

ANSWERING THE CALL RECONCILIATION DISCIPLESHIP RESOURCES



How do we answer Jesus' call to be His disciple through the theme of Reconciliation?

What is Reconciliation?

Reconciliation is one of the seven sacraments given to us by the Church to help us to develop and maintain our relationship with God. As humans, we all do things wrong and make mistakes from time to time. The important thing when this happens is to say sorry and try not to let it happen again.

When we act in a way which God does not want us to and sin against him, we fall out of communion with God and with the Church. God is always there waiting for us to turn back to Him, as demonstrated in the parable of the Prodigal Son;

'And the son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son."

But the father said to his servants, "Bring quickly the best robe and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet." Luke 15:21-22

The Sacrament of Reconciliation, also known as the Sacrament of confession, forgiveness and conversion, is the way by which we as Catholic's can reconcile our relationship with God and, through the priest, receive absolution of our sins.

Sometimes, however, it may not be possible to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. In this booklet you will find suggestions to help you to create a Reconciliation service in school, through which the young people can be supported to examine their conscience and say sorry to God in prayer. In this way they can prepare to receive the sacrament at a later date.



How do we answer Jesus' call to be His disciple through the theme of Reconciliation?

See — for use in displays and Collective Worship



Video clips:

- [John Lewis Advert](#). Edgar, an adorable young dragon, is so excited about Christmas that he cannot control the flames from his mouth. He even burns the village Christmas tree, dampening everyone's Christmas spirit. But when his best friend Ava gives him a thoughtful gift, just right for an excitable dragon, he realises how much she cares for him. She forgives him time and time again.
- **Forgiveness** (Secondary). [The power of forgiveness](#). A son visits his father in prison and forgives him for all that he has done to him in the past.
- [Nelson Mandela forgives](#). This video offers the story of Nelson Mandela, how he forgave, and good things that can come from forgiveness.
- [An animation story about God's forgiveness](#). A short animation with a pencil and a rubber to show how God rubs out our sins and allows us to start again.
- [NDCYS video on the Sacrament of Reconciliation](#). Fr. David Cain offers insights into what reconciliation is, what happens during the sacrament, and its benefits.

Displays:

- **Forgiveness Display:** This display could be created by class/KS/year group or as part of an Act of Worship. Students are asked to write down either: (i) How it feels to be forgiven (ii) The words that we use to forgive others (iii) Examples of forgiveness in the Bible (iv) Ways that we can heal and celebrate our new friendship with each other/ with God.
- **Reconciliation quotes and images:** Some images which you might be able to use in a display, or to form part of a discussion, can be found [here](#).
- **Examination of Conscience:** An example is given below, this can be used or edited to make it more personal for your school. Could your students write their own examination of conscience and share it with another Class/ KS for them to use?

An Examination of Conscience for Children

Responsibilities to God:

Have I prayed every day?

Have I prayed my morning prayers and night prayers?

Have I prayed with my parents and family?

Have I been moody and rebellious about praying and going to church on Sunday?

Have I asked the Holy Spirit to help me whenever I have been tempted to sin?

Responsibilities to others:

Have I been obedient and respectful to my parents?

Have I lied or been deceitful to my parents or to others?

Have I been arrogant, stubborn or rebellious?

Have I talked back to parents, teachers or other adults or been grumpy?

Have I been selfish toward my parents, brothers, and sisters, teachers, or my friends and schoolmates?

Have I become angry at them? Have I hit anyone?

Have I held grudges or not forgiven others?

Have I treated other children with respect or have I made fun of them and called them names?

Have I used bad language?

Hear - *Forgiveness is at the heart of Christianity, if we allow ourselves to be forgiven and in turn, forgive others, we are true disciples of Christ.*

Scripture:

- Luke 19: 1-9 Zacchaeus the Tax Collector
- ♦ John 8: 1-11 The woman caught in adultery.
- ♦ Matthew 18: 21-35 The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant
- ♦ Luke 15: 11-32 The Parable of the Prodigal Son
- ♦ Luke 23: 39-43 The Thief on the Cross
- ♦ [Ephesians 4:29-32](#) *'forgive one another, as God has forgiven you through Christ'*
- ♦ [Mark 11:24-26](#) *'forgive anything you may have against anyone, so that your Father in heaven will forgive the wrongs you have done.'*
- ♦ [1 John 1: 5-10](#) *'he will forgive us our sins and purify us from all our wrongdoing'*
- ♦ [Matthew 6: 5-15](#) Prayer and the Our Father
- ♦ [Luke 6: 37-42](#) *'forgive others, and God will forgive you'*
- ♦ [Colossians 3:12-17](#) *'You must forgive one another just as the Lord has forgiven you'*
- ♦ [James 5: 13-20](#) *'pray for one another, so that you will be healed'*
- ♦ [Acts 2: 38-42](#) *'turn away from your sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins will be forgiven'*

