Saint Anthony of Padua: The Lost Book

A person matters more than a possession

Ages about 7-11 | Video 3:50 | Group lesson about 25-35 minutes

Central truth A traditional story of Anthony's missing book highlights prayer for the person who took it and a welcome when he returns.

Learning goals Children will recall the book's return, explain repentance, and identify a safe way to repair a wrong.

Gather Video access, one handout per child, pencils or crayons, and a Bible.

Watch online Open this video on Servus Dei

Before watching | 2 minutes

Ask: How can we care about a person while also naming a wrong? Watch what Anthony values when his book disappears.

Watch and notice

Notice the young man taking the book, Anthony praying for him, his decision to return, and Anthony's welcome.

Talk together | 6-8 minutes

1. What did the young man take?
Anthony's precious book of prayers.

2. What mattered to Anthony beyond getting the book back?
The young man himself and his return to God.

3. How did the young man begin to make things right?
He returned the book and said he was sorry.

4. What can you do after a wrong choice?
Tell a trusted adult, apologize, return or repair what you can, and seek God's mercy. Adults can help with safety and sacramental preparation.

Then respond and pray Allow 6-8 minutes for a handout or the activity on page 2; finish with the closing prayer.

Lead the response

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Short family lesson Watch the video, choose one recall question and one application question, then pray. About 12-18 minutes; the handout is optional.

Choose a handout

Draw & Tell Draw the book being returned and a safe way to make a mistake right.

Read & Write Recall Anthony's care, identify the steps of repair, and plan an apology.

Adapt by readiness

Ages 7-8: practice returning a borrowed classroom item with kind words.

Ages 9-11: distinguish forgiving a person from ignoring a wrong or giving up boundaries.

Three steps toward repair | Optional 4 minutes

Use a fictional example of taking someone's pencil. On three cards write: tell the truth, return or repair, and apologize. Arrange them as a plan, with an adult's help where needed. Do not ask children to confess personal sins publicly.

Look for understanding Look for accountability and mercy together, without promising that prayer automatically finds every lost object.

Closing prayer Jesus, help us tell the truth and return when we have done wrong. Give us courage to make things right and kindness toward others. Saint Anthony, pray for us. Amen.

At home Ask an adult how to care for borrowed things. Practice a sincere apology using a harmless pretend example.

Handout answer notes Loss: precious prayer book. Mercy: the person returning to God mattered. Repair: tell truth, return item, apologize, adult help as needed.

Teach with care

Clarify that theft is wrong and returning property matters. Welcoming a person does not remove appropriate boundaries or adult responsibility. The lost-book episode is a traditional story associated with Anthony, with dramatized dialogue. His historical life centered on preaching and Scripture. Asking his prayers does not guarantee finding every object. Confession is a sacrament, not a classroom disclosure activity.

Words to explain Friar: a brother in a religious community. Repentance: turning away from sin and toward God. Reconciliation: restoring a relationship through truth and mercy.

Sources for the leader

Story source: Servus Dei video and English subtitle

Historical life: Saint Anthony of Padua - Benedict XVI