

DIOCESE OF OSSORY



LENT  
RESOURCES

Lenten celebrations  
with children



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# A Lenten Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation for use with Children



*This reconciliation service might be used during Lent at a celebration where the majority of participants are of primary school age.*

It proceeds as follows:

- An opening greeting
- Gathering Hymn
- Opening prayer
  
- First Reading/Psalm & Gospel (*Suggestions are given that take into account the age group of participants. The number of readings can be adapted to suit circumstances*)
- Homily
- Examination of Conscience
- The Confiteor
- Our Father
  
- Hymn of preparation
- Individual Confession and absolution.
- Choice of two *Penance Sheets* to be done at home.
  
- Act of Forgiveness
- Closing Prayer
- Sign of Peace
- Dismissal & Closing Hymn

## OPENING GREETING:

PRESIDER: May the love and peace of Christ be with you all.

ALL: **And with your spirit.**

PRESIDER: In this season of Lent,  
we gather together to ask God's forgiveness  
for any wrong that we may have done.  
We come knowing that God loves us and  
never wants to be separated from us.  
And so let us stand and sing  
in praise of his love for each one of us.

## OPENING SONG:

SUGGESTIONS: *We Gather in Body (Alive O 8, p. 288)*  
*What so ever you do (Alive O 5, p. 209)*  
*A Íosa, Glan mo Chroíse (Alive O 5 p. 235)*

## OPENING PRAYER:

PRESIDER: Loving God,  
You sent us Jesus your Son to show how great is your  
love and care for each one of us.  
On this day  
give us the courage to face the things we have done  
that separate us from your friendship.  
Help us to welcome your love and forgiveness once  
more.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

*(Presider invites all present to be seated as we listen to God's word to us today.)*

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

*(The scripture texts that follow use the Contemporary English Version translation.)*

### **A Reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans**

What can we say about all this?

If God is on our side, can anyone be against us?

I am sure that nothing can separate us from God's love -

not life or death, not angels or spirits,

not the present or the future,

and not powers above or powers below.

Nothing in all creation can separate us

from God's love for us in Christ Jesus our Lord! **The Word of the Lord**

### **PSALM:**

"My Shepherd is the Lord" p. 236 Alive O 4 (*using verse one as the refrain after verse 2&3*)

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:**        (*can be sung*)

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory.

*(The following Gospel reading might be used with children from 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> classes)*

### **A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke**

Jesus was going through Jericho, where a man named Zacchaeus lived. He was in charge of collecting taxes and was very rich. Jesus was heading his way, and Zacchaeus wanted to see what he was like. But Zacchaeus was a short man and could not see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree. When Jesus got there, he looked up and said, "Zacchaeus, hurry down! I want to stay with you today." Zacchaeus hurried down and gladly welcomed Jesus.

Everyone who saw this started grumbling, "This man Zacchaeus is a sinner! And Jesus is going home to eat with him."

Later that day Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "I will give half of my property to the poor. And I will now pay back four times as much to everyone I have ever cheated."

Jesus said to Zacchaeus, "Today you and your family have been saved, because you are a true son of Abraham. The Son of Man came to look for and to save people who are lost." **The Gospel of the Lord**

*(The following Gospel reading might be used with children from 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> classes)*

### **A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Mark**

Jesus took Peter, James and John with him  
and went up on a high mountain,  
where they could be alone.  
There in front of the disciples,  
Jesus completely changed.  
And his clothes became much whiter  
than any bleach on earth could make them.  
Then Moses and Elijah were there talking with Jesus.

Peter said to Jesus, "Teacher, it is good for us to be here!  
let us make three shelters, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah."  
But Peter and the others were terribly frightened,  
and he did not know what he was talking about.

The shadow of a cloud passed over and covered them.  
From the cloud a voice said, "This is my Son, and I love him.  
Listen to what he says!"  
At once the disciples looked around,  
but they saw only Jesus.

