

Session Plan, Reconciliation Session 2

September 24 2018

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Preparation

Session Planning

File: Rec_S2_SP.pdf

Catechist Background

Session Outcomes

Informing the Mind

- Know that God always loves us, remains faithful to his promises, and welcomes us with forgiveness and mercy when we sin
- Understand that Original Sin is the first sin committed by Adam and Eve, passed down to all human beings
- Recognize that Jesus came to save us from our sins and from death
- Realize that in Baptism, through the power of the Holy Spirit, we receive new life in Christ

Forming the Heart

- Appreciate God's covenant with Israel as a sign of his mercy and love that also requires us to show mercy and love to others
- Discover that Jesus is the sign of the new covenant
- Consider the relationship formed at Baptism between the baptized, Christ, and the Church
- Understand that the grace received in Baptism restores the covenant broken by sin and helps us to conform our lives to Christ

Church Documents

- *Rite of Penance* 1-3
- *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 413-421, 430-435, 1262-1274, 1422-1424

We Live in Covenant with God

"The Father has shown forth his mercy by reconciling the world to himself in Christ and by making peace for all things on earth and in heaven by the blood of Christ on the cross."¹⁴

Rite of Penance, 1

In Genesis 3, we learn about the Fall of creation. God holds on to the tree of knowledge of good and evil as an invitation for Adam and Eve to express gratitude, not because he is stingy. This single law given to them by God is a reminder that everything in creation is not really *theirs*, but a gift from God. The first sin is ultimately a fall from gratitude. Rather than receive everything from God, Adam and Eve failed to trust his goodness. Their prideful disobedience prompted them to seize the fruit.

The Law of the Old Testament is a gift that helps Israel to remember that everything they have, even their identity, is a gift from God. In the Law, God provides explicit ways for the Israelites to live in relationship with him and be his People. To sin by refusing to obey the Law is to fall again from that posture of true humility that makes it possible to enter into relationship with God and one another.

Israel continues to violate the covenant, but God refuses to give up on his People. He sends prophets to call Israel back to her deepest commitments, to worship God and love their neighbor. And in the fullness of time, the Father sends his only Son to offer a new covenant, one that fulfills the old.

The Old Law prepares for the New Law, the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is a prophesy of the freedom from sin which Jesus brings about. The strength for people to fully live by the Law only comes through the gift of grace. In Baptism, we enter into the life and death of Jesus Christ. We are liberated from sin and begin a life in the Spirit.

We know that we sometimes still fall short of this posture of gratitude and choose to follow our will and not God's. Confessing our sins in the *Rite of Penance* enables us to return to God, just as Israel did, again and again.

Reflect In what areas of your life do you fail to show gratitude? How do you try to keep yourself attentive to the gift of God's love?

Lord, you are ever-faithful. Help me to be a living example of faithfulness as I guide these children to your love.

Adaptive Learning & Special Needs

Promises (p. 20)

The instructions for this activity already accommodate for a variety of abilities and needs. **Children with reading difficulties (such as dyslexia), as well as children with writing or fine motor difficulties (such as dysgraphia)**, might prefer to say their answers aloud, rather than writing them. **Children with attention problems or impulsive behavior** may enjoy acting out their answers to questions on this page.

Personal Sin and Grace (p. 25)

Children with reading difficulties (such as dyslexia) might need some assistance spelling the words that go with the pictures on this page. Write the three words (*Baptism, Eucharist, and Penance*) on a small sheet of paper and place it next to the child's book. Point to each word as you read it so the child knows what each word looks like and can copy them into his or her book. **Children with writing or fine motor difficulties (such as dysgraphia)** might prefer to say their answers aloud. The catechist can then write them in the spaces on the page.

Friendships are Important (p. 26)

Children with intellectual/developmental delays (such as autism) might have some difficulties identifying social cues from pictures in order to determine which ones portray friendship. It might be helpful for the catechist or assistant to sit with these children and provide descriptions or narrations for several pre-selected pictures so each child can choose one that shows friendship.

Life in the New Covenant (p. 27)

Children with writing or fine motor difficulties (such as dysgraphia) might prefer to verbally describe ways to make their connection with Jesus stronger, rather than writing them in the spaces on the page. If you have **children with attention problems or impulsive behavior** in your group, you may wish to make this an interactive activity. Have three different colored cords set up in three different areas of the room. Make sure there are enough cords for each child in each area. Explain that each different colored cord represents each of the following: praying, reading the Bible, and going to Mass. Assign a color for each of these actions. Then invite the children to take one of each cord and braid them together to make a bracelet. Tell them to wear their bracelet as a reminder to look for ways that they can make their relationship with Jesus stronger.

