



Grade 2 In-School Reconciliation Retreat

Joint Diocesan/District Collaboration

November 2018



CALGARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT



ROMAN CATHOLIC
Diocese of Calgary

Introduction

This retreat is intended to foster a personal encounter with Jesus Christ by engaging Grade 2 students in prayer, worship, catechesis and celebration of God’s mercy. It is a joint effort between the parish and school bringing together a sense of connection and community for the students who are participating in the parish preparations for the Sacrament of Reconciliation as well as for students who are not receiving the sacrament but are learning about it in Religion Class.¹

Before the retreat, please ensure Unit 1 Lesson 10 has been taught. Unit 1 Lesson 11 will work either before or after the Retreat and can be adapted as this retreat will cover some of its outcomes.

Retreat Outcomes

Focus Question: How does Jesus forgive us?

Learning Goal: We are learning that Jesus wants us to return to him when we sin.	Learning Goal: We are learning that we can ask for forgiveness when we hurt someone.	Learning Goal: We are learning more about the sacrament of Reconciliation.	Learning Goal: We are learning that forgiveness is a reason for celebration.
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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION EXPECTATIONS - SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS	ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING - EVIDENCE OF LEARNING/“I CAN” STATEMENTS
ML2.3: Identify the Law of God in the Old Testament (i.e., Ten Commandments) and in the New Testament (i.e., Commandment of Love) and show how they guide us in making choices to act in ways that show love to God and our neighbour. [CCC 1949–1986; 1786–1789; 1847]	Students will/I can identify ways they can disobey the commandments that Jesus set out for them to follow and tell what they should do to follow the commandments/explain some actions that do not follow what God wants me to do and tell how I can do better
LC1.3: Identify actions and roles that unite us as families, those which build up relationships and those which sometimes diminish these relationships in our families and circle of friends and relate these to the actions and roles that unite us as Church.	Students will/I can identify actions that hurt relationships with God, friends, and family/tell how some actions can hurt others

¹ Materials for this retreat include “Retreat with Children and Parents (Modified Version of Model 3)” created by the Diocesan Youth Retreat Team and media resources from Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ Gr.2 Religion Program (Pearson).

Retreat At-A-Glance Outline - Total Time (including a 15 min recess) 105 min

Welcome and Opening Prayer and 'Reconciliation' Song – 8 min

Icebreaker "Sin or Mistake" – 8 min

Memories of Childhood Activity – 5 min

Prodigal Son Video and Discussion - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kfDfMZ6MTJs> – 15 min

Break – 15 min

Sin Demonstration with Discussion – 10 min

Bad Confession, Good Confession Skit – 15 min

Reconciliation (God Forgives) Song – 2 min

Examination of Conscience – 15 min

Procession with Good Deeds – 10 min

Closing Prayer and Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ Song 2 min

Grade 2 In-School Sacrament Retreat

Before the Retreat:

- 1. One week prior to the retreat – send home a parent letter and 3-4 slips of paper in a baggie labelled with their name for students to write on.

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Next week, we are learning about the sacrament of Reconciliation and the loving forgiveness of God. Your child has learned several stories about Jesus that show how much God loves us and how He wants to forgive us when we sin. Encourage your child to share some of these stories with you, for example, the story of Zacchaeus and the parable of the lost sheep. Your child will also be bringing home a retelling of the Prodigal Son. Read the story with your child. Ask your child about the lessons she or he has learned from these stories.

In preparation for our in-class Reconciliation Retreat, please ask your child to describe the good deeds they have done at home or school that they can offer as a gift to God during one of our retreat activities. These deeds can be recorded on the slips of paper provided in the agenda today. Please return these slips of paper by _____.

