

## Virtual First Penance Retreat 2020

### Happy First Penance Retreat, SacPrep Families!

Though we wish our community and classmates could be together today, we are still super excited to be spending the day with you and your parent, or grown-up, in your house! Your grown-up already did part of their homework with Deacon Dick and Miss Lisa - now, it's your turn to watch videos and do some fun activities!

We want to introduce you to the priests that you might see at First Penance. It's always nice to know who you're going to be sitting with when you're asking God for forgiveness. All five of our priests are SO excited to meet you!

*Your first task today is to [watch this short video](#) so all our priests can say hello to you!*

### CHURCH TOUR AND ACTIVITY #1

After you say hello to Fr. Mike, Fr. Tom, Fr. Vince, Fr. Ralph and Fr. Steve, it's time to take a quick tour of St. James Church! Some of you may have been here before, some may not have and some of you may have only been to St. Alphonsus or St. George - and that's completely ok! **You will be making your First Penance at St. James, so we wanted you to get a backstage tour of the Church before Reconciliation. Let's go behind the scenes.**

[Watch the Tour of St. James Church with Mrs. Held.](#)

(Be sure to watch the video from the beginning, for some reason the link may send you to the video 3 minutes in.)

Afterwards, use **Activity Page #1** to match the Church pieces with their names.

**Parents: PRINT Activity Page #1 ONE-SIDED.** Printing double-sided will match up the wrong images with the Church words and prevent you from cutting all the pieces out.

Start by cutting out all of the squares and then pair up the picture with the name of the object in the Church. Once you've paired up all of the Church words with the right Church images, you've won! *Now tell your parent what your favorite part of the Church was in the video.*

### RECONCILIATION VIDEO & ACTIVITY #2

Watch Dynamic Catholic's [The Five Steps](#) to Penance

After you have watched the video, it's a great time to explain what an Examination of Conscience can look like. **Activity Page #2** gives you a good set of questions for the kids to ask themselves and for you all to talk about as a family. You can even have older siblings get involved with this activity if you want!

## Tips for a Good Examination of Conscience

1. **Ask for help.** Encourage your kids to pray to the Holy Spirit to enlighten them about their sins, or ways that they have fallen short of being the person God wants them to be.
2. **Don't wait until the last minute.** If you use a written examination of conscience as a guide, post it on your refrigerator a few days before going to receive the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation so that the kids will be reminded of it.

### **\*BONUS CHRISTMAS VIDEO\***

Has your family ever watched Home Alone together? If so, you all can probably recall this Church scene with Kevin and Mr. Marley. It's actually an awesome representation of Kevin vocalizing his Examination of Conscience! I've included a [Youtube link to the full movie here](#), but you can find it on Disney+ and on Freeform all of December.

Even if your kids have not seen the movie, you can still understand the context of the short clip - but it's the best Christmas movie if you want to watch it as a family this month for a movie night! The church scene **begins at 1:06:26** (timestamp 1 hour, six minutes, 26 seconds) and **goes until about 1:13:00**. Watch this short clip and then when you watch the whole movie as a family the kids will be able to make the connection!

### **FINAL VIDEO & CLOSING PRAYER**

Watch Dynamic Catholic's [First, but NOT Last](#)

**Parents:** It's important to normalize Reconciliation for the kids! They need to know that, as Catholics, we are called to go to Confession regularly throughout the year.

*Let them know that you will also have the opportunity to go to Confession the day of their First Penance if you want to!*

Watch Dynamic Catholic's [Closing Prayer](#)

**AND THAT IS IT FOR TODAY! But you have one more activity to do before First Penance in January...**

**Decorate your Lamb on Activity Page #3.** Print the Lamb out and personalize it however you'd like! You can use cotton balls, markers/crayons, paint, glue, macaroni, glitter, ribbons & more - anything you have in the house. Just remember to put your name on the back of the Lamb so we can return them to you. Bring the Lamb with you to First Penance on January 9<sup>th</sup>. After your Confession, you will pin your Lamb up on the board.

**Thank you so much for spending this time together on your First Penance Retreat!** You all did a great job. Make sure you do your **Examination of Conscience**, decorate your Lamb and prepare for Reconciliation over the next few weeks. Try to practice your **Act of Contrition** prayer every night before bedtime!

*There are several optional videos to get families ready to First Penance on the next page. These resources may come in handy when you're preparing over the next few weeks.*

## OPTIONAL CONTENT TO HELP PREPARE FOR PENANCE THIS MONTH

**Parents:** If you do not already have your free subscription to FORMED through our Parish, you will need to make an account to watch. It's super simple and free to register!

1. Click on this link: [TheCatholicCommunityOfHopewellValley.formed.org](https://TheCatholicCommunityOfHopewellValley.formed.org)
2. After the page opens fully, click the box on the left "Register Now"
3. Enter your name, email address, zip code, and desired password
4. Click the box "Create Account," and you're done!

This first video on FORMED for the kids is not super long, but I think it is a really good example of what will happen on the day of First Penance.

**Note:** Due to COVID, the kids will not be going into a Confessional for Penance. They will just sit with the priest. When they talk about the Confessional in the video, please let your kids know that it will look a little different when they come to the Church that day!

