

CATECHIST CORNER

Parish of Desertegney and Lower Fahan
Parish of Burt, Inch and Fahan

FIRST CONFESSION



Boys and Girls...

This year has been a strange year for everyone. The Coronavirus pandemic has stopped us from doing so many things that we took for granted - visiting our friends at home, hugging our grandparents, gathering for Mass, and many more. You were supposed to receive the sacraments of First Confession and First Holy Communion when you were still in Second Class. Now you are in Third Class and again making preparations to receive them.

This leaflet is focused on the Sacrament of Reconciliation or Confession and to help you and your parents refresh some of that preparation so that you're ready once again to meet Jesus in this special way.

Parents and Guardians...

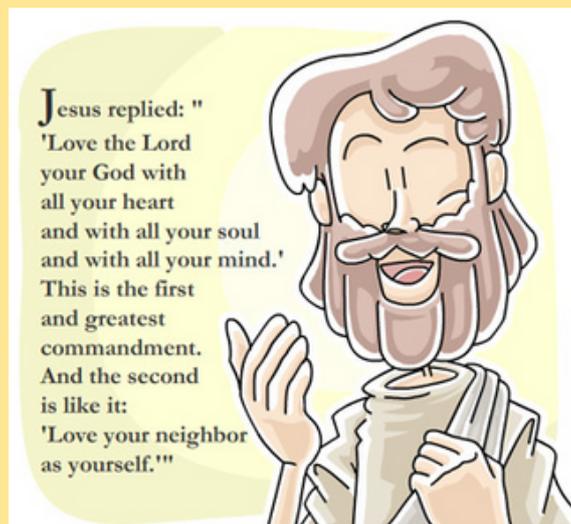
Please read through this yourselves and then talk to child about it

SACRAMENTS

A sacrament is a sacred (holy) moment when Christ meets us at important times of our lives. It is a special sign of the Risen Jesus present in our world today. There are seven sacraments in the Catholic Church: Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation, Reconciliation, Marriage, Holy Orders, Anointing of the Sick.

If your child is in 3rd Class, they have probably have received one sacrament already - **BAPTISM** - and they're getting ready to receive two more - **RECONCILIATION (or CONFESSION)** and **EUCCHARIST (or HOLY COMMUNION.)**

At their baptism you, and their godparents promised to help them to know Jesus and to show them how to live like him. Jesus wants us all to love God and to love each other.



Reconciliation

Sometimes we don't do as Jesus asked us. We forget to show love to others. When we do this, we are turning away from God's love.

When we don't live as Jesus asked, or we do something wrong, we reject the goodness of God and reject God himself. This is called this **SIN**.

When this happens, we need to say sorry for the wrong we have done and to the person we may have hurt. We need to say sorry to God because we haven't done as He asked us to. We do this through the **SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**.

Reconciliation means to bring together again. Through this sacrament we become friends again with God.



In the Bible we find lots of stories that Jesus told to help his followers understand what he was trying to tell them. These teaching stories are called **PARABLES**.

Jesus told parables about God's love for us and how even if we forget to love God, he never stops loving us.

One of the most well-known parables is the Lost (or Prodigal) Son found in St Luke's Gospel. (Luke 15: 11-32)

Through this story, Jesus tells us that God our Father

- Wants us to return to him in love
- Is waiting to forgive us
- Will treat us as the father treated the lost son in the story from St Luke's Gospel.

Read this story together

The Parable of the Prodigal Son
Luke 15: 11-32

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Jesus told a story about God's mercy: A man had two sons. The younger one said, 'Father, give me my share of your estate.'



After taking his money, the son left to a far country and squandered his wealth.



Soon, he had to work in a pig farm to feed himself. He felt sorry for his sins and decided to go home to beg for forgiveness.



As he approached his house, his father came out to hug him. The son said, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.'



The father told the servants to prepare a big feast as he said, 'My son was dead, and is alive again!'



The elder son was angry when he heard this but his father said, 'Son, all that is mine is yours. We should rejoice for your brother was lost and is found!'



This story shows how God is like. He is a Father Who forgives us despite our past wrong-doings and He asks us to forgive those who have hurt us. He eagerly waits for us to return to Him everyday!



"I will be merciful and remember their sins no more."
Hebrews 8: 12

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The Sacrament of **RECONCILIATION** celebrates the readiness of God to forgive us. This is one of the very unique things about our faith – it emphasises that God is a forgiving God and forgiveness plays a huge part in the ministry of Jesus also. Jesus taught his followers, and teaches us still, that God’s mercy and love are unending. God is always waiting on us to come back to him so he can welcome us just as the father welcomed the lost son in the story.

CELEBRATING THE SACRAMENT

There are four stages in the Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Contrition

- o We are sorry for our sins

Confession

- o We tell our sins to the priest

Absolution and Forgiveness

- o The priest says a special prayer of absolution

Penance

- o We do something to 'make it up' with God



One of the prayers usually said as penance is the Our Father. In the Our Father we say the words:

“Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.”

(Trespass means sin or offence). As well as God forgiving us, we too need to forgive people who have hurt us. This can be very difficult but we need to ask God to give us the courage to do so. We ask for this courage and strength through our prayers.



There are a variety of prayers we say during an act of penance. For example, we say the Confiteor at Mass, and the Act of Sorrow at Confession. It is good to be familiar with these prayers. They are in the table below. (PS: purple is the colour used to represent forgiveness and healing so for example, during the season of Lent, the priest wears purple vestments. He wears a purple stole when hearing Confession)

We say.....

The priest says...

THE CONFITEOR	OUR FATHER	ACT OF SORROW	ABSOLUTION PRAYER
<p>I confess to Almighty God, and to you my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done, and in what I have failed to do; through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore, I ask blessed Mary, ever virgin, and all the angels and saints, and you my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God. Amen</p>	<p>Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Amen</p>	<p>O, my God I thank you for loving me. I am sorry for all my sins For not loving others and for not loving you, Help me to live like Jesus and not sin again. Amen</p>	<p>God, the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son has reconciled the world to himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God give you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen</p>

Boys and Girls...

When you make your First Confession, you won't be using a confessional box. You'll simply sit near the priest and go through the steps on the next page.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a time of great joy when we experience the love of God and make our relationship with God better and stronger. Your First Reconciliation or Confession is a time of celebration for your families, your school and your parish. We thank you for being part of our parish family and we pray God's blessing on you as you take this important step on your faith journey.

THANK
YOU

GOING TO FIRST CONFESSION

1. Spend some time thinking of how you didn't show love to God or your family, friends or community

This helps you to prepare what you are going to say to the priest

2. Confess Your Sins to the Priest

Go to the priest. He will welcome you kindly and warmly.

Make the Sign of the Cross, and say these words:

Bless me, Father, for I have sinned.

These are my sins...

Tell all your sins openly and honestly,

Then, listen to the priest and follow his instructions.
Pray the Act of Contrition when the priest tells you.

ACT OF CONTRITION

**O, my God
I thank you for loving me.
I am sorry for all my sins
For not loving others and for not loving you,
Help me to live like Jesus and not sin again. Amen**



The priest will ask you to do a "penance," usually some prayers, to show you are truly sorry for your sins. This is done after you return to your seat.

Then the priest, acting in the person of Jesus Christ, will absolve (forgive) you of your sins with the following words:

God, the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son, has reconciled the world to Himself, and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God give you pardon and peace, and I absolve you of your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Make the Sign of the Cross, and say **Amen**.

3. Do the Act of Penance

After you return to your seat, do the act of penance the priest assigns you. Tell God that you are thankful for the grace of reconciliation that you have just received.