

Easter and Divine Mercy

Dear Parent(s),

Now that we are into the Easter season—a season that lasts seven weeks—we will be focusing on the gift of new life in Christ.

We replace the Lenten symbols with symbols of new life by replacing the nails with butterflies, a bird's nest with eggs or some silk spring flowers, and replacing the purple candle with a white candle.

These Family Take-Home Pages are filled with activities to reinforce what we're learning and discussing in class. They are divided into three sections: Warm-Up Exercises, Getting Started, and Putting It into Practice. The themes for this week are Easter and Divine Mercy.

May the activities suggested in these pages provide you with additional tools for nurturing your child's faith.

Warm-Up Exercises...

Gather the family around the white candle. Have one member of the family light the candle, and another read this passage from Scripture.

A reading from Matthew 28:5-8

The angel said to the women, "Don't be afraid! I know you are looking for Jesus, who was nailed to a cross. He isn't here! God has raised him to life, just as Jesus said he would. Come, see the place where his body was lying. Now hurry! Tell his disciples that he has been raised to life and is on his way to Galilee. Go there, and you will see him. That is what I came to tell you." The women were frightened and yet very happy, as they hurried from the tomb and ran to tell his disciples.

After sharing this passage with your family, follow with a family discussion using the suggested questions.

What did the women find when they visited the tomb? What did the angel tell them to do? And what was their response? What is

OUR response to the good news of Jesus' resurrection? How are we sharing this "wonderful news" with others? What else can we do to share the news?

Getting Started...

Brainstorm with your family different ways that you can celebrate Easter. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

Plant a tree or sapling as a symbol of your family's growing faith. Have everyone help with the digging and planting, watering and mulching. Bless it with a prayer.

Make an Easter banner to hang out or indoors. Display it throughout the Easter season.

Make a commitment to grow in faith by joining a Bible study or other group at your parish.

Putting It into Practice...

Establish a new Easter custom with your family by celebrating Divine Mercy Sunday, the second Sunday of Easter. When canonizing St. Faustina in 2000, Pope John Paul II de-

clared this day Divine Mercy Sunday, because the revelations of Jesus to St. Faustina so powerfully express the central truths at the heart of the Gospel: the merciful love of God manifest especially in the passion and resurrection of his Son.

Bake and decorate a heart-shaped cake. You can pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet before eating the cake.

The *Divine Mercy Chaplet* is prayed on rosary beads.

1. Begin by praying one Our Father, one Hail Mary, and one Apostles' Creed.

2. Then on the Our Father beads say:

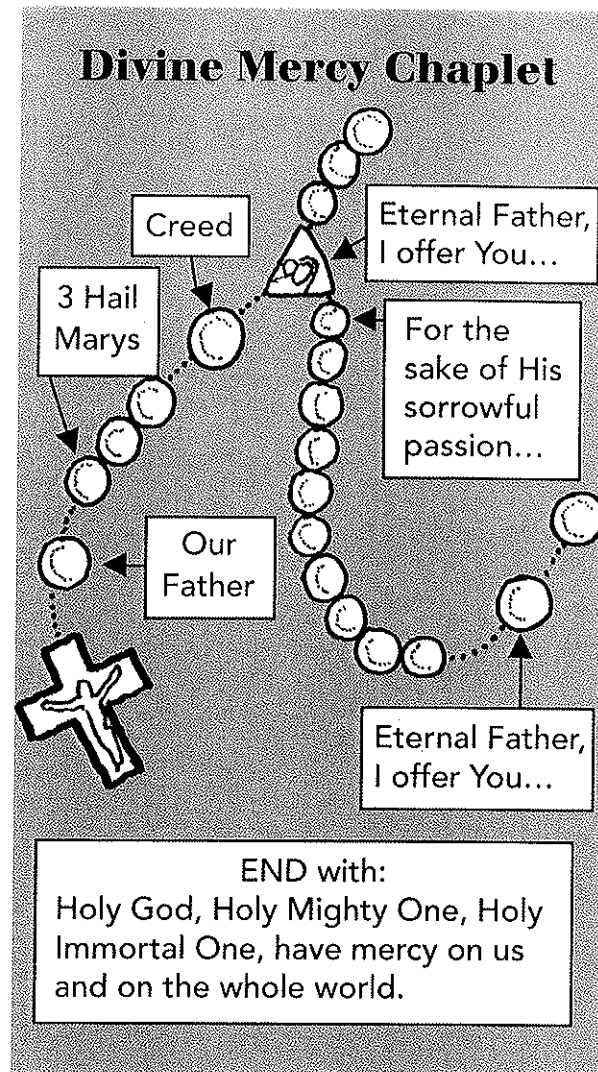
Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your dearly beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.

3. On the Hail Mary beads say:

For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

4. At the end, pray three times:

Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world.



Find out more about Divine Mercy Sunday on the web at: www.marian.org

Reflection

Know, My daughter, that between Me and you there is a bottomless abyss, an abyss which separates the Creator from the creature. But this abyss is filled with My mercy. I raise you up to Myself, not that I have need of you, but it is solely out of mercy that I granted you the grace of union with Myself.

Tell souls not to place within their own hearts obstacles to My mercy, which so

greatly wants to act within them. My mercy works in all those hearts which open their doors to it. Both the sinner and the righteous person have need of My mercy. Conversion, as well as perseverance, is a grace of My mercy.

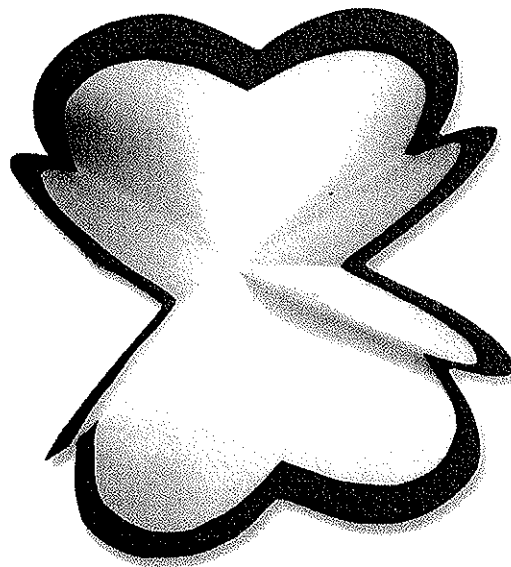
Message of Jesus to St. Faustina

Trust in My Pocket

The second Sunday of Easter is known as Divine Mercy Sunday. Help your children acknowledge Jesus' love and mercy for us with these heart-shaped cards.

Supplies needed:

heart template (see page 123)
red construction paper
white computer paper
scissors
pencil
hole punch
magic markers
or colored pencils
small stamps
or cards depicting Jesus
string for hanging



Directions:

1. Have children trace the heart template onto red construction paper, then cut out.
2. Once again, trace the template onto white computer paper, only this time trim the heart so that it will be a bit smaller than the first heart.
3. On white heart, write "Jesus, I trust you," and decorate.
4. Fold each heart as indicated on the template.
5. Open the heart. Using glue stick, glue the white heart inside the red heart.
6. Punch a small hole at the top of the heart, thread a string through the hole, and tie it to form a loop for hanging.
7. On the outside of the card write "Jesus loves me" or glue on a picture of Jesus.

Reflections

Come... I will bring you to the heights of heaven. With my own right hand I will raise you up, and I will show you the eternal Father.

St. Melito of Sardis

Don't run. Don't hide. Don't blend back into the world!

We must give an account of our hope!

Megan McKenna

Heart Template

