

During this unprecedented time in our world's history, we offer you the following material for your praying and reflecting on God's Word.

Introduction

"While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them 'Peace be with you.' They were startled and terrified and thought that they were seeing a ghost. He said to them 'Why are you frightened and why do doubts arise in your hearts?'"

It was the time after the death of Jesus. His disciples were in the upper room reflecting on the events that had just happened. They were locked in the room, scared as they were afraid of what the Jews might do to his disciples. They were already in fear but can you imagine the fear rise dramatically when Jesus appears to them? They were terrified and doubtful. Our current situation will create a lot of fear and doubt, some outright terror, but Jesus reminds us that we have a safe haven with him. He can take all our fears, our anxieties, our confusion, our doubtfulness and offer them up to God. Our hope and faith are found in God.

As we navigate a new normal with many restrictions, our spiritual lives do not need to suffer. There are still ways to observe this Holy season of Lent. The traditional practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving are still possible. It is imperative that during this time, we continue with our Lenten practices and to use this trial as an opportunity to elevate, adapt and deepen our relationship with Jesus.

Lectio Divina with the Sunday Gospel

Lectio Divina means 'divine reading'. It is a way to pray using the holy scriptures in a step-by-step process.

Gather the entire family around and make the sign of the Cross. Light a candle.

Leader: "Holy Spirit, you inspired the authors of Sacred Scripture to write what you wanted us to know for the sake of our salvation. Inspire us now to hear those words not only with our ears, but our hearts, so that we might know your saving Word for us today."

- Have one person **read** the scripture slowly, out loud and have a few moments of silence afterwards. (It may be helpful for everyone to have a copy of the reading).
- **Read** the scripture again out loud and choose a single word or short phrase that touches, speaks or surprises you. Share with everyone.
- **Read** the scripture out loud one more time and discuss what is happening directly in the text.
- **Meditate** on what God is doing now in our lives through this text.
- **Respond** to what God is doing through prayer.
- **Contemplate** on what God is asking of me through this text and how to use these words as a gift for others through my actions.
- After a period of silence, end with the Sign of the Cross.

The Holy Gospel for April 19, 2020

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John.

"It was evening on the day Jesus rose from the dead, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.'

After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.'

When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'

But Thomas, who was called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said to them, 'Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.'

After eight days his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.'

Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.'

