



Resources for Teaching
our budding rocks of faith

HOLY CONFESSiON

Activities for teaching young Orthodox Christian children about the Holy Mystery



HOLY CONFESSION

The symbol of this Mystery is...

The priest's epitachelion placed on the head of the person confessing

A PHRASE FROM A PSALM:

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your great mercy; and according to the abundance of Your compassion, blot out my transgression.

The Mystery in the Gospels:

Matthew 18: 17

John 20: 23

As humans, we regularly fall into sin. The Greek word for sin is *amartia*, and it means "missing the mark". Sin is **disobedience to God's commands**, and each time we fall into it, we move away from God.

When we get sick in our bodies, we go to the doctor to help make us well; in the same way, when we get sick in our souls due to our sins, we go to our priest to help us become spiritually healthy. We participate in the Mystery of Holy Confession, which offers us healing and makes us feel happy and peaceful.

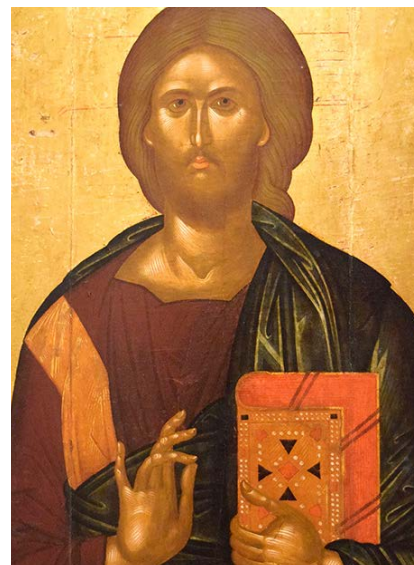
Our sins fall into three categories: Sins against God; sins against ourselves; and sins against others. Before we go to Confession, it is good to sit quietly and think about everything we have done that we feel sorry about. That way, we will be able to truthfully and honestly offer our confession.

What happens?

- We confess our sins to our **spiritual father**. At the moment of our confession, he is in the place of Christ. He lovingly helps us talk to him about everything we feel sorry for.
- After we are finished, he places his epitachelion on our head. He prays the **prayer of absolution** over us, by which the forgiveness of God is bestowed.

The icon of Christ the Merciful

Our Lord loves us no matter what we do, and He is always ready to forgive us. In this icon, He is named Merciful, to show His never-ending love and compassion. He is dressed with a blue garment on top and red underneath. He is blessing us with His right hand and holding the Gospel in His left hand.



HOLY MYSTERY:

The symbol of this Mystery is...

In this Mystery...

The Mystery in the Gospels:

**Draw a picture inspired by the icon
or the service.**

**A PHRASE FROM A HYMN
OR PSALM:**

How can we MISS the MARK?



We miss the mark
when we...



FORGET OUR LORD

How? How can we make it up?



We miss the mark
when we...



HURT OTHERS

How? How can we make it up?



We miss the mark
when we...



HURT OURSELVES

How? How can we make it up?



HOW CAN I MISS THE MARK?

Read the examples on the following page. Then write the number of each example in the appropriate box below.



**I FORGET
OUR LORD**



**I HURT
OTHERS**



**I HURT
MYSELF**

HOW CAN I MISS THE MARK?



1. I don't say my prayers.
2. I don't share my things.
3. I don't say the truth.
4. I eat junk food.
5. I forget to feed my pet.
6. I don't listen to my parents.
7. I don't do my homework.
8. I boast about being better than other people.
9. I don't thank God for the good things He has given me.
10. I don't help in the house.
11. I don't make the sign of the cross because I am afraid others will laugh.
12. I am disrespectful to my parents or teachers.
13. I cheat in my work.
14. I cheat at a game.
15. I say bad things about someone.
16. I speak angrily to my brothers or sisters.
17. I don't help someone who needs it.
18. I go to bed late.
19. I play dangerous games.
20. I take something that doesn't belong to me.

ICON CRAFT

Cut out the image below and glue it onto colored construction paper to make an icon of Christ the Merciful. The icon can be embellished with ribbons, gems or other decorations. For a photo of a similar craft, please visit our page orthodoxpebbles.com/saints/st-nicholas.

