

Our Friend Jesus Forgives Us

FOCUS: In this chapter, you will be helping your child to understand that Jesus is a good friend who forgives us as he forgave Zacchaeus.

Humble acknowledgment of one's sinfulness can strengthen bonds of love with God. Zacchaeus was conscious of the alienation caused by his sin, but in the end, he used his failings and sins to his advantage and experienced God's forgiving love.

Zacchaeus's story illustrates a dramatic conversion, or turning, toward a better way of life. The change required may be radical, as with Zacchaeus, or it may merely involve listening more attentively, responding more fully to God, and welcoming God into each moment and event. Every person has room for growth; there is always need for a greater response to God's love. The Almighty, who is always faithful and always forgiving, will do wonders for us if we acknowledge our need for forgiveness.

Scripture in This Chapter

Luke 15:1–7 The Lost Sheep

Luke 18:10–14 The Pharisee and the Tax Collector

Luke 19:1–10 Zacchaeus' Meeting with Jesus

John 15:14,16 Following Jesus

John 15:15 I Have Called You Friends

Catechism of the Catholic Church

1422, 1432, 1441–1442, 1446

In this chapter, help your child to

- ✦ understand that Jesus chose him or her as friends.
- ✦ understand the importance of reconciliation in friendship.
- ✦ explain that Jesus loves us even when we have done wrong.
- ✦ explain the difference Jesus made in the life of Zacchaeus.
- ✦ understand that we can go to Jesus for forgiveness.
- ✦ distinguish between good and bad choices.

Key Terms for Your Information

- ✦ friends—people who love one another and share one another's lives
- ✦ heaven—a place where we will be happy forever with God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the angels, and the saints
- ✦ I'm sorry—words that tell others we feel bad about what we've done to hurt them and wish we had not done it
- ✦ Pharisee—a member of an ancient Jewish group that stressed a strict interpretation of Mosaic law