

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, APRIL 20

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 27

Acts 5:12-16, Rev. 1:9-13, 17-19, 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 Divine Mercy Sunday, what connections can we find between "peace" and "mercy"?

3RD SUNDAY OF EASTER, MAY 4

Acts 5:27-32, 40b-41, Rev. 5:11-14, Jn 21:1-19

So the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord." – John 21: 1-19

- It seems the Risen Jesus was somehow different, yet recognizable. In this passage, how did his disciples know it was him? How do we recognize "It is the Lord" in our own lives? What characterizes his presence, his words?
- The disciples had gone back to fishing—the familiar place from which Jesus first called them. Jesus again meets them there, and renews his call to Peter. What familiar patterns in our lives does the Risen Jesus want to transform?

4TH SUNDAY OF EASTER, MAY 11

Acts 13:14,43-52, Rev. 7:9,14b-17, Jn 10:27-30

My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life. . . – John 10: 27-30

- 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)? Do we hear his voice? What does it sound like? What is he saying to you? How does knowing our Shepherd, Jesus, move us (as a family) to following him?



5TH SUNDAY OF EASTER, MAY 18 Acts 14:21-27, Rev. 21:1-5a, Jn 13:31-33a, 34-35

As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. – John 13: 31-33a, 34-35

- We know that Jesus' cross, conquering even death, was his ultimate act of love for us—our benchmark for loving. But have we experienced this transforming love personally in our brokenness? Are we in touch with our need?
- We are loveable and loved. And we are called to bring this love to the people in our lives. Do others know we're disciples of the Risen Jesus? Do they feel loved by us and by God?

6TH SUNDAY OF EASTER, MAY 25

Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid. – John 14: 23-29

In life there is always much to fear and be troubled about. Jesus wants to work the daily miracle of transforming our doubts into trust and our fears into peace. For this to happen, our hearts must remain open to the Holy Spirit, who comes to renew us. How can we become more trusting and open to the Spirit's movements in our lives?

SOLEMNITY OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD, JUNE 1

Acts 1:1-11, Eph 1:17-23, Lk 24:46-53

They did him homage and then returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and they were continually in the temple praising God. – Luke 24: 46-53

- What was it that made the disciples of Jesus so joyful and grateful? They were witnesses of God's greatest act of love yet: Jesus, God Incarnate, Savior! And they knew him, personally! Jesus was inviting them to be part of this great work of salvation. Jesus was sending his own Spirit upon them.
- As the Baptized, these things are true for us, too. Does reflecting on this bring gratitude and joy?



PENTECOST SUNDAY, JUNE 8

Acts 2:1-11, 1 Cor 12:3b-7, 12-13 or Rom. 8:8-17, 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!

