

Family Information Book For the Sacrament of Reconciliation



**Saint Luke Catholic Church
McLean, Virginia
2023-2024**



First Reconciliation Information

Date: ***Sunday, February 4th*** during class for Sunday Morning Religious Ed.
Monday, February 5th during class for Monday Religious Ed. 4:30-5:50 pm
Homebased students and students who attend other Catholic schools should attend this session*
Wednesday, February 7th after 9 AM School Mass for SLS Students.

Place: Students in St. Luke's School will meet in the Church.
Sunday Religious Education Students will meet in the gym at 10:30 AM.
Monday Religious Education Students will meet at 4:30 in the chapel.

Students will sit together as a class in the Church/Chapel/gym. Parents are invited to attend First Reconciliation; however, students will remain with their classmates for the duration of the prayer service and will return to their classes afterwards.

Prior to your child receiving their First Reconciliation

- Please take your child with you to visit Saint Luke chapel and show them the Confessional. (Although children may be making their First Reconciliation in the Church, this will help them to know that reconciliation is a Sacrament meant to be received more than once).
- The Confessional has been renovated. We kneel behind the screen to go to confession.
- Please let your child know that the Sacrament of Reconciliation is a joyous occasion because they receive unconditional love and forgiveness from God.

Priests

Father Guest and Father Carroll will strive to make you and your child feel at ease. Reconciliation is a Sacrament of peace, healing and forgiveness.

The Reconciliation Service

On the day of First Reconciliation:

- Children should dress in their Sunday clothes or their school uniform if a SLS student--no jeans or tee shirts.
- Students will proceed to their classes and will be brought over to the church or chapel by their teacher. Students who are homebased or who attend another Catholic school outside of St. Luke School, should meet in the Chapel on Monday evening at 4:30 pm.
- Father Guest will lead us in prayer and we will pray the Act of Contrition together.
- Students will then be given the opportunity to go to Confession.
- Students will say their penance and then wait for closing prayer.
- Father Guest will lead the Closing Prayer. Students will then return to their respective classes. Homebased students/Other Catholic School students will be able to go home after the Closing Prayer.
- Please be mindful of the sacredness of the sacrament and refrain from conversations while in the chapel and church.

November 19, 2023

Dear Parents,

“But whoever is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him.” ~1 Corinthians 6:17

We look forward to the celebration of your child’s Sacrament of Reconciliation at Saint Luke Church. This sacrament is one of the Catholic Church’s greatest treasures. It is a sacrament of peace, healing and forgiveness that helps us put our past sins behind us, reconcile ourselves with God and bask in the security of God’s unconditional love for us.

Parents are the first and most important educators of their children especially in matters of faith. Preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation is an important part of your child’s spiritual development. As parents, you have the responsibility of helping your child distinguish between right and wrong, good and evil. You are the ones who have the greatest influence on your child’s system of values and morality. It is through your lives that your child comes to understand and model forgiveness, compassion and mercy.

The book “Blessed: First Reconciliation” from Dynamic Catholic has been distributed to your child in order to assist them with preparation for the sacrament. We trust you will find the chapters, lessons and activities valuable in using this book with your child. Our prayer is that sharing this preparation with your child will be a very rewarding experience.

Please return the “Blessed: First Reconciliation” book to teacher/catechist (or have it checked off by the Office of Religious Education if students are homebased) the week of January 21, 2024.

We wish you well as you embark on this journey, together with your child. As always, please feel free to contact the office if you have any questions. We look forward to sharing this special time with your family. We look forward to seeing you at the First Eucharist Parent Meeting on February 7, 2024 at 7 pm in Flaherty Hall. Know of our prayers for you!

Peace in Christ,

Emily T. Teter
Director of Religious Education

Please contact our office with any questions you might have: 703-356-8419 or eteter@saintlukemclean.org or pslusser@saintlukemclean.org

Blessed: First Reconciliation

We are excited to be using Blessed: First Reconciliation to help your child prepare with you for First Reconciliation. Produced by Dynamic Catholic, the series is interactive and allows for students to use a book as well as to watch videos as part of their at home preparation.

Your student has been given their copy of Blessed: First Reconciliation and parents should go online here: <https://www.dynamiccatholic.com/plus/blessed-seasons.html> to access the Leader's Guide as well as the videos needed to walk them through each chapter. Please be sure to select the Leader's Guide for *First Reconciliation*. The leader's guide is easy to use, although you may need to adapt as you go, since you are working one on one with your child as opposed to your child being in a classroom setting. This link is available online on our website under Religious Education, First Reconciliation.

