

Monday: I am the face of God's mercy when I am kind and compassionate

Consider

The Dalai Lama said that: *Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them humanity cannot survive.*

Here are two definitions of compassion:

The ability to see what needs doing right now and the willingness to do it right now. (Brad Warner)

The deep awareness of the suffering of another coupled with the wish to relieve it. (Mary Brantley)

To be compassionate, one must be aware of the needs of others. Encourage the children to open their eyes, to notice others as Jesus did, and to see where we can help others.

Discuss

- Ask the children what they think **kind** means, and what they think **compassion** means. Write these words on cards and display them around the Prayer Space. These can be used to aid reflection and as prompts for action.
- Discuss the various kind acts/good deeds that could be done in school. Write these on strips of card and put them in a 'kindness box'. Each child does a 'lucky dip' and puts the chosen action into practice.
- Make a list of **kind words**. Encourage the children to use as many of them as possible during the day.

These quotes on kindness could inspire daily action:

Spread kindness to one person a day. Imagine the amount of happiness you would dispense in a lifetime.

Kindness begins with me.



Do

Worksheet

Ask the children to write ten kind words in the boxes at the top of the next page. Underneath, ask them to write about three times they saw/noticed someone's need and how they helped/could help.

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Tuesday: I am the face of God's mercy when I forgive and reconcile

Consider

This is hard – really hard! When we feel hurt, upset, angry, let down or disappointed by the actions of someone else, it can be very difficult to forgive. Yet, this is what we, as followers of Jesus, must try to do. As we read in Matthew 18:21-22:

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked 'Lord, if someone keeps on sinning against me, how many times do I have to forgive him? Seven times?' 'No, not seven times,' answered Jesus, 'but seventy-seven times.'

Forgiveness is a gift we give. We choose to **forGIVE**.

Reconciliation is to do with making up, becoming friends again, after a disagreement or hurt. It involves apologies for hurt caused, apologies accepted, forgiveness, and perhaps a sign of reconciliation, such as a handshake. Obviously, this links with our preparation for and teaching about the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the celebration of God's forgiveness.

Discuss

- Talk with the children about the difficulty of this challenge to forgive and reconcile. How might they get the strength to do this hard 'job'? Who has promised to always help us?
- Discuss the kinds of things that happen in school, especially in the yard, that might cause a need for reconciliation. How do we forgive? How do we reconcile? Have the children experienced forgiving, being forgiven, reconciliation? How did they feel? Can the class agree to a 'forgiveness code'?
- Have some prayer time, when children can quietly reflect on the forgiveness they need to give, and the forgiveness they need to receive.
- Learn and say The Act of Sorrow.
- Sing 'I'm Sorry' from *Alive-O 3*. The words of which are available on a PowerPoint from education.dublindiocese.ie

Alive-O Link

In the *Alive-O 3* children's textbook, pages 30, 31 and 32 are relevant. In *Alive-O 4* children's textbook, it is pages 28, 29 and 38.



