

# Penance/ Communion

## The Story of the Prodigal Son



happy



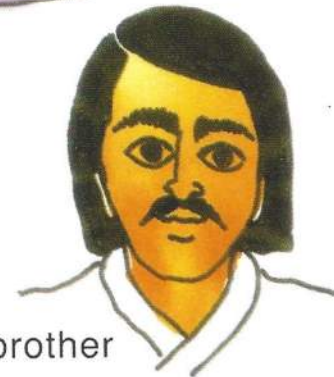
sad



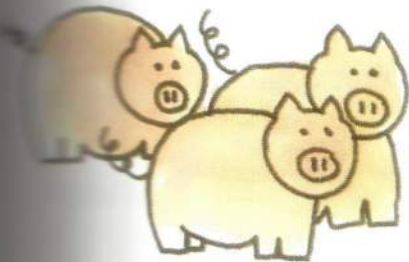
boy



father



brother










pigs











friends













food


Once there was a  . He lived with his  and  . They had a comfortable life, but the  was not  . One day he went to his  and said, “  , I am ready to go out on my own. Give me my share of the money and I'll go away to another place.”


The  was very  to see his  leave. But he gave him his share of the money and the  went off to another country.


At first the  had a good time. He went to lots of parties and ballgames. He took his  to the circus and spent lots of money on them. But after a while, the  spent all his money. He didn't even have a place to sleep at night. He asked his  for help, but they pretended they didn't know him.




Then he found other  . These  were bad and taught the  to do bad things. The  was  . He got a job feeding  on a farm. He was very hungry, but he didn't have money for  . The  said to himself, “I don't have  .”




to eat. I would be glad if I could eat what these  are eating. I will



go home to my . I will say that I am sorry I left my family. I will




ask my  to take me back and let me be one of the servants.”


So the  started home. But while he was still on the road, the


 saw him. The  came running out to see his 



The  hugged and kissed the . The  said to his



, “I am sorry I did things that made you . Please take me  
back and let me be one of your servants.”

The  was so excited. He called his servants and said, “We  
will have a big party. Cook lots of . Invite our . My

 is home again. He was lost, but now he is found.”

The  heard all the noise and came out. He asked why the

 was so happy. The servants told him, “The  is home

again. Your  is  now, because he was lost, but now he  
is found.”

*Luke 15:11-32*

*Some questions to think about*

I. How have I behaved toward my family and friends?

- Have I remembered my family, my friends and all people who need God in my prayers?
- Have I been good to my parents and given them my love? Have I been honest with them and answered them truthfully whenever they asked me something? Have I listened to them?
- Have I been kind to my grandparents and to older people?
- Have I been good to my brothers and sisters? Have I shared my things with them? Have I helped them?
- Have I been kind to my friends and teachers? Have I tried to make new students feel welcome? Have I tried to make friends with someone who is lonely? Have I been mean to anyone?

II. How have I behaved toward myself?

- Have I listened to my parents and teachers about taking care of my body — eating the right food, getting enough sleep, wearing my hat and mittens?
- Have I done the jobs my parents and teachers have given me to do?

Now ...

- How can I do better? If I have hurt anyone, am I sorry for it?
- Do I know what I should do to live as a better child of God?
- Do I know that God loves me very much and will help me change if I want to?
- How shall I show my love for God?

III. How have I behaved toward God?

- Did I pray to him every day?
- Did I thank him, in the morning, at meals, in the evening before bed?
- Have I really loved God and tried to live as he wants me to live?

This is My Body  
This is My Blood



parents), 9" to 10" lengths of string, one piece for each symbol on the mobile. (Enlist help of a parent for baptism mobile.)

- Blackboard, chalk, scissors (one for each child), crayons or markers
- Pictures of an Armenian Church baptism

#### Procedure

1. Greet class enthusiastically! Open with prayer, "I Believe," from *Prayers for Armenian Children*, page 15.
2. Review last week's activities. (5 min.)
3. Introduce lesson. Say: "Today we are going to learn about something that happened to each of us when we were very little. It is the special way we welcome people, even very little people, children, into God's family." Ask: "Does anyone know who God's family is?" If children know that we, the Church, are God's family, you're already two steps ahead of the game. If their answers are unsatisfactory, then say something like, "Let's learn about God's family and how we become members of it by listening to this story."
4. Read story on pages 53-55. Ask questions to elicit responses about their own baptisms, or ones they've witnessed recently. Emphasize joy in being part of a new family, the new life we experience in the Church. Stress importance of child's own family gathering for her/his baptism. Note that Melanie thought it extremely important that relatives would travel great distances for baptism. Children can be made to realize the joy and enthusiasm the birth of a new baby creates in a family, so also with the spiritual birth into God's family at baptism. (15 min.)
5. Look at the illustration of a baptism on page 55. Discuss what children see happening in picture. Make a list on the blackboard of things children observe. (10 min.)
6. Make a baptism mobile. Help children color and attach their symbols to the twine and then to the dowels. You'll have to drive a small nail to criss-cross dowels so children can work with them. Depending upon the children's motor control, you may have to do some of the tying to the dowels. As they work, ask more questions about their mobiles and what baptism means. (25 min.)
7. If time permits, do one or two other enrichment activities. Perform a "mock baptism" with children, allowing them the opportunity to change roles or take a trip into church to see the priest, and experience the vessels of baptism firsthand. Children can touch the font, see how water is turned on, learn where dove is kept, etc.
8. Closing prayer. Homework assignment is to explain all the symbols of baptism to their parents, and bring in a picture of their own baptism. Have parents fill in "Naming" questionnaire on page 58. (5 min.)

