

1

To help your child understand **sorrow**, talk about how you know when someone is sorry for hurting someone else.

What do you do when you are **really sorry for something**? You might mention things like

- we say we are sorry for something we did
- we make up by doing something especially nice for each other
- we cry and hug because we hurt each other
- we promise ourselves and/or the other person not to repeat the wrong thing

5 Being Sorry; Asking Forgiveness

We must be sorry for our sins.

When we are truly sorry,
we vow not to sin again.

We are sorry because
we hurt each other,
and in the process
hurt ourselves.

We are sorry because we hurt
our relationship with God

We promise to
try not to sin again.



How do we know when
we are sorry for our sins?

- We become aware that we have hurt others
- We are willing to admit our sins
- We hate what we have done wrong!
- We never want to do it again
- We promise to change and be more loving

2

Help them see that in Reconciliation, the same holds true. It's just like family life except that it is with **God and the church family**.

3

Your child learns when he or she sees you **doing the thing you are teaching them**. Share with your child about how sorrow in your own life has helped you to realize you've done something wrong that needs to be righted.

We all hurt each other sometimes. We all sin. Your child needs to know that so that they don't feel they are the only one to make mistakes – even their parents and teachers do. Even priests do the wrong thing sometimes!

1

Pray this with your child,
When the time comes, you, too should fill out a slip of paper. You will be invited to go forward as a family and place the papers near the Bible.



Prayer Celebration

Growing up Catholic means saying we're sorry when we have sinned.

Everyone begins by making the Sign of the Cross.

All: **In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Leader: Let us pray.

Oh Jesus, we love you and want to love you more.

All: **We are sorry for all our sins, O Jesus.**

Please listen to the reading: Matthew 19:13-15.

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!**

Please listen to the leader.

Leader: Let us pray together.

Please pause after each line:

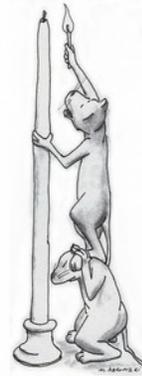
All: **We know we hurt you
and we hurt each other
each time we commit a sin.**

Please help us to be really sorry.

Help us to really want to do better

Help us to love you more by loving others more.

Amen.



2

With your child: Children at this age have tender consciences. They are aware of their own early choices and decisions. They are sensitive to love and hurts. It is helpful for them to see that when their parents make mistakes (sin) they admit it, apologize, and try to make up. This is a more valuable lesson for them than thinking that their parents or other adults are perfect but they are not.

3

If you are not Catholic yourself, we welcome you here! You play a vital role in the life of any child who is within your orbit. You can help by showing them that no matter what your own religious faith (or even lack of faith) you still believe in doing what is loving and right. You still believe in being sorry when you have hurt someone else. You believe in forgiveness and contrition.

1

Help your child understand the importance of **contrition**. It doesn't matter if someone confesses a sin, but doesn't feel genuinely sorry for it.



What is Contrition?

Contrition has several parts.

1. We realize what we did wrong.

We can't feel contrite if we feel smug about what we did or are proud of our wrongdoing. Have you ever had that experience?



2

Why is sin wrong? Help your child tell why. You might say things like:

- It hurts our friendship with Jesus
- It hurts the people around us
- It's against God's Rules of Love

2. We are sorry for it.

If we aren't sorry for it, we aren't ready for confession yet. If you know something was sinful but you don't feel sorry for it, you can pray for the grace to feel sorry.

Was there a time when you didn't feel sorrow until much later after you had sinned? What prompted you to feel sorry then?



3. We promise to be better.

Because we are human, we know that very likely we will sin again – but we still vow to try not to in the future.

3

Why must we feel sorry for our sins?

Help your child tell why. You might say things like:

- In order to feel God's forgiveness
- In order to not sin again

4

How can we be more like Jesus?

Help your child tell why. You might say things like:

- Make daily choices to be a better person
- Follow God's Rules of Love

1

After you and your child read the paragraph at the top of the page, **have a short discussion** about this. Share from your own experience as well as listening to theirs.

Then give your child some space to reflect more and **write his or her own response** on the child page. While that is happening, do the same, writing your thoughts below on this page.



When We Sin

Often there is a great mix of emotions, sometimes clear and sometimes confusing, after we have sinned. Describe some of the different ways you have felt when you did something wrong - or didn't do something that is right.

Everyone sins sometimes. The important thing, however, is that when you sin, you feel sorry for it, and you promise to be better in the future.

1

Ask your child to read this passage (Luke 7:36-50) aloud.

