

Opening Prayer and Introduction
to the sacrament

Fr Peter Gori

First Reconciliation Parent Meeting
Bridget Rao

- **We celebrate the Sacraments as a Parish Community which is why we are gathering here tonight**
- **We have the privilege of preparing 32 students from the school and 60 from the Religious Education program**

- **Who works to prepare your children**

- **School**
Molly Zytковicz
Sarah Casey

- **Parish**
- **Bridget Rao**
- **Volunteer catechists**
- **Clergy**

I like to begin this session with a guided meditation

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- **What is reconciliation?**

Confession, Penance. The Sacrament of Healing in which our sins are forgiven and we are reunited with God.

It's often a very emotional sacrament – on hearing the word confession some of you may have negative feelings, sometimes positive feelings depending on your own personal experience.

Hopefully tonight you might begin to see how much you can get from this sacrament and put away some of those old notions you might be

harboring and the fear of confessing your sins.

We want to encourage your children to come on a regular basis to the sacrament but if this sacrament is not part of family life we often find that the only return visits are either through the school or Religious Education program.

The sacrament of reconciliation is an encounter through which we receive forgiveness for our sins by a representative of both Christ and the church community.

It reminds us that through weakness and making poor choices

we often fail in our relationship with God and each other. It offers forgiveness and sustains us in our efforts to love God and each other.

Reconciliation is a sacrament that connects “church’ type things with everyday life.

Through it you will know that God is at home when families argue and make up, when there are difficult decisions to be made and when you struggle to grow together as Christian families.

So why Reconciliation?

In the Old Testament we see that the ancient Israelites had a close relationship with God, but they also realized that sins against one another were also sins against God.

They realized they needed to make atonement when they disobeyed God's law – some were simple reconciliations between two people, some were ritual offerings involving the High priest or Rabbi, with the most elaborate ceremony being Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.

Both old and new testaments show an early theology about forgiveness of sins which led to the sacrament of reconciliation.

In all four gospels Jesus offers both physical and spiritual healing.

His most profound teaching about sin and forgiveness came during his dying moments “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do”

Baptism was the earliest method used by Christians to forgive sins – the isolating of reconciliation from baptism comes much later in the history of the church.

First there was a form of public penitence, where penitents would sit outside the doors of churches and ask the faithful to pray for them – this disappeared as monks in the English and Irish monasteries began discussing personal faults and sins to trusted individuals

Soon this spread from the monasteries and by 1215 it was decreed that every Christian who had reached the age of reason had to go to Confession at least once a year.

- **Parents (Family's) Role**

You are the prime educators

When you presented your child to the Church for baptism you were reminded that you have the responsibility of “raising them in the practice of the faith” This obligation and privilege extends to sacramental preparation.

Before we leave baptism I need to remind you that your child may not receive the sacrament unless they have been baptized

This year we are all set in Religious Education and so too the school

So how are you doing....

Already made the first step by enrolling them in our Religious Education program or going to Catholic school.

Going to reconciliation yourself – as a parent you set the tone.

Start by looking at the ways your family practices reconciliation

How does your family apologize?

How to you express sorrow for doing something you shouldn't have done?

Do you make excuses or own up for doing something wrong?

How do you forgive other people?

Do you hold grudges?

How do you forgive your children?

How do you punish your children?

What else can you do

Attending Mass at least once a week

Don't forget our family 9 30 Mass

Annual Religious Education Mass
November 20 at 9:30 .Hope to see
you there!!

**Prayers - say them every day, twice
if possible**

**Regular class attendance (Religious
Education)**

**Taking an interest in their lessons –
ask what they learned.**

Attending Parent Meetings

**Read our
notices/webpage/bulletin/emails**

Adult Education – increase your own knowledge and understanding of the faith by attending one of our courses

Volunteer in the Parish – liturgical ministries are always looking for help

- **What do children have to know in order to celebrate the sacrament**

The difference between right and wrong

That sin is a choice and not an accident or mistake

**That sin is a choice to turn away
from God's friendship.**

**God is loving and merciful (how
wonderful for our children to know
& experience this)**

**Being truly sorry when they have
made a choice to sin**

**God will always forgive us if we ask
Him to**

Try not to commit sin again

Our sins are forgiven through the power of the Holy Spirit and the words and actions of the priest

In the sacrament we receive the grace to live as God's children

We must be willing to forgive others, just as God forgives us

- **How do you know if your child is ready?**

Do they take responsibility for wrongdoing?

Do they say sorry or ask for forgiveness without being told?

Are they able to express sorrow and forgiveness in their own words?

Do they sincerely try to change or “do better”?

The Sacrament

There will be 3 reconciliation services to accommodate everyone

Tuesday January 3 at 4:15 p.m. in the church

for Tuesday Religious Education students and school

Saturday January 14 at 9:30 a.m. in church

**for Sunday 10:45 Religious
Education students and school**

Saturday January 21 at 9:30 a.m.

**(for Sacramental preparation
students, Sunday 8:15 Religious
Education students & school
students)**

**(If your child is unwell on January
3 or 14 they may come to the
reconciliation service on January 21
otherwise you will have to make
your own arrangements for a
private reconciliation or go to the
regular parish Saturday
Reconciliations at 11:00 a.m. in the
church)**

Please support your child by being there

Maybe not younger siblings since you need to be able to focus on your child receiving the sacrament

During the reconciliation service there will be

No use of cell phones/limited conversation – this is sacred moment with your child

This is not an opportunity to catch up with friends

In the past Fr Peter has had to ask to keep the noise down because the priests cannot hear the children!

The Sacrament is face to face

Several priests will be present

Parents will introduce their child to the priest

Follow the directions of the staff

You may leave after sacrament has been received and penance has been said/made

Please never mention being nervous or scared - hardly ever the children nearly always the parent!!!!!!!!!!

First Holy Communion

We will be contacting you with sign up information in January/February

FHC parent meeting

Wednesday February 8 at 7:00 p.m. in the Church

4 families per liturgy 4:00 p.m., 9:30 & 11:30 am throughout May & June

In conclusion we are looking for the sacrament to impact your family and your child's lives.

Before leaving tonight please write down 1 thing you want to be forgiven for & the name of one person you need to and will forgive
Then we will pray an Act of Contrition

Act of Contrition

My God I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do right, 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