Blessings, _____

Before the Retreat continued:

- 2. Communicate with the Parish Sacrament Coordinator regarding volunteers and their role in the retreat (Opening Prayer, Memory of Childhood, Sin Demonstration, Examination of Conscience and Closing Prayer).
- 3. Create a welcoming environment for the retreat including a prayerful setup and name tags for students and guests.
- 4. Ensure students have their labelled baggie with filled out slips of paper for the Procession of Good Deeds
- 5. Ensure you have all the materials needed for the retreat (see below)

Materials for Retreat

- 1. Song audio files – Use Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ Student website ('Media by Type' folder)
 - *Reconciliation (God Forgives)*
 - *Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ* (There is a teaching video on Religion and Family Life ePD for this song)

Student-Home Website (<http://www.pearsoncanada.ca/school/growinginfaith/student-home/>)
user name: ccsd99 / password: Student99

Lyric Slides on ePD (if needed):

https://calgarycatholicsschools.sharepoint.com/:p:/s/epdre/EU3RVCI7qsBFvBhgZA0D4JoBJcCMo5ve28sf2N_epjog0w?e=d06hBy (Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ)

https://calgarycatholicsschools.sharepoint.com/:p:/s/epdre/Ec6_C-VD1G9JhEq1STMUDfoB8oU_qYfyJCe5S3eivl96_Q?e=03EYkl (Reconciliation – God Forgives)

- 2. Prayer Space including – bible, candle, cross, related artwork
- 3. Name tags and markers
- 4. Memories of Childhood copies for facilitating teachers and volunteers
- 5. Copies of the Retreat Lesson plan for facilitating teachers and volunteers
- 6. Laptop, projection screen and sound
- 7. Props for “Bad Confession, Good Confession” skit
- 8. Signs for “Sin Demonstration”
- 9. Extra slips of paper and pencils and a basket for Good Deeds Procession

Retreat Lesson Plan - Total Time (including a 15 min recess) 105 min

Please have students begin the retreat with nametags already on.

A. Welcome and Opening Prayer and Reconciliation Song – 10 min

- a. The purpose of this retreat today is to bring you closer to Jesus Christ through prayer, worship, learning and a celebration of God's mercy.
- b. Sing: "Reconciliation" (see links above and Appendix A)
- c. Gathering Prayer

B. Icebreaker "Sin or Mistake" – 10 min (see Appendix B)

- a. Share a statement with students – ask them to put their hands on their heads if they think it's a Mistake or hand over their heart if it's a Sin. Alternatively, you could ask them to choose a corner of the room, one for Sin, one for Mistake and ask them to go there.

C. Memories of Childhood Activity – 5 min (see Appendix C)

- a. Teacher/volunteers share about a poor choice they made as a child and describe how it made them feel. They then illustrate how a parent, adult or another person involved forgave them and made them feel relieved (see examples on handout in appendix).

D. Prodigal Son Video and Discussion - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kfDfMZ6MTJs> – 15 min

- a. Show the video (4 min)
- b. Ask students to retell the story
- c. Use the following questions for discussion (excerpts taken from "Retreat with Children and Parents Modified Version 3):
 - Do you think the two sons were rich or poor?
 - *They were rich because their father gave them everything they needed.*
 - Why do you think the younger son left home?
 - *He didn't appreciate his father's generosity. He wanted to be on his own. He didn't like being the younger brother.*
 - Did the father stop loving the son who went away? How do you know?
 - *No. He looked for him every day. When the son came home, his father forgave him.*
 - Why did the son return home?
 - *He felt guilty and ashamed because he wasted his father's gifts. He was sorry for what he did.*
 - Did the older son understand why his brother was forgiven?
 - *No. He was envious because he had not been given a party. He too did not appreciate his father's generosity.*
 - When Jesus told the story, whom do you think he was talking about?
 - *He was talking about God and us. The father is God, and the sons are us.*
 - How was the father in the story like God? How were the sons like us?
 - *God always forgives and waits for us to feel sorry for our sins and return to his love. But we do not always appreciate God's love for us.*

Recess Break – 15 min

Ensure students have time to eat their snack, play and use the washroom as needed during this time.

E. Sin Demonstration with Discussion (excerpts taken from “Retreat with Children and Parents Modified Version 3) – 10 min

Optional Materials – “God” sign, “Family of God” sign

Discussion Questions

What is sin?

- *Sin is something that takes us away from God.*
- *Sin hurts us and hurts the people around us.*
- *Sin separates us from God (important!).*

How do you know when you've sinned?

