

# ALIVE IN CHRIST

GRADE 5

The Seven Sacraments

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**Our Sunday Visitor**

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# Forgiveness and Healing

## Let Us Pray

**Leader:** Forgiving Father, remind us always of your amazing promise of pardon and peace, that we can always come home to you.

“Bless the LORD, my soul;  
and do not forget all his gifts,  
Who pardons all your sins,  
and heals all your ills ...” **Psalm 103:2-3**

**All:** Father, thank you for being a God who forgives, heals, and welcomes your wayward children with open arms. Amen.

## Scripture

The Pharisees and their scribes [asked], “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?” Jesus said to them in reply, “Those who are healthy do not need a physician, but the sick do. I have not come to call the righteous to repentance but sinners.” **Luke 5:30-32**

## What Do You Wonder?

- How do you know if you really need forgiveness?
- Why is it sometimes hard to ask for forgiveness?



A detail of *Return of the Prodigal Son*, by Julie Ribault

## Reconciliation and Forgiveness

How can you bring forgiveness and reconciliation into your relationships?

Jesus understood that anger can have a negative effect on even close relationships. In this story of forgiveness and reconciliation, Jesus taught his followers a lesson that he also lived.

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### Catholic Faith Words

**confession** an essential element of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation when you tell your sins to the priest; another name for the Sacrament

**reparation** the action taken to repair the damage done from sin

**contrition** being sorry for your sins and wanting to live better

**absolution** words spoken by the priest during the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation to grant forgiveness of sins in God's name

### Scripture

#### The Parable of the Lost Son

Jesus told a story about a man with two sons. The younger son said, "Father, give me the share of your estate that should come to me." The father did so, and the son went far away. He wasted his money and was soon starving. Desperate, he decided to return to his father's house. He went home, where his forgiving parent greeted him with joy and love. The father told his servants to prepare a feast to celebrate his son's return. When the older son heard about this, he was angry and complained to his father. But the father, who loved his sons equally, replied, "My son, you are here with me always; everything I have is yours. But now we must celebrate ... because your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found."

Based on Luke 15:11-32

➔ What does the older son learn after expressing his anger to his father?

## A Generous Father

Like the father in the story that Jesus told, God always wants you to come home to his love. No one is ever far from God's mercy. Christ continues to share God's forgiving and healing love through the Church in the Sacraments of Healing, which include Penance and Reconciliation, sometimes called the Sacrament of Confession or simply **confession**, and Anointing of the Sick. In these Sacraments, God's forgiveness and healing are given to those suffering physical and spiritual sickness.

Catholics who commit serious sin are required to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation, but the Church encourages all to celebrate it. Sin wounds or destroys relationships with God, the Church, and others. Reconciliation heals these relationships. After you confess your sins to the priest, he gives you a penance, which helps you repair the damage done from your sin by doing something good; it also helps you turn away from sin in the future. This action is called **reparation**.

After you have confessed your sins, the priest will ask you to pray the Act of Contrition (see page 323 in the Our Catholic Tradition section of your book). This prayer helps you express **contrition**, or sorrow, for your sins and your intention to do better. It reminds you that God, who always hears your prayers, is forgiving, just, and merciful. Your confession of sins and the **absolution**, or words spoken by the priest to grant forgiveness of sins in God's name, bring you God's peace and grace.

## Penance and Reconciliation

### Parts

#### Acts of the Penitent

- Contrition
- Confession
- Penance

#### Act of the Priest

- Absolution

### Signs

- Confession by penitent
- Priest's words of absolution
- Extension of priest's hands

### Effects

- Forgiveness of sins
- Reconciliation with God and the Church
- Peace and spiritual strength

## Share Your Faith

**Reflect** Think of an idea for a modern parable of forgiveness. Begin by thinking of situations in which people find it hard to forgive.

**Share** With a partner, decide whether you would tell your story as a play, a poem, or a short story. Write the form you would use and three to five sentences telling what the situation would be or what your parable would be.

## A Healing Sacrament

**Why is the Anointing of the Sick called a Sacrament of Healing?**

In the Hawaiian Islands of the late 1800s, no healing was available for those stricken with Hansen's disease, or leprosy. All victims were exiled to Molokai, one of the Hawaiian Islands.



### *Saint Damien and the Lepers*

Belgian missionary priest Damien de Veuster volunteered to serve on Molokai. When he arrived, conditions in the settlement were horrible. Disorder and despair were everywhere.

Father Damien cared for the outcasts and taught them to help one another. He built homes for orphans. He baptized people and brought them the other Sacraments. Because of his great faith, he was inspired to love these very sick people and to stay with them to the end. This compassionate priest eventually contracted leprosy himself and thereafter referred to himself and his flock as “we lepers.”

