

Reconciliation

Hohourongo



Chapter 1

WELCOME

How to use this resource:

This is a work book for both you and your child.

It includes activities in these boxes for you to complete together to help consolidate understandings and the ideas.

This box prompts you to stop and spend some time discussing things with your child and perhaps your family or the people you are meeting with.

Tips and extra information are included in these boxes and are valuable information that can be shared with your child or used as a basis for discussions.

We have also included internet links that can be used to enhance their enjoyment and understanding.

This resource is a support to help you guide your child on their journey of Catholic faith, a responsibility taken when they were Baptised. For this to be a successful journey:

1. Make a regular time to sit together and spend reflecting on their journey
2. Involve other members of the family with your discussion, perhaps around the dinner table
3. Be positive and open to where the discussion and reflection may take you
4. Enjoy

Goals:

The goal of this programme is to guide the youth in our church to encounter the presence of God in their everyday lives. We hope that it enables them to understand the wonder of belonging to our church family, and to understand our mission. We hope to encourage conversations and support the ongoing faith development of anyone who picks up this resource, regardless of where they are on their faith journey.

Section 1

Reconciliation Hohourongo

God loves you so much! **Te Atua** wants you to live a life free from the things that hurt ourselves and others, and that break our relationships down. **God** wants you to live a life full of loving, healthy, merciful and supportive relationships. This Sacrament is about **FORGIVENESS** and it won't make sense until you understand that you are part of a worldwide community and you share a common understanding of what it means to be human.

I am unique. There is no-one else like me in the world.

I am a treasured gift of Te Atua.



Draw or paste a photo or **yourself** inside this heart.

4 parts to this Sacrament:

The first two are human responses:

1. Choices:

Community and relationships through choices can be built up or be pulled down.

2. Saying Sorry:

This is a way of life that has to be learned and continually relearned. It is vital to mean the words when you say them.

For RECONCILIATION to really be effective you need to understand that *forgiveness* is not a 'churchy' thing it is a life skill.

*F*orgiveness in our lives allows Jesus to make our lives richer and better.

Real *f*orgiveness is sometimes really hard to achieve!

The next part is where **God/Jesus** steps in:

3. *F*orgiveness:

This is allowing **God** to use healing power to absolve us or forgive us. It is allowing **God** to change us like in the story of Zaccheus.

<https://tinyurl.com/4Sacraments19>

The last part is again up to us:

4: Penance:

Often when we break relationships there is a consequence or a price to pay. Penance is about acting to change your behaviour or your attitude, getting help and prayer.

Te Atua wants to help you become the best person you can be and to use the gifts you have been given to make our world a wonderful place to be.

God wants you to know you are never alone and that with a relationship with **Te Atua** you can find peace.