Help your child grasp the power of this story. Ask them to look at the picture of the woman. What is she doing? Why is she crying? Ask your child to retell this story in his or her own words.

2

Point out how Jesus responded to this woman. [He welcomed her to himself and forgave her for her sins because she was sorry for them.] Explain that he responds in the same way to us when we are sorry for our sins.

3

Help your child understand that, when we approach Jesus to confess our sins, we may not do it in just this same way (bathing his feet with our tears, etc.). But we do this in our hearts. We know Jesus sacrificed himself for us. When we sin, we fail to live up to the dignity we have been given by Jesus' sacrifice. We act selfishly. At first, it feels like we are getting what we want when we sin, but eventually, we come to see it as sinful, just as this woman did.



Meeting Jesus in the Bible

As we prepare for First Reconciliation, we want to know Jesus better and to love him more.

Jesus teaches a woman that she has been forgiven because she was sorry for her sins. He teaches us that, too.

From Luke 7:36-50 (NRSV)

One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and took his place at the table. And a woman in the city, who was a sinner, having learned that he was eating in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment.

She stood behind him at his feet, weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair. Then she continued kissing his feet and anointing them with the ointment.

Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw it, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him—that she is a sinner."

Jesus spoke up and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." "Teacher," he replied, "speak."

"A certain creditor had two debtors; one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he cancelled the debts for both of



them. Now which of them will love him more?"

Simon answered, "I suppose the one for whom he canceled the greater debt." And Jesus said to him, "You have judged rightly."

Then turning toward the woman, he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has bathed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which were many, have been forgiven; hence she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little."

Then he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." But those who were at the table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."



From Papa Francis

On Valentine's Day, Pope Francis told 25,000 fiances that the success in marriage can be found in the three words, "Please, thanks, and sorry.... In our lives we make many errors, many mistakes. We all do. ... And this is why we need to be able to use this simple word, 'sorry'. In general we are all ready to accuse others and to justify ourselves. It is an instinct that lies at the origins of many disasters. Let us learn to recognize our mistakes and to apologize....The perfect family doesn't exist, nor the perfect husband nor wife. Let's not even talk about the perfect mother-in-law!"

1

In this activity, your child (and you) will learn more about the Act of Contrition by **writing your own version**.

Let your child take the lead, but work on it together. Ask questions or make small suggestions, but let your child write it out in his or her own words.



The Act of Contrition

Write your own version of an Act of Contrition, including the following points:

1. You admit you did something wrong.
2. You admit feeling sorry for it.
3. You promise to do better in the future.

1

Throughout these lessons, we have been learning the **Act of Contrition**. Explain to your child that during the Sacrament of Reconciliation, he or she will be asked to say this prayer aloud after the Priest has given them their penance. Assure them that if they don't remember the order of everything, the priest will help them.

2

The most important moment of the celebration is next, when the priest gives them **absolution** – **speaking aloud the promise that they are forgiven**. Make sure they understand this term.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

The Act of Contrition

The Act of Contrition is a prayer we say during the sacrament of reconciliation. When should you say it?

- After you tell the priest your sins
- After he asks you questions or gives you advice
- He will invite you to express your sorrow and that is when you say it
- Contrition means being sorry and being willing to not sin again.

Absolution

Absolution is when the priest offers you God's forgiveness after you have confessed your sins.

After you say your Act of Contrition, the priest will say:

Through the ministry of the church
may God give you pardon and peace,
and I absolve you from your sins
in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

(here you make the Sign of the Cross)

You answer: AMEN.



1

Review with your child the prayers and steps for this Sacrament and assure them that it is normal to be nervous or scared. You can tell them of a time when you were nervous or scared before going to confession.

2

As the parent of a child in this process, we urge you to **celebrate this sacrament yourself around the same time as your child** since you are asking them to do this. It is important role-modeling.



At Home This Week

Rehearsal Time

The Sacrament of Reconciliation can feel a bit scary to someone who is celebrating it for the first time. (Some adults still feel nervous or a little scared when they go to confession, especially if they haven't done it in a long time!) You can help by making sure your child knows the prayers and knows what will happen.

Also help your child to memorize an Act of Contrition (given above). Your child may also be given a penance, which could involve praying the Our Father, the Hail Mary, and the Glory Be. Make sure they know these prayers as well.

Assure them that even if they forget some words of the prayers or aren't sure what to do or say next during their confession, the priest will be willing to help. You can also remind them that whatever happens, God still loves them and forgives them.



Tips and Activities for This Week
<http://GrowingUpCatholic.com/reconciliation5>

3

Be sure to check out the online page for this lesson at GrowingUpCatholic.com/reconciliation5.