

# Encountering THE SEASON

Easter for the Family

Fifth Sunday of Easter (C)

Acts 14:21–27

Revelation 21:1–5a

John 13:31–33a, 34–35

## Dear Family:

Read the reflection about hardships, and discuss the “Ponder and Pray” questions and prompts, thinking about how Our Lord is calling you to act. Then, consider the challenges of the “Live It” section, and have fun with the family activities.

## Preparing for Hardship

Life is filled with both blessings and hardships. While we often celebrate the idea that our best days are ahead, we must also prepare for the reality that trials are part of the journey. Scripture reminds us that difficulties are not interruptions in God’s plan but essential elements of it. St. Paul encourages us today in the Acts of the Apostles: “It is necessary for us to undergo many hardships to enter the kingdom of God.”

Problems shape us, transforming our character and preparing us for greater challenges ahead. Like marathon runners training for race day, we face today’s difficulties in building the strength and faith needed for tomorrow. Jesus himself exemplified this in his Passion, facing the worst day of his life with unwavering love and purpose.

“ *My children, I will be with you only a little while longer.  
I give you a new commandment: love one another.  
As I have loved you, so you also should love one another.* ”

—John 13:33a, 34



Jesus Teaching, AI generated (Adobe Stock)

The Christian life calls us not to avoid troubles but to embrace them with trust in God’s presence. In moments of difficulty, remember: You have not been abandoned. God is with you, using

even the hardest moments to transform you into the person he created you to be. With love as your guide, you can face each challenge, becoming your best self—even on the hardest days.

## Ponder and Pray

- What hardships are you currently facing, and how can you approach them with trust in God's plan?
- St. Paul said trials are necessary to enter God's Kingdom. How does this perspective change your view of difficulties?
- What practical steps can you take to persevere in love, even on difficult days?

## Live It

Trials are not detours but part of God's path for us. This week, embrace the difficulties you face as opportunities for growth. When challenges arise, repeat this truth: "God is with me, and I am not alone." Reflect on how today's trials are preparing you for greater strength and faith tomorrow. Remember, nothing given to God is ever wasted. Persevere in love and trust, knowing that he is shaping you for his Kingdom.



## Fun for the Family

As a family, create a "Trial Training Chart." Write down the small challenges each person faces during the week, such as handling interruptions, practicing patience, or tackling a difficult task. Check in daily to encourage one another, and celebrate moments of perseverance. At the end of the week, discuss how these small trials helped you grow stronger in faith and character.

## Dive Deeper

Scan here to watch Mass for the Fifth Sunday of Easter with Fr. Mike Schmitz



Or go to:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=znOMe1cCbt4>.

Fr. Mike Schmitz, a Catholic priest and evangelist, is the award-winning host of these Ascension podcasts: *The Bible in a Year* (with Fr. Mike Schmitz)®, *The Catechism in a Year*® (with Fr. Mike Schmitz), and the *Fr. Mike Schmitz Podcast*. Fr. Mike is the director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry for the Diocese of Duluth as well as the chaplain for the Newman Center at the University of Minnesota-Duluth (UMD).

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