



OLV National Shrine & Basilica

A Father Baker Legacy

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Dear Parents and Caregivers:

Since your child was an infant you have been teaching him or her how to make good choices and to recognize the difference between good and bad actions. Perhaps one way you did this was when your child was unkind to another child or family member. This important task of teaching your child to make good choices also took place when you explained how to share, how to speak respectfully to others, and how to play fairly. You yourself modeled these behaviors too, perhaps when you said you were sorry when you had been unkind. Such actions taught your child to do the same.

Preparation for the sacrament of First Reconciliation continues this example in a new and renewed way. You are gifting your child with a wonderful heritage; a faith that instills in others a capacity for sincere sorrow and an ability to change one's actions. In the coming months you will help your child understand that their relationship with God and others can be broken through their sins and actions, but you will also share with them the skills to be able to ask for forgiveness, to restore these relationships, and to change their ways. What a beautiful gift you will share with your child: Faith!

Our sacramental preparation program for First Reconciliation is called *Together in Jesus*. Your child will explore six themes.

- We belong to a loving community.
- We belong to a community that keeps God's Ten Commandments.
- We belong to a community that acts as Jesus teaches in the Sermon on the Mount.
- God is forgiving like the father of the prodigal son and calls us to be forgiving.
- Jesus on the first Easter evening gives his followers the power of the Spirit so that they can forgive people's sins.
- We celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

These six themes will also be explored within your family setting. We recognize that what goes on in your home is the most important part of the preparation for First Reconciliation. We also recognize that parents and caregivers are tremendously busy these days, so our goal is to assist you in making First Reconciliation preparation an enjoyable part of your family activities. In addition, to exploring the above six themes you will also help your child learn their basic prayers.

As your child's first and most important religious educator, you have the right and the responsibility to be an active participant in their sacramental preparation. We will support you in that role and in the sharing of the gift of faith.

Peace and All Good,

Carmel Zomeri

Director of Faith Development

Fostering Miracles