

PRAYER OF ST. EPHRAIM

This is a prayer in which we ask God to give us a spirit of repentance.
We ask Him to help us recognize the things we do wrong and to change them.

This prayer is especially said during Great Lent, the time of preparing before Pascha--the Feast of Christ's Resurrection from the Dead.

In between each of the verses, we make a prostration. (Kneel, and touch our head to the floor).

As always, say this prayer--and any others--before an icon.

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O Lord and Master of my life,
Take away from me the will to be lazy and to be sad;
Take the desire to get ahead of other people, to boast and brag.

--prostration--

Give me, instead, a pure and humble spirit,
The will to be patient with other people
and to love them.

--prostration--

Let me realize my own mistakes
And keep me from judging the things other people do.

For You are blessed now and forever. Amen.

--prostration--

When I am ready, this is what happens. I go to my priest in church, and stand in front of the Gospel, cross and priest.



The priest welcomes me.

He is like the loving father in the story of the Prodigal Son.

We even call him Father.

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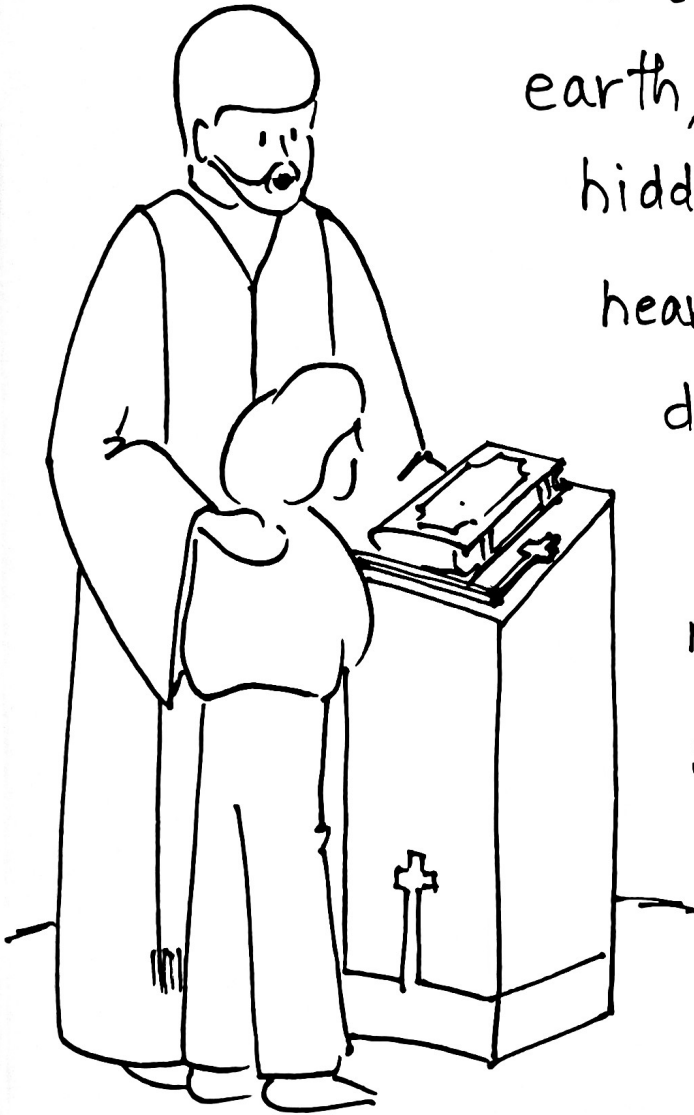
Having thought about the times I was selfish and not like Jesus, I am ready to begin my confession.



I make the sign of the cross, kiss the holy Gospel and cross.

Then I begin with a prayer.

Father, Lord of heaven and earth, I confess to You all the hidden and open sins of my heart and mind, which I have done; and I ask You, the loving Judge, to forgive my sins and give me the grace to sin no more.

