

Featured Story

Jesus Forgives a Woman's Sins
(Luke 7:36–50)

Lesson Goals

- to recognize that our sins can be forgiven if we are truly sorry
- to identify that we have more room for love when we are forgiven in the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- to explain the difference between mortal sin and venial sin

Materials Needed

- The Catholic Children's Bible
- Chapter 5 activity booklet
- Treasure Map
- Stickers
- Journey Book
- Coloring and writing tools
- Colored paper
- Glue
- An empty square tissue box
- An envelope
- An index card
- A vial, spray bottle, or small bowl of perfume or essential oil *
- Tissues
- An index card for each child *
- Hole-punch *
- Ribbon (optional) *
- Instrumental music, both sorrowful and joyful *
- * For Additional Activities

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We Ask for Forgiveness

Background Focus (for parents)

Identifying ourselves as sinners is not easy, but it is the honest truth. With this truth comes the humble realization that no one—not even the person I call me, myself, and I—is perfect. This truth can be humbly liberating, especially when we realize God still loves us and wants to forgive us. As sinners, our imperfect love is met by perfect love. We are forgiven!

The expansion of the definition of sin presented in this lesson is very important and includes the distinction between serious sin (mortal sin), which completely breaks our relationship with God, and less-serious sin (venial sin), which nonetheless harms our relationship with God and others.

In this lesson, the truth of sinfulness and forgiveness is gradually opened up to the children through the account of the sinful woman who poured her perfume and her tears over Jesus' feet.

Go (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

✚ **Child:** Turn to page 1 in the Chapter 5 activity booklet and locate the prayer on the page.

Together: Begin prayer with the Sign of the Cross.
(Allow about 10 seconds of silence.)

✚ **Child:** Read the prayer aloud. End with the Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

✚ **Child:** Think about everything you own—your clothes, your toys, your books, your electronic devices.

✚ What is your most treasured possession and where do you keep it?

Parent: Explain: some people keep their most treasured possessions at the bank, in a special box. Continue with the following points:

- People sometimes keep their jewelry at the bank so the jewelry will be safe at all times.
 - People sometimes keep important papers at the bank so that they will not be lost or burned up in a fire.
 - Other people keep special boxes at home for their most treasured possessions.
- This lesson is about a woman who was so sorry for her sins that she gave her most precious possession to Jesus.

✚ **Child:** Would you be willing to give your most precious possession to Jesus?

Parent: Say: Jesus does not really want or need what we have.

- Explain that he wants us to love God, ourselves, and others.
- Jesus wants us to be truly sorry, to not sin again, to do our penance, and to follow his command of love.

Seek **(30 minutes)**

Featured Story

- ✚ **Child:** Find Luke 7:36–50 in the Catholic Children’s Bible.
- ✚ Turn the page to the Featured Story on page 1596 and place an “I found it!” sticker on the page.

(The words between the leaves are a shortened version of the Scripture story on the previous page.)

- ✚ What is the woman in the artwork doing?
- ✚ Read the title of the story

Together: Read the Bible story Luke 7:36–50, Jesus at the home of Simon the Pharisee.

Parent: Ask several questions to check for comprehension, such as these:

- Where was Jesus in this story?
(eating at the house of a Pharisee)
- Who came in with a special alabaster jar?
(a woman)
- What was in the jar?
(perfume)
- What was the woman doing at first?
(crying and wetting Jesus’ feet with her tears)
- What did the woman do next?
(She dried his feet with her hair, kissed them, and poured the perfume on them.)
- What did she show by doing this?
(her great love)
- What did Jesus say to her?
(“Your sins are forgiven.”)
- **Explain:** like the woman in the story, we have room in our hearts for two things: love and sin.

- Sin is anything we think, say, do, or fail to do that goes against God's Law, especially the commandment of love.
- The more love we have, the less room we have for sin.
- The more sin we have—the more meanness and selfishness—the less room we have for love.
- When we are forgiven in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we have more room for love.

 **Child:** Turn to page 2 in the activity booklet and complete the activity with the Bible open.

(Answers: "In that town was a woman who lived a sinful life. She heard that Jesus was eating in the Pharisee's house, so she brought an alabaster jar full of perfume and stood behind Jesus, by his feet, crying and wetting his feet with her tears. Then she dried his feet with her hair, kissed them, and poured the perfume on them. [Jesus said] 'The great love she has shown proves that her many sins have been forgiven. . . .' Then Jesus said to the woman, 'Your sins are forgiven.'")

Understand It!

 **Child:** Read Understand It! on page 1597.

Parent: Ask your child to summarize what they just read and review these key points with them:

- Jesus is a friend to sinners and forgives them.
- This woman was sorry for her sins. She had true contrition, true sorrow for her sins.
- She showed her sorrow and love with her tears, kisses, and gift of perfume.
- Jesus forgave this woman's sins.