- *Our conscience is a gift from God that helps us to know when we've sinned.*
- *Adults such as parents, teachers, and priests also help us to recognize when we have sinned or done a bad thing.*
- *The Bible teaches us about what is sinful and what is good.*

How does sin hurt us?

- *Sin hurts us because it makes us feel alone and as if God is far from us.*
- *Sometimes we think that 'little' sins are minor and don't really count, but they do.*

Demonstration

1. Ask for two volunteers. Choose one to represent 'God'. Tell him/her that he/she must stand in one place and not move from his/her spot. The other volunteer will represent each of us, the 'Family of God'. Optional: Have volunteers hold up signs that say 'God' and 'Family of God'.
2. Say, "Look how God and his family are close to each other. They can talk, shake hands and high five" (*Instruct the volunteers to do these actions as you mention them*).
3. Ask, "What happens when we sin?" Then ask the audience for some minor sins (*Responses may vary. Guide the children in naming sins that they may commit such as lying, fighting, etc.*). As audience members give examples, have them come and stand between God and his family. Make sure it is God's family that move and not God to make way for the sins!
4. Ask, "Can name of person representing the Family of God still talk to God? (*yes*) Are they as close as they used to be? (*no*).
5. Ask the audience for another couple of sins and have them come up.
6. Say, "When we sin, we choose to move away from God. The more we sin, the more we move away from him. God never moves away from us."

7. Say, "We have a special gift from God that allows us to get close to him again. It's called Reconciliation. When we receive the sacrament of reconciliation, we ask God to forgive us for our sins."
8. Tell the Family of God to ask God for forgiveness. For each sin, ask the Family of God to say, "God, please forgive me for name of sin." Then, tell God to say, "I forgive you" and have the volunteer who named that sin go back to his/her seat.
9. Continue Step # 8 with all the sins standing in between God and his family. If time is limited or there are a lot of sins, tell the Family of God to say, "God, I'm sorry for all my sins." God will say, "I forgive you." As the sins sit back down, make sure that the Family of God stays in his/her place and does not close the gap.
10. When all of the volunteers who gave examples of sins are sitting back down, say "Even though the sins are gone, God and his family still aren't as close as they used to be."
11. Then ask, "Does anyone know what we can do to bring them closer again?" (*Penance*)
12. Say, "Penance is a prayer or good action to show that we will do better. When a priest gives us our penance, it helps us to take the steps to reconnect with God."
13. Ask, "Can anyone give me an example of penance?" (*Responses will vary.*)
14. Ask the audience to help the Family of God say a "Hail Mary" all together for penance. As everyone is praying, have the Family of God walk back towards God.
15. Once the Family of God and God are standing side by side again, say, "After we do our penance and really make an effort to change our lives, we are closer to God again. See how God and his family can talk, shake hands and high five again without all the sins in the way?" (*Again, instruct the volunteers to do these actions.*)

F. Examination of Conscience – 15 min

1. If the pastor or deacon is present, invite him to conduct this examination of conscience. Provide each child with a "Guide to Reconciliation" (*Explanation card to come*)
2. Tell the children that you are going to lead them in an examination of conscience to help them remember things that they have done that may have been harmful to others or against God's will. Tell them that this examination of conscience also appears in the back of their child's books, and suggest that they read this over a few more times after the retreat to help them prepare for their First Reconciliation.

3. Slowly and reverently read the following, using these or similar words. Pause briefly between sentences.
 - Think about the words of Jesus: "As I have loved you, so you also should love one another" (John 13:34).
 - Think about the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule.
 - Ask the Holy Spirit to bring to your mind what you have done, or what you have not done, to follow God's rules. You may want to pray one of the following prayers:
 - **Invocation to the Holy Spirit**
Come, Holy Spirit.
Come, Holy Spirit.
Come, Holy Spirit.
 - **A Prayer to Jesus**
by Saint Richard of Chichester

