

Living EASTER

Faith Conversations

Find some time in your week, perhaps at a mealtime, to have meaningful conversations with loved ones centered around the Sunday Mass readings. You may start with reading from the Bible (here we focus only on the Gospel readings) or simply read the excerpt provided. Use the questions here to get a conversation started. Then, offer prayers of petition for special people and situations. End with a brief prayer, either from the heart or something formal such as the prayer below:

Easter Season Prayer

Risen Jesus, stand in our midst and give us your peace. Like Thomas, let us touch the wounds in your hands so that our faith in you may grow. As with Mary Magdalen, lift our tear-stained faces to see the hope you offer. And as with the timid Apostles, breath your Spirit into us, emboldening our hearts to love more fully. We thank you and praise you for the new life you have won for us. We pray with joyful hearts, Amen! Alleluia, Alleluia!

EASTER SUNDAY, MARCH 31 Acts 10:34a, 37-43, Col 3:1-4, Jn 20:1-9

Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed. – John 20:1-9

REFLECTION

Scientists studying the **Shroud of Turin** (the cloth traditionally believed to be Jesus' burial cloth) have concluded that the image on the cloth was created by a flash of light radiation – more powerful than any UV radiation source known today. This gives some insight into the power of the Resurrection. What are the implications of such power for our faith? For our daily life?

When the disciple John sees the signs of Jesus' Resurrection, his response is belief. What is our response to Jesus, who gives us his everything...his miracles, his friendship, his forgiveness, and finally, his life...all so that we might live joyfully here on Earth and eternally in Heaven?

FAMILY CONVERSATION STARTERS

Have you heard of the Shroud of Turin before? What do you think of the scientists' conclusion on how the image was created?

How can our family keep the joy of Easter alive and vibrant throughout the Easter Season?



DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY, APRIL 7 Acts 4:32-35, 1 Jn 5:1-6, Jn 20:19-31

Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.” – John 20:19-31

The Holy Spirit is often thought of as breath or wind. Let’s discuss what this means for God as Trinity for us.

We often hear the Risen Jesus say, “Peace be with you.” On this Mercy Sunday, what connections can we find between “peace” and “mercy”?

3RD SUNDAY OF EASTER, APRIL 14 Acts 3:13-15, 17-19, 1 Jn 2:1-5a, Lk 24:35-48

“Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have.” —Luke 24:35-48

How does this passage help us understand the core belief that *Jesus physically rose from the dead*?

What does Jesus’ physical Resurrection help us understand about the power of God, the presence of Jesus now, our own lives now as followers of Jesus, and our own bodies at the end of time?

4TH SUNDAY OF EASTER, APRIL 21 Acts 4:8-12, 1 Jn 3:1-2, Jn 10:11-18

“I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me...and I will lay down my life for the sheep.” – John 10:11-18

As Baptized believers, we belong to Jesus, the Good Shepherd. He knows us. He loves us so much he laid down his life for us. How does it feel to be known and loved so deeply? How well do we know our Shepherd – the person of Jesus – who loves us so much? How can we get to know him more (not just know about him, but know him. . . personally)?



5TH SUNDAY OF EASTER, APRIL 28 Acts 9:26-31, 1 Jn 3:18-24, Jn 15:1-8

“Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine, you are the branches.” – John 15:1-8

What happens to a branch that gets cut off from a plant? How do we stay connected to God, our source of energy and growth? How does this connection to God, affect our relationships with other “branches”?

What is the “fruit” that Jesus wants us to bear?

6TH SUNDAY OF EASTER, MAY 5 Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48, 1 Jn 4:7-10, Jn 15:9-17

“I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy might be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I love you.” – John 15:9-17

What is love? Is it easy to love? What does it look like to love people in our lives the way Jesus loves us?

How is loving Jesus and loving like Jesus linked to complete joy?

SOLEMNITY OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD, MAY 12

Acts 1:1-11, Eph 1:17-23, Mk 16:15-20

Jesus said to his disciples: “Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature.” – Mark 16: 15-20

What is “the gospel” or “good news” to which Jesus is referring? How would you explain it to someone who had never heard it before?

These were Jesus’ final instructions to his followers before he went up to heaven. We are followers of Jesus. How can we proclaim his gospel to the people we know in our everyday life?



PENTECOST SUNDAY, MAY 19

Acts 2:1-11, 1 Cor 12:3b-7, 12-13 or Gal 5:16-25, Jn 20:19-23

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were...Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." – John 20:19-23

What are the doors that are locked in our hearts because of fear or sadness or hate? Let's be quiet for a moment to invite Jesus into the "closed off" parts of our hearts with his healing and peace.

On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit transformed frightened/timid people into bold/courageous people. What does it mean to be courageous? Is it fearlessness? Share a time you were courageous. Were you conscious of the Holy Spirit's help?

Tomorrow we celebrate the Memorial of Mary, Mother of the Church. She was present as the Church was "born" on Pentecost and accompanied the first Christians as they tried to follow Jesus in this very new way as Church. As we begin "Ordinary Time" again in the Church calendar, what does it mean to start this new season with the power of the Holy Spirit and with the company of our mother, Mary?

Pentecost Prayer

Come, Holy Spirit, into our minds with your light. Come, Holy Spirit, into our hearts with the fire of your love. Come, Holy Spirit, into our wills with your strength. Transform us. Send us. Work through us. Be present with us always . . . and teach us to be always present to you, attentively listening . . . that we may effectively preach the Good News of Jesus to every creature. Amen. Alleluia, Alleluia!