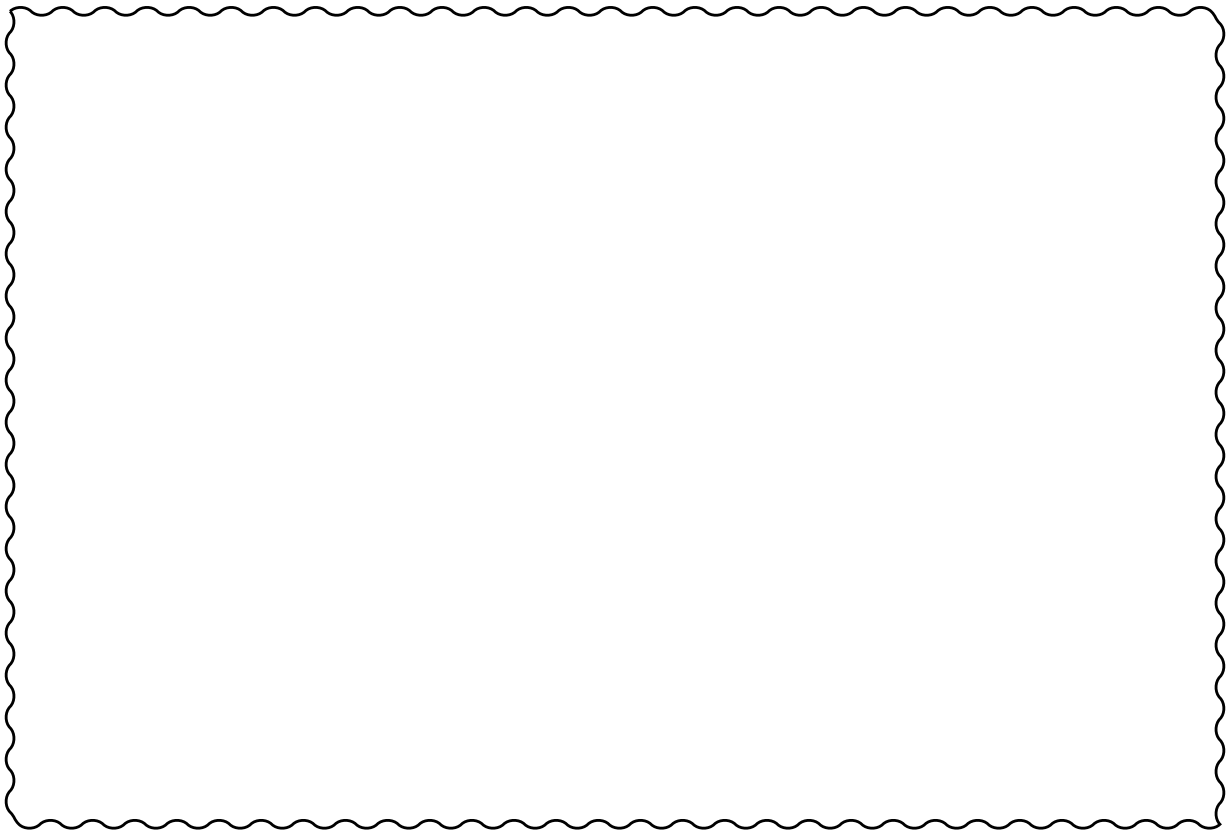
Do

Worksheet

Ask the children to draw and colour in a picture in the box on the next page of a time when they forgave someone.

**Do for others what you want them
to do for you. (Mt 7:12)**

I FORGIVE



Thursday: I am the face of God's mercy when I am fair and just

Consider

Pope Paul VI said: *If you want peace, work for justice*, and Martin Luther King said: *Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere*. As we said about kindness, fairness and justice begins with each one of us. It can be said that acting justly is doing the right thing because it is the right thing to do.

Discuss

Help the children learn the following:

**We are just,
We are fair,
We do the right thing,
Everywhere.**

- What do these words mean to the children? What is their experience of fairness/justice/doing the right thing? How can we treat others with justice and fairness?
- How can I act with justice/be fair/do the right thing at home? In school? With my friends? Are there any times and places in which I can do the right thing?

Use some or all of the following suggestions to help the class explore more fully the concepts of fairness and justice in different aspects of their everyday lives.

- Tell the story of Zacchaeus (Lk 19:1-10) and discuss how Zacchaeus' actions were not fair or just, and how Jesus showed him how to live differently.
- Play card or board games in class. Discuss the rules and how to play fairly.
- Use role play to show acting fairly and with justice.
- Have a discussion about yard time. Can the class draw up a list of five **fair** and **just** ways to behave?
- How can we be just in how we treat God's creation? (See the Starfall website for the 'Earth Day Song' www.starfall.com/n/holiday/earthday/load.htm?f&n=main to remind and encourage everyone to play their part in caring for the earth.)
- Borrow an idea from comic books: can the children see themselves as a kind of 'Justice League' committed to **doing the right thing and being fair**?

Alive-O Link

Page 40 in *Alive-O 4* has a 'Making Peace' poem that focuses on some of the aspects involved in making peace and behaving justly.



Do

Worksheet

Ask the children to list situations/ways in which they can act with justice and fairness.

**We are just, we are fair,
we do the right thing, everywhere**







Friday: I am the face of God's mercy when I live like Jesus

Consider

Jesus says: *My commandment is this: love one another, just as I love you. This is what I command you: love one another (Jn 15:12, 17).* Jesus calls us to love each other, which involves being kind, compassionate, fair and just, and forgiving and reconciling. If we do this, then everyone can see God's mercy and God's love in our actions. We get the grace and strength to do this through prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to help us. We also get help to live like Jesus when we receive Jesus in the Eucharist. This ties in with the preparation for the Sacrament of First Eucharist.

Discuss

We can use two of the Prayers after Communion:

Thank you, Lord Jesus, O thank you
For giving yourself to me.
Make me strong to show your love
Wherever I may be

I'm ready now, Lord Jesus,
To show how much I care.
I'm ready now to give your love
At home and everywhere.

- Recalling the words of St Teresa of Ávila (on page 3 of Notes for the Teacher), how can we use our hands to live like Jesus? Our voices? Our feet? Our faces?
- How can I live like Jesus? How can I live like Jesus at home and in school? How can I live like Jesus wherever I am? Children can have a page entitled 'I live like Jesus when ...' where they can write down five ideas for home and five ideas for school.
- Draw a large face outline. Use photos OR self-portrait drawings of the children (passport photo size). Stick these into the face outline and this becomes the 'face of God's mercy', made up of all the faces of the children.
- Talk about the worksheet on the next page and what the words mean. The children could decorate around the words with pictures to illustrate the concepts.



Do

Worksheet

Ask the children to fill in the blanks on the worksheet. The answers are at the bottom of the page.



Use your voice for _ _ _ _ _

_ _ _ _ _



Your eyes and ears for _ _ _ _ _

_ _ _ _ _



Your mind for _ _ _ _ _

_ _ _ _ _



And your heart for _ _ _ _ _

_ _ _ _ _



kindness, compassion,
charity, truth, love