Watch [Forgiven – For Children: How to Make a Great Confession](#)

This next video on FORMED is for the **Parents!** Parents need to prepare themselves, too, in order to prepare their children for this Sacrament. FORMED has created a video specific to the parents

Watch [Forgiven – For Parents: Preparing Your Child for First Confession](#)

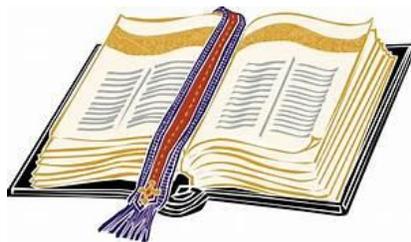
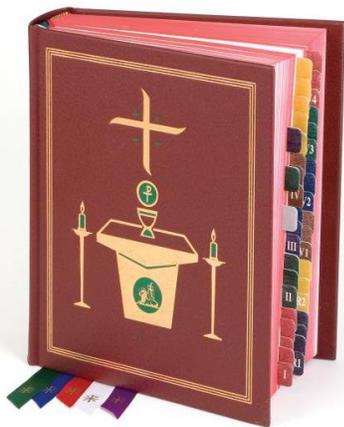
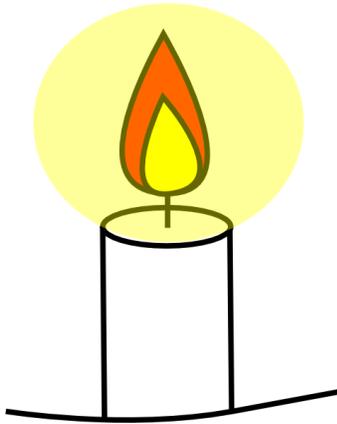
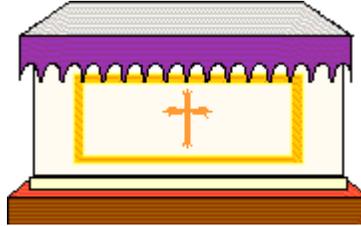
I'm sure you also noticed there were a ton of other **Dynamic Catholic Blessed Reconciliation** clips that the kids could have watched during the Penance Retreat. I think these short videos are really helpful to them. Any of the videos in Lesson 4 and Lesson 5 would be good for the kids!

Session 4: [Forgiveness and Healing](#)

Session 5: [Your First Reconciliation](#)

Session 6: [It's Only the Beginning](#)

# ACTIVITY PAGE #1



**ACTIVITY PAGE #1**

**CHALICE**

**ALTAR**

**AMBO**

**CANDLES**

**PRIEST &  
DEACON  
VESTMENTS**

**BAPTISM  
FONT**

**MISSAL**

**LECTIONARY**

**TABERNACLE**

## ACTIVITY PAGE #2

### PRACTICE STEP-BY-STEP FOR DAY OF PENANCE

As Pope Francis said, *“Do not be afraid of Confession!”*

**1:** First, pray to the Holy Spirit to help you, then examine your conscience (see below). Plan what sins you will tell the priest.

**2:** After the priest greets you, make the Sign of the Cross.

**Say:** “Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It has been (state how long) since my last confession. These are my sins.”

**3:** Tell your sins simply and honestly to Jesus, who acts through the priest. Feel free to tell why you did what you did if you need to!

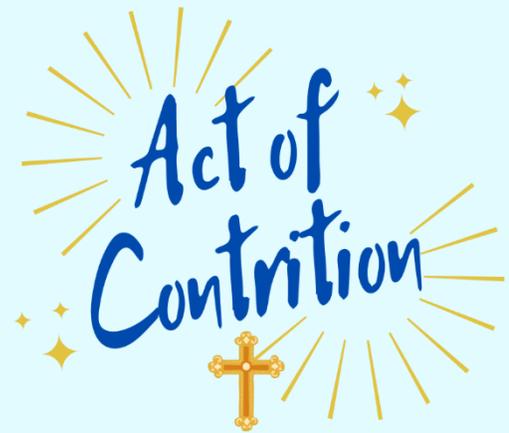
**4:** Listen to the advice the priest gives you and remember the penance he tells you to do.

**Say:** The Act of Contrition

**6:** The priest will then dismiss you.

**7:** Do your penance in the Church right away if you can! Then thank God for His mercy.

**\*\*\***You can print and cut out this prayer card to have on the morning of First Penance! →



**My God, I am sorry for my sins  
with all my heart.**

**In choosing to do wrong and  
failing to do good, I have  
sinned against you whom I  
should love above all things.  
I firmly intend, with your help,  
to do penance, to sin no more,  
and to avoid whatever leads  
me to sin.**

**Our Savior Jesus Christ  
suffered and died for us.**

**In His name, my God,  
have mercy.**

## ACTIVITY PAGE #2

### CHILDREN'S EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

Did I pay attention at Mass?

Have I messed around in church?

Did I say my prayers every day?

Did I say mean things to my mom or dad or siblings?

Did I always say "Thank You" to people?

Am I hard to get along with (during school, at Grandma's, at home)?

Did I do what my mom and dad told me to do? My teacher?

Was I lazy around the house?

Did I do my chores?

Did I hurt others people's feelings by calling them bad names?

Have I started fights with my brothers and sisters at home?

Have I blamed other people for things I do?

Did I get other people into trouble?

Do I hit people when I get mad?

Have I forgiven people? Or am I holding a grudge?

Have I cheated or been unfair in games?

Did I refuse to play with someone for no good reason?

Was I was lazy about my schoolwork?

Did I fail to do my homework?

Did I cheat in school?

Have I lied to my parents? My teachers? My friends?

Did I take anything that didn't belong to me?

Did I avoid medicine? Did I refuse to eat food I didn't like?

**REMEMBER:** You can't sin "by accident" and if someone did something bad to you, it is not your sin, but theirs — and you should tell an adult.