

Liturgy Preparation Sheet

for the Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the First Time

It is envisaged that this planning sheet be completed at a meeting attended by representatives of the home, school and parish communities. Some suggestions are given for readings, music, etc., but these are by no means exhaustive. Please feel free to use suitable alternatives.

The form of Reconciliation celebrated here is what is known as the Second Form of the Rite, officially entitled: Rite for Reconciliation of Several Penitents with Individual Confession and Absolution.

Careful consideration ought to be given to the time at which this celebration would take place. It is important that parents and families are welcomed to this liturgy. As the primary educators of their children in all ways, including in faith, it is them who should present the children for the Rite of Reconciliation. It is, therefore, usually most appropriate to have this celebration in the evening, when it is likely that parents and families will be more available.

Date: _____

Time: _____

Preparing the church building

Parish communities like to work with both teachers and families to make the church welcoming and friendly for children, and to honour the special occasion that is being celebrated. There are a few points to bear in mind where this is the case:

- In the likely event that the Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time takes place during Lent, it is important to note that it is not appropriate for either the altar or the church building to be decorated with flowers during Lent (the exceptions being the Fourth Sunday of Lent (Laetare Sunday) and the Solemnities and Feasts occurring during Lent).
- If the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time takes place outside of Lent, it is acceptable to place flowers around the sanctuary area but not on the altar itself. Flowers can also be placed in the entrance hall/porch to express welcome and festivity. It is not appropriate to place flowers, candles or other objects around the tabernacle.
- There is no requirement for the children to prepare artwork for the church. In some cases, this can distract from the liturgy itself. It may be appropriate, however, to display the children's artwork in the entrance hall/porch of the church.

INTRODUCTORY RITES

Opening Hymn/Song: _____

Suggestions from *Grow in Love*:

- 'Lay Your Hands' by Carey Landry and Jean Kinghorn (Second Class/P4 Teacher's Manual, p. 89)
- 'I'm Sorry' by Geraldine Doggett (First Class/P3 Teacher's Manual, p. 160)
- 'I'm Sorry' by Mary Amond O'Brien (Second Class/P4 Teacher's Manual, p. 165)
- 'Zacchaeus' by Ivor Redmond (Second Class/P4 Teacher's Manual, p. 166)

Sign of the Cross and Greeting

Penitential Act

Choose from one of the following:

- Say the *Confiteor* ('I confess to almighty God...')
- Sing or say the *Kyrie* ('Lord, have mercy ...') (Second Class/P4 Teacher's Manual, p.320) following the Invocations led by the priest.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Readings for the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation may be taken from the Penance section of Lectionary III. You may also like to use readings that the children will be familiar with from the *Grow in Love* series. References for these are given below. A full selection of readings is given as an appendix to this document. Except for those with hearing impairment, the congregation does not need a copy of the words of the readings.

First Reading

Text: _____

Suggestions:

- Isaiah 43:1-3 ('Do not be afraid for I have redeemed you')
- 1 John 4:7, 11, 12 ('Let us love one another')
- 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 ('Love is patient, love is kind')

The first and second readings should be proclaimed from the Lectionary. The person who proclaims the Word of God at Mass is called 'Minister of the Word'. This person has been trained and commissioned for this work in the church. The Word of God is not merely 'read' at Mass, it is proclaimed. For this reason, the most appropriate person to do this work is a trained Minister of the Word.

Proclaimed by: _____

Responsorial Psalm

The psalm should be sung. It is led by the psalmist, a cantor or the choir. The congregation and all the ministers should be facilitated to take up their part and sing the response each time.

Suggestions from *Grow in Love*:

- 'The Lord, he is my shepherd' (*Psalm 23*) (Second Class/P4 Teacher's Manual, p.139)

Led by: _____

Gospel Acclamation

The Gospel Acclamation should be sung. The congregation and all the ministers repeat the Acclamation after the cantor or choir. The cantor or the choir alone sings the verse. The congregation and all the ministers repeat the Acclamation after the verse has been sung. During the Lenten season the following Gospel Acclamation is used: 'Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, King of Eternal Glory'.

Suggestions from *Grow in Love*:

- *Alleluia* (Second Class/P4 Teacher's Manual, p.140)

Verse sung by: _____

Gospel

Suggestions from *Grow in Love*:

- John 13:34-35 ('Love one another')
- Matthew 18:12-14 (The lost sheep)
- Luke 19:1-9 (Zacchaeus)

Proclaimed by: _____ (priest/deacon)

Examination of Conscience

As part of the homily, or immediately after it, the following Examination of Conscience is led either by the priest or another appropriate adult, such as a parent, teacher or a parish representative.

Thinking back over your day today, I am sure there were many times when you showed love to God and to others. Thank God for these times. But maybe there were times when you didn't. Using your 'inside voice' that no one else can hear, tell God the answers to each of these questions:

- Did you pray to God today? *(pause)*
- Did you do as your teachers and family asked? *(pause)*
- Were you kind to your brothers, sisters or friends? *(pause)*
- Were you lazy? *(pause)*
- Did you steal? *(pause)*
- Did you share your things with others? *(pause)*
- Did you always tell the truth? *(pause)*
- Did you borrow anything without returning it? *(pause)*

If there is anything we would like to say sorry for, we can do so now, as part of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

RECONCILIATION RITE

Parents/guardians of those children who are celebrating their First Reconciliation are asked to stand

Priest: When you brought your child to the church to be baptised, you accepted the responsibility of accompanying your child on his/her journey of faith. Today your child takes a further step on that journey. What do you ask God's Church for your children?

Parents/Guardians: The celebration of God's forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Parents/Guardians are invited to be seated

Priest: In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we reconnect with others, and with God. We celebrate the love and forgiveness of God. Even when we don't love others, God still loves us. God is always waiting for us to realise we have sinned, to say sorry and to return to being loving. Let us celebrate God's love now in the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

At this point in the liturgy, parents/guardians are invited to present their child to the priest for confession, one at a time. It may be helpful for children to bring with them a picture that he/she has drawn, which shows a time that he/she made a bad choice and sinned.

Where possible, parents and other family members ought to also be welcomed to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

When each of the children have given their individual confession to the priest, the rite continues.

Celebrant: At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

All: Our Father ...

CONCLUDING RITES

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Celebrant: May Almighty God bless you all, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Celebrant: Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Concluding Hymn/Song _____

Suggestions from *Grow in Love*:

- 'Gifts from God' (Second Class/P4 Teacher's Manual, p.88)
- 'This is the Day' (Second Class/P4 Teacher's Manual, p.212)
- 'Alleluia, Alleluia! Give Thanks' (First Class/P3 Teacher's Manual, p.207)