

# Forgiveness and Healing

## Preparation for the Session

**Turn to Page 217,**  
the Family + Faith page.

In this chapter you will cover the following objectives:

- Compare the faith journeys of the two brothers in the story of the Prodigal Son, which depicts God's forgiving love
- Identify the four parts of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation
- Connect with Saint Damien who modeled compassion for the sick and outcast
- Develop an understanding of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick

**Read** the **Consider This** feature. What thoughts or reactions do you have to the opening question?

**Parents, Consider This:** *Whether you are ten or eighty, there is nothing more difficult than trying to understand pain and suffering and healing. The reality of that experience is even more overwhelming when the person who is in pain or needs healing is someone you love. As you consider the Sacraments of Healing, you will be sure to get questions from your child about suffering and death. Listen carefully. It is important to have these conversations in light of our belief that this world is not our home. We are only on this Earth for a while. God has created us to live forever with him. During our life on Earth, God is present with us in our joys and sorrows, always offering us his healing grace.*

**Read** these other sections on the Family + Faith Page.

- *Your Child Learned.* This highlights some of the content of Sacred Scripture and Tradition in the lesson.
- *Children At This Age.* This will help you to understand how your child processes and learns at this developmental level.



**Let's Sing:** These songs connect the session topics and can be downloaded from [aliveinchrist.osv.com](http://aliveinchrist.osv.com).

- Heal Us, Lord
- Through My Fault

## INVITE: Encountering God in His Word

**Turn to Page 209,**  
Forgiveness and Healing

After gathering the supplies that you will need, find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



**Let Us Pray** Invite your child to make the Sign of the Cross. Read aloud the Psalm verse from the book. Help your child to respond.

**Say:** Jesus came to reveal a God who is absolutely loving and forgiving. Jesus came to reveal his Father, especially to those who were sinners. He came to call them home to God. Jesus wants us to know that God is our loving and welcoming Father, constantly calling us to his side.



**Guide** your child through the Preparing for God's Word Ritual you learned in the Introduction Session or play Track 1 of the *Songs of Scripture* CD.

- Proclaim God's Word in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- Ask: What did you hear God say to you today?

**Invite** your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Now, look at the *What Do You Wonder?* box.

**Say:** God's forgiveness and reconciliation are available through the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. Through this Sacrament, our sins are forgiven and we are reconciled with God and the Church.

**Invite** your child to respond to the questions. Ask what else they might wonder about forgiveness, reconciliation, and healing.

## DISCOVER: Learning God's Truth

### Turn to Page 210,

Reconciliation and Forgiveness

**Have** your child read aloud the first paragraph.

**Ask** your child what Jesus thought about anger. (It can have a negative effect on even close relationships.)



**Proclaim** the parable.

**Ask** your child what she/he thinks the older son did. Ask what would she/he do? Share how hard it might be for you to go to the party, but why it would be important to do so.

**Listen** to the song, "The Prodigal Son," on the *Songs of Scripture* CD, Track 14. You will find the lyrics at [aliveinchrist.osv.com](http://aliveinchrist.osv.com). Discuss the line in the chorus, "There is nothing you *can* do, that I cannot forgive." Why does it not say, "There is nothing you *can* do that I *will* not forgive?" (In order for God to forgive, we must be truly sorry.)

### Turn to Page 211,

A Generous Father

**Read** the text on the page, alternating between you and your child.

When you come to the highlighted words, **confession**, **reparation**, **contrition**, and **absolution**, go to the Catholic Faith Words box and read their definitions. Ask your child to repeat the definition in his/her own words before moving on.

**Review** the Act of Contrition on page 323 of the Our Catholic Tradition reference section of your child's book.

**Call** your child's attention to the "Penance and Reconciliation" chart. Explain that this Sacrament is also called Penance. Review the parts, signs, and effects of this Sacrament.

**Share** with your child an experience of forgiveness that you have had.

**Parents, Consider This:** *Remind your child that God looks upon our suffering and pain in the way that a loving parent does. We hold this essential belief—because God is all-powerful, he can redeem all evil. Only he can use our pain and suffering to help us live more fully. Suffering and death are the consequence of Original Sin and were not God's plan for us. God sent his Son, who suffered on the Cross, so that we can join our suffering to his. We do not understand why some people are healed and others are not, but all people die. We trust, however, that whenever anyone dies, God has prepared a place for them to be with him in eternity, as long as they have opened their hearts and accepted his gift of redemption.*

**Turn to Page 212,**  
A Healing Sacrament

**Tell** your child that you will be discussing the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and why it is called a Sacrament of Healing.

**Read** aloud the first paragraph. Before beginning the next section, explain to your child that people with Hansen's disease (leprosy), develop ulcers and scabs on their skin.

**Have** your child silently read the text.

**Ask:** What do you think it meant to the people that Father Damien said "we lepers"?

**Discuss** with your child what it must have been like to be sent to that island and left to die. How did Father Damien bring hope?

**Read** aloud the first paragraph of the text.

**Emphasize** the categories of people whom the Church invites to celebrate the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. (people who are seriously ill or at an advanced age)



**Complete** the gold-star activity.

**Ask:** What is happening in the photo on this page?

**Share** your experience with your child if you have ever been present during the celebration of this Sacrament.

**Read** the "Anointing of the Sick" chart on this page. Discuss the similarities and differences between the Penance chart and this one. Emphasize that both Sacraments bring healing.

## LIVE: Living Our Faith

### Turn to Page 214, Our Catholic Life

**Before** reading the text, think about how one should prepare to receive forgiveness.

**Read** aloud the first paragraph.

**Ask** your child what it means to examine one's conscience.

**Read** aloud the steps, pausing after each one. Stress that an examination of conscience is private, between oneself and God.

**Ask** your child to cut out the "Examine Your Conscience" column. Glue the column to a larger sheet of construction paper or cardboard. Together, place the sheet in your child's room in a place where she/he will be able to use it for his/her evening prayer.

**Tell** your child that Saint Ignatius of Loyola asked his fellow priests to examine their conscience twice a day. Commit yourselves to practicing this reflection every night for two weeks and notice the difference it makes in the way you live each day.

### Turn to Page 215, People of Faith

**Read** the paragraph about Saint John Vianney.

- Share your reactions to the information.
- How does your family encourage each other to admit their wrongs and ask for forgiveness?

### Turn to Page 217, Family + Faith Page and conclude with the Let's Pray prayer on this page.

**Parents, Consider This:** *It's important to form our children in the common language of prayer. We encourage you to pray the Act of Love (see Page 323), during your night prayer this week.*



To access and send an eAssessment to your child, go to the Student and Family section of [aliveinchrist.osv.com](http://aliveinchrist.osv.com).