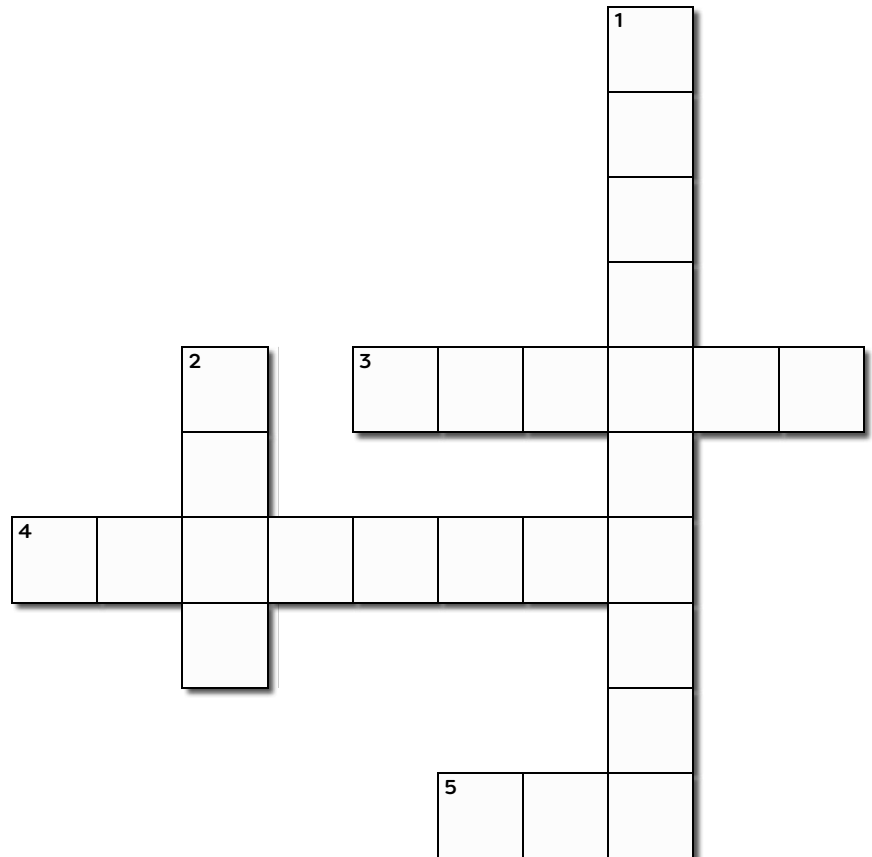


HOLY CONFESSION - CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Fill in the crossword puzzle using the following words:

FORGIVES - CONFESSION - MARK - PRIEST - SIN



Across

3. When we go to Confession, we talk to our ... about the bad things we did.
4. At the Mystery of Holy Confession, our Lord ... everything we feel sorry for.
5. When we disobey God's commands, we commit ...

Down

1. We tell our priest everything we did wrong at the Mystery of ...
2. Sin means 'missing the ...'

HOLY CONFESSION - WORD PUZZLE

What does our Lord do when we go to the Mystery of Holy Confession?
To find out, write on each line the letter that, in the alphabet, comes before the one you see.



I

F

G

P

S

H

J

W

F

T

HOLY CONFESSION - WORD PUZZLE



What did our Lord say about the Mystery of Confession? To find out, copy every other letter to the spaces below.

IBFJYHOKUOFQOWRPGAISVLEDTXHVEUSJIFNSSLOHFJAK
NNYMTBHVETYGAJROEPFEOWRSGCIHVIEKNZTDHBEAM

_____ ,

_____ .

John 20: 23



HOLY CONFESSION - BOARD GAME



The following two pages can be used to easily make a board game. Print out the following page to make the game board. Laminate or print on card stock for sturdiness. To make the spinner, follow the instructions on the page after next. Alternatively, a die can be used.

To play the game, you will need:

- The game board
- The spinner or one die
- Board game pawns or any small colored objects than can be used as placeholders (buttons, large beads etc.)

How to play

The point of the game is to go over important facts about the Mystery of Confession in a fun and interactive way. All placeholders are placed on **START**. The first player spins the spinner or throws the die and moves his/her placeholder a corresponding number of squares. The spinner directs the player to either move forward or backward in the game. If a die is used, then the player only moves forward.

The player reads aloud the information on the square that s/he landed on. Then s/he has to close his/her eyes and repeat the information in his/her own words.

If using the spinner, there are two choices of actions, depending on the results of the spinner.

- **The placeholder had moved FORWARD**
If the player remembers the facts correctly, the placeholder stays where it landed. If not, it returns to its previous position.
* This is also what happens if a die is being used instead of the spinner.
- **The placeholder had moved BACKWARD**
If the player remembers the facts correctly, the placeholder goes back to its original position. If not, it stays where it landed.

After the action is performed, the next player takes a turn. The first player to reach **FINISH** wins. If there is no time to cover the whole board, the player who moved closer to FINISH wins.



HOLY CONFESSION - BOARD GAME

START

We go to
Confession
to talk to our
priest about
our sins.

To sin means to
miss the mark.
We sin when we
fail to do what
our Lord wants
us to.

Each time we
fall into sin,
we move away
from God.

We miss the
mark when we
forget our Lord.

At the Mystery
of Confession,
the priest reads
a prayer for us
and all our sins
are forgiven.

Our Lord loves
us and He is
always ready
to forgive us for
anything that
we do wrong.

