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Thoughtful Moments

Start small

Concepts such as the Holy Trinity are difficult for anyone to understand, let alone children. That's why they are called, "mysteries." That doesn't mean you shouldn't introduce them, even when your children are young. As their cognitive abilities grow, they will understand more, but you can plant seeds even as they are young.



God trusts you

Do you ever feel overwhelmed by the responsibility of parenting? Sometimes it can feel as if we aren't up to the task of doing the job right and if we had to do it alone, we might not be. Fortunately, God never intended to leave us on our own. When he gives us a child, he stays with us and guides us. If he didn't trust us, he wouldn't have chosen us in the first place.

Experience counts

"The glory of the young is their strength, and the dignity of the old is gray hair" (Proverbs 20:29).



Easter returns each Sunday

Easter morning comes after six weeks of darkness and sacrifice. In fact, the joy of Easter is meant to last throughout the year. "Sunday recalls the day of Christ's Resurrection. It is Easter which returns week by week, celebrating Christ's victory over sin and death" (*Dies Domini*, Pope John Paul II). Try these ideas to celebrate Easter each week:

Make ready for Sunday. Acknowledging sin isn't

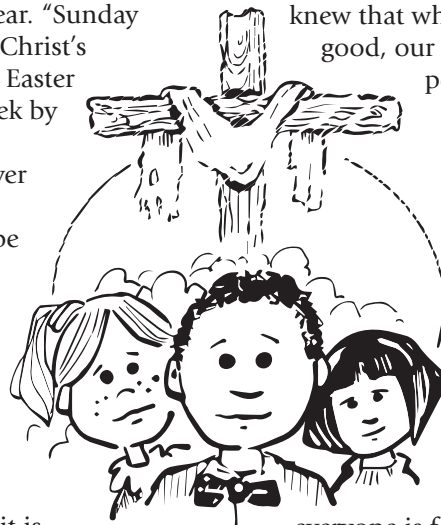
comfortable, but it is essential in order to experience the joy of Easter. Turn Fridays into penitential days in your home during which you work to eliminate whatever keeps you from being best friends with God. Share meatless meals, fast from

television or video games, spend quiet time together.

Rejoice in reconciliation. Jesus knew that while our intentions may be good, our resolve isn't always perfect. That's why he created the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Take your family to Confession regularly. Your children will learn that God is always ready to forgive.

Rejoice in the Resurrection. Before you participate in Sunday Mass, read the gospel selection out loud so that that

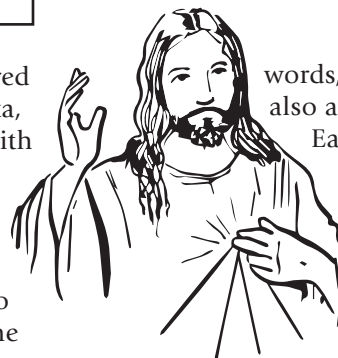
everyone is familiar with it. Talk about what the priest will do, the hymns you like to sing, or ask which prayers your children like best. This helps all of you to experience Mass, not just witness it. Easter returns every Sunday. Don't miss it.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday?

In 1931, Jesus appeared to St. Faustina Kowalska, a simple Polish nun, with his hand raised in blessing and two rays of light radiating from his heart – a red and a pale one. He told her to paint the vision with the



words, "Jesus, I trust in you." He also asked that the Sunday after

Easter become the "Feast of Mercy," and promised that anyone who approaches him as the King of Mercy would receive special graces and great mercy.

Beautiful symbols of Easter

Easter is the most important feast day in the Catholic liturgical calendar, celebrating the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. We use popular symbols to represent truths about this holiday.

Lily: Lilies grow in spring – the season of new life. They begin as a bulb or seed buried in the ground that bursts forth with new life. Jesus was buried and then came forth with new, glorious life on Easter morning.

Eggs: The egg is a symbol of the rock tomb out of which Christ emerged when he rose



again. The chick, hatching out of the egg, symbolizes new life.

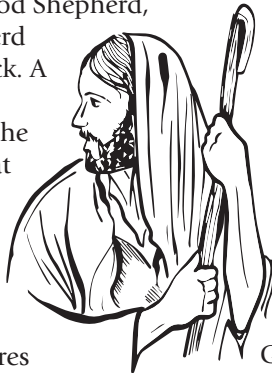
Lamb: The lamb was a sacrifice made during the Jewish Passover, celebrating when the “angel of death” passed over the homes of those who had lamb’s blood smeared on their doorposts, sparing the firstborn sons. Jesus was crucified during Passover week and was the ultimate sacrificial lamb. He is referred to in the Bible as the “Lamb of God” and “our Passover lamb.” During Easter, we celebrate Jesus’ passover from death to life.

Scripture LESSON

John 10:1-10, The Good Shepherd

This Gospel tells of our relationship with God. Jesus is the Good Shepherd, we are his flock. A shepherd guards and guides his flock. A flock of sheep knows its shepherd by voice. When he calls, the sheep follow that voice but not any other.

Society tells us today to follow our own voice. In fact, we get the message that it’s okay for us to each pursue our own desires and look after ourselves. As a result, when trouble strikes, we would have no one to turn to for guidance and comforting.



Jesus is now the Good Shepherd for everyone. As the Good Shepherd, he gives his life for his sheep. But he also looked beyond the sheepfold of Israel. His hope is to have one flock and one shepherd for the whole world, the Church which he founded.

What can a parent do?

The picture of Jesus as the Good Shepherd and us as the sheep he takes care of is appealing to children. We can reinforce that picture by stressing that our children can trust in Jesus.

Parent TALK

The local paper carried an article about COVID patients in the hospital who were sad because they wouldn’t be home for Easter. Their families



were also upset because COVID patients can’t have visitors. The story in the paper touched my girls and we talked about how we could help. After a

discussion, we decided to make Easter baskets to bring to the hospital. I reminded the girls that Jesus said when we show compassion to the sick, lonely, or the forgotten, we serve him.

After a trip to the store, we assembled brightly colored baskets with a prayer card, Mass card, a stuffed animal, and some candy. Each basket was tied with a pretty ribbon, and we brought them to the hospital across the street from the church. We couldn’t deliver the gifts to the patients directly but the nurses assured the girls that everyone will truly appreciate them.

Feasts & Celebrations

April 23 – St. Adalbert of Prague (997). As Bishop of Prague, Adalbert spent his life spreading the Good News. His efforts to reform the clergy of Prague were met with opposition that forced him to leave for Rome. While Adalbert was on a mission in Prussia, he was martyred by the pagan priests.

April 28 – St. Peter Chanel (1841). Born to a peasant family in France, Peter Chanel was ordained and entered the Society of Mary. He was sent to evangelize the Marshall Islands. Despite adversities, he

baptized natives, including the chieftain’s son. He was martyred by hostile warriors. The island converted two years after his death.

April 30 – Pope St. Pius V (1572). Born to a poor family in Italy, Antonio Ghislieri became a Dominican. After serving as an inquisitor during the Catholic Reformation, he became Pope Pius V. He established seminaries and hospitals, and published the Roman Catechism, Roman Breviary, and the Missal. He is known for efforts to implement the Council of Trent.



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