

God, help us to be mindful that you dwell among us—walking with us, laughing with us, and listening to our family stories.

## **Your Child's Moral Development: FORGIVENESS**

It's good for our children to develop a sense of right and wrong and to know when they have made mistakes or even committed sins. It's a fact of life that we humans sometimes falter and fail. But it's also essential in our growth as moral persons to develop the ability to accept and receive the gift of God's forgiveness. What good is a gift if it never gets opened and enjoyed?

Here are some steps you can take to help your child grow in the ability to accept and receive this great gift of forgiveness so that he or she might live fully and freely in the light of God's love.

- Refusing to forgive one's self is often an obstacle to receiving God's forgiveness. Some children are more likely to hang on to guilt and self-blame. Work with your child over time to trust God and accept forgiveness.
- Allow for fresh starts and forgive cleanly. Don't hold previous mistakes over your child's head. Bringing them up again and again.
- Pray the Our Father together and emphasize the phrase "Forgive us our trespasses." Jesus taught us to confidently ask God for forgiveness.
- At Mass, point out the early penitential rites to your child, in which we ask for God's mercy. These are not empty words. They are a way to seek and celebrate God's forgiveness.

*Excerpts taken from "Preparing at Home for First Reconciliation" Tom McGrath [www.loyolapress.com](http://www.loyolapress.com)*

**"The feeling remains that God is on the journey too."**

**Saint Teresa of Avila**

## **Catholic Fact**

We are expected by the Church to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation at least once a year. If we have committed a mortal sin, we are to receive sacramental absolution before going to Communion. But these are bare minimums. We are encouraged to seek reconciliation any time we are in need of its healing grace.