There are six chapters (referred to as seasons online) which are meant to take about an hour and a half each to complete. You know your child best, so feel free to go through the chapters with them in a way that best suits them. Some children will thrive doing one chapter in a sitting and others will need them broken up. Regardless of how you choose to do the lessons, students will need to have their books completed the week of January 21. The book will be returned to your child.

Should you need a Catholic Bible or any other resources to help your child prepare, please reach out to our Office.

Preparing Your Child for the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Being a witness to your faith is the most important way to teach your child the faith. Teach your child by your example. Take your child with you to church and confession. Go to Mass weekly and on Holy Days.

Your child needs to sense and see the joy, love and security of your lived faith.

Children behave much better in response to our positive expectations than to criticism. If we expect them to do wrong, they probably will. If we indicate that we expect them to rise to our high expectations of them, they are more likely to do so.

Express forgiveness toward your child. Say, "I forgive you". Ask for forgiveness when you have been unjust.

Help your child express forgiveness to someone who has injured or hurt him/her.

Make the words "I'm sorry" and "please forgive me" part of your family communication.

Help a child go beyond being sorry out of fear of punishment or being caught, to being sorry or seeking forgiveness because of love and concern.

Help your child learn from their mistakes. Help him/her see the consequences of their behavior.

Pray together. Pray with your child. Ask your child to pray for you. Help your child to learn the **Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be and the Act of Contrition**.

Read Scripture. Tell Bible stories, especially the parable of the Prodigal Son: Luke 15:11-24 and the story of the Lost Sheep: Luke 15:1-7

Discuss stories, TV shows, commercials or real-life experiences involving moral decisions.

Guide your child in a short examination of conscience before bedtime. Pray an Act of Contrition. Pray before bed.

Look forward to the day when your child will receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time. Perhaps prepare a countdown and then a celebration the day they receive the sacrament.

Additional Resources to help you prepare your child for the Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Five Ways to Prepare your Child for First Reconciliation

<https://www.catholicmom.com/articles/2015/01/19/5-ways-to-prepare-your-child-for-first-reconciliation>

Preparing Students for Reconciliation

<https://catechistsjourney.loyolapress.com/2018/01/preparing-students-for-reconciliation/>

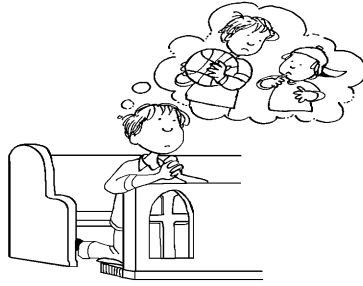
Brother Francis Online on Confession:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fhphVKNUX8k>

How to Go to Confession:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lb8pzvnnL20>

All of this information will be found on our website in order for you to access the hyperlinks easily.



Catholics live by...

The Great Commandment

“You shall love God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

The New Commandment (Jesus’ Law of Love)

“Love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. “

The Ten Commandments

1. I am the Lord, your God: you shall not have strange gods before me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord’s Day.
4. Honor your father and your mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor’s goods.

The Precepts of the Church

1. To keep Sundays holy; and to participate in Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.
2. To lead a sacramental life; to receive Holy Communion frequently (at least once a year during the Easter season) and the Sacrament of Reconciliation regularly.
3. To study Catholic teaching in preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation; to be confirmed, and then to continue to study and witness Christ to your world.
4. To observe the marriage laws of the Church. To give religious training, by word and example, to one’s children.
5. To strengthen and support the Church – one’s own parish and priests, the worldwide Church, and the pope.
6. To do penance, including abstaining from meat and fasting from food on appointed days.
7. To support the missionary spirit and work of the Church.

CHILDREN'S EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

Do I love God as his very own child?

Do I remember to pray to God each day?

Do I thank God for all he does for me?

Do I always say God's name with love?

Do I always say the name of Jesus with love?

Do I show my love for God by loving others?

Do I keep Sunday holy by going to Mass?

Do I remind myself when I am in God's house and behave as I should?

Do I always talk nicely to my parents?

Do I do what my parents ask me to do?

Do I help with the chores around the house?

Do I try to be pleasant while doing chores and obeying my parents?

Do I show my love for others by obeying at school and at public places?

Do I treat others with love and kindness?

Do I ever hurt others by calling them names?

Do I fight with others?

Do I make others angry?

