

Reconciliation Levels 3-7

Dear Parents and Guardians,

When our children are baptized, we make a promise to raise them in ways that help them to learn and experience our Catholic faith. This learning and experiencing leads to *living out* what we believe as followers of Jesus Christ.

Your child's first experience of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and those that follow are meant to set the stage for what will become a lifetime of experiencing and coming to understand God's unconditional love and forgiveness. Reconciliation, sometimes called Penance or Confession, both reminds and allows us to experience the truth that God loves us no matter what.

As Catholics we are asked to confess our sins at least once a year and whenever we are conscious of having committed serious sin. So you can understand why celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation would be an integral and non-negotiable part of your child's overall faith formation. Therefore, every child in our Faith Formation Process in Levels 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 is asked to celebrate Reconciliation at least once a year so that we can certify that they have participated in the Sacramental life of the Church as part of the overall Faith Formation Process and move to the next Level in the coming year.

As a way of encouraging our young people and assisting parents in what is their responsibility, we have attached a small card to your child's folder that says, "Celebrating Reconciliation." Please have your child clearly print their first and last name, and Level in the spaces provided and give it to the priest when they go to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

As parents we model what is important for our children. As your child's best teacher, we invite you to pray about celebrating this Sacrament yourself so that you can draw from your own experience when speaking to your child about Reconciliation. **Please go to our website, www.stsylvesterli.org and click on Faith Formation and then Reconciliation to read more about the importance of going back to the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the article, "Why Go Back to Confession?"**

There are many opportunities at St. Sylvester Parish for you and your child to celebrate Reconciliation. Every Saturday in the church at 12:00 P.M. we celebrate Reconciliation face to face or in the traditional way. As well as in Advent and Lent when there will be individual Penance, Faith Formation Services and Parish Penance Services in the church (found on your child's calendar). At the Penance Services we listen to the Word of God, the priest leads us in an examination of conscience, we all say the Act of Contrition which we follow in the booklet, we then go face to face to the priest to confess and receive absolution.

The Sacraments are moments of encounter with Christ where we express ritually in visible and concrete ways, what we deeply believe. In celebrating Reconciliation, your child will have the opportunity to reflect on who they are and how they live, enabling them to grow in becoming all that God has created them to be, fully alive... happy, holy and healthy!

Blessings,

Fr. Tom Coby

Pastor

Frances McMahon

Director Faith Formation