

Equipping Parents: First Penance Edition

Let's be honest. Certain aspects of parenthood can be challenging. Parents are overwhelmed, exhausted, and trying to navigate the many emotions and needs of their children. Parents, as primary catechists of their children, should be approaching the sacrament of penance alongside their children this season. How can we equip them, even if they've been away from the sacrament for a while?

We've created some links and materials to get you started as you begin this conversation of inviting parents, alongside their first penitents, to experience the grace and mercy of our loving Lord.

How to start the conversation: Three Primer Videos

Parent Starter Video for Conversation (Lump): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9IBPXuxpheE>

Returning to the Sacrament after a Break: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWxp5BNgmVY>

How to go to the sacrament of confession:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lb8pzvnnL20&list=RDLVtvo0OCcp600&index=2>

Basic Information to hand to parents (English and Spanish):

Parish Toolkit including a guide to the sacrament, and examination of consciences for parents and children: English/Spanish <https://thelightison.org/toolkit/>

[Examination of Conscience for the Modern Parent](#)

Parent Project Idea: LOVE BAGS!

What a beautiful year for these first sacrament children, as they experience God's awesome and amazing love for them through the forgiving cleansing of the Sacrament of Penance, and in the spring through the loving sacrifice of the Sacrament of Holy Communion. To remind each child of how much God loves them, you can show them how much they are loved by family and friends. Each parent can prepare a Love Bag for their child to be opened after reception of the Sacrament of Penance. A Love Bag is simply any type of bag, decorated by parents, and is filled with love, by the way of notes, letters, pictures, prayer cards, etc. that express love for that child. Invite grandparents, siblings, godparents, aunts, uncles, etc. to let the child know how much they mean to them by writing a note or letter to them. Again, this can be presented after they have received the Sacrament and honored their Penance. You do not have to distribute Love Bags at the church; some families elect to share this at home after the service or even over ice cream on the way home! Guide parents to make it a family evening to remember!

For more ideas or questions on how to involve parents in the First Sacrament process, please contact Megan Cottam mcottam@richmonddiocese.org