

“Rite of First Penance” Role Play

The following role play portrays a child celebrating the Sacrament of Penance for the first time.

- ♥ Comments from the Narrator will help your child better understand the Rite.
- ♥ This scenario can be reenacted three times, if needed, using the dialogue for Child 1 and Priest 1, Child 2 and Priest 2, then Child 3 and Priest 3)

Narrator: In our role play, (mom, dad, grandparent, older sibling) will play the part of the priest and (your child) will play the part of a child celebrating the Sacrament of reconciliation for the first time

Before you go to confession make an **Examination of your Conscience:**

✠ **Pray to the Holy Spirit for help.**

“Holy Spirit, Help me to know how I have loved. Help me to know how I have failed to love. Help me to be sorry for failing to love. Help me to trust in God’s loving forgiveness.”

✠ **Think about the times you did not act as a loving child of God.** (Times you offended/ hurt God and others by not following your family’s rules and God’s Ten Commandments.)

Child: Hello, Father!

Priest: Welcome.

Priest and Child together: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Child: Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. This is my first confession and these are my sins:

(At your next confession, you say... “It has been (amount of time-day, week, month, year) since my last confession.”)

Narrator: You tell Father about the unloving choices you have made—unloving choices that are sins. This is called your **confession**. You tell him your sins and things you’d like to change so that you can better follow Jesus.

Child 1: Father, I want to try to be more thoughtful and kind. It is hard for me to let others go first. It is hard for me to share.

(or)

Child 2: Father, I really like to watch TV, but my parents have a rule that I can’t watch a lot of the programs. But when I’m at my friend’s house, I watch these programs anyway. I want to stop doing this.

(or)

Child 3: Father, I fight with my brother a lot at home. I’d like to try not to fight so much. I know the fighting bothers my parents, and it makes my brother feel bad.

End by saying: I am sorry for these sins and any sins I may have forgotten.

Narrator: Father will talk to you about what you want to change in your life and ask you to do something special to show Jesus how much you love him. Father may give you some suggestions about ways to change. He might ask you to do an act of kindness or say a prayer. This is called your **penance**

Priest to Child 1: God understands that it is not always easy to be kind, especially if the other person is not nice to you. But God told us to love others and treat them just as we would like to be loved and treated. Pray three Hail Mary's, and ask Mary, the Mother of God, to help you see the goodness in others.

Priest to Child 2: Deep down I am sure that you know that your parents make rules to protect you. They don't want you to see or hear things that might harm you. Next time you go to your friend's house, bring some games with you and play those instead of watching TV. Or, until you feel strong enough to say no to the programs you shouldn't watch, invite your friend to play at your house.

Priest to Child 3: It sounds like the fighting is causing some hard feelings between you and your brother. This week, I'd like you to do an act of kindness for him. Maybe you could do the dishes or make his bed for him as a surprise. Choose one of these things and do it for your brother.

Child 1, 2, or 3: Thank you, Father, I will do that. I am going to try to be better

Priest: When you leave, I'd like you to go back and kneel before the Blessed Sacrament and take some time to think about what you are doing for your penance and when you are going to do it. Doing your penance is an important part of the sacrament. It shows your willingness to change your way of acting

Now, tell Jesus you're sorry by praying an **Act of Contrition**

**Child: O My God, I am heartily sorry for having offended You,
And I detest all my sins because of Your just punishments,
But, most of all, because they offend You my God,
Who are all good and deserving of all my love.
I firmly resolve, with the help of Your grace,
To sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin. Amen**

Narrator: After you pray the Act of Contrition, Father will pray for you and say the words of forgiveness. This is called "**absolution.**" The grace that we have lost is given back to use. Then, Father will bless you.

Priest: I absolve you from your sins. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
(Your child makes the sign of the cross together with the priest without saying the words.)

Priest and Child together say: Amen

Priest: Go in Peace.

(If he says, Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. **Child: God's mercy endures forever.**)

Child: Thank you, Father

- ✠ Then, you go silently kneel before the tabernacle.
- ✠ Do the prayers that the priest gave you for your penance.
- ✠ Thank God for forgiving your sins.
- ✠ Ask God for His help to lead a good life