

## First Communion session- 3 of 4

The parable commonly known by the title Prodigal Son or Lost Son is called The Forgiving Father in the Featured Story of the The Catholic Children's Bible on page 1620. This change of emphasis from the son to the father is deliberate and reflects the main point of the story. Although it is important that the son recognized his self-destructive ways and decided to repent and return home, it is even more important that he was received with mercy and compassion by his father.

Jesus' story here is not only about our human weaknesses but about God's loving kindness, or mercy, for all of his children. This is the message of this chapter, that God always welcomes us home.

Important points for this lesson are

- God is a loving Father
- God always forgives us when we are truly sorry for our sins
- God's mercy comes to us in the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Together pray the prayer on the front of the activity booklet.

Before diving into the scripture portion of the activity, remind your child that running away from home is never a good idea, and it could be very dangerous. Tell him/her that today they will be hearing a story that Jesus told about a young man who ran away from home.

Ask:

1. How do you think I would feel if you ran away from home?
2. How do you think I would feel if I came back?

Open your Bible to find Luke 15:11-32 (pgs 1619, 1622) and read the story together.

Remember to stop and ask questions or discuss things along the way. When you are finished, ask the following questions,

1. What did the younger son ask his father for?
2. Where did the son go? What did he do with all of the money?
3. Why did the son decide to go back home?
4. What did the son say to his father?
5. What was the father's reaction when he saw his son coming up the path?
6. Did the father scold the son?

Go over pages 1620-1621 in your child's Bible together.

Have your child go to page 2 in the materials and complete the activity with their Bible open.

- Explain to your child that the Sacrament of Reconciliation is the sacrament in which we ask for forgiveness and our sins are forgiven. Our sins are something that we do that does not follow God's Law.

- Explain that at the very beginning of the sacrament, the priest will greet us and welcome us. Tell then that we then pray together the Sign of the Cross. Explain that making the Sign of the Cross reminds us that we are baptized and that we belong to God. Tell him/her that the priest will usually say something like, “May God, who has enlightened every heart, help you to know your sins and to trust in his mercy.”
- Remind him/her that they learned about God’s mercy in the Bible story about the Forgiving Father. Recall that Jesus taught us that God was like the forgiving father in the story. Explain that God is full of mercy and will always love us and forgive us.
- Explain that when we go to confession, we trust in God’s mercy, and we trust that if we are truly sorry for our sins, God will forgive us.

Do page 3 in your workbook and then go over page 4 as well.

Here is the YouTube link:

The Parables of Jesus 6- the Prodigal Son

Jebtoonz

<https://youtu.be/V96rkM5Gpn0>

Finish this session with the Pray It! Prayer at the bottom of page 4 in the workbook pages.