Welcome and Gather

Before the session begins, have red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple construction paper, pencils, and safety scissors (one pair per child) set out for the children. Ask them to trace their hand onto the pieces of construction paper. Next, have the children cut out their traced hands. Let them know that the more hands they make, the better!

Say: *While you work, think about some of the ways that God has blessed you. Also, try to remember some of the important promises that God has made to his People.*

Tell the children that they will use their hands later to make a class rainbow that symbolizes something very important. Invite volunteers to share some of the ways that God has blessed them or tell about any of God's promises that they know.

Say: *Let's keep these wonderful promises and blessings in mind as we begin our opening prayer.*

Opening Prayer Option

Invite the children to pray the opening prayer in a call and response style. Read the first two sentences of the *Leader* part and have the children pray the *All* response (saving “Amen” for the end of the prayer). Then, read the last sentence and have the children pray the *All* response again (this time including “Amen” at the end of the prayer).

Before you begin this call and response, tell the children that you would like them to cup their hand around their ear to signify listening each time they say the word *hear*.

Invite

Catechist Guide Instruction

Invite

♡ Let Us Pray

Quiet the group and read aloud the leader’s part. Prompt the children’s response.

Explain that this session focuses on God’s constant love and mercy.

- *Say:* Today we are going to learn about how God never stops loving us. He shows us mercy when we fail to love. Let’s get ready to hear the Word of God.

God’s Word

Guide the children through the process of scripture reflection.

- Invite the children to close their eyes, be still, and be ready to hear what God is saying to them.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- Read aloud the Scripture.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?
- Invite volunteers to share.

► **Opening Video 2** Have the children watch a short video at [sacraments.osv.com](https://www.sacraments.osv.com).

Note If you do not use the video, say the following to transition to the next page: Let’s learn more about Jesus’ promise to always be with us and the importance of keeping the promises we make.

Adaptive Learning & Special Needs

Intellectual/Developmental Delays

Children with autism or other intellectual/developmental delays may need some help interpreting the visual cues for the emotions depicted on page 23. Use questions to focus their attention to specific parts of the pictures. For example, have them look at the first picture and ask, “How is the girl feeling? Look at her face. Is she happy or sad?” and “What is the boy holding in his hands? Is he sharing with the girl?” Do the same with the other picture. Ask which picture shows a loving action. Point out that sharing is one way we show love to others.

✪ Session activity adaptations to meet various learning needs can be found at [sacraments.osv.com](https://www.sacraments.osv.com).

Promises

Open the lesson by telling the children that you promise to give them a surprise today if they shut their eyes and are silent for thirty seconds. Use a timer for thirty seconds, and then begin the lesson.

Use the first paragraph of text to lead into the activity.

★ Provide prompts of promises the children may have kept, such as working hard at school or keeping their room clean. Allow time for them to complete the activity.

- Ask: What happens when we break a promise, or when a promise someone made to us is broken?
- Ask the children how they would feel if you broke your promise to give them the surprise that you mentioned earlier. Expect a little uproar. Then discuss disappointment from broken promises.

★ **Disciples Sharing** As a group, compile reasons for keeping promises. *Possible responses: shows we are trustworthy, shows we are responsible, helps people to depend on us*

- Then, keep your promise and give the children their surprise.

Optional Activity

Perform Skits As an alternative to the opening activity, invite the children to make up and perform the end of a skit about promises.

- Divide the group into several smaller groups. Give them a premise for a skit and describe the beginning of a story, including a promise that is made. Each group will come up with different ways to keep the promise. They can act out keeping the promise or what happens after the promise is kept.
- Provide simple costumes and props and allow the children to select those that are appropriate for their skits.
- Remind the children to use hypothetical, not real, names and incidents to avoid embarrassing others.

Session Video

View Video: http://sacraments.osv.com/reconciliation/view_video/33653

Discover

Catechist Guide Instruction

Discover

Signs & Symbols

Point out the photograph. Explain the function of the font, and point out the baptismal water.

- Ask: Where have you seen a font like this? *Accept reasonable responses.*
- Point out that the Holy Trinity is present at all of the Sacraments and that we honor the Trinity by praying the Sign of the Cross.

Summarize the last paragraph.

- Ask: What have you done with water today? *Possible responses: washed, brushed teeth, drank*
- Reinforce that just as physical life depends on water, becoming a member of the Church, the Body of Christ, depends on baptismal water.

Explain that a symbol or sign is something we see that stands for something we can't see.