O most merciful Redeemer, Friend, and Brother,
may I know you more clearly,
love you more dearly,
and follow you more nearly,
for ever and ever.
Amen.
- Ask yourself:
 - Have I used God's name and the name of Jesus with respect?
 - Have I honored God by saying my prayers?
 - Have I done my best to pay attention at Mass and to pray and sing with my parish?
 - Have I shown love to my parents and others who care for me by listening to them and always doing as they ask?
 - Have I lied to my parents or teachers?
 - Have I been helpful to my brothers and sisters? Have I been mean to them?
 - Have I treated others in a kind and friendly way? Have I been mean to others?
 - Did I call names or tell lies about someone?
 - Did I share my things with others?
 - Have I treated the belongings of others carefully? Have I taken what does not belong to me?
4. After a pause, lead the children in the Act of Contrition that they have been asked to memorize.
5. At this point, you can talk to the children about where confessionals or stations for their First Reconciliation will be in their parish and how they will look.

G. Bad Confession, Good Confession Skit – 15 min

- a. Reconciliation (God Forgives) Song – 2 min (see links in Materials section and Appendix A)

Skit Objective: To illustrate both improper and proper approaches to the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Cast:

- a priest
- 4 people to play the following roles: the blamer, the unrepentant, the uncaring, the good one (one person can play all 4 roles)
- a commentator (if required, the Priest can carry out the commentator’s role to stop the skit when called for and explain what happened)

Materials:

- Two chairs facing each other, as in "face to face" Reconciliation
- Props to dress the priest (i.e. a stole or something that can represent a stole, like a scarf, and a cross)

Skit:

This skit can be carried out in a series of four examples of Confession; three are “bad” examples, the last one is a “good” example. After each example, the commentator (or priest) can stop the skit, ask the kids what happened, then explain why it is a proper or improper example. As an option, the commentator can instruct the kids to make a buzzer sound any time he/she stops the skit using a phrase like “Hold it right there!” or “Wait a minute!” Not necessary, but an idea to keep the kids involved/engaged.

Example 1: The Blamer

In this example, the main character attempts Confession, but then proceeds to only talk about the other person involved.

Priest: *Begin with sign of the cross:* In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit...

Main Character: “Bless me Father for I have sinned, this is my First Confession. I got in a fight with my brother...but you know what? *He* started it! I *told* him it was *my* turn to use the iPad and he just kept using it! So you know what? Maybe *he* should be here instead of me!”

Commentator (or Priest): What happened? What did he/she do wrong? Should you talk about the actions of others in Confession?

Reconciliation is about *us* taking responsibility for our own actions and asking God for forgiveness for *our* sins, not someone else’s. We never have to provide a reason for *why* something happened, just tell the priest *what* happened and how often it happened. The priest is there just to forgive us

of our sins in Jesus' name; no explanation of the circumstances is required.

Example 2: The Unrepentant

In this example, the main character attempts Confession, but then expresses that he/she is not really sorry for it.

Priest: *Begin with sign of the cross:* In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit...

Main Character: "Bless me Father for I have sinned, this is my First Confession. I stole twenty dollars from my mom...but you know what? She doesn't really need it. In fact, she probably doesn't even know that it's gone. And I really needed the money. I have been wanting this toy for a long time, but I never had enough money. No big deal, right? I know, as a Catholic, I should go to Confession, so let's get on with the absolution already, okay?"

Commentator (or Priest): What happened? What did he/she do wrong? Was it right or wrong that he/she took the money as they explained?

One of the most important things in Reconciliation is that we must be *sorry* for our sins. Reconciliation gives us an opportunity to always change our life and refocus our sight on God. How can God forgive us for something if we are not sorry? Having an attitude of wanting to change, and making a resolution to try to avoid sin from then on, is important to our confession.

Example 3: The Uncaring

In this example, the main character doesn't really attempt Confession.

Main Character: *Sitting with arms crossed, maybe chewing gum, staring at the priest.*

Priest: *Begin with sign of the cross:* In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit...

