



sharing your faith with your family

Prayers – Reflections – Sharings as a family

St. James Church
Pennington NI

Part 1 **FAMILY REFLECTIONS**

IMAGE OF GOD

Parents & Children Reflection

- God the Father
- Jesus the Son – human and divine
- Holy Spirit

Today's the day! God only asks that you share with God a sense of what you might expect.

1. Who is God to you?
2. Why do you think God sent God's Son to become human?
3. How do you think Jesus might have responded to this 'job request' of God's to become human at first? Later after he started? After he completed it?

Reflections shared

Parents share: Why did you choose the people you did to be your child's Godparents? Explain.

Child reflects: What is your reaction to your parent's responses to the above questions? Reflect on what your Baptism has meant to you in light of your conversation with your parents. Write your thoughts below:

Isaiah 43:1 – “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine!”

Child reflects: What does this Old Testament reading mean to you?

Our Church Teachings

What is a Sacrament? One definition is “an outward sign or action which brings us closer to God.” The Church recognizes seven “official: sacraments (Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist, Confirmation, Matrimony, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders).

Baptism: the first sacrament:

- We are welcomed to share in the life of the Church
- We are cleansed of original sin and all personal sin (our inclination to focus only on us)
- We are made new creations
- We receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit: wonder/awe, knowledge, wisdom, understanding, right judgment (counsel), courage, reverence

Scripture: see Mark 28: 16-20

Child – fill in the following about your Baptism.

What was the name of the Church where you were baptized? _____

City of Baptism _____

Date of Baptism _____

Parents Reflect: Think about the following, then share your responses with your child.

Tell your child about their baptism . . . how did you celebrate the occasion? What was the meaning of the name you gave your child at their baptism? Why did you select this name?

RECONCILIATION

“Jesus said to them, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you’. And when he had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven, and whose sins you retain are retained.’” John 20:21-22

We see from the scriptures that Jesus gave the apostles power to forgive sins. Today, priests are the successors of the apostles. If a priest represents Christ when administering the sacraments, then you are not going to just a priest, you are going to Jesus. It is Jesus who forgives your sins through the body of the priest.

Jesus Christ is real and truly present through the priest in reconciliation, it is not a punishment that the Church has instilled upon us, it is an incredible gift. We are reconciled, not only with God, but with the entire faith community. Being reconciled is not something that we have to do; it is something we GET to do. So when your child says: “Do I really have to go to reconciliation?” Respond, “Yes, you get to go to reconciliation!” What a great example you give your child when you, yourself, participate in this sacrament. Your actions allow your child to see how important this sacrament is in our continued faith journey.

Parents & Child reflect – Is experiencing the Sacrament of Reconciliation a common part of your faith journey? If so, how do you think that it has helped you? If not, why? And do you think that going to reconciliation more often would help you?

Was your recent experience receiving the sacrament of reconciliation something that you feel has helped you in your faith journey?

PART 2 PRAYING

SCRIPTURE

CHILD – get out the Family Bible and read aloud

Read the following from the Old Testament, then answer the questions:

Jeremiah 33: 14-16

To whom do you think the prophet Jeremiah is referring? _____

CHILD shares: Why do you think we read from the Old Testament at Mass each week?

“Get the Gospel” exercise

Parents & Child: Together, read one chapter of Matthew. Share the following with each other. From reading the Gospel of Matthew, what did you learn?

Candidates should write their reflections in the space provided.

Scripture reflection: Jesus left Galilee and went to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. But John kept objecting and said, “I ought to be baptized by you. Why have you come to me?”

Jesus answered, “For now this is how it should be, because we must do all that God wants us to do.” Then John agreed.

So Jesus was baptized. And, as soon as he came out of the water, the sky opened, and he saw the Spirit of God coming down on him like a dove. Then a voice from heaven said, “this is my own dear Son, and I am pleased with him.” (Matthew 3:13-17)

Parents share: Talk with your son or daughter about how God has been a part of your life, and about the actions and teachings of Jesus that you value, and about who the Spirit is to you.

Child – Write a reflection on:

- What have you learned from your parents values?
- Do you have the same values as theirs?
- How do you feel about having God, through the Bible and the Church, guide you in setting your values?

PRAYING

THE MASS

The Mass is the core activity that identifies us as Catholics. It is a time to give and receive – to give praise to God and to receive God’s blessings. Attendance at Mass allows us to connect in a real, physical way with the entire Body of Christ. Our faith is meant to be both *vertical* (one on one in relationship with God) and *horizontal* (in relationship with fellow believers). Therefore, it is not enough to go off on our own and pray to God. Jesus tells us that God wants us, requires us, to pray together and draw strength from one another. In this way, the presence of God becomes a visible sign throughout the world.

The Mass has two main parts that are of equal importance –

Liturgy of the Word

Liturgy of the Eucharist

As we gather at Mass we first greet one another with the ancient words from the Old Testament.

“The Lord be with you!” “And also with you!”

We then remind ourselves that we are all imperfect and in need of forgiveness:

“I confess to almighty God.....”

“Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy....”

Having admitted we’re all equals in our sinfulness, we praise our God, who loves us despite that:

“Glory to God in the highest....”

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Now, as a community, we sit and listen to the stories of our faith and are reminded of God’s presence with humankind throughout the ages.

Following the homily, which connects those stories from long ago to our lives today, we stand for what we “stand” for – our core beliefs, stated in the Nicene Creed.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

We *celebrate* the sacrifice Jesus made for us, in dying and rising for us, allowing us to have life everlasting.

We are *nourished* at the Table, receiving Christ’s body (the essence of Jesus, himself) and his blood (Jesus’ life force).

We *share* in the same identity as the Body of Christ and become a life force for the world.

CONCLUDING RITE

We have now been nourished through Scripture and Eucharist. We leave, commissioned by God, to BE Christ to the world – to love one another, feed the poor, comfort the sorrowful, show kindness to those in need. We leave through the church doors renewed and recharged – ready to be a beacon of hope to the world.

Reflection on The Mass: Read Luke 22:14-20

Child reflects: Have you ever put your own money in the collection on Sunday?

We are all called to remember that all good things we enjoy come from God; and to share the best of what God has given us is our best response. We do this freely.

What do you have that you could share with God?

Why do you think the Church wants us all to receive communion each week?

What is the purpose of coming together to worship?

At the end of mass we hear, “Go in peace to love and serve the world” . . . As Catholics, in response to our Baptismal call, what is our responsibility to the greater community?

PRAYER: *Read together*

THE NICENE CREED

On Sundays and holy days, all say the Nicene Creed.



We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten not made, one in Being with the Father.
Through Him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
He came down from heaven:
(bow) by the power of the Holy Spirit
He was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered, died, and was buried.
On the third day He rose again
in fulfillment of the scriptures;
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and His kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son
with the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified
He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.