➔ **What do you think it meant to the people that Father Damien said “we lepers”?**



## Compassion for Those Who Are Sick

Father Damien could not cure illness, but he could ease pain, help restore dignity, and bring hope to those he served. Through the Sacraments, Father Damien brought people God's healing and forgiveness. Although Molokai's exiles had been separated from family and friends, they learned from this good priest the truth that they could never be separated from the love of God in Jesus Christ. Father Damien was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI in 2009.

During his life on Earth, Jesus showed compassion for those who were sick and often healed them. Through the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, the Church continues to bring Jesus' healing touch to strengthen, comfort, and forgive the sins of those who are seriously ill or close to death. Anyone who is seriously ill, at an advanced age, or facing surgery can receive this Sacrament. It should also be celebrated when someone is thought to be near death.



**Highlight what Father Damien taught the exiles of Molokai.**

A priest performs the laying on of hands during the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.



### Anointing of the Sick

#### Signs

Laying on of hands, prayer, anointing of the forehead and hands with the oil of the sick

#### Effects

The strength to bear illness, the forgiveness of sins, preparation for eternal life, peace, courage, union with the sufferings of Christ, sometimes physical healing

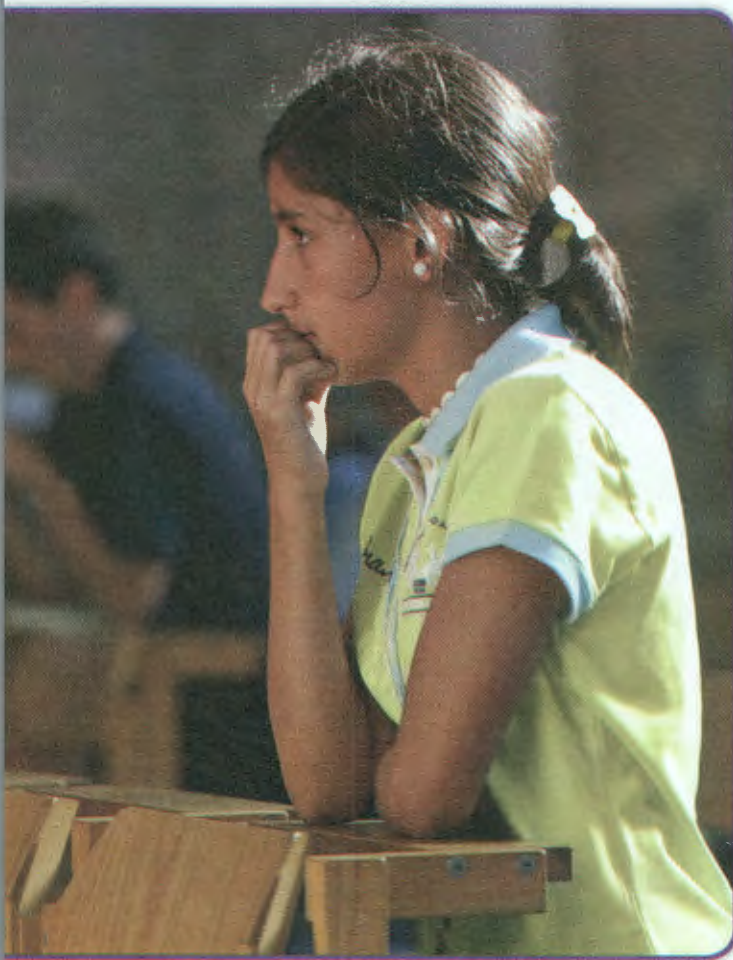
### Connect Your Faith

**Share Healing Love** Make a list of what Saint Damien did to care for the lepers. Then discuss in small groups how you can use some of these ideas to care for the sick.

## Our Catholic Life

### How do you prepare yourself to receive forgiveness?

God's love and goodness help you see your need for forgiveness and healing. He gives us the gift of our conscience, an inner voice that helps us to judge whether actions are right or wrong. It is important for us to know God's laws so our conscience can help us make good decisions. Examining your conscience regularly helps you recognize your sin as well as bad habits that can lead to sin. It is a prayerful reflection on and assessment of your own words, attitudes, and actions. It prepares you to receive the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.



## Examine Your Conscience

Take time to think about each step. You do not need to share your thoughts. Be honest with yourself and with God.

1. **Pray to the Holy Spirit for help in recalling your sins.** Ask him to guide you in acknowledging sins and expressing sorrow. Do you understand how actions can hurt? What things are hard for you to feel sorry for?
2. **Reflect on your life.** Have you neglected your relationship with God or with others? How have you misused what you have been given? Have you forgiven those who have hurt you?
3. **Think about the Commandments, the Beatitudes, the teachings of the Church, and the command to love.** Cheating, spreading rumors, disobeying, and stealing are against the Commandments. How have you lived by the Beatitudes? Have you thought of others' needs or avoided fights? Have you been helpful at home? Have you stood up for what is right or treated others with respect?
4. **Ask for help.** Ask God to give you the grace to live a life that mirrors his love and goodness. Ask for humility.
5. **Decide to do better.** Do something positive to make up for your sins.
6. **Thank God.** Praise God for loving you even when you fail to love him or others as you should.
7. **Pray an Act of Contrition.** Ask God for forgiveness.

