



FIRST RECONCILIATION
AND
FIRST EUCHARIST TIME LINE



| EVENT/PROJECT | RELEVANT DATE |
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| Baptismal Information due | October 15, 2007 |
| Eucharist Family Prayer For parents & child/ren at 7:15 in the Church | Wednesday, October 24, 2007 |
| First Reconciliation Meeting Parents only at 7:15 in the McLaughlin Commons | Wednesday, January 16, 2008 |
| First Reconciliation Sacrament Day at 9:30 AM and 11:30 AM in the Church Parents are welcome to receive the Sacrament Group assignment in due course | Saturday, February 9, 2008 (No Religious Ed. Class today) |
| Eucharist Parent Meeting* For parents only at 7:15 in the McLaughlin Commons | Wednesday, April 16, 2008 |
| First Eucharist Family Practice For parents & child/ren More information to follow in due course | Tuesday, April 29, 2008 |
| FIRST EUCHARIST SACRAMENT DAY Masses at 9:30 AM (families last name beginning with letter L – Z) 12:30 AM (families last name beginning with letter A-K) Group assignment in due course | SATURDAY, MAY 3, 2008 |

*At Session II, you will receive a CD of the First Communion Mass music---we hope you will listen and sing along with the CD at home—practice makes perfect music
Communion Day!

You will also receive material to create a small individual banner for your youngster to bring with you on First Eucharist Day. These will be carried by the child during the entrance procession and the recessional at the end of Mass. This project is entirely voluntary.



THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

WHAT IT CAN MEAN FOR US TODAY

OUR NEED FOR FORGIVENESS

We live in an imperfect world with imperfect people. Why does the same world that has glorious sunsets also have earthquakes and tornadoes? Why are talented and creative people also marked by pride or greed? Why do marriages and friendships fall apart? Why can all of us say with Saint Paul, "I do not do the good I want, but I do the evil I do not want" (Romans 7:19)? Sin is a shared human experience. Some disaster at the beginning of time must have spoiled God's good creation. The Bible presents this concept through the story of the fall of Adam and Eve.

Our first parents were intended to share life and love forever with God their creator. Unfortunately Adam and Eve opposed God and rejected God's friendship and plan for them. This was the first sin. Because the original couple represented the human race, their sin shattered our relationship with our creator too.

The good God, however, offers us a second chance. As a loving Parent, God sent Jesus to repair the damage sin has done. Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, all sin was atoned for and forgiven: the original sin of Adam and Eve, our collective sin, and our personal sin. Moreover, in his mission as a Jewish preacher Jesus taught us by his words and by his own actions how to live in right relationships.

Following Jesus is not easy because the scars of the original offence remain. We are weakened and do not always choose what is good. We are not always loving. In other words, we sin against God, others and ourselves. The Hebrew word for sin is literally translated as "missing the mark." When we sin, our aim is off. We do not act as the reasonable, loving human beings we were meant to be. We sin in small ways (venial sin) and in serious ways (mortal, or deadly, sin). By mortal sin we sever ourselves completely from God.

Every time we pray the Creed we declare that we believe in the forgiveness of sins. God always gives us the opportunity to start over with a clean slate. We can do this through the prayers and ministry of the church. Whether or not we do so is up to us.

ILL EFFECTS OF SIN

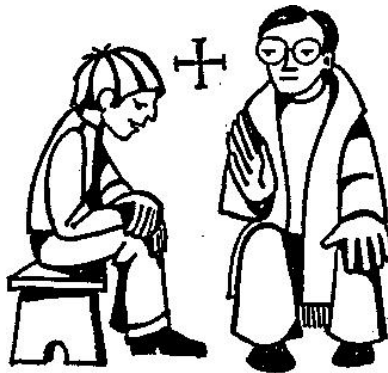
Recall a time when you sinned. How did you feel afterwards? If you have a healthy, informed conscience, you probably felt guilt, remorse and shame – all uncomfortable feelings. These negative feelings can affect our mental and physical health. In addition, sin is divisive. It isolates us from God and other people.

By giving us the sacrament of penance Jesus offered us a way out of this painful situation, a way to live fully again. Russian Orthodox Christians refer to this sacrament as the “kiss of Christ.”

Your child knows when he or she has done wrong and experiences the effects as keenly as you. Celebrating the sacrament of reconciliation will bring relief and joy to his or her heart too. For good reason another name for this sacrament is the sacrament of peace.

THE BALM OF FORGIVENESS

We have an innate desire to be forgiven, to be united with God and others again. Yet asking forgiveness is one of the most difficult tasks we must learn as human beings. Recently countries have been asking forgiveness for sins against groups of people. The church herself has felt the need to apologize for mistakes made in the past. Occasionally a great act of forgiveness catches the world’s attention: The pope forgave the man who tried to assassinate him, a cardinal forgave the man who falsely accused him of sexual misdeeds, a spouse forgives a spouse for infidelity, a parent of a murdered child forgives the murderer. Reconciliation – forgiving and being forgiven – plays an important role in history and human life.



**A copy of the *Catholic Update* “Finding Jesus in the Eucharist: four ways he is present” and a hand-out entitled *Living Faith / Points to Ponder* were also distributed. Copies of these documents can be obtained by calling the Religious Education Office. 349-0769