



Jesus Invites Us to Forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation
A Lesson on Forgiveness and God's Love
Grades 7-9

Goal: Students will recognize that sorrow for sinning should be accompanied by self-forgiveness and a willingness to change behavior. Students will learn that the Sacrament of Reconciliation is a sacrament of healing, in which Jesus is seeking renewed relationship with us.

Watch:

- [The Power of Confession:](#) (8 minutes)
 - Why do we go?
 - What is it for?
 - What good does it do?
- ["I Confess"](#) Powerful video invites teens to the Sacrament of Reconciliation no matter how long they have been away or how big the think their sins are. (5.5 minutes)
- ["Healing Through the Eucharist"](#) Crystalina Evert explains how devotion to the Eucharist is essential in personal healing. (4 minutes)
- ["What You Should Know About Purgatory"](#) Fr. Mike Schmitz clarifies the Catholic doctrine of Purgatory and connects it to God's mercy. (7 minutes)

Read:

["Purgatory: Heaven's Waiting Room"](#) Engaging article explains the Catholic doctrine of purgatory using Scripture references.

Questions:

- Why is the sacrament of Confession important to Catholics?
- What is Purgatory?
- Why is it important to understand what will happen to us when we die?
- Do you know anyone who has died?
- How should Christians feel when people die?
- How is that different than the way non-Christians might feel?
- If we want Jesus to forgive us so we can go to Heaven when we die, what must we do while we are alive?
- Is it possible to live with the thought of our eternal destiny always in our minds?

Read:

[John 8:1-11](#); the story of the Woman Caught in Adultery Complete worksheets and activities
["The Permanent Wounds of Mercy"](#) Just because our wounds persist does not mean that God has not forgiven us. Article.

Watch: Prodigal Son Story [retold in comic book form](#) (2 minutes)

Discussion:

- How does the story of the Prodigal Son's "coming home" help us to understand God's love for us?
- How does it help us live as followers of Jesus?

Read: [Matthew 18: 21-34](#)

Discussion:

- What does the story tell us about the mercy of God?
- Is God very merciful with us, or just a little bit?
- In the story, even though the people who were forgiven acted unjustly to others, they were still forgiven.
- What does that tell us about God's forgiveness toward us?
- Is there anything that we can ever do that is so bad that God cannot forgive it? NO. No matter what we do, we can always turn back to God if we are truly sorry for our sins, confess them, and ask for God's forgiveness.

As Catholics, we seek God's forgiveness for our "bad choices" in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The gift of the Sacrament of Reconciliation helps us to restore our union with God. The graces we receive through the Sacrament of Penance make us stronger in our faith commitment to try NOT to sin again, to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, and to allow his grace to transform us so we don't want to do bad things anymore.

For students: [Examination of Conscience](#)

PRAYER

God of Heaven and Earth, thank you for giving us free choice.
Send your Holy Spirit to guide us, so that all our choices may lead us closer to you.
We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.