

COMMUNION/SACRAMENT SUNDAY #2

Penance and Confession of Sins

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| <p>Preparation: (What I need to do and items to gather before I begin to teach.)</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. FOCUS this Sunday on taking students into church to receive Holy Communion. 2. CONTACT your parish priest in advance and let him know that this week's Sunday school discussion is the third Sacrament, <u>PENANCE and CONFESSION OF SINS</u> 3. ASK: Your priest to please prepare a children's sermon to share with the children while they are inside church. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A copy of your church confession that children recite before Communion • Whiteboard or Poster paper • Markers |
| <p>Scripture Reference(s):</p> | <p><i>Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.</i> (Matthew 16:19)</p> |
| <p>Emphasis or Theme:</p> | <p>There are 7 Sacraments of the Armenian Apostolic Church. They are (<i>in order of customary appearance in our lives</i>): Baptism, Chrismation or Confirmation, Penance, Holy Communion, Marriage (<i>Holy Matrimony</i>), Ordination (<i>Holy Orders</i>), Prayers for the sick. Last Communion Sunday, we discussed the first 2 sacraments: Baptism and Chrismation. Today we focus on the 3rd sacrament: PENANCE/CONFESSION OF SINS</p> |
| <p>Introducing the Lesson: (What you might say or do before the story to help create an interest or curiosity.)</p> | <p>SAY: Sacraments are signs of God's love. The Armenian word for sacrament is "<i>khorhoort</i>," which means <i>mystery</i>. Jesus Christ is mysteriously present in the seven sacraments and is Himself the officiant through the person of the priest.</p> <p>Sacraments give us God's grace, friendship, constant love, and His invitation for us to live in union with Him. Participating in a sacrament allows us to be physically reminded that God loves us!</p> <p>The third sacrament we can experience is PENANCE and CONFESSION of SINS. This is something that we do every Sunday we go into church to receive Communion.</p> <p>ASK: Does anyone know the meaning of Penance? (<i>Pause for responses.</i>) Penance is when we confess, or say we're sorry, for our sins to a priest who, in turn, gives us forgiveness.</p> <p>SAY: The Sacrament of Penance is a great gift from God. Through our priest who hears our confession, God forgives every action or wrongdoing that we may have done. But we have to be truly sorry!</p> |
| <p>Sharing the Lesson: (Outline the lesson here. Then describe the method you will use to tell the story. Examples might include showing pictures, props, visuals, drawing as you tell, using puppets, costumed characters, dramatic story-telling or any number of other methods.)</p> | <p>ASK: What is a SIN? (<i>Pause for responses.</i>)</p> <p>SAY: A SIN is doing something wrong in the eyes of God.</p> <p>ASK: What are some examples of SIN? (<i>Pause for responses & list on board.</i>)</p> <p>SAY: SIN also includes NOT helping someone or being kind to someone when we had the chance, (<i>add to list on board</i>). Sin destroys our union with God. But through the sacrament of PENANCE, we can always make things right again with Him.</p> <p>SAY: A venial or mortal sin is an everyday fault that hurts our relationship with God. Confession of these sins helps us to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form our conscience • Fight against evil tendencies • Be healed by Christ • Continue to live in the life of the Spirit <p>There are 7 "venial" or mortal sins which must be confessed in order to enter heaven:</p> |

1. Pride
2. Covetousness/Greed (selfish desire for more than is needed)
3. Lust (a strong [sexual] desire for another person)
4. Anger
5. Gluttony (excess of food or drink)
6. Envy (wanting what others have)
7. Sloth (laziness)

PENANCE and CONFESSION OF SINS

SAY: So, we know what sin *IS*, but what is the **Sacrament of PENANCE?**

PENANCE gives us the opportunity to tell God that we are sorry for any sin we may have committed or any good we've left undone. Penance is the sacramental act through which we are reconciled, or making things right, with God when sin has broken our relationship with Him and the church.

SAY: There are **3 conditions** for a person who wishes to reestablish their relationship with God through his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ (*list on board*):

1. The first condition is **Repentance** or feeling sorrow for one's own sins. Repentance must come from the depths of one's heart. Without truly feeling badly, penance is just a formality and hypocrisy.
2. The second condition is **Confession**, an open and full acknowledgement of one's sins. To be worthy of the forgiveness of God, one must sincerely confess their mistakes from the heart and with love and faith. We must never knowingly hide any of our sins or refuse to confess them.
OPTION: *Review the "CONFESSION and ABSOLUTION Explanation for Children" activity here.*
3. The third condition is the **Absolution**, which is when the person confessing receives God's forgiveness through Christ and his designated successors on earth, which were His apostles first, then their successors, and who are today our priests. Absolution in the Armenian Church contains the words that Christ said to His disciples: "*Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.*" (Matthew 16:19)

HOW DO WE CORRECT A SIN THAT HAS BEEN COMMITTED?

SAY: Many sins wrong our neighbor. One must do what is possible in order to repair the harm . . .

- If you stole, return the stolen goods
- If you spoke badly about someone, restore the reputation of that person
- If you hurt someone physically, pay compensation for injuries

For more serious sin (*murder, rape, adultery*) the **ABSOLUTION** and release from guilt for full forgiveness of the sin may involve an **ACT OF PENANCE**.

An **ACT OF PENANCE** is an assignment or consequence that is given to the person confessing their sins. (*for example, if you litter, your parent may make you pick up a bag of trash as a consequence.*)

An **ACT OF PENANCE** is:

- Usually given after a person has participated in a private confession
- Designated by the Church and assigned by the priest who hears the confession
- Depends on the number and severity of the sin confessed.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be accepted and fulfill by the confessor, willingly and cheerfully - not as punishment but as a way of rebuilding their spiritual and moral life, which had been weakened by sin. <p>Some Acts of Penance include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A period of increased prayer • Fasting • Clearly understood sacrifices • Performing a specific work of charity • In cases of very grave sins, suspension from Holy Communion. |
| <p>Learning Activities: (Games, crafts artwork, songs, memory verses, or other activities that bring fuller meaning to the scripture or make application to the lives of the students..)</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clean Heart Prayers craft 2. CONFESSION and ABSOLUTION Explanation for Children 3. Joy of a Clean Heart craft 4. 'Thumb'-thing to Think About craft |
| <p>Review: (Solidify learning by repeating. facts or themes or even the story itself through games, crafts, activities, or visual aids.)</p> | <p><i>Ask students to complete each statement:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The third Sacrament is called: PENANCE/CONFESSION OF SINS 2. The 3 Conditions of Penance are: Repentance, Confession, Absolution 3. The meaning of Absolution: Release from guilt 4. Example of "Acts of Penance:" Prayer, fasting, sacrifices, charity, suspension from Holy Communion |
| <p>Closing: (Prayer, last song, . . .)</p> | <p>SAY: Hayr Mer</p> |