Do I always tell the truth?

Do I make promises that I do not keep?

Do I ever cheat on tests or schoolwork?

Do I ever take things that do not belong to me?

Do I treat the property of others with respect and care?



HOW TO MAKE YOUR FIRST RECONCILIATION

Make the **SIGN OF THE CROSS**: "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

SAY **"Bless me, Father, for I have sinned."**

CONFESS your sins by explaining what you have done for which you are sorry.

SAY **"For these and all my sins, I am sorry."**

The priest will give a penance for you to say or do AS SOON as you leave the confessional.

The priest gives Absolution:

"God, the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son, has reconciled the world to himself and poured out the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God grant 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. Amen."

SAY **"Amen."**

The priest may say, "Go in peace."

SAY **"Thank you, Father."**

You may say your penance in the Chapel or in the pews marked off in the front of the Church/gym. After you are done with your penance, please return to the pews in the church/chapel/gym to wait for the final blessing!



PRAYERS

Sign of the Cross

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

Our Father

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee! Blessed are thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Glory Be (Doxology)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Act of Contrition

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy. Amen.

Guardian Angel

Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here, ever this day be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.

ACT OF CONTRITION

My God, I am sorry for my _____ with all my _____.

In choosing to do wrong and in failing to do _____,

I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things.

I firmly intend, with your _____, to do _____,

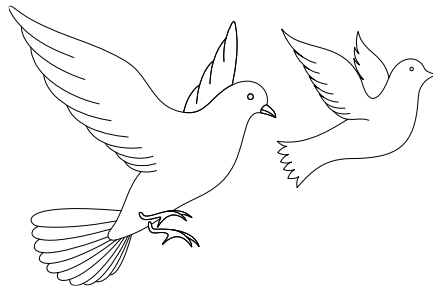
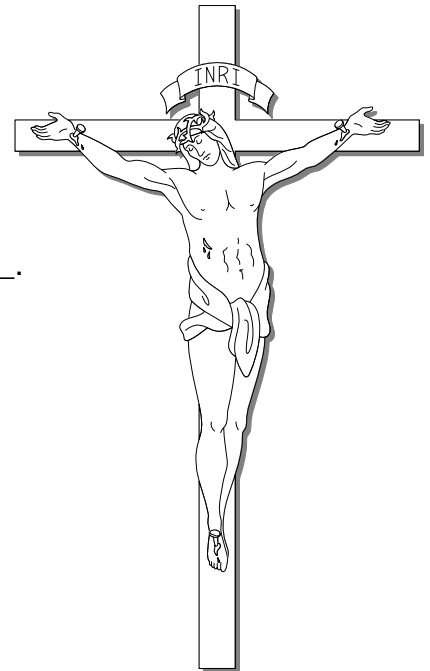
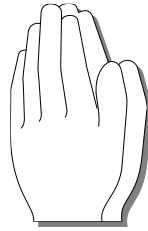
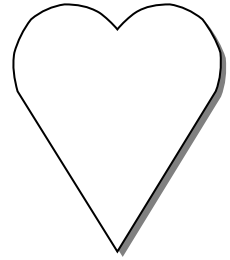
To _____ no more,

And to avoid whatever leads me to sin.

Our Savior Jesus Christ _____

And _____ for us. In his name, my God, have _____.

Amen.





Sacrament of Penance Cryptogram

The KEY at the top lists all the letters from A thru Z with boxes below that have a corresponding number. Each of the blanks has a number underneath it. Fill in the letters that correspond to the numbers below the blanks to solve the puzzle. ©2008 Doreen Gerczak Used with permission.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
18	3	13	21	5	2	23	15	24	20	26	22	8	12	4	16	7	14	10	25	17	1	9	6	11	19

16 5 12 18 12 13 5 24 10 25 15 5 10 18 13 14 18 8 5 12 25

3 11 9 15 24 13 15 10 24 12 10 13 4 8 8 24 25 25 5 21

18 2 25 5 14 3 18 16 25 24 10 8 18 14 5 2 4 14 23 24 1 5 12

25 15 14 4 17 23 15 25 15 5 18 3 10 4 22 17 25 24 4 12 4 2

25 15 5 16 14 24 5 10 25 24 25 24 10 18 22 10 4

13 18 22 22 5 21 25 15 5 10 18 13 14 18 8 5 12 25 4 2

14 5 13 4 12 13 24 22 24 18 25 24 4 12 4 14 4 2

13 4 12 2 5 10 10 24 4 12