



The Sacrament of Reconciliation  
Preparation Booklet 5



## Saying Sorry to Others

When we have done something wrong, how can we *show* that we are sorry?



We can say it.



We can do something nice.



We can shake hands.



We can make a card.

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*During the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we say a special prayer to say that we are sorry. It is called the Act of Contrition or the Act of Sorrow.*

*"O my God, I thank you for loving me. I am sorry for all my sins, for not loving others and not loving you. Help me to live like Jesus and not sin again.*

*Amen."*

## Jesus Forgives



Jesus loves everyone and forgives us when we do something wrong. We can read many stories of Jesus forgiving people in the bible. Jesus forgives all sorts of people - his disciples, his enemies, the rich, the poor and even the people who crucified him.

We are all sinners. Jesus wants sinners to come to him. Sinners are still very special to Jesus. They are still God's children, he loves them, and that is why Jesus is ready to forgive everything they do wrong.

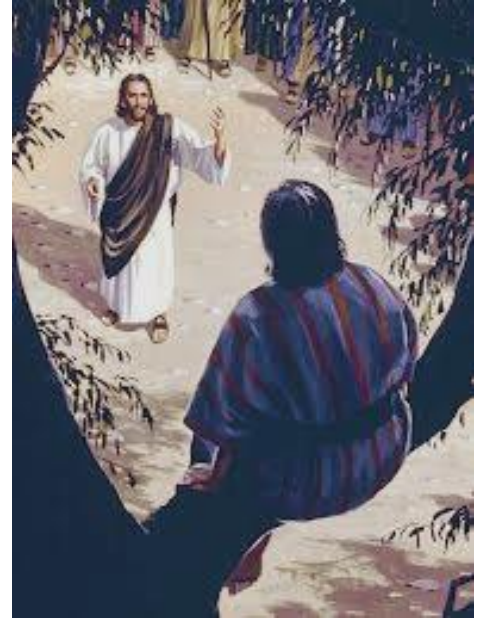
1. Think of a time when you did something wrong and were forgiven. ***How did you feel when you were forgiven?***
2. Think of a time when someone did or said something wrong to you and you forgave. ***How did you feel when you forgave the person? How did the other person feel?***
3. What happens when you hold a grudge against someone? ***What do you think Jesus would say about holding a grudge?***

Draw a picture of yourself shaking hands with someone and saying sorry.

## The Story of Zacchaeus Luke 19:1-10

Zacchaeus was a tax collector who got rich by making others pay too much tax. When Zacchaeus heard Jesus was in town, he wanted to see him. But Zacchaeus was small, and Jesus was always surrounded by a crowd.

So Zacchaeus decided to run ahead of the crowd and climb a sycamore tree. From there he could watch for Jesus.



He watched as Jesus came closer.

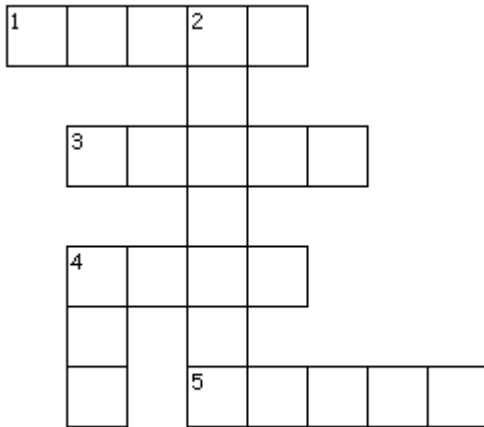
Jesus stopped right beneath his tree. Then Jesus looked straight up at him!

**"Zacchaeus," said Jesus, "come down. I want to stay at your house today!"**

Zacchaeus climbed down. **"You are welcome at my house, Jesus,"** he said. But others grumbled, muttering to each other. **"Why does Jesus want to go to the house of a sinner?"**

Zacchaeus turned to Jesus and said, "... Lord... I promise to give half of my money to the poor. If I have cheated anyone in taxes, I will pay them back four times that amount."

