Focus on Faith

God Forgives Us

On May 13, 1981, an attempt was made to assassinate Pope John Paul II. The pope was rushed to the hospital and underwent surgery for six hours. In his first public statement after the incident, he asked all to "pray for the brother who shot me, whom I have sincerely forgiven." On a visit to the prison cell of the person who shot him, the pope repeated his words of forgiveness. The pope through his words and actions is an example of the healing grace of forgiveness we receive when we celebrate the Sacrament of Penance. Recognizing that God forgives us opens us to the grace to forgive others.

Dinnertime Conversation Starter

In what way can we become a forgiving family?

Our Catholic Heritage

When people celebrate the Sacrament of Penance, they take time to do an examination of conscience. In his *Spiritual Exercises,* Saint Ignatius of Loyola gave people instructions on how to stop to look at their lives every day. This part of the exercises is called the examen. It is not the same thing as the examination of conscience that is part of penance. Instead, it is designed to help people be more aware, from day to day, of both their blessings and their sins. Ask yourself these two questions: What have I done today to be closer to Jesus? What have I done today to separate myself from Jesus? This daily examen can help prepare us for penance by encouraging us to pay attention to our spiritual life on a daily basis.

Hints for at Home

The next time your family knows of someone in the hospital, write that person a get-well card and include a passage or two from the Bible. One person may decide how to design the card, and another person may look for appropriate messages of encouragement. The Book of Psalms is a great place to start your search for get-well messages.

Focus on Prayer

Review with your child the Act of Contrition, the focus of prayer in this session. This prayer can be found at www.FindingGod.org.

www.findinggod.com