

For Parents

Listen The Most Holy Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is attentive to you. As you turn your attention to God, let this prayer from Sacred Scripture become your own: “My heart and flesh cry out for the living God” (Psalms 84: 3).

Know Grace is God’s free, loving gift of his own life. The Seven Sacraments are special sources of grace when they are properly celebrated and received. (For more about how the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist are properly celebrated and received, see *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1234-1235; 1297-1301; 1306-1314; 1348-1355; and 1384-1390.)

Sanctifying grace is God’s divine life within us that heals us from our sins and makes us his adopted sons and daughters. Baptism is a sign of sanctifying grace that changes a person permanently. Through completing initiation with Confirmation and receiving the Eucharist, Catholics show that they long to grow closer to Christ through prayer, through the Sacraments, and through obedience to his will. In the Sacraments we also receive actual grace, the help God gives us to live and behave as he calls us to do.

One source for knowing more about grace and the Sacraments is the *Catechism*, paragraphs 1076-1134. Ask a trusted catechist or priest about additional recommendations for learning about grace and the Sacraments.

Wonder A parent’s own relationship with the Church is an irreplaceable faith witness for the family. How does your life show your Christian faith and the importance of being a Catholic?

Following Jesus is an ongoing journey. Sometimes we don’t live as we know God hopes for us. Thankfully, God is merciful and ready to forgive, especially when we recognize how we have sinned. When was the last time you celebrated the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation? What helps you to (or hinders you from) accept the forgiveness of God and healing grace offered in this Sacrament?

Choose Making an Examination of Conscience shows humility in trying to be in right relationship with God, others, and oneself. Prayerfully reflecting on your thoughts, words, and deeds in comparison to Catholic moral teachings helps you identify where you cooperate with God’s grace, recognize sins, and choose what you want to change.

The Beatitudes and Ten Commandments are common frameworks for such reflection. Lists like the five baptismal promises also would be meaningful while preparing for Confirmation. An Examination of Conscience can be found on page 49 in the Candidate Book.

For Families

Pause Prepare to gather by finding mementos from sacramental celebrations like pictures, baptismal candles, and certificates, and then create a centerpiece where you will meet.

Pray

Leader: The Bible tells us those who dwell in God's house never cease to praise him (Psalm 84:5). We recognize that God is in our home today by saying Amen.

All: Amen.

Leader: God loves each of us, so we give praise by saying Alleluia.

All: Alleluia!

Practice Practicing Catholics "exercise" their spiritual, mental, and physical "muscles" to develop habits for living as God's adopted sons and daughters. Participating in the Sacraments is an important habit. The things we can see in a Sacrament—the "visible signs"—point to and make present God's actions. Use the mementos you gathered to spark stories of who was there, what happened that day, and how you feel about it now. Plan to go to Mass soon to give thanks for these graces.

All Catholics are obliged to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation (see CCC, 2192). Participate actively in the Mass by singing to God in praise, joining your voice with others in the prayer, and listening attentively to the Scripture readings and the prayers of the priest. Pay particular attention to how the actions, words, and signs present in the liturgy point to the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.