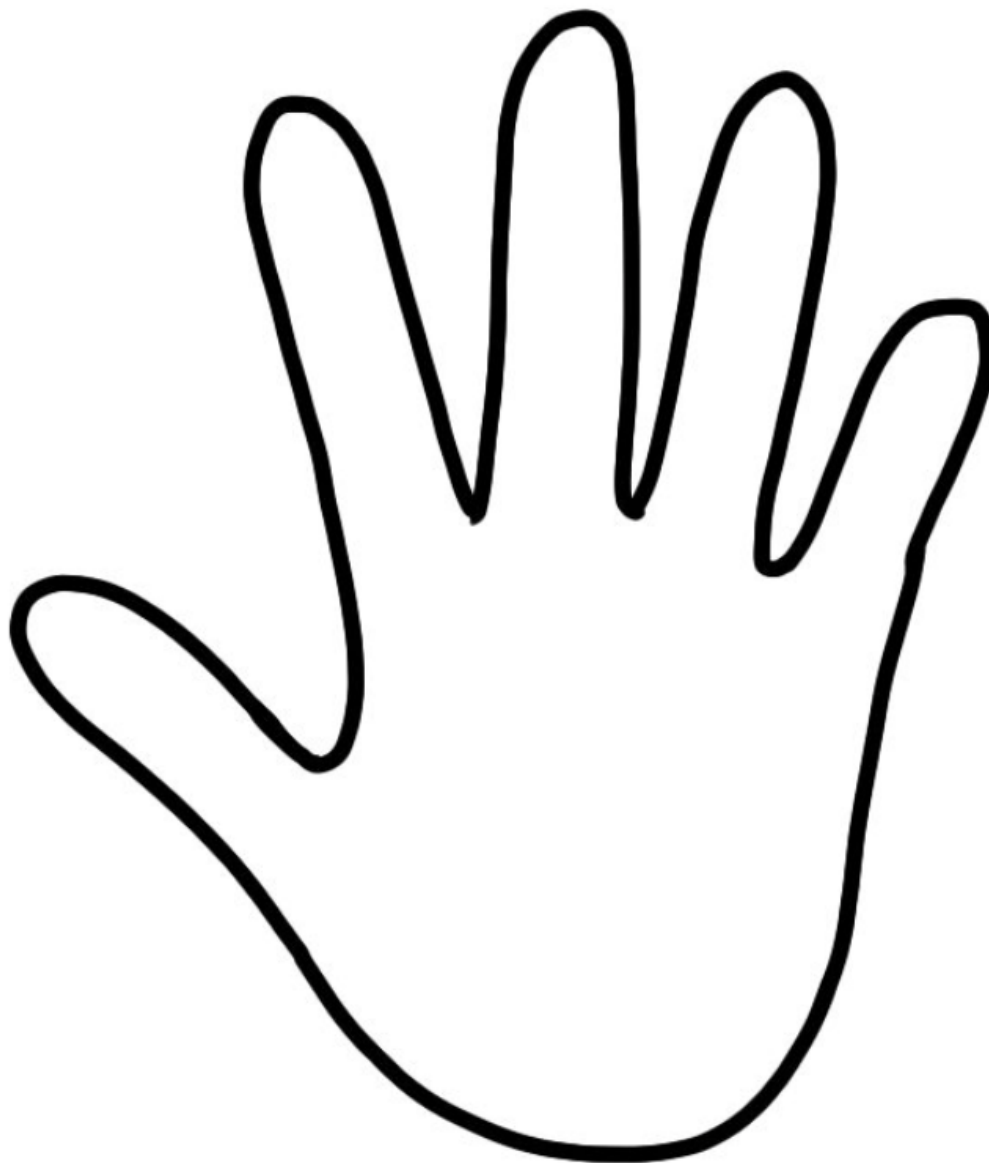
Section 2

Friendship

Jesus wants to be our **friend**. **Friends** want to spend time together, they want to share ideas and feelings and they want to help each other. **Friends** are strongest when they can accept each other with their gifts and weaknesses and respect each other no matter what.

As Christians when we turn away from our **friendship** with **Jesus**, an uneasiness comes into our lives. When we listen to **God** and be true to our **friendship** with **Hehu Karaiti**, we are more *peaceful* and **happy**.

List 5 things that make you a good friend.



What makes me a good friend?

Talk with your children about their friends, and your friends. Share some stories about spending time with them.

Discuss how you can show that you are a good friend of Jesus.

(When we are loving, forgiving, understanding, happy, when we pray, when we care for our earth, when we spend time with God's family at Mass.

Discuss this question:

Do you think Jesus stops loving you even when you are not a good friend?

REMEMBER: Jesus is always your friend. Even when we are not loving to God, God still loves us. God does not like the unloving things we do, but God always LOVES us.

In your bible look up and read:

John 15:14-16 You did not choose me I choose you.

Who did Jesus choose to be his friends? Was it people who were perfect?

Do we have to be good to be loved by Jesus?

Section 3

LOVE

For us to live like **God** wants, we need to understand how to **love** one another.

Matthew 12:30-31

Jesus said 'Love your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' ... 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

Discuss how you care for people in your family, how you show **love** for people at school. Do you show **love** for people in your community or overseas? Do you show **love** for people you don't know?

Consider how looking after the gift of our earth and creation shows **love** for one another. How do we show **love** for **God**?

Our Christian life is a journey. Each day we are called to turn ourselves towards **Hehu Karaiti - Jesus**, so that we may 'put on' the mind and heart of **Jesus**. Through choosing to ignore this, we turn ourselves away from **God's love**, and from the ability to **love** those around us more authentically.

RECONCILIATION shows we have a real desire to live a more full life with **God** at the centre. It gives us the ability to reflect on our weaknesses and receive the strength and encouragement for our lives through the **Holy Spirit**. The SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION gives us the opportunity to physically experience the **love** and *forgiveness* **God** offers us, and to allow it to change our lives.

List or draw some ways that you show you love others:

Section 4

Choices

There are times we are not very good *friends*. We can **choose** to do things that hurt our *friends* and that we know are wrong. When we fail to love our *friends*, ourself, and **God** we commit a sin. A sin is when we **choose** to turn break relationships because of **GREED** or **selfishness** or lack of kindness. We turn away and say 'no' to **God**. To mend our broken relationships we need *forgiveness* from **God** and **God's** family, we also need to *forgive* ourselves. When we sin we hurt **God**, our *friends* and ourselves because we give up our **real happiness** and *peace*.

Loving choices activity at the back of the booklet.

Read from your bible to story of Zacchaeus **Luke 19:1-10**

Discuss these questions:

Why did the people get mad with **Jesus** when he wanted to stay at his house?

How do you think Zacchaeus knew he had been unloving and sinned?

What did **Jesus** want us to understand when he chose to stay at his house? (God never leaves us. **Jesus** loves Zacchaeus even though he is a sinner.)

When **Jesus** stayed with Zacchaeus he showed that by loving someone even though you don't like their actions you can help them to become better people. **God** wants to help us realise our sins and change to become better people too.

Why did Zacchaeus want to give away his money? (Because he was sorry and wanted to change. He wanted to fix the broken relationships and be friends with his community and Jesus.)

Section 5

Holy Spirit

Sometimes it's hard for us to reflect honestly on how well we are following **God** and making **choices** that are life giving each day. To help us with that we can call on the **Holy Spirit** to show us areas we need to work on.

John 14:16 "I will ask the Father to send you the Holy Spirit who will help you and always be with you."