## The Story of Zacchaeus



### Across

1. Jesus wanted to go to the \_\_\_\_\_ of Zacchaeus.
3. Zacchaeus promised to give back m \_\_\_\_\_
4. This is what Zacchaeus climbed
5. Zacchaeus was not tall, he was \_\_\_\_\_

### Down

2. Jesus even loves \_\_\_\_\_
4. Zacchaeus was a collector of this.

### Question Time

- 1 Why did people not like tax collectors?
- 2 Why did Zacchaeus climb a tree?
- 3 Did Jesus ignore Zacchaeus?
- 4 Where did Jesus ask to go?
- 5 What did the other people in the crowd think when Jesus wanted to visit Zacchaeus?
- 6 What did Zacchaeus promise to do to show that he was sorry?
- 7 What special things does this story tell us about Jesus and people who sin?

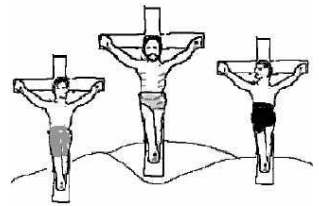
## Jesus Forgives Everyone who is Sorry

When Jesus was dying on the cross there were two other men on crosses beside him. They were both criminals. They were robbers. The first criminal made fun of Jesus and shouted unkind things to him like:

**"Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!"**

The second criminal, however, said,

**"But we are criminals, we are getting what we deserved; but he has done nothing wrong."**



And he said to Jesus,

**"Remember me when you come as King."**

Jesus said to him, **"I promise you that today you will be with me in paradise."**

- 1 What is a "robber"?
- 2 How do we know that the first criminal was not sorry?
- 3 What does the second robber ask Jesus?
- 4 What does it mean when Jesus says "You will be with me in paradise?"
- 5 What does this story tell us about being sorry ?

## The Sacrament of Reconciliation Booklet 5

### Lesson Aims

- to help the children to understand that there are different ways to express that we are sorry
- to be able explain a situation where they show that they are sorry
- to relate Jesus' willingness to forgive to the children's ability to forgive
- to help children to understand the term "hold a grudge."
- to show examples of forgiveness from the New Testament and encourage the children to reflect on the message of the stories.

#### 1 "Saying sorry to Others" worksheet.

20 minutes approx.

Read through the four pictures/words depicting *how* to say sorry. Ask questions relating to the pictures to encourage discussion, e.g. "What is the boy doing to show that he is sorry?"

"What do you think has happened?" "Have you ever made a card for someone? Why?"

"Have you ever done something for your parent to show how sorry you were?"

You could ask the children to draw their own "sorry" scenario picture and explain it in words. (They could do it at home with their parents and bring it to the next session).

#### 2 "Jesus Forgives" worksheet.

15 minutes approx.

The aim is to underline the *extent* of Jesus' forgiveness - that he even forgives those who crucified him! Explain what a "grudge" means (it's quite a difficult term to explain, but it's important to tell them that Jesus forgives those who are *really* sorry - it must not be half-hearted or grudged).

When it comes to the questions (1-3) the children could be split into pairs to discuss the three questions.

Then, they could draw a picture of themselves saying sorry.

### 3 The Story of Zacchaeus (2 sheets - story and crossword & questions) 30 minutes

Some of the children may already know this story!

Before reading, ask/explain what a tax collector was in those days. Then read the story ...The aim of the story is to show that Jesus loves those whom others dislike.

It's also important to highlight the following:

- that Jesus *noticed* Zacchaeus - Jesus does not ignore sinners - he seeks them out, he loves them too.
- that Zacchaeus is bad-turned-good by the end of the story - this is the effect that listening to Jesus has on us!
- that the crowd were wrong to judge Zacchaeus. By being angry, the crowd themselves were just as guilty of sin as Zacchaeus.
- that Zacchaeus showed *by his actions* that he was truly sorry- actions speak louder than words! Zacchaeus gave money back to people. Jesus did not ask Zacchaeus to do this. Zacchaeus used his own free will in his bad choices but now rectifies his choices and makes good ones. Zacchaeus' encounter with Jesus changed him completely. This happens to us too when we are truly sorry for our sins.

### 4 Jesus Forgives Everyone who is Sorry 15 minutes approx.

Read the words. Stop whenever you come to the spoken words of Jesus and the two criminals, and ask one of the children to read these words. This will help make these key phrases stand out and be remembered!

This is a good time to explain that Jesus often does the opposite of what people expect - people would expect a crucified man to hate those who killed him - but Jesus continues to love them ...

Go through each question. The aim is to highlight that true sorrow is necessary for forgiveness. The robber who is truly sorry is promised a place in heaven.