Saints Monica and Augustine

Prayer, change, and a restless heart

Ages about 7-11 | Video 4:48 | Group lesson about 25-35 minutes

Central truth God's mercy invites real change, while loving prayer respects another person's freedom.

Learning goals Recall Augustine's wrong choices, encounter with Scripture, and Baptism; explain repentance; choose a truthful repair after a mistake.

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 someone can begin again after a wrong choice. Explain that admitting harm and making a repair matter more than pretending nothing happened.

Watch and notice

Notice the stolen pears, Monica's persistent prayer, Ambrose's teaching, Augustine reading Scripture, and his later service as bishop.

Talk together | 6-8 minutes

1. Why was taking the pears wrong?
The fruit belonged to someone else, and Augustine and his friends took and wasted it for excitement. A crowd's approval does not make a choice good.

2. What did Monica keep doing?
She prayed and loved her son. Her prayer did not remove Augustine's freedom or her own need for support.

3. What helped Augustine change?
Ambrose's teaching and Scripture helped him respond to God's grace. He was baptized and began a new life.

4. How can you begin again after a mistake?
Tell the truth, apologize, repair harm when possible, and ask God and a trusted adult for help. Change includes actions.

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

Saints Monica and Augustine

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 learning from Scripture and a simple repair, using fictional examples if preferred.

Read & Write Recall a wrong choice and conversion, then plan a concrete repair.

Adapt by readiness

Ages 7-8: use a simple borrowed-toy example and picture cues for apology and return.

Ages 9-11: discuss peer pressure and why change includes responsibility, not only regret.

A begin-again path | Optional 4 minutes

On paper draw three steps: tell the truth, repair what you can, and ask for help. Apply them to a simple invented example of borrowing without permission. Do not require personal confessions in the group.

Look for understanding Look for responsibility and a concrete repair. Avoid teaching prayer as a guarantee that someone else will change on our schedule.

Closing prayer God of mercy, help us turn toward you when we make mistakes. Teach us to pray with love and respect others' freedom. Saints Monica and Augustine, pray for us. Amen.

At home With an adult, discuss a fictional repair example. Pray for someone you love without trying to control their response.

Handout answer notes Theft: others' property and waste. Change: Ambrose, Scripture, God's grace and Baptism. Repairs: truth, apology, return or replace with guidance.

Teach with care

The video mentions theft, family sorrow, and Monica's death. Reassure children that a family member's faith or choices are not their responsibility. The retelling compresses Augustine's years of study and conversion and adds dialogue. Monica's perseverance is not a promise that every family prayer brings the same visible result. Children are not responsible for changing a parent's faith. Keep discussion of adolescent mistakes age-appropriate and avoid public disclosure of personal sins.

Words to explain Repentance: turning away from sin and toward God. Conversion: a change of heart and life toward God. Bishop: a shepherd who teaches and serves the Church.

Sources for the leader

Story source: Servus Dei video and English transcript

Vatican biography: Benedict XVI: Saint Augustine, January 9, 2008

Prayer and family: Benedict XVI: Monica, August 30, 2009