Main Character: *A long, awkward silence follows. Perhaps the only thing heard is the person's chewing of gum.*

Priest: *Show confusion or discomfort for comedic effect. Ideally, the kids will find it funny until finally the commentator (or priest) interrupts the silence.*

Commentator (or Priest): What happened? What did he/she do wrong? Why didn't he/she say anything?

We have to prepare for First Reconciliation. We have to use different tools, like an Examination of Conscience, to think about our life and the things that we should confess. We have to be ready for the sacrament and willing to let God work through the celebration of the sacrament in order to remain close to Him and change our life.

Example 4: The Good One!

In this example, the main character properly displays a “good” Confession.

Priest: *Begin with sign of the cross:* In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit...

Main Character: “Bless me Father, for I have sinned. This is my First Confession. I got into two fights with my brother, I stole twenty dollars from my mom's purse once, and I came to church but I really didn't feel like being there and didn't want to pray.”

Commentator (or Priest): What happened? What did he/she do *right*?

Reconciliation is a dialogue between us and Jesus, whose representative is the priest. We have to be sorry for our sins, ready to confess them, and make a resolution to avoid sin from then on. We will more than likely sin and go to confession again, but it is important that we tell God that we will always do our best.

H. Procession with Good Deeds – 10 min

- a. Place the basket in/near your prayer space
- b. Invite the children to retrieve their slips of paper from their baggies. If some have forgotten use the extra slips and scribe “For all my good deeds” for them to use.
- c. Explain that when we go to Confession/Reconciliation, the sins we have committed are forgotten, just like in the Sin Demonstration. The good deeds we perform are things that we want to remember and bring forward as an offering to God and as a sign of our love for Him.
- d. Either with quiet music playing or in silence, each child comes forward and put their slip(s) of paper in the basket. Teachers/volunteers can collect the empty baggies.
- e. After everyone has placed a slip in the basket teacher leads children in following.
- f. “Boys and Girls, repeat after me” ... Dear God ...we offer you today these good deeds...as a gift to you.... We believe you are forgiving....and loving....and that you will help us...to make good choices...and be close to you...Amen.

I. Closing Prayer and Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ Song 2 min

- a. Ask all to stand. Teacher prays:

Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God.

Loving God, our source of life,
you know our weaknesses.

May we reach out with joy to grasp your hand
and walk more readily in your ways.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

All make the Sign of the Cross as the leader concludes:

May God, who frees us from sin,
bless us and keep us always in peace.

All: Amen

(Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers, pp. 317-318)

- b. Sing “Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ” (see Materials Section for links or Appendix A)

Appendix

- A. Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ Musical Score
- A. Reconciliation (God Forgives) Musical Score
- B. Sin or Mistake Ice Breaker
- C. Memories of Childhood

Appendix A

Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ

Words and Music by: Janet Bentham
 Arranged by: Angelo Oddi

♩ = 110

Chorus F B \flat F C

Grow-ing in Faith,___ Grow-ing in Christ. The Spi-rit with-in___ us, shin-ing so

F B \flat F C

bright. With love in our hearts,___ we are chil - dren of light.___ Grow-ing in Faith,___

Verses B \flat F F B \flat F

Grow-ing in Christ.____ 1. Like the sun in the for-est that warms a ti - ny seed, the
 2. God sent to No-ah a rain-bow in the sky. We

Gm Dm B \flat C

love___ of our Fa - ther___ gives ev- ery thing we need.____
 have the love of Je - sus, He is al - ways by our side.____

F B \flat F C F

Grow-ing in Faith, Grow-ing in Christ. The Spi-rit with - in___ us, shin-ing so bright. With

B \flat F C

love in our hearts, we are chil-dren of light.____ Grow-ing in Faith,____

B \flat F F C B \flat F

Grow-ing in Christ.____ Grow-ing in Faith,____ Grow-ing in Christ.____

Appendix A

Reconciliation (God Forgives)

Intro

♩ = 115

Words and Music by: Angelo Oddi

Arranged by: Angelo Oddi

E A E A E F#m B B7

Spoken: Sometimes we don't act the way we should. It's called a sin, and in our hearts we don't feel good.

