

# God's Mercy

## Preparation for the Session

**Turn to Page 149,**  
the Family + Faith page.

**Read** the **Consider This** feature. What thoughts or reactions do you have to the opening question?

In this chapter you will cover the following objectives:

- Explore God's mercy in the story of the Prodigal Son
- Celebrate that God has mercy on us even though we are sinners
- Recognize that virtues can help us say no to temptation and choose what is good
- Understand the importance of asking God for forgiveness and being forgiving toward others

**Parents, Consider This:** *The word mercy is translated from the Hebrew word "hesed," meaning goodness and the Greek word "eleos," which captures the essence of God's will to save sinners. Mercy and compassion are at the forefront of Jesus message and ministry. He calls his disciples to follow his example. We learn what mercy is most profoundly when we experience it ourselves. Be an example of someone who shows mercy as well as teaches about it. Your child will learn from your example as well as from your words.*

**Read** these other sections on the Family + Faith Page.

- *Your Child Learned.* This highlights some of the content of Sacred Scripture and Tradition in the lesson.
- *Children At This Age.* This will help you to understand how your child processes and learns at this developmental level.



**Let's Sing:** These songs connect the session topics and can be downloaded from [aliveinchrist.osv.com](http://aliveinchrist.osv.com).

- The Supper of the Lamb
- We Come to Worship You

## INVITE: Encountering God in His Word

**Turn to Page 141,**  
Insert Page Head


After gathering the supplies that you will need, find a quiet place to be with your child. This is a sacred time—a time when you will be present to each other and to the Lord. You may want to light a candle as you begin.



**Let Us Pray** Invite your child to make the Sign of the Cross. Read aloud the Psalm verse from the book. Help your child to respond.

**Explain** that when God shows mercy and love, he gives us examples of being kind and forgiving.

**Say:** Let's listen to how many times Jesus wants us to forgive someone.

 **Guide** your child through the Preparing for God's Word Ritual you learned in the Introduction Session or play Track 1 of the *Songs of Scripture* CD.

- Proclaim God's Word in the Parchment Paper box on the page.
- Maintain several moments of silence.
- Ask: What did you hear God say to you today?

**Invite** your child to respond and also share what you heard.

Now, look at the *What Do You Wonder?* box.

**Say:** Jesus tells us what we need to forgive each other often and always.


**Invite** your child to respond to the questions. Ask what else they might wonder about God's life and love and how he shares them with us.

### DISCOVER: Learning God's Truth

**Turn to Page 142,**  
Jesus Teaches Forgiveness

**Have** your child silently read the opening question and paragraph.

**Tell** your child to listen to the Scripture story about a loving father.

 **Read** the first two paragraphs of the Scripture story.


**Ask:** How do you think the father felt when his son went away? (*very sad*)  
How do think the son felt? (*embarrassed, ashamed*)

**Have** your child look at the illustration on the page and talk about how it relates to the story.

**Turn to Page 143,**  
The Prodigal Son

 **Read** aloud the rest of the Scripture story.

**Ask:** How do you think the younger son felt? (*resentful, jealous*)

 **Do** the gold-star activity.

**Parents, Consider This:** *In the Scripture story of the Prodigal Son, the younger son in the story offended his father by asking for his inheritance. Then he squandered it on foolish and harmful things. He also offended his family by forsaking Israel, the land in which God had settled his Chosen People. Jesus knew that this story would powerfully show that God his Father is always willing to forgive sinners. All of us sin and it is the foundation of our faith to learn that God will forgive us. Reinforce this important message to your child every chance you get.*

**Read** and discuss the words **virtues**, **temptation**, and **mercy** and their definitions in the Catholic Faith Words box.

## Activity

**Have** your child complete the Share Your Faith activity.

**Turn to Page 144,**  
Forgive One Another

**Have** your child silently read the opening question and paragraphs under the “Forgive One Another” section. Ask your child to underline the sentences that tell what Jesus wants them to know about God. (God our Father always forgives us if we are truly sorry. Jesus wants us to forgive others in the same way the Father forgives us.)

**Discuss**, with your child, the concepts of love and mercy and how to show love and mercy to those who have hurt us.

**Read** aloud the story, “A New Model.”

**Ask:** How would you change the scene?



**Do** the gold-star activity. Review your child’s answers.

**Parents, Consider This:** Help your child see that forgiveness is an important part of bringing peace, not only to relationships with family and friends, but also to the world. Remind your child to look for peaceful and non-violent resolutions to conflicts. Invite your child to be a mediator when siblings or friends quarrel. Help your child learn to listen without interrupting and be willing to compromise and look for solutions that benefit everyone.

**Turn to Page 145,**  
Putting Things Away

**Read** aloud the content under “Putting Things Away.” Have your child underline the parts he or she would change.

**Read** aloud the content under “Jesus Asks Us to Forgive.”

**Explain** that this means we are to forgive as we are forgiven by God. We should ask for forgiveness from those we have hurt and we should forgive those whom have hurt us. Remind your child that to forgive means to cancel, pardon, or absolve. Help your child to understand that to forgive someone means letting go of any anger or hurt by “canceling” those feelings.

## Activity

**Have** your child complete the Connect Your Faith activity.

### LIVE: Living Our Faith

**Turn to Page 146,**  
Our Catholic Life

**Read** aloud the opening question and paragraphs.



**Do** the gold-star activity.

**Turn to Page 147,**  
People of Faith

**Read** the paragraph about Saint Jane Frances de Chantal.

- Share your reactions to the information.
- Talk about how you can be forgiving.

**Turn to Page 149,**  
Family + Faith Page and  
conclude with the Let's Pray  
prayer on this page.

**Parents, Consider This:** *It's important to form our children in the common language of prayer. We encourage you to pray the Hail Mary (see Page 321), during your night prayer this week.*



To access and send an eAssessment to your child, go to the Student and Family section of [aliveinchrist.osv.com](http://aliveinchrist.osv.com).