



## FAMILY LIFE AND SACRAMENTAL RECONCILIATION

The sacrament of reconciliation is a celebration of the fact that we have a God who forgives us. Therefore, we can overcome the power of sin and become the persons God wants us to be.

The appreciation for the sacrament begins with appreciation for the experience of reconciliation in our life. Through that experience we can better understand what it means for God to love and forgive us.

**When** you tell your children you love them and always will, no matter how much you may dislike what they did...

and let them know how important they and their love are to you...

**Then** you help your child understand God's unconditional love for them.

**When** you help your children understand the impact of what they have done and learn to say they are sorry...

and tell them you are sorry...

**Then** you teach your children contrition or sorrow for their sins.

**When** you teach children to acknowledge doing wrong and to take responsibility for their actions...

and you admit your wrongs...

**Then** you teach your children how to confess sinfulness.

**When** you help your children forgive someone...

and tell your children you forgive them...

**Then** you teach your children about absolution.

**When** you help your children see alternate ways of behaving or getting along with someone...

**Then** you help your children see the role of penance.

**When** you show patience and walk with children as they learn and practice new ways of relating with others...

and admit to working past forgiveness in your own relationships...

**Then** you help your children appreciate the process of reconciliation.

As you and your family practice the skills of reconciliation in your home, you will grow in the awareness of the power of love and forgiveness. Then, you can celebrate that forgiveness and healing both in your home and with the Church in sacramental reconciliation.

Also, as your child learns the skills of reconciliation from you, he or she will become stronger and more confident about sharing those skills with others. In such a way, the family efforts at reconciliation, so essential for the family's very life, will help foster a community of reconciliation.