## Session 3—Penance/Communion

#### Key Concepts

1. We receive God's blessing through Holy Communion, and share in the special meal of his family.
2. When we offend members of his family, we repent and ask God's forgiveness in the sacrament of penance.
3. The sacraments of penance and Holy Communion help us to grow into more loving members of God's family.

#### Objectives

Students will

1. Receive penance and Holy Communion, and will recognize these two sacraments as ones we receive regularly.
2. Read the rebus of the Prodigal Son, and be able to retell it.
3. Recognize that God is ready to forgive us if we are sorry for doing what we know is wrong.

#### Background for Teacher

The sacraments of penance and Holy Communion are the two sacraments Christians should receive most often. These two sacraments are the means by which we return to wholeness in our relationship with God and our fellow humans. They are also "spiritual vitamins" which help strengthen us to resist sin and temptation, and grow closer to God. Just as our physical bodies need nourishment and sustenance to stay healthy, so our spiritual selves need the nourishment of meeting our Lord in these two sacraments. In these sacraments, Jesus helps us to grow stronger and more like him.

To be able to fully receive the sacrament of penance, we too must be willing and able to forgive, as we are forgiven. As we are forgiven through the sacrament, so we long to become one with our Lord and his Body, through reception of Holy Communion.

Also see chapters on penance in *The Sacraments: The Symbols of Our Faith*.

Holy Eucharist: This is the great sacrament and through its administration Jesus Christ, in the form of Bread and Wine, gives himself to us for our salvation.

Christ becomes the spiritual food and is continually given to the faithful, which is basic in Christian faith.

The sacrament was instituted by Christ at the Last Supper on the eve of his crucifixion. Here the man Jesus, before his actual death, gave to his disciples and all those who would follow them, a new commandment to re-experience his own sacrifice. In this sacrament, while man is giving himself up to God, God on the other hand sends his grace upon the

souls of men.

Therefore, all the prayers, songs and readings which form the body of the structure of Holy Eucharist can only be understood in relation to this central action of Christ's sacrifice.

#### Materials Needed

- Pencils
- Markers or crayons

#### Procedure

1. Welcome children enthusiastically. Open with prayer, "We Believe," from *Prayers for Armenian Children*, page 15. Encourage children to recite it with you. Go over their At-Home assignment from last week. Allow children to mention who their god-parents are, where they were baptized, and why they were baptized. (10 min.)
2. Begin lesson by asking if children know the story of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. (It should be known to all.) Assign several children to role play the story. After the story has been acted out, discuss what Goldilocks did. Elicit from children that she "borrowed" things that were not her own, that she entered the home of others without permission, etc. Help them to see that Goldilocks' actions were wrong. Now discuss with them how Goldilocks should renew her relationship with the bear family. Have children role play the story again. This time, after Goldilocks has run off, have her feel sorry for her actions and return to the bear family to express regret. And have the bear family welcome her in and invite her to have dinner with them, and "sleep over." Discuss with children how sometimes we do things which we know are wrong, but how when we're sorry, as our Christian Goldilocks was, we are always forgiven. (15 min.)
3. Now turn to the story of the Prodigal Son, on pages 59-61. Read the story together. After the children have finished the story, ask: "What would you have done if you were the boy? Do you think the boy did the right thing? Why was the father glad he came back? What did the father do when the boy came home?" Let the children discuss the story, and express their reactions. Help them to see that our Father welcomes us back just as the Prodigal's father rejoiced at his return. (15 min.)
4. Begin the "self-examination" based on "Some questions to think about" on page 62. Children must not be required to answer the questions orally, but should be permitted to discuss those they wish. Children need to be reassured that forgiveness from God is free and without measure. After children are prepared by the "self-examination," describe to them the practice in your parish for group confession and Holy Communion. (10 min.)
5. Take children to church to participate in the sac-

raments of penance and Holy Communion. (10 min.)  
6. Snack, closing prayer, "Glory to you, O Lord. . ."

*At-Home Activity:* Have children trace over dotted lines, "This Is My Body. . ." on page 62.

## Session 4—Prayers for the Sick

#### Key Concepts

1. God's blessings come to those members of his family who are ill, through the Prayers for the Sick.
2. We can all pray for those who are ill.
3. We witness to our own faith by praying for, and caring for, those who are ill.

#### Objectives

Students will

1. Send cards to a nursing home.
2. Make a "prayer chain" for those they know who are ill.
3. Role play the story of Jairus' daughter as an example of Jesus' healing the sick.

#### Background for Teacher

*The Sacraments: The Symbols of Our Faith*

Healing is a ministry of the Church in which all of us can be involved. We can bring healing and comfort to a shut-in, to a friend who just lost a dog, to an aging person who is lonely, to a family member who is sick. We can bring healing to a person by listening, caring, touching, praying, "being with" in so many different and often little ways.

Children can participate in this activity in a variety of ways. Their enthusiastic natures, and natural warmth can bring the healing touch of the Church to those in need, and help them realize that their family extends to all those who believe in the name of the Lord.

#### Materials Needed

- *The Little Sleeping Beauty*—Arch Book
- Pencils, crayons, markers
- Construction paper, of various colors
- Scissors
- Elmer's glue or other fixative
- Construction paper cut into 8" x 1½" strips (for prayer chain)
- Names of parishioners, either adults or children, who are ill (names might be obtained from pastor, for children's prayer chain)

#### Procedure

1. Welcome children warmly. Open with "Glory to you, O Lord, glory to you. . ." prayer. Look at last