Live It!

 **Child:** Read Live It! on page 1597

Parent: Explain: the Jesus Prayer can be said anytime or in any place. Some people carry a circle of ten beads with them, called “Jesus beads,” so that they can move their fingers from bead to bead as they pray.

Together: Say the Jesus Prayer now, ten times, using your fingers as “beads.”

*“Lord Jesus, Son of God
Have mercy on me, a sinner”*

Parent: Assure your child Jesus will always forgive them if they are sorry.

Tell It!

 **Child:** Look at the images in Tell It! on page 1597.

 Use the pictures in Tell it! to retell the story in your own words.

 Use some of the smaller stickers to mark parts of the Featured Story pages that capture your interest.

(Remember to save enough stickers to use on the remaining Chapters.)

Core Learning Activity

A Treasure Box of Love

Parent: Review the story including the following key points.

- The sinful woman gave her greatest treasure to Jesus to show her sorrow and love.
- Jesus forgave her sins, not because she gave her treasure, but because she had great love.
- Her love was a greater treasure than her perfume.
- We too can have the great treasure of love and offer this love to Jesus by doing good things for others.

Together: Make a treasure box of love

Materials Needed:

Tissue box,
one-half of an index card
a small envelope
4 colored pieces of paper: white, red, turquoise and gold or yellow

- ✚ Make 7 paper jewels. Each should be about 2 inches long or about 2 inches in diameter.
 - two should be “diamonds”
(a diamond shape cut from white paper),
 - two should be “rubies”
(a round shape cut from red paper),
 - two should be “turquoise stones”
(an oval shape cut from turquoise paper), and
 - one should be a “gold bar”
(a rectangle cut from gold or yellow paper).
 - Each paper jewel represents a real jewel. There are seven of them, one for each day of the week. Name each jewel with a day of the week.
 - Keep the paper jewels in the envelope.
- ✚ Write “My Treasure Box” on the one-half index card and tape it to the front of the tissue box.
- ✚ Starting today and for each day of this week, write something good you did for someone else on a jewel.
(Suggestions: “I helped clear the table without being asked”; “I read a storybook to my baby cousin.”)

Process the Activity

Parent: Give examples of good actions your child might write on their jewels. Remind them of small things they can do to help others.

- Explain that love is often expressed in small and helpful ways.
- Remind the children that the more we love, the less room we have for sin in our hearts. Tell them Jesus will always forgive our sins if we ask him.
- Of course, more jewels may be made if your child wants to put more “treasure” into their box.

Additional Activity Options

The Sweet Fragrance of Christ

****This is not an activity to be done if there is an allergy to perfume or essential oil.****

Materials Needed

a vial, spray bottle, or small bowl of perfume or essential oil
tissues
an index card for each child
markers
hole-punch, ribbon (optional)

 **Child:** Open your Bible to 2 Corinthians 2:14–15. (page 1820)

Parent: Explain in these verses, Saint Paul is comparing the knowledge of Christ to a sweet fragrance. Just like the sweet fragrance of perfume spreads everywhere, so the followers of Christ spread the knowledge and love of Christ everywhere.

 **Child:** Read aloud the bible verses.

Parent: Spray or dip the perfume or essential oil on a tissue or on your thumb, and mark the child with the Sign of the Cross. As you mark your child Say:

**"I mark you with the sweet fragrance of Christ in the sign of the cross.
Spread the knowledge and love of Christ everywhere!"**

 **Child:** On an index card draw a simple cross. Under the cross write "The Sweet Fragrance of Christ."

Parent: Again, using a spray, your finger, or a tissue, mark each card with the perfume or essential oil.

 **Child:** You may want to punch two holes at the top and run a ribbon through the holes so the card can be hung over a doorknob.

Praying Our Sorrow, Dancing Our Joy

Materials Needed:

Instrumental music, both sorrowful and joyful
(suggestion: "We Are Marching")

Parent: Explain:

- We can pray with our bodies as well as with words.
- When we genuflect before we go into the pew in church, we are honoring God with our bodies.
- When we make the Sign of the Cross, we also are honoring God with our bodies.
- Play the sorrowful music for a few moments.

 **Child:** Move/dance with the music.

Parent:

- Ask your child to hold still in a position that will let God know how sorry they are for doing wrong.
- Ask them to breathe quietly, in and out, and talk to God for a few moments.
- Instruct them to tell God what they are sorry for, and to ask for his forgiveness and strength to avoid sin from now on.

 **Child:** Say thank-you to God for his forgiveness and love.

Parent: Then say aloud:

**"Thank you, God, for your forgiveness and love.
We can be joyful in your forgiveness!"**

Parent: Play the joyful music for a few moments.

 **Child:** Move/dance with the music.

Parent: Remind them when our sins are forgiven, we rise with Jesus to new life.