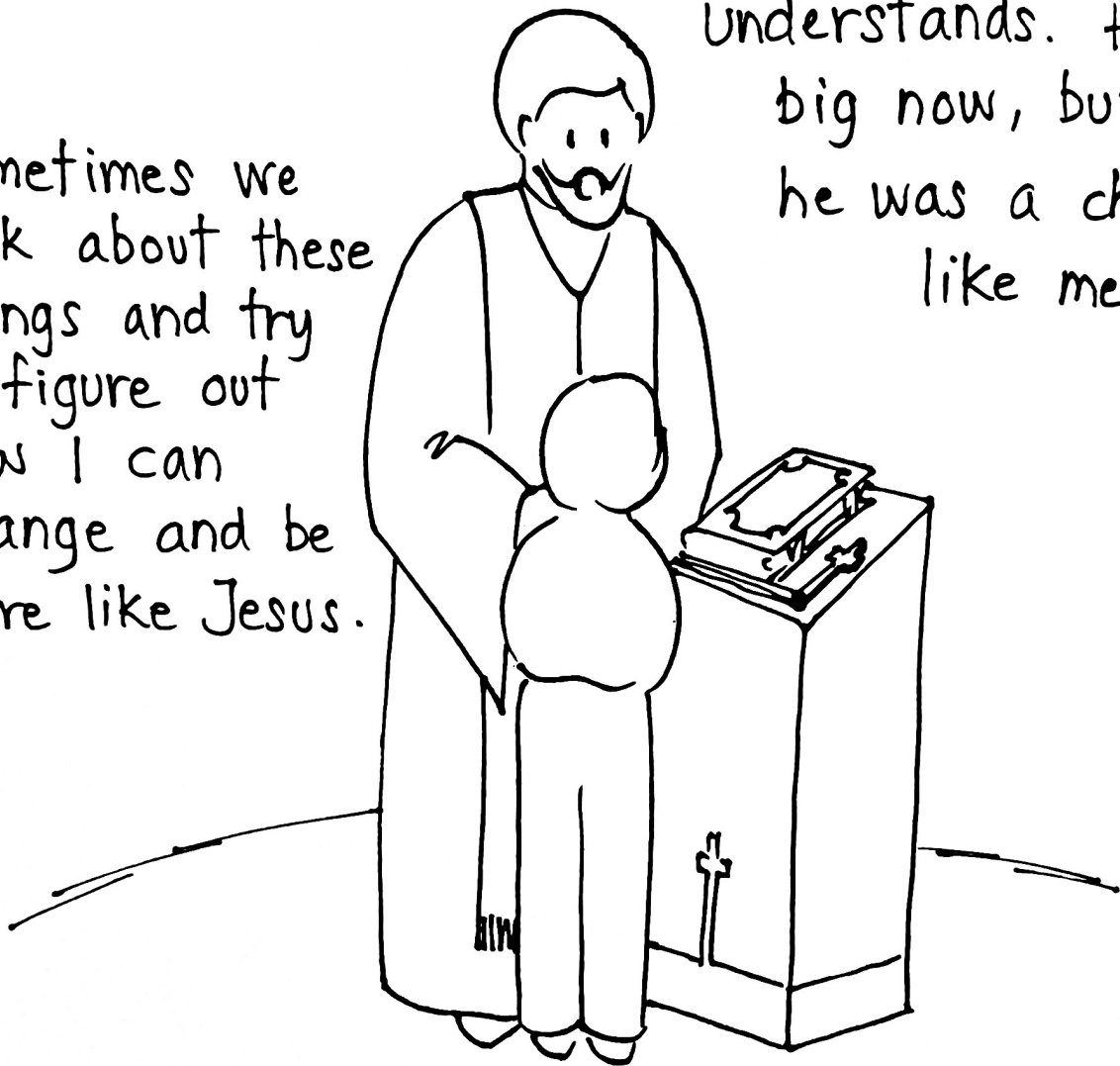


Then Father tells me that it is time to tell my sins to Christ, while he stands next to me and helps me.

Then I tell him about the times I did not love God and others.


Father listens and he understands. He is big now, but once he was a child like me.

Sometimes we talk about these things and try to figure out how I can change and be more like Jesus.



I tell him and God how sorry I am that I have sinned.

Then the priest says the words of forgiveness that I have been waiting to hear.