- ♦ [Ephesians 1: 1-14](#) *'For by the blood of Christ we are set free, that is, our sins are forgiven.'*
- ♦ [Luke 17: 1-4](#) *'If he sins against you seven times in one day, and each time he comes to you saying, 'I repent,' you must forgive him.'*
- ♦ [Luke 23: 32-25](#) *"Forgive them, Father! They don't know what they are doing."*

Worship Music and Hymns - More can be found on www.worshiptogether.com (modern worship music) or www.ocp.org (hymns more commonly found in hymn books).

- All the people said amen - Matt Maher.
- Give us clean hands – Chris Tomlin.
- Forgiveness – Toby Mac.
- ♦ You are more – Tenth North Avenue.
- ♦ Forgiveness - Matthew West
- ♦ Power to Redeem - Lauren Daigle
- ♦ Reckless Love - Cory Asbury
- ♦ Lay it all down - Will Reagan
- ♦ When I Survey the Wonderous Cross - CJM Music
- ♦ Good, Good Father - Chris Tomlin
- ♦ What a beautiful name it is - Hillsong Worship
- ♦ **Hymns:**
- Amazing Grace.
- ♦ Freely, Freely.
- ♦ Make me a channel of your peace.
- ♦ Face of your mercy - CJM Music
- ♦ Freedom Reigns - Michael Larson
- ♦ Lay your hands - Carey Landry

Secular Songs:

- Sorry seems to be the hardest word – Blue ft Elton John
- ♦ Sorry – Justin Bieber
- ♦ Blinded By Your Grace Part 2 - Stormzy, MNEK

Think — *A time to reflect on how God's forgiveness impacts our lives and how our forgiveness of others allows us to be true disciples of Christ.*

God doesn't want anyone to sin, but he knows we will. That's why he provided a way for us to have complete forgiveness through His son Jesus. And He not only gives us a way out of sin, He's excited about forgiving us. The Bible says God delights in showing us mercy - Micah 7:18.

♦ **Prayer before Reconciliation**

Come, Holy Spirit, into my soul.

Show me my sins,
both the wrong that I did
and the good I failed to do.

Give me the grace
to be sorry for my sins
out of love for God,
so that through Confession
my soul might be healed
and strengthened to do good.

Amen!

- ♦ **Discussion activity** - using pictures [provided](#), what do they tell students about forgiveness?

- ♦ **Examination of conscience** - Using a series of questions or reflections we can prepare ourselves for the Sacrament of Reconciliation or a Reconciliation Service by reflecting on our thoughts and words, what we have done, and what we have failed to do and bringing them before God to seek His mercy and forgiveness for the times when we have not been a true disciple of Christ.

For an Examination of Conscience based on the 10 Commandments click [here](#)

♦ **Sorry Prayers:**

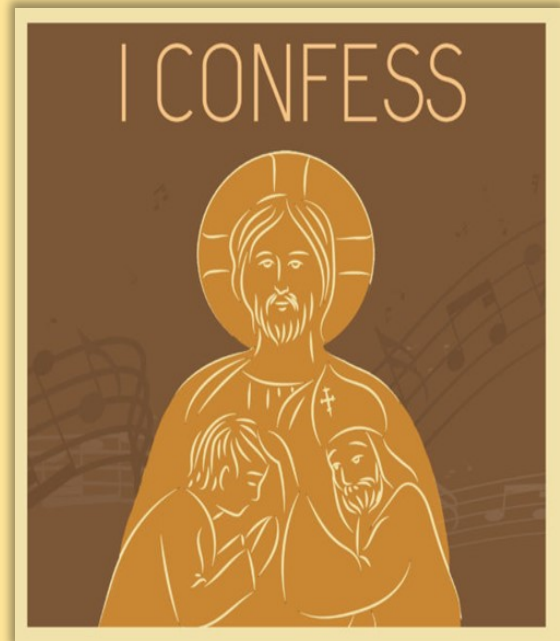
- ♦ For when we have upset others
- ♦ For when we are not grateful for what we have
- ♦ For the times when we have not trusted God
- ♦ For when we have broken other people's trust
- ♦ For when we have mistreated others who are different to us
- ♦ For when we have failed to help those in need
- ♦ For when we failed to love others
- ♦ For when we have not shown our love for God
- ♦ For when we have shared anger and not peace
- ♦ For when we have tried to find our hope in things away from God