# People of Faith

August 4

## Saint John Vianney, 1786–1859

Saint John Vianney found school difficult. He had a very hard time with Latin. Because of that, he almost wasn't allowed to become a priest. But he was so good and kind, he was finally ordained. He became the priest of a small church in a French town called Ars. John had a special gift of knowing exactly what to say to people who confessed their sins. Within a few years, thousands of people would come to Ars just to go to confession. John often spent sixteen hours a day hearing confessions and counseling people on how to be closer to God.



**Discuss:** How do you prepare to go to confession?



Learn more about Saint John Vianney at [alivelnchrist.osv.com](http://alivelnchrist.osv.com)

## Live Your Faith


**Compose** your own short prayer to the Holy Spirit or an Act of Contrition for use in an examination of conscience.



 Let Us Pray


## Prayer of Peace

Gather and begin with the Sign of the Cross.

 **All:** Sing “Dona Nobis Pacem” together.  
Dona nobis pacem, pacem.  
Dona nobis pacem.

**Leader:** A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.  
Read John 14:27.  
The Gospel of the Lord.

**All:** Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.  
Sing “Dona Nobis Pacem” together.  
All pray the Lord’s Prayer together  
and exchange a sign of peace  
at the conclusion of the hymn.

 **All:** Sing “Heal Us, Lord”  
Heal us, Lord.  
We feel the power of your love.  
Let your Spirit come unto us.  
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## YOUR CHILD LEARNED >>>

This chapter defines contrition and absolution and identifies the Sacraments of Healing as Christ's actions through the Church to share God's healing and forgiving love.

### Scripture



Read **Luke 5:30–32** to find out what Jesus says about sinners.

### Catholics Believe

- The Church receives God's forgiveness through the Sacraments of Healing.
- The Sacrament of Reconciliation includes contrition, confession, penance, and absolution.

To learn more, go to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* #1421, 1491, 1527, 1531 at [usccb.org](http://usccb.org).

### People of Faith

This week, your child learned about Saint John Vianney, whose special ministry was hearing confessions and counseling sinners.

## CHILDREN AT THIS AGE >>>

**How They Understand the Sacraments of Healing** Even though many of them have already received the Sacraments of Penance and Reconciliation for the first time, fifth-grade children might still struggle with the idea of confession to a priest. ("Why do I have to confess my sins to a priest?") With some guidance, they are capable of understanding that the Church is a family, and that we are all connected in the Body of Christ. When one of us sins, it affects everyone. The priest serves as a representative of Christ but also of the Catholic community.



## CONSIDER THIS >>>

Have you ever wondered why there is sickness and death in this world?

Sickness and death are unavoidable in human life. To strengthen us and unite our suffering with Christ's suffering on the Cross, the Church celebrates the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. As Catholics, we know that "when the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is given, the hoped-for effect is that, if it be God's will, the person be physically healed of illness. But even if there is no physical healing, the primary effect of the Sacrament is a spiritual healing by which the sick person receives the Holy Spirit's gift of peace and courage to deal with the difficulties that accompany serious illness or the frailty of old age" (USCCA, p. 254).

## LET'S TALK >>>

- Ask your child to retell the Bible story of the Prodigal Son in his or her own words.
- Share a story of forgiveness in your own family.

## LET'S PRAY >>>



Dear God, forgive us our sins and help us to always do your will. Amen.



For a multimedia glossary of Catholic Faith Words, Sunday readings, seasonal and Saint resources, and chapter activities go to [aliveinchrist.osv.com](http://aliveinchrist.osv.com).

# Chapter 15 Review

**A Work with Words** Complete each sentence with the correct term from the Word Bank. Not all terms will be used.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ refers to the words spoken by the priest during the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation to grant forgiveness of sins in God's name.
2. The father in the parable celebrated the return of his son with a \_\_\_\_\_.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ is sincere sorrow for having sinned.
4. Absolution is part of the Sacrament of \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The strength to bear illness is an effect of \_\_\_\_\_.

## Word Bank

contrition

Penance and Reconciliation

feast

the Anointing of the Sick

absolution

prayer

service

**B Check Understanding** Cross out any incorrect answers you find in the items below.

6. The signs of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick are (**laying on of hands, anointing with oil, doing penance**).
7. The basic elements of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation are (**contrition, confession, penance, Communion, absolution**).
8. Some steps to take in examining your conscience are (**to reflect, to think about the Commandments, to sing hymns, to decide to do better**).
9. Contrition for sins (**is unnecessary, must be sincere, helps restore damaged relationships with God and the Church**).
10. Saint Damien is a heroic example of reconciliation and healing because he (**found a cure for Hansen's disease; devoted himself to the care of those exiled on Molokai; brought comfort, dignity, and hope to those in his care**).