C#m A B E A F#m B B7

But there's a way to be forgiven, it's found in every nation. Just go see a Priest for some reconciliation.

Chorus

E A E A E F#m

Re-con-ci-li-a-tion, Re-con-ci-li-a-tion. It's when we're sor-ry for our

B B7 C#m A B E A F#m

sins. Re-con-ci-li-a-tion, Re-con-ci-li-a-tion. It helps us to feel

B B7 E A E B7 C#m B A E

bet-ter a-gain. The priest greets us with the sign of the cross.

Verse

A B A B B7 E A

We con-fess our sins and there's no time lost... for... Re-con-ci-li-a-tion,

E A E F#m B B7 C#m A B E

Re-con-ci-li-a-tion. It's when we're sor-ry for our sins. Re-con-ci-li-a-tion, Re-con-ci-li-a-tion. It

A F#m B B7 E A E B7 **Verse** C#m E

helps us to feel bet-ter a - gain. The priest gives us pe-nance, some

A E A E A B B7

thing we need to do. A prayer or a good deed so we can start a-new. It's

Chorus E A E A E F#m B B7 C#m A

Re-con-ci-li-a - tion, Re-con-ci-li-a - tion. It's when we're sor-ry for our sins. Re-con-ci-li-a - tion,

B E A F#m B B7 E A E B7 **Bridge** A C

Re-con-ci-li-a - tion. It helps us to feel bet-ter a - gain. We feel sor-ry for

D A F#m C D C# C#7

all our sin-ful li-ving. The priest ab-solves us and we are for - giv - en.

Chorus F# B F# B F# G#m C# C#7

Re-con-ci - li - a - tion, Re-con-ci - li - a - tion. It's when we're sor-ry for our sins.

D#m B C# F# B G#m

Re-con - ci - li - a - tion, Re - con - ci - li - a - tion. It helps us to feel

C# C#7 **1.** F# **2.** F#

bet - ter a - gain. gain. Yee - haw! Spoken: I feel so much better now.

Appendix B

Sin or Mistake Icebreaker (10 min)

- You're outside kicking a soccer ball around with a friend. One of your shots hits the neighbour's window and cracks it. You don't mention it to anyone.
- You are really upset and jealous that your friend got the Wii game that you wanted for your birthday.
- Since you left your homework on the bus the day that the teacher marked it, you get a zero.
- You decide to go to the mall with your friends instead of finishing your chores.
- You leave your scooter out in the rain so long that it begins to rust.
- Without asking, you get some change off your brother's bedside table and buy a Slurpee from 7-11. You buy him something, too!
- You come home from hockey practice and are really tired. When your parents ask, you say you don't have homework, even though you really do.
- You're messing around during dinner and knock over a big glass of milk, which drips down the crack of the table and gets on the rug.
- While on sleepover, you watch a movie that you know your parents wouldn't approve of.
- You call your little sister a bad name under your breath.
- There's so much stuff in the garage that, as you're trying to get your bike out, you scratch the side of the car.
- Your bedtime is 9:00 PM, but you stay up reading under your covers until 11:00 because your book is so good.
- Your teacher wrote a letter to your parents about your bad behavior in class. She gives you the letter to take home but you lost it.
- You find a spider in your room and try to kill it. You break something in the process.
- You were up later than normal. The next morning you overslept and missed the spelling test.

Ask the kids to make up some, they usually come up with good ones!

Appendix C

MEMORIES OF CHILDHOOD

Print, cut out, and provide the parents with copies of the following examples for the “Memories of Childhood” activity.

MEMORIES OF CHILDHOOD

Note to teachers/volunteers:

Share with your child(ren) about a poor choice you made as a young child. Describe how you felt sorry for the harm you may have caused and how a parent, other adult, or anyone else that was involved forgave you and made you feel relieved.

Examples:

- I talked back to my parents/was disobedient
- I lied to my parents about something
- I fought with my siblings
- I made fun of another kid at school and it hurt their feelings
- I took something that didn't belong to me
- I wasn't thankful for a gift that was given to me

*Note that you are not limited to the examples above. You are welcome to share another memory you may recall.

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