

# 4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT

## REJOICING IN GOD

This Sunday, the 4th Sunday in Lent, is also known as *Laetare Sunday*. The word *Laetare* means “rejoice” in Latin. As we continue to prepare our hearts to celebrate Easter, we rejoice that God loves us so much that He came into the world to die so that if we believe in Him, we might be saved and have eternal life.

### PRIMARY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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**This Sunday is *Laetare Sunday*, when we rejoice in God’s love for us.**

*Scripture Resources:* [John 3:14-21](#); [1 John 4:7-9](#); [Philippians 4:4](#)

*Catechism Resources:* [CCC 218-221](#)

**God came into this world to die for our salvation because He loves us so much.**

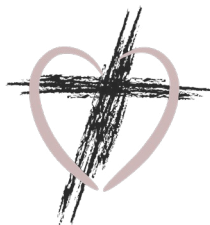
*Scripture Resources:* [John 3:14-21](#); [Romans 5:8](#)

*Catechism Resources:* [CCC 456-458](#)

**If we believe in Him, we will be saved, and enjoy eternal life with Him.**

*Scripture Resources:* [John 3:36](#); [Romans 6:5-6](#)

*Catechism Resources:* [CCC 1023-1026](#)





## PONDER: EXPLORE KEY THEMES FOR THE WEEK

*Look for opportunities throughout the week to ponder with and communicate these truths to your child(ren). Use the questions below each objective to explore the topic throughout the week. Remember that our faith is a mystery and you don't always need all the answers. Refer to the Parent Guide for more recommendations on pondering with your child(ren).*

### FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN:

#### *Learning Objectives*

## 01 This Sunday is *Laetare Sunday*, when we rejoice in God's love for us.

*To help your child ponder this idea, ask:*

- What are some things that you are joyful about in your life?
- What does it feel like to know that someone loves and cares for you (your family, friends, community)?
- What does it feel like to know that God loves you even more than all these people?

## 02 God came into this world to die for our salvation because He loves us so much.

*To help your child ponder this idea, ask:*

- How do we show friends and family we love them?
- How does God show us He loves us?
- How should we show God we love Him?

## 03 If we believe in Him, we will be saved, and enjoy eternal life with Him.

*To help your child ponder this idea, ask:*

- Why did God send His son Jesus?
- What will happen if we believe in God?
- God created us for Heaven. He wants us to be with Him. What are some ways we can respond to God's invitation to love and serve others the way He loves and serves us?

**FOR OLDER CHILDREN***Learning Objectives***01 This Sunday is *Laetare Sunday*, when we rejoice in God's love for us.**

We are joyful because God loves us. He loves us even when we do things we shouldn't do. So, when we love God, we want to follow Him by doing what He wants us to do. This means that we obey His commandments, follow Jesus' example, and love others as Jesus does.

*To help your child ponder this idea, ask:*

- What does the word "rejoice" mean?
- Why should we rejoice that God loves us?
- How should we respond to God's love for us?

*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.*

John 3:16

**02 God came into this world to die for our salvation because He loves us so much.**

God loves each of us deeply and personally. Because of this deep love, He sent Jesus His son to save us by suffering and dying on the cross for our sins. He offered His life as an act of love for us.

*To help your child ponder this idea, ask:*

- Is there someone that you love very much? How does it make you feel when you think of this person or see this person?
- How much do you think God loves you?
- Why did God come into the world in the person of Jesus?

**03 If we believe in Him, we will be saved, and enjoy eternal life with Him.**

Jesus came to Earth so that we would hear the Word of God and believe and follow Him. He made it possible for us to have eternal life. We are called to respond to God's love and live a life as followers of Jesus so that we may be with God forever in Heaven.

*To help your child ponder this idea, ask:*

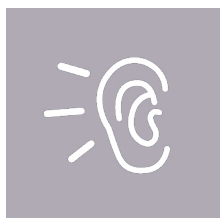
- What does it mean to be a follower of Jesus? How does a follower of Jesus live his/her life (words, deeds, etc.)?
- If we follow Jesus, what will happen to us?

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# REJOICE

## IN THE LORD ALWAYS

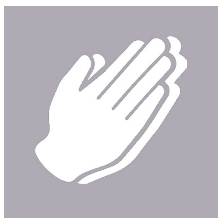
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**LISTEN: FAMILY LECTIO DIVINA**

*Choose one or more of the passages listed below for this week's family Lectio Divina time. Ask what your child's favorite part is or what stood out to them. Ask what God may be trying to show your child through the chosen scripture. Please refer to the Parent Guide for further recommendations on doing Lectio Divina with children.*

[John 3:14-21](#) - The history of Salvation

[Ephesians 2:4-10](#) - The riches of God's mercy

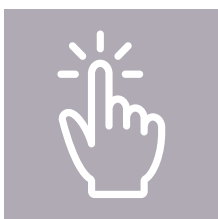


## PRAY: SPECIAL PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

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**FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN:** Pray the **Apostle's Creed** every day this week. (See page 7 of the Prayer Guide.)

**FOR OLDER CHILDREN:** Learn and pray the **Nicene Creed**. (See page 8 of the Prayer Guide.)



## ACT: CONCRETE WAYS TO LIVE OUT THIS WEEK'S THEME

**FOR THE FAMILY:** On *Laetare* Sunday, we celebrate that we are half-way through the Lenten season. We rejoice in God's love and continue our journey of prayer, fasting, sacrifice, and almsgiving in joyful anticipation of celebrating the paschal mystery. As a family, have a special meal together to celebrate *Laetare* Sunday. Decorate your table to make it look festive and if possible, put roses on the table!

Years ago, it was tradition for families to visit the cathedral of their diocese or visit the "Mother Church" where they received Sacraments of Initiation. If it is possible, attend Mass at your local Cathedral or a parish where one or more family members received their Sacraments of Initiation.