- Ask: What is baptismal water a sign of? *God's grace at Baptism*
- Remind the children that during our Baptism, we can either be fully submerged in the baptismal water or have it poured over us.

Meet Jesus

Introduce Jesus as the Savior.

- Ask: What does it mean to save someone? *Possible responses: to protect the person, to defend the person, to care for the person*

Read aloud the text.

- Ask: What does Jesus save us from? *sin and death*

Catechist Background

Baptismal Water In the blessing of baptismal water, we hear of God's grace and love and the importance of water throughout salvation history. God breathed over the waters during the creation story and gave life to the world. God's presence makes all water a wellspring of holiness. When Noah traveled the waters of the great flood, his journey marked a new beginning for humanity and a covenant between God and human beings. The Israelites walked through the waters of the Red Sea to escape slavery in Egypt. Jesus himself was baptized by John in the waters of the Jordan as a sign of repentance, though Jesus is without sin. The waters of Baptism signify and impart God's saving love.

Made for Love

Read aloud the heading.

- Discuss what the children think it means to be made for love.

Read aloud the text. Point out that our relationship with God is more important than anything else in our lives.

- Ask: How did our first parents harm their relationship with God? *Possible responses: They turned away from God's love and put themselves before him. They disobeyed God.* How can you make your relationship with God stronger? *Possible responses: pray often, make choices that will please God, be kind to others*

Point out that God remained faithful to his People and loved them no matter what. But they still had to face the consequences of their choices.

God's Word

Define key terms in the scripture reading: *rend* (tear; tearing garments was a sign of sorrow), *abounding* (full of), and *steadfast* (faithful).

- Proclaim the Scripture and help the children interpret it.

Challenge the children to find gestures that echo the ideas in the key terms and that help them understand the scripture passage.

- Read the Scripture again and ask the children to add their gestures as you read.

Scripture Background

Joel 2:13 This verse is part of a call to repentance. The people of Israel would rend, or tear, their garments as a sign of sadness or grief. God is speaking through the prophet, calling his People to allow their hearts to be broken open with sorrow over their sin. The people are called to change their ways and to make their hearts pure as they reestablish a relationship with God. Joel is encouraging his people to turn back to God and experience the kindness and mercy he has to offer. God’s “gracious and merciful” nature is proclaimed often by the prophets to encourage the people to repent—to turn back to God and experience his goodness.

When Humans Fail, God Still Loves

Remind the children that Adam and Eve had free will. They chose to act against God’s plan and command.

Read aloud the first two paragraphs.

- *Ask:* What do we call the sin of Adam and Eve? *Original Sin* What are the consequences for choosing against what God wants? We harm ourselves, others, and our relationship with God.

Emphasize that God still loves us. Read aloud the next paragraph.

Say: God sent Jesus to teach us how to live and to save us from sin. Jesus healed our relationship with God.

★ As the children color, explain that the first picture shows a non-loving action that we must say no to in order to be in right relationship with God and others. The next picture shows an action that is a sign of God’s love.

- Invite the children to suggest some other actions that show love for God and others.

Entering the Mystery

Define the Paschal Mystery. Point out that God was always faithful to his promise to save us. God the Father sent us Jesus so that we could have new life with him.

- Have the children turn to the Paschal Mystery feature at the back of their book. Help them place the correct sticker by each part of the Paschal Mystery.

Optional Activity

And With Your Spirit Music CD Using the lyrics for “Incarnate One” (track 6) from *And With Your Spirit*, explore the idea of Original Sin.

- Print each verse on a separate sheet of paper. Then tape the verses on a wall in consecutive order.
- Have the children work in groups to illustrate, on chart paper, one of these stories: God makes the

world, God makes Adam and Eve, Adam and Eve disobey, Jesus is born, Jesus on the Cross.

- Play “Incarnate One” while they work.
- Attach their illustrations to the wall under the corresponding verses.

God Keeps His Promises

Ask: When is it the hardest for you to do what is right? When are you most tempted to do what is wrong?

Summarize the first paragraph.

- *Ask:* What happened as a result of Adam and Eve’s choice to act against God’s will? *They damaged their relationship with each other, with God, and with the world.*

Read aloud the second paragraph.

- Discuss what *mercy* is and how God shows us his mercy.
- *Ask:* What is a covenant? *a sacred promise* What covenant did God make with the people of Israel? *They will be his People, and he will be their God.*
- *Say:* Let’s read on to see what happened next.

Select a volunteer to read the last few paragraphs.

