This voice is what we call our conscience.

Deep within their conscience men and women discover a law  
which they have not laid upon themselves  
and which they must obey.

Its voice, ever calling them to love and to do what is good  
and to avoid evil, tells them inwardly at the right moment:  
do this, shun that.

For they have in their hearts a law inscribed by God.  
Their dignity rests in observing this law,  
and by it they will be judged.

Their conscience is people's most secret core,  
and their sanctuary.

There they are alone with God  
whose voice echoes in their depths.

[Gaudium et Spes 16](#)

- 1) What words or phrases strike you in this passage?
- 2) What has helped you as an adult to connect with the voice of your conscience?
- 3) How might you help your child to recognise when their conscience is calling them to act?

When we celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation we pray and examine our conscience..... What does this mean for you?

# EXAMINATION of CONSCIENCE

When we prepare for the sacrament of reconciliation we can take time to be in God's presence and open up our hearts to become more aware of the choices we are making and the actions in our lives which are drawing us away from God.

Some people find it helpful to reflect on particular areas of their lives, sometimes it is just very obvious to us what actions are drawing us away from God's goodness. At other times we may have to reflect more deeply.

Here are some questions we can ask ourselves as we sit in God's presence:

- When have I acted selfishly or hurtfully in my life with family, friends, colleagues?
- When have I not acted to prevent someone else being hurt in some way?
- When were there times when I should have said 'sorry', and did not do so.
- When do I affirm others' goodness or do I mostly see only the negative?
- Have there been times when I have turned away from the Gospel message, or decided not to live by its teaching so as to suit my own needs?
- When have I judged the actions of others, when only God can truly understand them?
- Am I more likely to blame others when things go wrong for me?
- When I am trying to teach my children to forgive, be generous or kind, do my actions reflect my words?

Questions such as these can help us to become more aware of what we would like to share with a priest when we celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation.

These questions can also help us to grow daily in self-awareness.

What can you do to help your child to grow in this awareness?



## LUKE 15: 11 - 32

### THE PRODIGAL – A story of return

As we celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation we often reflect on the Parable of the Prodigal Son as it mirrors the journey of returning to God that takes place for us.

LISTEN CAREFULLY as the STORY is READ.....

We can look at ourselves in relation to the son

The Prodigal Son	ME
His relationship with his Father	<i>I am in relationship with God</i>
A growing selfishness, going away from the Father	<i>I choose to live more selfishly</i>
Living totally selfishly	<i>I sin</i>
Eventual misery because this is not life giving	<i>I realise deep down this is not the way God want me to live</i>
Desire to return to the Father	<i>I want to put things right with God</i>
Sorrow and repentance	<i>I am sorry and want God's forgiveness</i>
Acknowledging sin to the Father	<i>I acknowledge my sin</i>
Acceptance, forgiveness, reconciliation	<i>I listen to words of healing, pardon and peace</i>
Celebration	<i>I thank God and pray my penance</i>
Living as the Father's son	<i>I live as a child of God</i>

## REJOICE WITH ME.....

Before your child makes their first confession you can help them by taking time to read the story of the Prodigal a few times. Take time to reflect on:

- What was going on between the two brothers?
- Which brother would you be?
- When you think about this scripture passage how does it remind of your own family experience?
- Why was the Father so forgiving?
- What is God like with us when we turn back to him?

HAVE LOTS of FAMILY CHATS ABOUT THIS

## FINAL REFLECTION:

Imagine God is saying this to your family

When you say sorry **I REJOICE**

When you forgive **I REJOICE**

When you tell the truth **I REJOICE**

When you stand up for what is right **I REJOICE**

When you reach out to others in kindness **I REJOICE**

When you love one another **I REJOICE**

I say to you that there shall be joy like this in Heaven  
over one sinner who returns home,  
more than over ninety nine righteous ones  
who do not need a homecoming

- How can you help your child to celebrate this homecoming?