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Family Activities

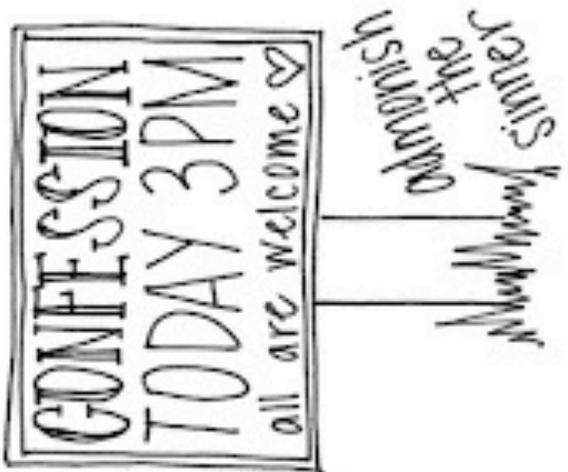
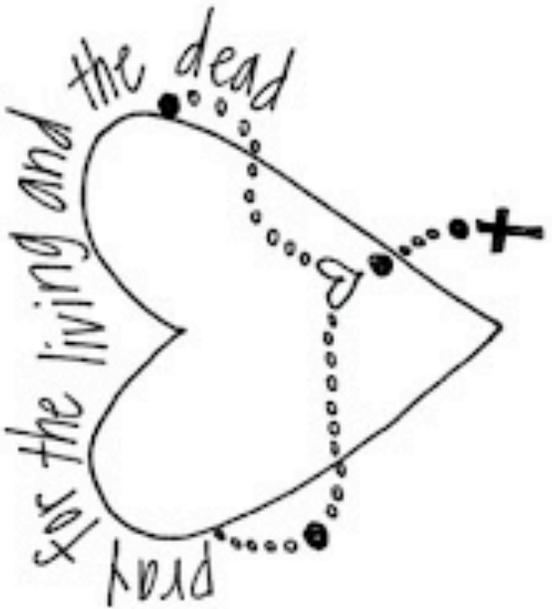
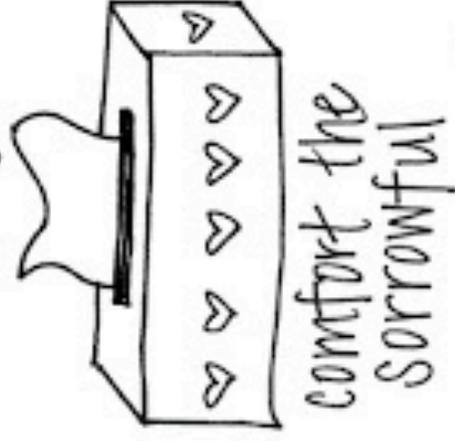
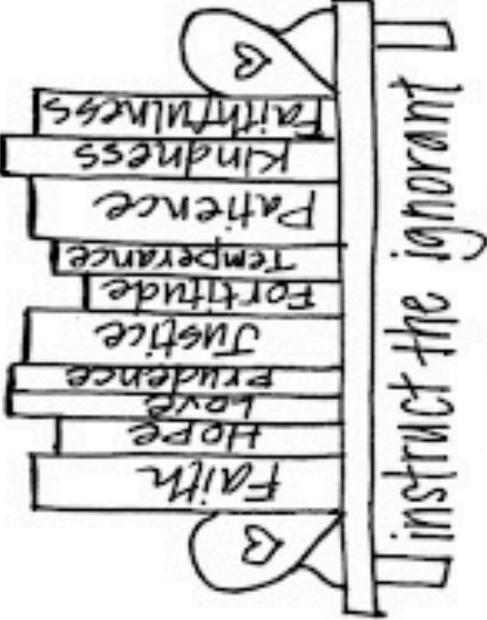
Many of us can relate to Thomas' response to the news that the disciples had seen Jesus. We want to see for ourselves too, but we grow in faith, trusting the experience and knowledge of others.

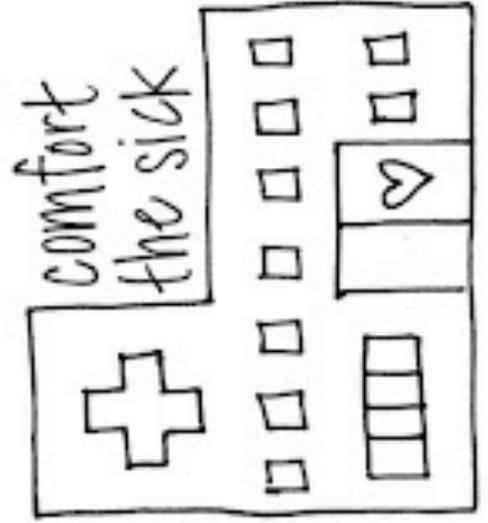
- * Many of us have heard the saying "Seeing is believing." As your family gathers, take some time to **consider** what that saying means. What are some things we believe because we see them? Is there anything we believe without seeing? Today's Gospel reminds us that faith sometimes asks us to believe things we cannot see with our eyes.
- * **Reflect** on how the first disciples, the Gospels, the Holy Spirit and the community of the Church help you to strengthen your faith.
- * What makes YOU believe that Jesus is alive?!
- * As a family, **recite** the Apostles Creed. It summarizes the central truths of our faith and it symbolizes the faith of the whole church. When we recite the creed, we proclaim both our individual identity in Christ and our identity as a part of the whole Church.

**I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. Amen.**

- * Today, we also celebrate the Feast of Divine Mercy. It is a special day in which we remember the mercy of God. Mercy is when a person treats someone else with kindness and forgiveness. When Jesus died on the cross, this was an act of great mercy. He gave up his life so that we could be forgiven and join him in heaven. **Pray** the Divine Mercy Chaplet with your family (given last week).

The Spiritual Works of Mercy





The Corporal Works of Mercy