- *Ask:* Did the people keep the covenant? *no* What did God do about the broken promise? *He sent prophets to remind them that they were not living as they should; he promised to send Jesus to them.* How does Baptism change us? *We become one with Jesus. All sin, including Original Sin, is forgiven. God’s grace helps us grow closer to him.*

Content Extension

Sacraments The Seven Sacraments are divided into three groups:

- The three Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist) celebrate membership into the Catholic Church.
- The two Sacraments of Healing (Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick) bring God’s forgiveness and healing to people who are suffering physical and spiritual sickness.
- The two Sacraments at the Service of Communion (Holy Orders and Matrimony) celebrate people’s commitment to serve God and the community and help build up the People of God.

Personal Sin and Grace

Clarify the difference between a *sin*, *accident*, *mistake*, and *temptation*.

- *Say:* An *accident* is not done on purpose and is not a sin. A *mistake* is a misunderstanding or an incorrect answer, not a sin. A *sin* is a choice to do something we know is wrong. A *temptation* is an attraction to sin. It is not a sin but can lead a person to sin. In our hearts we must choose to live by the Spirit and walk away from the temptation. We can trust that the Father will give us the strength to get through it.

Point out that when we sin, our relationship with God is weakened. But when we do as God wants, we are open to his grace. We share in his life and work, making loving choices.

Read aloud the second paragraph.

- Ask: What helps us avoid sin and temptation? *Possible responses: God's love, Jesus' example, the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the Church, the Sacraments*

📍 Go to page 69 for more info on the Seven Sacraments.

Read aloud the next paragraph and the information on "Forgiveness."

- Say: In the Sacraments, we receive grace and strength to live as Jesus taught us and help heal our relationships with God and others. This is what it means to be a disciple of Christ.

★ Have the children label which Sacrament is being celebrated in each photo.

Restored Order Connection

Sacraments of Initiation Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist are the three Sacraments of Initiation. Baptism and Confirmation are received only once because they make "an *indelible spiritual mark*, the 'character,' which is the sign that Jesus Christ has marked a Christian with the seal of his Spirit ... so that he may be his witness"¹⁶ (CCC, 1304). Confirmation increases and deepens the grace of Baptism. The Eucharist is a sign of our continuing relationship with Jesus. Catholics are encouraged to partake in the Eucharist often and are required to do so at least once a year (see CCC, 1417). Have the children place a Holy Spirit sticker next to a place where they learned about the Holy Spirit in this session.

Friendships Are Important

Remind the children that God is good and loves us. Jesus teaches us to be faithful to God by making good choices and acting with love toward others.

- Read aloud the text.

★ **Disciples Sharing** Allow volunteers to share some of their answers to the questions in their books about friendship.

★ Read aloud the activity instructions.

- Supply magazines or other sources for the children to cut out pictures and paste on the page.
- After the children have had time to complete their work, discuss which pictures they chose and why.

Optional Activity

Clarifying Sin Some children may have difficulty distinguishing between mistakes, accidents, sins, and temptations. Use this activity to discuss these terms as a group. First, put the words *mistake*, *accident*, *sin*, and *temptation* up in the corners of the room.

- Provide several age-appropriate, hypothetical examples of each. Possibilities: giving an incorrect answer (mistake), dropping a stack of plates (accident), deliberately smashing a plate (sin), having a thought about stealing a candy bar (temptation).
- For each example, have the children stand under the word they think describes the action. Discuss each example with the children and ask why they think the action is or is not sinful.

Music Option: "Incarnate One"

Play "Incarnate One" (track 6) from [And With Your Spirit](#). Follow the instruction in the Optional Activity

box on page 23 of the Catechist Guide.

INCARNATE ONE

Chorus

*Truly God (He is)
Truly man
Jesus Christ is Mary's Son
God made flesh (Yes the)
Incarnate One
The Son of God, Jesus our friend*

Verse 1

Always there were three
The Persons of the Trinity
The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
Created earth and all within it

Verse 2

When man and woman were created
Life was perfect no one hated
Yet they chose to turn to sin
Pain and sickness did begin

Verse 3

There was no way to have again
What we'd lost because of sin
When we thought that all was lost
God sent his Son not counting the cost

Verse 4

Mary the young girl from Galilee
Said yes to the angel's plea
And God the Son came to us on earth
To give us all a second birth

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Music: John Burland

Words: Jo Ann Paradise and John Burland

You may also want to play additional songs or prayers from the [Our Family Prayer Collection](#) CD by John Burland.

File: Rec_S2_Discover_Music_Incarnate_One.mp3

Game Option Instruction

As you follow the Catechist Guide instruction for page 25, stop before reading aloud the second paragraph. Tell the children that they are going to play a game to help them better understand the difference between a sin, a temptation, an accident, and a mistake. This Art Reveal game can be found in the [Games section](#) at **sacraments.osv.com**.