Find (30 minutes)

God's Treasure of Forgiveness

Parent: Explain the sinful woman gave her greatest treasure—her love—to Jesus, so he forgave all of her sins.

- Remind your child:
 - Sin is doing something that is against love.
 - Sin is a thought, word, or action that goes against God's Law, especially the commandment of love.
 - There are two kinds of sin: mortal sin and venial sin. Write both of these terms in your child's Journey Book, leaving space for examples to come.
- Introduce the definition of mortal sin, giving examples:
 - Mortal sin is a serious sin, committed on purpose, that completely breaks our loving relationship with God.
 - Mortal sin is a serious sin against the Ten Commandments and against God's Law of Love. Mortal sin is a sin like murder.
(Write this definition in the Journey Book under mortal sin.)
 - We sin by taking another's life.
 - Or, we can sin against God by refusing to worship him as he deserves.
 - We can refuse to go to Mass on Sunday or on Holy Days of Obligation.
(The Holy Days of Obligation can be found on page 1991 in The Catholic Children's Bible.)
 - Mortal sin cannot be committed by accident.
 - It is very serious.
 - To commit a mortal sin, you must first know it is a mortal and serious sin, you must want to do it, and you must freely do it.
 - If we commit a mortal sin and are sorry for it afterward, we must go to confession as soon as possible. We have broken our loving relationship with God, and we must ask forgiveness.

- Introduce the definition of venial sin by explaining that a venial sin is a less serious sin that weakens, but does not completely break, our loving relationship with God.

(Write this definition in the Journey Book under venial sin.)

- Expand on this definition with the following explanation and examples:
 - Venial sin cannot be committed by accident. We must know something is a sin, must want to do it, and then do it freely.
 - Venial sins are the kinds of sin that we might commit in our everyday lives.
 - Some examples are: talking back to our parents and being sassy and rude, fighting with our brothers and sisters, cheating on a test or taking something that does not belong to us. Add any additional examples that may relate more to your family.
 - Even though venial sin is “less serious,” we want to avoid it, because we do not want to harm our loving relationship with God or others the least little bit.
- Explain that venial sin is something that we can confess in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and we can ask God to forgive us. The sacrament helps us to be better and to follow Jesus more closely.
- Tell the children that there are other ways that venial sin is forgiven.
 - We can also ask God to forgive us at the beginning of every Mass, in the Penitential Act.
 - We can ask God to forgive us in our private prayer.
 - Emphasize that the best way to receive God’s forgiveness is in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, because the grace we receive from this sacrament helps us to grow in God’s love.

 **Child:** Turn to page 3 in the activity booklet and complete the activity.

(Answers: Answers: 1. freely, 2. as soon as possible, 3. weakens, 4. Reconciliation, 5. grace)

Parent Note: This content is presented in a child-friendly way in the God’s Treasure of Forgiveness Student Booklet. You may wish to have your child read

all or parts of chapter 5 to supplement the lesson. Or use the concluding points under “Things to Remember” to wrap up the lesson before prayer.

Lesson Wrap-Up

Parent: Invite your child to think back over all of the different things discussed in this lesson and have your child share some of the key things they learned.

Ensure the following points are made:

- God will forgive our sins if we are truly sorry.
- We have more room for love when we are forgiven in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- There is a difference between mortal (serious) sin and venial (less serious) sin.

 **Child:** Place the chapter 5 sticker in the correct circle on your treasure map.

Closing Prayer

 **Child:** Find Romans 12:21 in your Bible and read the verse aloud.
(page 1786)

Parent: Remind your child to conquer evil with good by working on their treasure boxes this week.

Together: Begin with the Sign of the Cross. (Allow about 10 seconds of silence.)

- Pray the “Morning Prayer.”

*O my God,
I offer you this day All I do and think and say,
in union with what was done on earth by Jesus Christ, your Son.
Amen.*

- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

 **Child:** Put a copy of the Morning Prayer, as a keepsake, in your Journey Book.

Video Time: Moses and the Ten Commandments

Jesus Forgives Sins

Parent: Introduce the video saying “Jesus told a story to explain love and forgiveness to Simon the Pharisee.” This cartoon is a retelling of the Gospel account in Luke 7:36-50

 **Child:** Watch “Jesus Anointed by a Sinful Woman,” (3:16).
YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Il_v3KTtgDw

 **Child:** Retell the story.

Parent: Explain that the woman’s actions showed her great love for Jesus and how sorry she was for her sins. Jesus forgave her for those many sins.

- We are also called to show sorrow for our sins and our love for Jesus.
- The Sacrament of Reconciliation will give us the grace and strength to continue to follow Jesus and his way of love as this woman did.

Parent: Before gluing the activity booklet into your journey book, make sure to read over the Family Page.

Please make sure you keep all your Reconciliation Journey Memories in your “Journey Book”.

(The reconciliation activity book, the activities done for each lesson and any other memories you wish to include.)