



The Kids' Catholic Virginian

"Let the little children come to me" – Matthew 19:14

Students encounter God in first reconciliation

During this Lenten season, Sacred Heart, Richmond, celebrated first reconciliations for 81 children on March 22.

In addition to confessions, various stations were set up for the children, including a singing and drama station, activities promoting good behavior, and a communal recreation space.

There was also an intercession room with a Charismatic Renewal Group. One group member named Alex said, "It was a beautiful experience of love, faith, and joy. The Holy Spirit touched our hearts."

Mireya Sandoval, a volunteer catechist, was pleasantly surprised to find the prayer group. "I felt an unexplainable peace. That's when I understood why my nerves were gone. That kind of calm can only come from God," she said.

Some attendees said one of the most moving moments that day was the Living Rosary, in which the children reenacted the Joyful Mysteries. Rosita, a catechist, led the children's choir in singing "Ave, Ave, Ave Maria." The children prayed in Spanish, guided by their catechists, while their Spanish-speaking parents watched from the pews.

A documentary was shown about how Communion hosts are made by religious sisters in Yucatán, Mexico, one of whom is from El Salvador. The documentary sparked instant reactions in María de Lourdes' catechism class. One girl exclaimed, "I thought the priest bought them at a candy store!" Another child said with excitement, "From El Salvador! That's where my parents are from!"

Jesuit priests from Sacred Heart heard the children's first confessions that day: Father Shay Auerbach, pastor; Father Josué Salguero Cortez, parochial vicar; and Father Donald Ward, senior priest. Father Jonathan Goertz, pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes, Richmond, also heard confessions.

"It was all for the honor and glory of God," said catechist Kleer Rodriguez.

Ruth, another catechist, commented, "That's our faith. When we unite, anything is possible."

— Yenni León, director of religious education at Sacred Heart, Richmond, contributed to this report.

Lee la historia en español:



(Photos/Kleer Rodriguez and Nathaniel Balcarcel Cordova)



Ask the Bishop

Q. What is your favorite part of Lent?

– Lauren Freeman, 12;
Good Shepherd, Smithfield

A. When I was a boy, I would sometimes help as a server at the Friday Stations of the Cross. I found that praying and reflecting on the Passion of Our Lord were some of the most beautiful parts of Lent.

Q. What is a bishop?

– Mrs. Mroz's 1st Grade; St. Pius X School, Norfolk

A. A bishop is the person who has received the fullness of the sacrament of Holy Orders. He is selected by the Church to provide oversight, pastoral leadership, and sacramental care for a portion of the Church. He does this by making sure that the teaching, sacraments, and charitable works of the Church are accomplished in fidelity to the teaching of the Church and in communion with the rest of the People of God throughout the world.

Kids 12 and younger: make sure to check with your parent/guardian, then email Bishop Knestout YOUR question.

AskTheBishop@catholicvirginian.org
Include your full name, age, and home parish.