

# First Reconciliation Parent Handbook

2023 - 2024



**Mary, Mother of the Church Parish  
Religious Education**

Fr. Martin O'Reilly, Pastor

Fr. Cesar Anson, Parochial Vicar

Margaret Zola, Business Manager and CRE

Debbie Brown, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Catechist

Joe Gramlich, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Catechist

Tricia Hutman, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Catechist

Matthew Hutman, 2nd Grade Aide

Danielle Mason, 2nd Grade Aide

Dianne Walker, 2nd Grade Aide

**As the parent is the primary model of faith for the child, we ask that parents help to reinforce what children are learning about the Sacraments at home. The Church is here to support and guide you in your important role in the faith life of your child, and the following folder contains resources for preparing your child for the Sacrament. Please read this entire Handbook and familiarize yourself and your child with the following items: (this reinforces the lessons they will receive the next 6 weeks in class).**

**1) How to Celebrate – The Sacrament of Reconciliation 8-Steps**

**2) Parent Q&A**

**3) Family Time poster**

**These are the signs that indicate a child is ready to receive First Reconciliation:**

- ❖ A desire to receive the Sacrament
- ❖ Ability to distinguish between “mistakes” (non-intentional) and “on purpose” (intentional) actions.
- ❖ Ability to distinguish between right and wrong, and the effect of actions and omissions upon others.
- ❖ Ability to feel and express “I’m sorry”.
- ❖ Ability to make amends and change behavior.
- ❖ Knowing God as loving and forgiving through Jesus Christ
- ❖ Basic familiarity of stories of forgiveness from Scripture and the prayers and gestures of the Rite of Penance

**Parents have an important role in helping a child become “ready”.**

- ❖ Use the “teachable moments” in your family’s life to reinforce forgiveness and reconciliation. When arguments and conflicts occur in your home, model and encourage taking responsibility, expressing sorrow and making amends.
- ❖ Practice forgiveness in your home and avoid re-hashing old arguments; let go of grudges.
- ❖ Celebrate the “making up” after a family quarrel.
- ❖ Reinforce the stories of Jesus forgiving others.
- ❖ Thank God each day for his abundant mercy when we fall short.
- ❖ Teach children responsibility for others – love takes the form of action.
- ❖ Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation, at least once a year during Lent.
- ❖ Help your child learn to pray the Act of Contrition and when we are closer to the date of Reconciliation, help him or her with the examination of conscience (see the next page for the Act of Contrition and the Examination of Conscience).
- ❖ Practice going to Confession – let your child know that he or she does not need to actually tell you their sins when practicing, that this is just to practice being ready for the Sacrament.

# ~ An Examination of Conscience ~

## Understanding true sorrow and forgiveness

Share with your children your memories of forgiving and being forgiven when you were a child. Focus on how you felt when you were hurt and wouldn't forgive. Describe how you felt when you hurt someone, and the person wouldn't forgive you. Talk to them about how being unforgiving makes people grow apart - how giving and receiving forgiveness draws people closer together.

### ***GROW IN LOVE FOR GOD***

**Jesus teaches us, "Love the Lord your God." It is His first great commandment.**

**Check the ways in which you show love for God.**

DO I PRAY EVERY DAY?

DO I USE GOD'S NAME WITH RESPECT?

DO I PRAY WITH OTHERS?

DO I SAY THE PRAYERS AT MASS?

DO I LISTEN TO GOD'S WORD?

DO I TRY TO LEARN ABOUT MY RELIGION?

DO I TRY TO UNDERSTAND WHAT GOD ASKS OF ME?



**Another way to show love for God is by loving others.**

**Jesus said "Whatever you do to others, you do to Me." (Matthew 25:40)**

### ***GROW IN LOVE FOR OTHERS***

**Jesus teaches us, "Love others as yourself." This is His second great commandment.**

**Check the ways in which you show love for others.**

DO I TRY TO LISTEN TO MY PARENTS?

DO I OBEY THEM WITHOUT ARGUMENT?

DO I HELP AT HOME?

AM I FRIENDLY?

DO I BEHAVE IN CLASS?

DO I TELL THE TRUTH?

DO I SHARE WITH OTHERS?

DO I TAKE CARE OF MY HEALTH?

DO I RESPECT OTHER PEOPLES PROPERTY?

DO I DO MY BEST AT SCHOOL, AT PLAY?

DO I FORGIVE THOSE WHO HURT ME?



**"Happy are those who obey the Law of Love!" (Psalm 119:2)**

## ***Parents' Prayer***

God, you are Parent to us.  
You have made us in Your image and likeness.  
Help us to become more like You  
in our relationship with our children.

God, You are always there for us,  
even when we turn away from Your love,  
You stay with us always.  
Teach us to be good parents.

Help us to be present to our children  
in good times and in bad times.  
May we support them and love them as  
You have loved us - unconditionally.

God, give us the strength and determination to be just  
and honest in our relationships with our children.  
Give us the patience and perseverance to face each day,  
knowing You are with us,  
as we try to become the parents we must become for our children.  
Amen.