As we prepare for RECONCILIATION we can look at some areas of our life and ask some questions about how we are going.

This is called an Examination of Conscience.

An Examination of Conscience for Children Using the 10 Commandments

1. I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before me.

Have I wanted more things, making things or money more important than God?

Do I make sports or entertainment or other people more important than God?

2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

Do I use God's name carelessly?

Do I use God's name in anger?

3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.

Do I go willingly to Mass on Sunday?

Did my behavior make it difficult or impossible for my parents to get to church on time?

Have I remembered to pray daily?

4. Honor your father and your mother.

Do I obey my parents?

Have I done my jobs without complaining?

Have I been disrespectful to teachers, coaches?

5. You shall not kill.

Do I keep my patience or do I lose my temper?

Do I hold grudges and try to get even with others?

Have I been unfair to others, especially those who are different than I am?

6. You shall not commit adultery.

Do I show respect for my body, by eating well, exercising and accepting it for what it is?

Do I respect the bodies of others?

7. You shall not steal.

Have I taken something that belongs to someone else?

Have I “forgotten” to return something that I borrowed?

Have I used money responsibly?

8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Do I play fairly or do I ever cheat at school or games?

Have I been honest or have I lied?

Have I hurt someone by what I have said or done?

9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

Have I been jealous of the friends that someone else has?

Have I tried to be kind to others?

10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

Have I been jealous of the things that my friends have?

Have I nagged my parents into buying things because my friends have them?

Have I helped others when they needed help?

Section 6

Being Sorry

The **Holy Spirit** also helps us to *f^or^gi^ve*.

Jesus said “Receive the **Holy Spirit**. If you *f^or^gi^ve* peoples sins, they are forgiven.”

When you know you have turned away from **God** and from your family and friends by making bad **choices**, it's important to say *sorry* and to learn from your mistakes. This way you can be free from the negative feelings you have and also be able to build more honest relationships.

RECONCILIATION is a Sacrament of healing.

It's easy to say the word '*sorry*', but it's actually really hard to **be sorry** and to mean it when you say it.

RECONCILIATION is a chance for us to start over to be honest about what we have done wrong to share this with **God** through the priest then to let it go and try and change your behaviour, attitude and actions.

Read Psalm 51:1-2 A prayer for Forgiveness

Once you have thought about your **choices** think about those things that you are truly sorry for.

Name them if you can and share some of them with each other.

Talk about how those bad choices made you feel or act?

Now we need to ask **God** for *forgiveness* through the priest.

We do this by saying an Act of Contrition:

You can say your own or use this one below.

Merciful God, I am so very sorry for choosing to turn away from you. Through your loving grace, give me the courage and strength to make life giving choices in my life that turn me back towards you and healthy relationships.

OR

Oh my God
I am very sorry that I have sinned against you.
Because you are so good and with the help of your grace I will try not to sin again.
Amen

Read Luke 15:11-32 When you change your heart, God will forgive you.

Once you or the priest has suggested what to do for penance one last thing to remember

is that as part of RECONCILIATION **you** need to *forgive* yourself and others

and accept the unearned, freely given love of **God**.

Section 7

Activities to support learning.

Breaking relationships:

Have 3 people stand up to represent 'you' god' and 'others'

* You may like to include a 4th to represent the earth who we seem to have a very one sided relationship with. Think about it ... nature doesn't need us to survive, but we need her.

Join the people together with string and explain that this represents relationships between the groups.

Explain when we make choices that turn us away from God or others or earth, we break these relationships.

Cut the ties.

*Perhaps offer some examples, littering, not recycling, living wasteful lives, lying, physically hurting each other, emotionally hurting each other, choosing to please yourself without considering others, turning away from someone who is in need etc.

The good news is that reconciliation with God helping restore the relationships actually brings us closer together and makes our relationships even stronger.

Demonstrate this by tying knots to join up the groups, show that the knots shorten the distance between the groups and are actually stronger than the original string.

Communities ties:

We talked about how the choices we make can build up or breakdown communities and relationships.

Give each family a blank puzzle. On it get them to draw their family, then around that draw other groups that they are members of, or friendships that they may have. Encourage them to think about their connection with earth, and being part of all living things on the planet.

*Make sure that each piece of the puzzle has something on it so it is not too difficult to put back together.

Now explain to them that sinning or turning away from God breaks these relationships and communities apart.



Community ties contd.

Break up the puzzle. This is how brokenness feels and looks!

The good news is that with Gods help and with effort from us we can build these relationships again. Sometimes it's easier than other but it can be done.

Rebuild your puzzle together.

Loving Choices:

Include pics or statements that show loving choices and unloving acts. Get the students to circle the 'sins' in black and draw a heart around the loving actions.



Choosing a smile
over ignoring
someone.

Bugging my parents to buy
more cheap disposable
things, so that I can have
the latest toy.



Choosing to sit with some-
one at lunch time who
often sits alone.



Complaining and not
eating the food that is
prepared for me.

Understanding that
my way is not the
ONLY way to do
things.

Thinking about the
things I buy and how
they can effect our
natural environment.

