

FAMILIES FORMING DISCIPLES

EASTER – LIVING THE SEASON FULLY

GOAL(S): TO GIVE FAMILIES THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE THEIR *LIVING-THE-EASTER-SEASON FAMILY PLAN* AND SHOW THEIR *RESURRECTION SETS*.
TO LEARN ABOUT DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY
TO PRAY THE CHAPLET OF DIVINE MERCY

MATERIALS

- Rosaries
- Divine Mercy Chaplet Pamphlet
- [Divine Mercy Coloring picture](#) by Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception of the B.V.M. to be used by younger children during the lesson to keep their attention
- Crayons, watercolors or markers

OPENING PRAYER

Christ is risen: The world below lies desolate.
Christ is risen: The spirits of evil are fallen.
Christ is risen: The angels of God are rejoicing.
Christ is risen: The tombs of the dead are empty. Christ is risen indeed from the dead, the first of the sleepers! Glory and Power are His for ever and ever! Amen. (*Saint Hippolytus of Rome*) Glory be,...

ICE BREAKER

Rose, Thorn, and Spaghetti

Each family member shares three highlights from their day: One is the rose (the best thing that happened that day); the second is the thorn (something the person wishes hadn't happened or something unpleasant that happened); and the third thing is the spaghetti (something funny or unexpected that happened).



Adapted from www.churchleaders.com

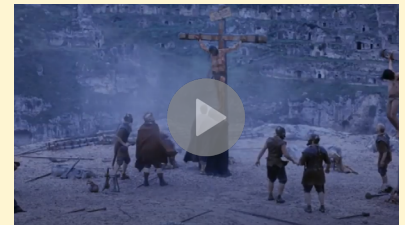
CONTENT

Explain: The last time we were together, we talked about the Easter season. During your At-Home Week, you made *Resurrection Sets* for your home altars/ prayer spaces and reviewed resources that provided ideas for how to celebrate the fifty days of Easter as a family.

Model for families by briefly sharing your own *Living-the-Easter-Season Family Plan* and show your *Resurrection Set*. Then ask each family to share about their *Living-the-Easter-Season Family Plan* and show their *Resurrection Set*.

Explain: We have learned about the Good News (Gospel) of Jesus' Paschal Mystery, the Resurrection, and the Easter season. Today we will reflect on Jesus' Divine Mercy. To do this we have to look at two stories. The first story is about the piercing of Jesus on the Cross and the power of the blood and water which flowed from his side. The second is about when, in 1931, Jesus appeared to a simple religious sister. He told her to tell everyone that the blood and water that flow from His side is from His Heart and is a source of mercy for the whole world.

- Read: We will read the first story, from John 19:31-37, *The Blood and Water*
- Optional for tweens/teens – Watch: Jesus is Pierced on Cross (from *The Passion of the Christ*) (1:22 min)



- Explain: An early tradition identifies St. Longinus as the [centurion](#) who, when ordered to break the legs of Jesus when He was already dead on the cross, chose not to do it. Out of compassion for Mary, Jesus' mother who stood at the foot of the cross and had already seen her Son suffer so much, Longinus instead pierced the side of Our [Lord](#) with his lance or spear (the Gospel of John includes the account of the piercing of Christ's side). The lance reached into the Heart of Jesus. When he pulled it out of Christ's side, blood and water poured out, as noted in John's Gospel. According to early tradition, Longinus, who was nearly blind at the time, was miraculously healed when some of the blood and water fell onto his eyes. It was then that he exclaimed "Indeed, this was the Son of God!" (see Mark 15:39—the tradition identifies Longinus as the centurion who exclaimed these words in Mark's Gospel). Not only were St. Longinus' eyes healed, but his soul was healed as well!

Many Church Fathers taught that the Church was born from the pierced Heart of Jesus on the Cross—the blood and water signifying the sacraments instituted by Christ and celebrated by the Church, through which the Lord’s mercy and grace are poured out upon the world. (See also CCC, nos. 766 and 2669.)

St. Longinus believed in Jesus, left the army, and was taught about Jesus by the Apostles. He became a monk and lived a life of holiness, never forgetting the great love and mercy that God had shown him. Later, he became one of the early Christian martyrs and died for his love for Jesus Christ. Today, the lance that Longinus used to pierce the side of Jesus is contained in one of the four pillars over the altar in the [Basilica](#) of St Peter’s in Rome.

(Adapted from [Catholic Online](#))

Explain: You already know our second story because, during the Week 2 Family Mission Activity, you watched videos about St. Faustina who was the religious sister to whom Jesus appeared in 1931. He told her to make an image of His mercy and to tell the whole world that He wanted to pour out His mercy on all people, just like He had done for St. Longinus.

Jesus also gave Faustina a special prayer called the Divine Mercy Chaplet. When we pray this chaplet, God makes us four promises.

Watch: *Divine Mercy Chaplet: 4 Promises* - Catholic Minute



Watch: In addition to praying the chaplet, Jesus also asked that we go to confession and receive Holy Communion nine (9) days before or after the Feast of Divine Mercy. But what if we can’t do that this year? *What To Do on Divine Mercy Sunday (if you can’t go to Mass and confession)*



FAMILY SHARING

Has there been a moment in your life when you experienced God showering you with His love and mercy? How did that experience make you feel about God and about yourself? (Ask families to discuss privately. Then invite large group sharing.)

Ask all the family members to gather around the prayer altar/space, and use the Divine Mercy pamphlet to pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

PRAYER

Pray: As we quiet ourselves before our Lord, think of an area in your life into which you would like to invite Jesus to come. It could be a hurt that you have, or an area that needs forgiveness, or a prayer for someone dear to you.

Pause in silence for a moment.

Pray: For these intentions and for all the intentions that we hold in our hearts, we pray.

Begin leading the Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

REMIND

Remind families to complete the [Families Forming Disciples Family Survey](#) (if they haven't already done so) and about the next meeting date and time.