We miss the
mark when we
hurt other
people.

We miss the
mark when we
hurt ourselves.

The priest who
hears our
confession and
gives us advice
is our spiritual
father.

An icon that is
related to
Confession is
that of Christ
the Merciful.

FINISH



HOLY CONFESSION - BOARD GAME

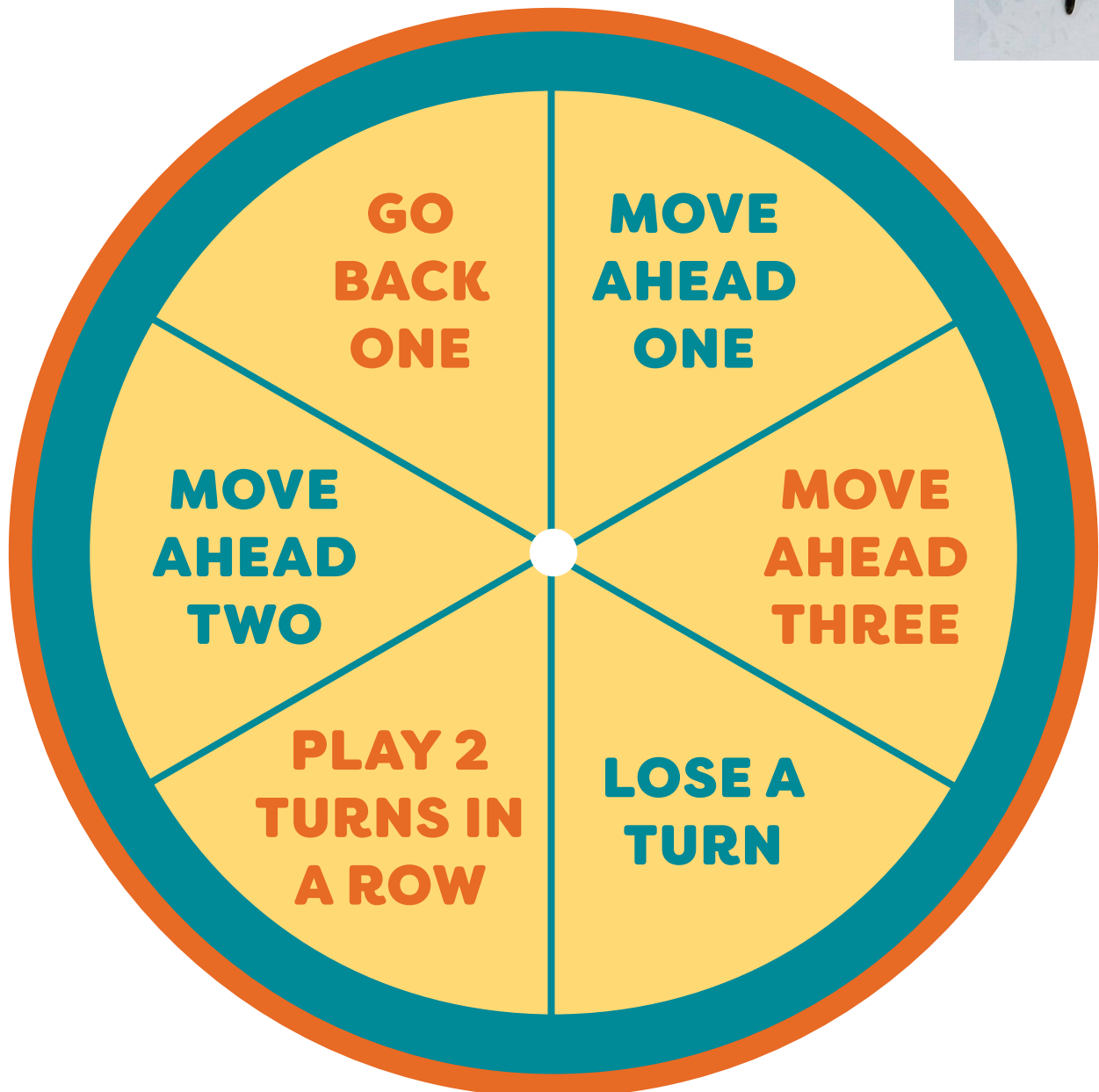
SPINNER

Print out this page. For sturdiness, print on plain paper and laminate, or use premium printer paper or card stock. Cut out the circle below.

To make the spinner, you will need:

- The circle cut-out
- A brad (metal paper fastener)
- A paper clip
- A piece of packing tape

Punch a small hole in the center of the paper circle. Insert the brad through the hole. Fold the back of the brad mid-way, not at the top, so that the brad is poking up from the paper circle about half an inch. Tape the brad on the back of the circle. Slide the paper clip on the brad. Ready to spin!





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