

## Filling in the Gaps...

## Helping Parents who missed one or both of the Retreat Sessions

Welcome to sacramental preparation! This is a beautiful and exciting time and we are pleased to partner with you to make the first celebrations of Reconciliation and Eucharist memorable firsts of a lifetime of participation.

The Diocese of Richmond has provided us with an Instruction on the preparation for First Reconciliation. In it, they indicate that each parish should partner with parents to do two things in this time period:

- Provide parents more knowledge about each sacrament, at adult levels
- Partner with parents by offering help and support for integrating sacramental preparation into the faith life in their homes

Saint Bridget parish offered two retreats for the Sacrament of Reconciliation to get families off on this journey together. We are so sorry you were unable to join us for one or both of these retreats! So that you are supported in your role as the primary teacher of your children in the ways of faith, we've put together this at-home "retreat" for your use. It is designed to do as the Diocese directs, giving you some additional understanding of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and providing some At-Home Hints.

**Information**

- Dates for children's celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation 1/14/17 OR 1/21/17. 9:00AM or by special arrangement. Contact Julie Koury if you prefer to make a special arrangement for First Reconciliation.
- Dates for retreats for First Eucharist preparation February 12, March 19 and April 2. 12:30-2:30PM. **One parent and the child preparing are required to attend all three.**

**Using the materials at home Try and do as much of this as you can!**

- Spend time going through each of the lessons with your child. Experiment with the suggestions for engaging them as they are based on sound learning principles. As you move through the lessons, you'll discover which activities most engage your child and you can tailor the time.
- Here's a link to a parent resource created by the publisher of your children's booklet. You might find it helpful since it is designed to help you understand and engage this process!  
<https://cart.pflaum.com/product.php?productid=17691&cat=14&page=1>
- Work on the poster activity with your child.
- Spend time with the Scripture stories (reading them from a children's Bible, re-telling them in your own words and using bible story books are all good methods.)
- Help your child learn the prayers by heart. The resource handout has some audio and audio/visual tools to assist you with this.

**Increasing your knowledge of the Sacrament of Reconciliation** **Be sure to watch the video. This is a question you should be able to answer for your children as well as for yourself!**

- 2-page overview of the Sacrament of Reconciliation  
<http://www.olgseattle.org/documents/Overview%20of%20the%20Sacrament%20of%20Reconciliation.pdf>
- A step-by-step guide to the Sacrament plus other resources for teens and children:  
<http://www.thelightisonforyou.org/confession/>
- Why do I have to confess to a priest? (video with Bishop Robert Barron 2:30)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cun9F-XCang>

**Understanding the power of the Sacrament of Reconciliation** **Watch at least one of the videos and read one story!**

- Fr. Mike Schmitz (video) “The Power of Confession” (8:00)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_C4hGM3ItKk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_C4hGM3ItKk)
- What confession does for us: <https://www.franciscanmedia.org/sacrament-of-reconciliation/>
- Stories of the power of confession (short vignettes of ordinary people):  
<http://confessions101.com/pdf/freebook-confession.pdf> Stories of how confession “works”
- Theology of mercy Bishop Robert Barron (video 13:00)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N862lyF8KtU>

**Music to inspire** **Both of these were used in the closing prayer service with parents and children. Why not listen together with your child?**

- “Honest” by Francesca Battistelli <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uvb2HNa6B5o>
- “Turn to Me” by John Foley SJ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0FDphUBRsA4>

**To find the handouts from the second parent session:**

Go to this address: [www.saintbridgetchurch.org/forgiven](http://www.saintbridgetchurch.org/forgiven) -or-

Go to the Saint Bridget website ([www.saintbridgetchurch.org](http://www.saintbridgetchurch.org)) and follow the following menu path:  
Faith Formation > Children's Religious Ed > First Reconciliation Resources

1. Finding God in all things: Examen of Consciousness
2. Litany of Humility
3. Examination of Conscience based on the Beatitudes
4. Worship Aid for the Closing Prayer Service (has an Examination of Conscience in it)
5. Resources for First Reconciliation Preparation (a guide from November to January with links to resources)
6. Self-Reflection “Toward Holiness” based on the retreat
7. You May be Wondering: Signs of readiness, what your child should know
8. Handouts from Session 1 (overview, Scripture stories and dates to remember)

**I have questions. Who do I ask?**

Until Saint Bridget has a new Director of Religious Education:

1. For questions regarding baptismal certificates, the schedule, conflicts with the schedule and dates and times for celebrations, contact Julie Koury [Julie@saintbridgetchurch.org](mailto:Julie@saintbridgetchurch.org).
2. For questions about the content, theology or ways to help your child, contact Debbie Stollery [deborah.stollery@gmail.com](mailto:deborah.stollery@gmail.com)
3. For spiritual guidance for yourself or your child, contact Msgr. Carr.
4. If your child attends Saint Bridget School, both second grade teachers are available to you: Mrs. Butler and Mrs. O'Grady.

**I'd like to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation myself. What do I do?**

1. Watch this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GCmumpsrwBE>
2. Use one or more of the handouts on the website to help you examine your conscience.
3. Feel free to print one of the guides to the sacrament that includes an Act of Contrition and bring it with you.
4. If you would like some extended time to talk with the priest, get some spiritual guidance as well as penance make an appointment for the Sacrament so you are not rushed.
5. Saint Bridget Church offers confessions on Saturday afternoon beginning at 4:00PM or anytime by appointment. Times for confession at other parishes are usually easily found on their websites or by telephone. Some find going to another parish simplifies the process. Feel free!
6. During Advent and Lent the parish will offer multiple times for the sacrament. Neighboring parishes may have communal services to which you are welcome. If you've not been in a while, attending one of these communal services can help you prepare and give the Holy Spirit a chance to call you to the celebration. There's no imperative to go to individual confession at one of these services, but the opportunity is there if the Holy Spirit calls!
7. Feel free to celebrate the sacrament during the services for your children on January 14<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup>.