IT WAS GOD WHO FORGAVE DAVID THROUGH NATHAN THE PROPHET, WHEN HE CONFESSED HIS SINS, AND PETER WEeping BITTERLY FOR HIS DENIAL AND THE SINFUL WOMAN IN TEARS AT HIS FEET, AND THE PUBLICAN, AND THE PRODIGAL SON. MAY THAT SAME GOD FORGIVE YOU ALL THINGS, THROUGH ME A SINNER, BOTH IN THIS PRESENT WORLD, AND IN THAT WHICH IS TO COME, AND SET YOU UNCONDEMNED BEFORE HIS DREAD JUDGMENT SEAT. AND NOW, HAVING NO FURTHER CARE FOR THE SINS WHICH YOU HAVE CONFESSED, GO IN PEACE.

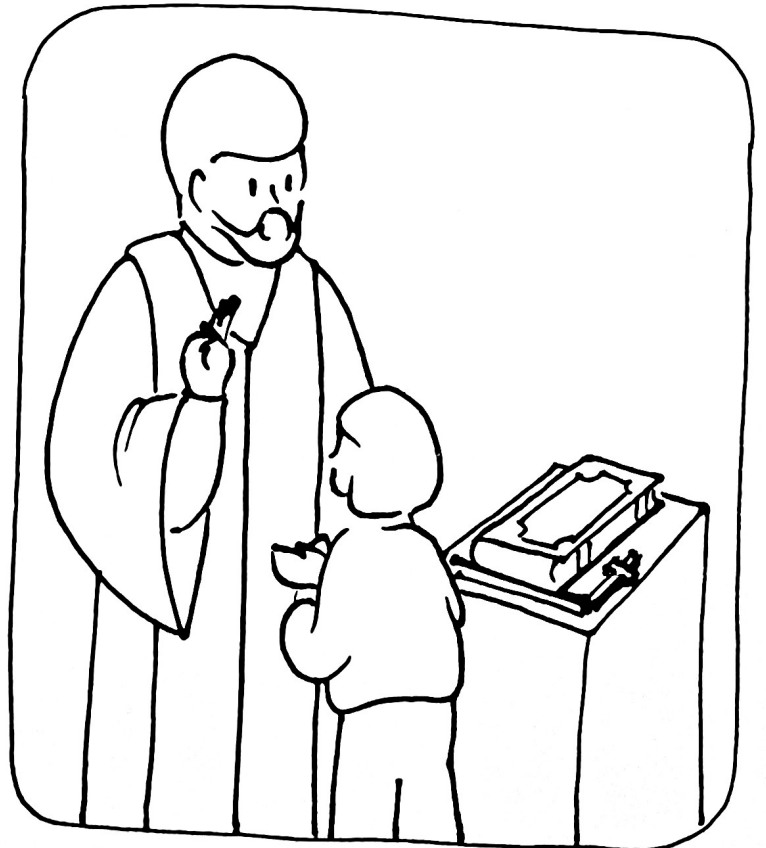
I am very close to my God, and to my brothers and sisters in Christ.



I have received
God's forgiveness

Now I make the
sign of the cross,
Kiss the holy Gospe
and cross.

Then I ask
Father for his
blessing. My heart
is glad again! I
say a prayer of
"thank-you" to
God.



Sometimes
I feel just like
I've been

HUGGED
BY GOD!



PSALM 51 (adapted)

Lord, call me back to You
and I will return because You love me.
Yes, I know I turned away from You,
but now I am sorry and ask Your pardon.

My God, have mercy on me because You are my
Father,
In your kindness forgive me my sins.
I know what my sins are,
I see quite well that I have done wrong.

Yes, I have sinned against You,
I have done wrong in Your sight.
My God, open my heart,
Save me and I shall be full of joy.

Lord, have mercy on me,
for I have sinned.
My God, I want You with all my heart.
Do not let me wander away from You.

Open my eyes that I may see
What You want me to do.
Lord, show me Your path,
Teach me what You want me to do.

I want to do what You ask
Your word is like a lamp that will light my life.
I want to do the things that please You,
so that I may be Your friend forever.