◆ **Penitential Rite:**

I confess to almighty God
and to you, my brothers and sisters,
that I have greatly sinned,
in my thoughts and in my words,
in what I have done,
and in what I have failed to do,
through my fault, through my fault,
through my most grievous fault;
therefore I ask blessed Mary, ever virgin,
all the Angels and Saints,
and you, my brothers and sisters,
to pray for me to the Lord our God.

May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life.
Amen.



◆ **The Act of Contrition:**

There are a variety of different Acts of Contrition suggested in the Rite of Penance. [Here](#) are a few of them.

- ◆ **Around the room activity:** Look around the classroom / Chapel / hall / playground. What are some of the things that delight you - you know, that really make you happy? Next time you ask for forgiveness, think of that feeling of delight; it's just a tiny glimpse of the delight God feels when he shows mercy toward you. This could lead into a class discussion about what brings joy to our lives.

- ◆ **Celebrating our Forgiveness:** In the [Parable of the Prodigal Son](#) the Father throws a banquet to celebrate the return of his lost son. Think about how to celebrate Reconciliation - how will you use your new start to live your life as a better disciple of Jesus? How could you forgive others so they too can share in the joy of reconciliation?



Do

Teach Students How to Respond:

Sometimes we can have a knee-jerk reaction when we feel we have been wronged by someone, and think that an 'eye-for-an-eye' is the way to solve the situation. To help us learn to choose forgiveness, we need to focus on how to respond in an uncomfortable situations.

A great way to teach students to choose to forgive is to have them play the “**What would you do?**” game. This is where you read students a scenario and ask them to choose between the three choices (ignore, seek revenge, forgive). Give each student “Spotlight colours” of paper (red - seek revenge, yellow - ignore, green - forgive) for them to make their choice. Here are a few scenarios that you can read to students:

- *You just found out that your best friend has been telling everyone your deepest secret. What do you do?*
 - *Everyone in class got invited to a party but you didn't get an invitation. What do you do?*
 - *You were playing a board game and lost your temper because you thought someone was cheating. What do you do?*
 - *You are in the playground and your “Friend” keeps picking on you “jokingly” in front of everyone. While it's upsetting you, they apologise. What do you do?*
 - *Your classmate breaks your favourite headphones by accident and wants to apologise. What do you do?*
- **Reconciliation Service** – during the Service you can drop an ice cube into water (this can be done on a small or large scale). The melting ice symbolises our sins being forgiven. You could also do something similar with: soluble paper, felt tips written on paper/ paper towel, writing in sand that is washed away by water.
 - **Fire Pit** : Students write their sins on a piece of paper and take them outside to the fire pit. The teacher places the sins into the fire pit to show that God forgives our sins and we can start afresh.
 - **Chalk on playground and wash away:** Bring the students to the playground, give them a piece of chalk each and ask them to draw something on the ground that symbolises a time when they have not been a good disciple of Jesus. **Remember to avoid writing names/ specific sins in this public setting.** Either wait for the rain to wash the sins away or pour water over them to show that there is nothing that God's love for us cannot overcome when we are truly sorry.



Do

- **Who does God say I am?:** Ask the students to sit in front of a mirror. Tell them to look at themselves and to think about how we view ourselves and our actions. Once they are ready they should write a word on the mirror that **God** would use to describe them. Encourage students to spend some time in prayer asking God to help us to see ourselves in the way that He does so that we may see the good in ourselves.
- **Home-school:** A note of forgiveness written at school and given to someone at home.
- **Mission:** Students can be encouraged to: go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation in their parish (if it is happening); find someone they've upset and say sorry; to help others to resolve their conflicts peacefully.
- Here is a [Cafod Reconciliation Service](#) which you could use or adapt.



R.E.

- GCSE – Matthew 18: 21-35 The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant
- Come and see – Topic 8 Reconciliation - interrelating

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