



Journey through Easter

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER; SUNDAY OF DIVINE MERCY

Lower Elementary

Materials

- ▶ Handout A: Gospel Reading for April 11, 2021
- ▶ Handout B: Divine Mercy

Learning Goals

This week concludes the Octave of Easter with the great feast of Divine Mercy. While the Octave comes to an end, we continue in the Easter Season. This Sunday we reflect on and rejoice in the beauty that is the mercy of God.

Activity

Note: You may send this week's activities home for students to complete with their parents. If you do so, be sure to include the directions page for parents as background on the Divine Mercy painting.

- Read the Gospel passage aloud to your students as they follow along.
- Project or show an image of the Divine Mercy painting, such as the one here: SophiaOnline.org/DivineMercy.
- Explain the history of the Divine Mercy image: *In 1931, Jesus appeared to a nun named Sister Faustina. He told her that He wanted her to help Him to let the world know a special message – the message of **Divine Mercy**. Jesus wanted the world to know of His great love for people even though we sin. He wanted people to know that all they had to do was ask Him for His mercy and, with the help of the Sacraments, He would give it. He also asked all of us to forgive each other when we hurt one another just as He forgives our sins. Lastly, He wanted us all to trust in Him with our whole hearts.*

Jesus asked Sister Faustina to have an image painted of Him. Out of His heart would come two rays of light: one red and one white. These rays of light are to remind us that when He was crucified, blood and water came from His heart when it was pierced. This image was to serve as a reminder that Jesus wants to forgive the sins of anyone who comes to Him. He wants to pour His mercy out upon the whole world. The image would also include a message that says “Jesus, I trust in You!” Whenever we look at this image, we are reminded of God’s great gift of mercy. Sister Faustina followed Jesus’ direction and had an image painted of Him, as He asked.

D. Discuss the painting with your students using the following questions:

- ▶ What do the rays on the *Divine Mercy* image represent? They represent the blood and water that came forth from the heart of Jesus on the Cross after His heart was pierced. They also represent the mercy God wants to pour out on the world.
- ▶ The *Divine Mercy* image includes the words “Jesus, I trust in You.” What are some ways you can trust in Jesus? Accept reasoned answers.
- ▶ Why do you think we celebrate Jesus’ *Divine Mercy* on this Sunday? What does Jesus’ mercy (and this painting) have to do with the Gospel for this week? God’s mercy was made perfectly known to us in Jesus’ sacrificial Death on the Cross and by His Resurrection, both of which we celebrated last week during Holy Week and Easter Sunday. In this week’s Gospel Jesus appears to His Apostles for the first time. Often, we are like Thomas, who doubt God’s love and mercy for us. Accepting God’s love and mercy requires us to have faith and believe in His saving works. Notice, too, that the *Divine Mercy* painting shows God’s mercy pouring out from Jesus’ side (the rays of light). Thomas put his finger in Jesus’ side, feeling the wounds from His crucifixion, the very sacrifice of our salvation and God’s mercy.

E. Have your students color the **Divine Mercy** coloring page.