

PARENTS' GUIDE FOR FIRST RECONCILIATION

Important Dates to Remember:

Parents' and Candidates' Meeting:	Wednesday January 12, 2011 7-8 pm
Commitment Ceremony:	Saturday, January 15, 2011 5 pm Mass or Sunday, January 16, 2011 10 am Mass
Parent Discussion/Questions	Wed Feb 23 7:30 pm Or Sat Feb 26 4 pm
Reconciliation Celebration:	Tuesday, April 12, 2011 7:30 pm.

We wish to support you in preparing your child for First Reconciliation. The celebration of First Reconciliation will take place as part of the Parish Lenten Reconciliation liturgy on **April 12, 2011**. We hope that this guide will make it easier for you and your child to journey together through the program "We Discover God's Paths". **This year, we are offering an opportunity for PARENTS to ask questions of, and discuss the Preparation Journey, with Ken Hagel, Coordinator of Sacraments of Initiation and the Parent Volunteers for this Sacrament.**

The Home Study Booklet

In order to fully appreciate all that the program has to offer, children will be required to complete the four themes found in the booklet. While journeying with your child, we ask you to consider implementing the following ideas to help you support and nurture your child's discovery of themselves as God's wonderful creation.

1. Chat with your child – After reading a few pages together from the program book, talk with your child and find out their reactions to what you just read. Use the questions and activities found within each theme to stimulate discussion to further enhance their understanding.
2. Pay particular attention to your child's daily life. At this time of preparation, it is important to be more attentive than usual to your child's good and bad experiences. Reflect on these experiences. Encourage your child to put into practice what they have already discovered as they journey through the four themes, as a positive way to handling these experiences.
3. Time to pray – The journey of preparation towards this sacrament provides a good opportunity to develop the habit of daily prayer with your child. It is a good idea to pray with your child. Each theme provides simple suggestions that can make this time a rich and joy-filled experience for both of you. As part of the Family Guide in the centre of the booklet, you will find four mini posters; one for each theme. Cut them out and give one to your child at the beginning of each theme. You may want to help your child create a 'prayer corner' somewhere in your home. Allow your child to decorate this corner and make it a place where you and your child pray together.
4. Attend Mass regularly- Celebrating Eucharist is the heart of our life. It confirms our Christian faith and practices. Jesus is most fully present to us in all aspects of the Mass. Thus we are strengthened by His love and share in His joy and peace.
PLEASE TURN OVER

It is our sincere hope that the time you spend in preparing and journeying with your child will be both memorable and deeply rewarding. Strive to instill in your child a deep trust in the infinite .

love of God, who always forgives us. Create an atmosphere of joy, peace and prayer. Work together through the four themes at your own pace. The themes are organized so that there is a flow within each theme and continuity from one theme to the next

What follows is an overview of the four themes your child will be expected to work through. We have identified the main objectives/goals for each theme. Refer to the Family Guide in the centre of the booklet for appropriate activities that complement each theme's goals. You will find this to be an excellent resource. Remember that you are your child's first and best teacher. You may wish to choose activities of your own creation that you feel would best enhance your particular child's understanding and experience.

THEME ONE: The paths of God are paths of life

Goals:

- That your child comes to see their life as a gift from God
- To awaken in your child's heart the desire to thank God for the gift of life
- To encourage your child to share his or her gifts and talents with others
- To accept their personal limitations

Preparations/Readings/Activities: see pages 3 – 15 of workbook

THEME TWO: The paths of God are paths of joy

Goals:

- To help your child experience the joy of knowing God and being loved by God
- To help your child understand that God lives in our hearts, that we are one with God
- To awaken in your child's heart the desire to pray

Preparations/Readings/Activities: see pages 16 – 27 of workbook

THEME THREE: The paths of God are paths of love

Goals:

- To help your child understand that 'love one another' is at the heart of Christian living
- To give your child the opportunity to discover the joy of loving, even when it calls for sacrifice, in the simple events of our daily life

Preparations/Readings/Activities: see pages 28 – 37 of workbook

THEME FOUR: The paths of God are paths of peace

Goals:

- To help your child become aware that from time to time we all fail to follow God's path
- To awaken in your child's heart the confidence that God always forgives us
- To encourage your child to experience the forgiveness and reconciliation to which God invites us in our relationships with others

Preparations/Readings/Activities: see pages 38 – 56 of workbook

If you have any questions, please feel free to call Ken Hagel at the Church Office at 932-2944, Tuesdays to Thursdays, 10 am to 4 pm. Or email:

khagel@stmaryscochrane.ca

Church website: www.stmaryscochrane.ca