

5 STAGES OF RECONCILIATION

In school, the children prepared for the Sacrament by discussing the good choices and bad choices that they can make in life. They looked at a number of scenarios and work out what is the best thing to do.

They used this as a basis for engaging with the story of Zacchaeus (Luke 19: 1-10). Zacchaeus helps them to see that you can say sorry/forgive others when something wrong is done. The children will apply the story of Zacchaeus to receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time.

There are 5 steps, or stages, to the Sacrament of Reconciliation that they will learn about and they can be viewed below:

1. Examination of Conscience – I realise that I've done wrong and feel sorry
2. Confession – I am sorry
3. Penance – I accept my penance and pray the Act of Sorrow
4. Absolution – I am forgiven
5. Resolving to Try Again – I try again

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

There are many types and texts of examination of conscience. Below is an example of one that can be used with the children to help them prepare to receive the sacrament.

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

DIALOGUE FOR FIRST CONFESSION – STEP BY STEP

Parent: Father, this is my daughter/son N.

Priest: N. you're very welcome. (parents/guardian steps back)

Priest: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Child: Bless me Father for I have sinned, this is my First Confession.

Priest: What ways have you not shown God's love?

Child: I didn't show love when....

Priest: Thank you (and he will say a few words of encouragement to your child) and now will you pray your Act of Sorrow?

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

Priest: N. God the Father forgives you and I absolve you of all your sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Priest: Congratulations, you have made your First Confession.