

## **Celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation**

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a celebration shared not only with our family but our parish community. Celebrating the sacrament helps us take responsibility for our actions, come to experience the loving forgiveness of God, and the gift of peace. Everyone is proud and excited for you to share in this wonderful event.

Remember that the priest is an instrument of God. He will never tell anyone what is shared during confession. Be honest and open with him and do not hide anything from him. He may ask you questions or give you advice because he wants to help. He represents Jesus and wants peace and joy for you just as much as Jesus does.

As you prepare to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, spend a little time thinking about what you want to tell the priest. You will gather with your family in St. Aloysius Church on Saturday, February 24, 2018. Please arrive dressed comfortably but appropriately for church. Have a good breakfast and relax. Plan to arrive no later than 9:45 A.M. that morning so that you can get settled and clear your mind in preparation of the service.

We will have a communal service with readings from the bible and songs. Try to relax and enjoy the words from the bible and the music. Remember, this is a celebration! Then the sacrament of reconciliation will be offered to everyone on an individual basis.

There will be several priests available to hear confession that morning. Choose a priest near where your family has chosen to sit. Watch for directions from your teachers and other church volunteers. When you approach the priest, say hello and take a seat in front of him. Take a deep breath and calm yourself. Make the sign of the cross and say "Bless me Father, for I have sinned."

Tell the priest your sins – tell him how you have not loved others or yourself. Let him know that you want to be a better person; you want to follow Jesus in your daily life. After listening to you, the priest will ask you to say a prayer or do a good deed. Tell him that you are truly sorry for your sins.

He may extend his hands over you and pray that you will receive God's forgiveness. He may say "I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." He may share another blessing or say "Go in peace."

You can simply say thank you and leave him. Remain prayerful and do your penance after you leave him while sitting quietly with your family in your pew. You can use this opportunity to talk to God in your own words.

Remember many of your friends and classmates are also receiving this sacrament with you. Be respectful and quiet at all times. This is a solemn sacrament and should be treated with respect.

Congratulations! You have been cleansed of your sins and now have a fresh new start to be the best person you can be! Remember to follow God's laws – use the commandments as your guide – and you will experience the peace, joy and love that Jesus shares with us every day.

Prayer:

*God, I am sorry for my sins. With your help I will try not to sin again. Amen.*