

The Sacrament of Reconciliation allows us to draw near to the Father with trust to have the certainty of his forgiveness. Pope Francis

As we all know, parents are the first educators of their children when it comes to our Faith. However, the best way to really teach our children about the Faith is to practice it by living it out in our everyday life.

Here are Ways to Prepare Your Child for the Reconciliation:

1. Talk about the Sacrament of Reconciliation Together

Read together with your child about when Jesus instituted the Sacrament and gave his apostles the authority to forgive sins in His Name in the Gospel of John 20: 19 – 23.

Explain, that going to Confession is not about getting into trouble; it's about asking God for forgiveness and receiving God's Grace to do better. Listen to your child's questions and encourage them to learn more by asking more questions.

2. Examination of Conscience

Teach your child how to pray an Examination of Conscience each night before bed, or as often as time allows. Some families do this together as a family before bed, silently reflecting on their days while mom or dad read the Examination out loud.

3. Practice

Register has a nice and easy **Confession Guide for Children**

Confession Guide for Children| National Catholic Register (ncregister.com) that goes through a simple Examination of Conscience followed by the steps involved in a confession.

4. Go to Confession as a Family

Aside from practicing how to go to confession with your child, practice actually going to confession as a family.

Maybe even make it a family tradition, say on the first Saturday of each month. Add a little fun incentive and go out for ice cream or grab some pizza afterwards and make it a family date night.

5. Pray Together

The most essential step in preparing your child – and yourself – for the Sacrament of Reconciliation is prayer. Through prayer, we join in an intimate conversation with God. We ask Him to open our hearts to Him, show Him our weaknesses, and ask for His infinitely merciful forgiveness. Pray with and for your child, asking God to prepare him or her for this great Sacrament.

Together, you can pray the Act of Contrition with your child and also the Prayer to Your Guardian Angel to help them make good choices and be ready to receive God's mercy. **Need a fun way to explain the importance of Reconciliation to your older kids** (and get a little refresher yourself)? Has anyone ever asked you why Catholics believe you have to confess to a priest? **Catholic Central**'s episode on Reconciliation explains the powerful but often.

Reconciliation (catholiccentral.com)

God bless to all families, Anna Harmata PA/CRE