You may want to have the children play the game with a partner or small group. If you only have

access to one computer, you can play together as a large group. Make sure that each child has a turn to decide which category a scenario represents.

Say: *Great work, everyone! Let's continue reading to find out how we can avoid temptation and sin.*

Continue following the Catechist Guide instruction on page 25 at the point where you stopped before playing the game.

Additional Activity: God's Promises Rainbow

Before the session begins, tape a large piece of butcher paper to the wall. Draw the outline of a rainbow large enough to fill up the sheet of paper. Show each bow within the rainbow and label each bow with the correct color: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. The children will be filling in the rainbow with the colorful handprints that they cut out during the Welcome and Gather option. You will also need to have glue sticks or tape ready for this activity.

After completing the Catechist Guide instruction for page 24, ask the children to take out the colorful hands they made at the beginning of the session. (Note: If you did not have the children pre-cut colorful hands during the Welcome and Gather option, then the children will need to do so now.)

Say: *We are going to make a "God's Promises Rainbow" together. Write down one thing that God has promised us on each of your handprints.*

If the children are having trouble identifying things that God has promised, ask volunteers to share some ideas (e.g., love, forgiveness, mercy, grace, salvation, heaven, Jesus, the Holy Spirit). Let the children know that it is okay to write down promises that other people mentioned or already wrote on their handprints.

After the children have completed this step, invite them to come up one at a time and glue or tape each of their "promise handprints" to the correct bow. Make sure that each child has a chance to attach all of his or her handprints to the bow.

Say: *Wow! Look at this beautiful rainbow we made. What's even more beautiful are all of the promises that God has made to us. Now think about what promises we can make to God.*

Live

Catechist Guide Instruction

Live

Life in the New Covenant

Explain that Jesus gave us the Sacraments so that we can connect with him and be as close to him as possible here on Earth. It is up to us to grow in our relationship with Jesus, so we should take part in the Sacraments whenever we can.

- **Say:** After you celebrate First Penance and First Eucharist, you should try to receive them as often as you can.

★ Explain that many cords braided together create one stronger cord.

- Have the children write three ways they can strengthen their connection to Jesus.

* If books go home, remind the children to complete page 28 and bring their books back. Distribute copies of the Session 2 **Family + Faith Pages**.

♡ **Closing Ritual Prayer**

Gather around a prayer table set with a candle, Bible, crucifix, and bowl of holy water.

Lead the group in the Sign of the Cross.

Catechist: “Father, our source of life, you know our weakness. May we reach out with joy to grasp your hand and walk more readily in your ways” (*Rite of Penance*, 54).

Reader: There is “one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all” (*Ephesians 4:5-6*).

Catechist: To remind us of our Baptism that made us one with Jesus, when I call your name, come to the table and place your hand in the holy water. Then, make the Sign of the Cross. When you return to the circle, join your left hand with the person next to you and say, “I am a sister of Christ,” or “I am a brother of Christ.”

When the circle is complete, say the following.

Catechist: “All-holy Father, you have shown us your mercy and made us a new creation in the likeness of your Son. Make us living signs of your love for the whole world to see. We ask this through Christ our Lord” (*Rite of Penance*, 57).

All: Amen.

Closing Ritual Option

Follow the instructions for the Closing Ritual Prayer in the Catechist Guide. Enhance this ritual prayer by singing “The Baptism of Jesus” (track 12) from [Songs of Scripture, Grades 4-6](#). Sing this song when the children have completed the circle by joining hands. Then read the last *Catechist* line of the prayer.

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

Based on John 1:29-34, Matthew 3:13-17

Chorus

**“I saw the Spirit come down from the sky like a dove
And remain upon him, the chosen one from above.
The one who sent me to baptize said to me,
‘Behold my Beloved Son,
Behold my Beloved Son,
So precious to me.’”**

Verse 1

A man named John from the wilderness came,
In camel hair he seemed somewhat strange.
He was sent by God to bring the news,
“One mightier than me is coming soon.”

Verse 2

“Come to the Jordan and now be baptized.
Turn away from sin, your fighting, your lies.
I will pour the water on your head,
But he’ll save your souls from sin and death.”

Verse 3

And so Jesus came to John on that day.
John baptized Jesus as a sign to us all
That we must do what the Father asks,
For now we too are his beloved children.

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Music: John Burland

Words: John Burland and Jo Ann Paradise

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File: Rec_S2_Live_Closing_Baptism_Jesus.mp3