

Heart Speaks to Heart: The Gift of Reconciliation

Exploring Session 5 Together



Turn to **PAGE 68** in the *Heart Speaks to Heart* book. There you will see a magnificent picture of Joseph and his brothers. Take a few moments to look at the picture. What do you notice?

Opposite the picture on **PAGE 69** is the opening prayer. Pray this prayer together.

On **PAGES 70-71** there is a conversation between Grandpa and the twins. Read through their dialogue. Read the questions at the bottom of page 71 and try to answer them together. Here are some suggestions for the answers that you may give:

What preparation for First Reconciliation have you been doing at home since last time?

Share any work that you have been doing on Reconciliation since the last time that you met, e.g. finishing off the Bible Journaling; making entries in the Reflection Book; learning prayers off by heart; reading the *Max and Droogo* story; taking time to pray; etc.

Do you remember what you have to do and say for your First Reconciliation?

You may like to refer back to pages 64-65 or the *How to Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation* card and make sure that you know everything that you need to do and say to make your Confession.

How are you feeling now?

A similar question was asked in Session 4 but you may like to focus now upon your feelings as the day of First Reconciliation draws very near. You may like to use the Feelings Chart to help you to identify your feelings.

Do you have any other questions?

It may help to write the questions down in your Reflection Book. If you can't answer them together, you may like to consult a priest or a catechist later to see if they can help you with the answers.

Turn to **PAGE 72**. This page introduces the session's virtues, which are Love and Forgiveness. Read the page together. We will think more about these virtues later in the session.

Look at **PAGES 74-75** where the story of Joseph and his brothers is told. You will notice blank spaces on these pages. These spaces are where you can write or draw thoughts which come to you as the story is read.

Read the story together, the children underlining (in pencil) words that stand out for them. Begin to do 'Bible Journaling' in the space provided. Finish off designs and add colour later.

Turn to **PAGE 76-77**. Read what it says on page 76. You will be reading the story of the Prodigal Son together. As you do so, imagine yourselves to be either the father or the son in the story. Think about the questions on page 76 as you read through the story.

Read the story aloud and then answer the questions in the boxes on page 76. Here are some suggestions to help you to answer these questions:

- **What do you see?**

The road stretching out ahead. Some pigs are in the fields. The father is pointing at his son and looking happy. The son's shoulders are hunched and he seems weary.

- **What do you think is happening?**

The father sees his son in the distance: he is so pleased to see him after so many years. The son is probably tired from his long journey.

It could be, though, that his shoulders are hunched because he is ashamed of what he has done.

- **What does it make you wonder?**

How will the father greet his son? Will he agree to accept the son as one of his servants? Will the father forgive his son? Will the son ever cheer up?

Turn to **PAGE 78**. Read this page together. Here are some suggestions to help you to answer the questions as they occur on this page:

What does it feel like when you are forgiven?

Some answers may be: very happy; humbled that I have been forgiven; a great sense of peace; etc.

What do you think that it will feel like when God forgives you?

Similar answers to the question above, but especially being filled with joy and thanksgiving because God has forgiven me. Remember, God loves us very much and always forgives us.

How will you celebrate after your First Reconciliation?

There may be a party organised within the Parish or you may celebrate a meal together.

How will you continue to be a loving friend of Jesus and show His love to others?

Some answers may be that you will: always try to do what is right and loving; celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation regularly; spend time in prayer with God; help others who are in need (especially those who are in need of love and friendship); etc.

On the opposite page (**PAGE 79**) there's a story about Ryan forgiving Jess. Read this page and talk together about the questions at the bottom of the page. Here are some suggestions to help you to answer these questions:

Do you always try to forgive someone who has hurt you?

Do you remember any time when you found it hard to forgive someone? How did you start to try and forgive that person?

The first two questions simply require a 'yes' or 'no' answer. You may like to read those two questions and then pause to think about them before talking together in answer to the third question.

Turn to **PAGE 80**. On this page there are suggestions for some activities to do before the celebration of First Reconciliation. Read through this page together and ask for help if you are not sure what to do.

Included in the activities is reading this week's story from *The Marvellous Adventures of Max and Droogo: Ice Cream Melts* (on page 22 in that book).

Read the story and have a go at answering the questions at the bottom on page 25. The story and the questions help us to think about the importance of saying sorry, and how wonderful it is to be forgiven.

On **PAGE 81** of *Heart Speaks to Heart*, there are prayers to end this session.

Firstly, there is a time of Quiet Prayer:

- Sit quietly
- Close your eyes
- Listen to your breathing
- Quietly and slowly say a few times: ***Forgive me, Jesus: my friend and my Lord***
- Allow a period of silence for about 2 minutes
- End the silence, perhaps by making the Sign of the Cross:
'*In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*'

To end the session, pray together the final prayer (***Lord Jesus, I love You; I trust You; I am not afraid ...***) which you will find written out on the right-hand column of page 81.

Stick the sticker of Love and Forgiveness onto your sticker chart to show that you have completed this session.

After the Celebration of First Reconciliation

Look at **PAGE 83**. The children should fill in this page.

We hope that you have enjoyed this journey together. May the Lord bless you as you continue to grow in love and understanding of Him.

OUR CONTINUING JOURNEY IN FAITH

Take time to reflect on ways in which you may continue your faith journey as a family together. As you journey towards the celebration of the sacraments of First Holy Communion and Confirmation, there are many ways in which you may show your love for God and for others.

Below there are a few examples of how (as children and as parents or carers) you may put your faith into action. You may:

- Continue to engage in private and family prayer
- Keep your special Prayer Place and continue to add things about your faith into your Reflection Book
- Read about Jesus and others who have lived their faith; a good way of doing this is by using resources which help you to read and reflect on the Bible, e.g. *The Wednesday Word* (www.wednesdayword.org)
- Become involved at Church during Holy Mass. Perhaps there may be an opportunity for either children or adults to:
 - present the gifts of bread and wine
 - help take the collection
 - read at Holy Mass
 - become an altar server

Ask your priest or catechist what may be possible in your own Parish

- Support and pray for members of the Church and wider community
- Join or start a Prayer Group
- Join groups to learn more about Catholicism, e.g. through courses developed by Sycamore and CaFE (your catechists may be able to tell you more about these and other local parish opportunities which help you to find out more about the Catholic faith)
- Join Catholic societies and organisations (many of our schools have a Mini Vinnies group and many of our parishes have the adult version: a Society of St Vincent de Paul group); both the Mini Vinnies and the SVP are dedicated to helping the poor and needy
- Joining a Social Action Group linked to the Church (e.g. a CAFOD group, a Justice and Peace Group, etc.)
- Care for God's creation in charitable works which care for the world (for the climate and its creatures)