

# Repentance & Forgiveness

It is important that our children know that everyone at the church, young children, teens and even parents are always learning more about the church and about God. One way to develop this insight is an All Parish Education time. This can be done after the Liturgy on Sunday or at any other convenient time in your parish (e.g. Saturday after Vespers, Friday evening.) The topics will only be limited by your creativity.

During the Liturgy Father's Sermon could focus on *repentance*. Prior to the Veneration of the Cross, directions for the program and the time frame for the activity are given. You announce the groupings (e.g. church school classes, college students and young adults, and adults), room assignments and group leaders. A short coffee hour, approximately 20 minutes, should precede the start of the discussions. Meet in your groups for 40 minutes. Each group determines how they report back to the congregation when they reconvene in the Nave. The classes of younger children can give their responses to the pre-scripted questions either individually or with pictures and drawings. Different groups have different questions to discuss. These are distributed to the leaders a week or so prior to the All Parish Education Day. At the upper grades and in the adult groups, a class recorder gives an overview of the reactions to their pre-scripted questions.

It is always interesting at these All Parish Education gatherings to hear and/or see the report section of the program and the similarities and /or differences in their responses. Encourage parents to further discuss the findings of their children ' s group and to compare them to the dialogue in their section.

Listed below are the timeline, discussion questions and example groupings used for this activity.

## Schedule

### **9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy**

### **10:25 a.m. Introduction and explanation of the program**

- What is expected?
- Various groups and where they will meet.
- Introduction of group leaders
- Need for a recorder/reporter.
- Present timeline/schedule.

### **10:30 a.m. Veneration of the Cross**

### **10:35 a.m. Coffee, milk, donuts etc.**

### **10:55 a.m. Participants report to appropriate group**

- Record keepers record comments and questions\*.

## **11:40 a.m. Groups reconvene in the Narthex of the church**

- Recorders/reporters present to the group important comments and/or questions\* offered in their group.

## **Noon Dismissal with prayer**

# Discussion Questions

Please discuss your group's activity with your children. Questions generated in the group sessions can be addressed in the weekly bulletin.

### **Group 1 (Pre-Kindergarten - Grade 1)**

- How do you feel when you did something you should not have done?
- When do you say, I'm sorry?
- For what should we say, I'm sorry to God?

### **Group 2 (Grade 2)**

- Give each student an opportunity to respond.
- When would you say, " I ' m sorry " , to God? For what actions?
- How do ask for forgiveness from God?
- What is the priest ' s role when going to confession?

### **Group 3 (Grades 3 & 4)**

- For what things should we ask forgiveness?
- How do we ask for forgiveness from God?
- What is the priest ' s role when we ask for forgiveness?
- How does God show that He has forgiven us?

### **Group 4 (Grades 5 & 6)**

- Focus on one or two questions. Only if time permit should you go on.
- We speak of repentance. What is repentance and for what do we repent?
- In the prayer before Communion we pray, " Therefore, I pray have mercy upon me and forgive my transgression both voluntary and involuntary, of word and of deed, committed knowingly and unknowingly, of knowledge and of ignorance. " What are sins of word and of deed?
- How does God show that He has forgiven us?

### **Group 5 (Grades 7 & 8)**

*Select one question for discussion.*

- In the prayer before Communion we pray, “ Therefore, I pray have mercy upon me and forgive my transgression both voluntary and involuntary, of word and of deed, committed knowingly and unknowingly, of knowledge and of ignorance. ” What are transgressions? How would we sin involuntarily?
- We speak of repentance. What is repentance and why do we repent?
- How do we prepare for confession, for asking God to forgive us?

**Group 6 (Grades 9 & 10)**

*Select one question for discussion.*

- In the prayer before Communion we pray, “ Therefore, I pray have mercy upon me and forgive my transgression both voluntary and involuntary, of word and of deed, committed knowingly and unknowingly, of knowledge and of ignorance. ” How would we sin involuntarily? What would a sin of ignorance be?
- What is “ repentance ” and “ forgiveness ” ? Why do we ask for forgiveness from God?
- How would we show that we want to repent?
- Do you find it difficult to go to confession to ask for forgiveness from God? Why/why not?

**Groups 7 & 8 (Young Adults, Adults & Seniors)**

*Select one question for discussion.*

- In the prayer before Communion we pray, “ Therefore, I pray have mercy upon me and forgive my transgression both voluntary and involuntary, of word and of deed, committed knowingly and unknowingly, of knowledge and of ignorance. ” How would we sin unknowingly? What would a sin of ignorance be?
- What is “ forgiveness ” ? Why do we ask God for it?
- How should we prepare ourselves for confession, for asking God to forgive us?
- Do you find it difficult to ask for forgiveness from God? Why or why not?

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