As Jesus and his disciples were coming down the mountain,  
he told them not to say a word about what they had seen,  
until the Son of Man had been raised from death.  
So they kept it to themselves.  
But they wondered what he meant by the words  
"raised from death". **The Gospel of the Lord**

## HOMILY SUGGESTIONS:

- Relationship with God is a two way thing. Sometimes we do things to avoid being a friend of God, we separate ourselves from God; we forget to pray or don't bother to. We might be too busy to spend some time with God.  
Perhaps we do this with our own family and friends - we separate ourselves from them and don't let them enter into our lives (First reading)
- Or perhaps when we are with our family and friends we expect and want them to act and be different people. We want them to be more fun or more athletic or more clever or more popular or more... instead of just seeing them for who they really are and loving them for that. (Gospel - Transfiguration/Zacchaeus)
- God loves us for who we are. God wants us to be the best we can possibly be - but being the best begins with accepting and loving ourselves just as we are, the person God has made us to be. And God is always with us - always loving us and helping us again and again to let go of the things we do that hurt others - calling us to begin again, and to try to be who God wants us to be - showing God's love in the world by how we love and care for one another in our families, in our classrooms and among our friends.

*EXPLAIN that to help the children prepare to celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation they are going to spend a few minutes thinking about what they need to say sorry to God for, in what we call an examination of Conscience.*

## EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE:

*(Ask the children to close their eyes and picture themselves in the words you are going to say to them. If you find it of help, some music could be played softly in the background)*

Imagine yourself in one of your favourite places...a place where you like to be alone...maybe it's in the countryside...or in a park...or in your favourite room in your house...picture that for a while...the different things in the place, the things you can see, the smell of the place, the sounds you can hear...relax there...have a little rest there...

Now imagine that God is in that place with you...sitting down beside you...tell God if there is anything that is getting in the way of your

friendship with God...if there is anything getting in the way of your friendship with your parents, brothers, sisters, friends and other people in your life...tell God anything you really want to say sorry to him for...be as honest as you can...

Perhaps there have been times when you have forgotten to pray to God, or times when you have not respected the people who look after you...parents, teachers, guardians...

Maybe you have told lies or been untrue to others in some way...

Maybe you have left out others, bullied them or ignored them...tell God what you want God's forgiveness for...

Now hear God say to you: "I love you and I forgive you. You can begin again to show my love to others."...then rest for a while there with God...enjoy the feeling of friendship and the forgiveness of God.

And when you are ready, quietly open your eyes and in silence, wait for others to open their eyes too.

### **RITE OF RECONCILIATION:**

**PRESIDER:** As we prepare to ask God for forgiveness for the wrongs we have done let us say together.....

**ALL:** **THE CONFITEOR**

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,  
all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters,  
to pray for me to the Lord our God.

**SONG:** *I'm Sorry God* *Alive-O5 p208*  
*Song of Repentance* *Alive-O8 p314*

**PRESIDER:** Jesus loves each one of us and is always ready to forgive us. Together let pray the pray that Jesus taught us.....

**ALL:** **OUR FATHER**

## **INDIVIDUAL RECONCILIATION:**

**PRESIDER:** I invite you to come forward now for confession

*Quiet music might be played during this time!*

*Presider may invite all to pray the Prayer after Forgiveness together:*

## **PRAYER AFTER FORGIVENESS:**

**ALL:** O my God, I thank you for forgiving me.  
Help me to love others.  
Help me to live as Jesus asked me to. AMEN.

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

*(Presider stands before the children.)*

Loving God

We thank you for your forgiveness this day.

We thank you for your love that is with us every day.

May we show this love to all we meet.

We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

## **SIGN OF PEACE:**

*Before we leave here today let us offer one another a sign of peace.*

## **DISMISSAL:**

**PRESIDER:** The Lord be with you...

**ALL:** **And with your spirit**

**PRESIDER:** And May almighty God bless you...

**ALL:** **AMEN**

**PRESIDER:** Go in peace to love one another and to love God.

**ALL:** **Thanks be to God**

## **SONG OF GOING FORTH**

*We are the Greatest: Alive-O3 p192*

*Christ be our Light: Alive-O8 p273*

*Go Now in Peace: Alive-O5 p310*



## PENANCE SHEET TO TAKE HOME

Write a letter to God. Thank Him for being a friend. Ask God to bless your family and friends. Tell Him something you will do to be the best person you can be!

## PENANCE SHEET TO TAKE HOME

Draw a picture of the place you were thinking about when you were with God in our celebration of Reconciliation. Bring it home and let it remind you in the future to spend time with Jesus and God.