

March 25, 2020

Staying with the the theme of the wonderful mercy of our heavenly Father, I encourage each student to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet with your family. All you need is a rosary bead. The following link will take you to a web-site where you can find simple instructions on how to pray the chaplet.

<https://divinemercury.life/chaplet-of-divine-mercy/> It takes perhaps 10 - 15 minutes.

If you don't have a rosary bead try praying [St. Faustina's Litany of Divine Mercy](#) which you will find on the same site. In this time of uncertainty the chaplet, or Sr. Faustina's litany, will provide encouragement and comfort, for we know we worship a God who loves us, who cares for us, who hears our prayers and is ever-ready to shower us with His Divine Mercy.

Please complete the remainder of Chapter 18, by reading pages 212 - 215 in your textbook.

These pages will give you an idea of the state of God's people approaching the birth of our Lord Jesus. Recall what happened to the once united kingdom of Israel following the reign of King Solomon, how it was divided in two, and how both the northern and southern kingdoms were permitted by God to be conquered, with the disappearance of the ten tribes of the north (Israel, conquered by the Assyrians in 721 B.C.) and the carrying off into **exile** of the people of the south (Judah, conquered by the Babylonians in 587 B.C.). Eventually, after this period of exile, when the Persians came to power, God brought his people back to the land of Judah, and the temple, which had been destroyed by the Babylonian forces, was rebuilt. The walls of the city of Jerusalem were reconstructed, reinforcing the city against attack. The people rededicated themselves to worship and to God's law (the Torah), realizing they had been unfaithful and had been justly punished by God for their sins. But the land never returned to the peace and prosperity the people experienced under the reign of King Solomon. Judah tried to become an independent nation once again, but as we see from the last few pages of Chapter 18, there were more disagreements and divisions among the people and never-ending battles among themselves and with enemy forces. Nearing the time of the birth of Jesus, the land of Judah, now called Judea, was under Roman domination – about 60 years before the birth of Jesus Rome had captured the city of Jerusalem and stationed its troops throughout Judea. Rome appointed a ruler over Judea, Herod the Great. He did not fear God and he was obsessed with his own power. He did whatever he had to do to please the Roman authorities. He was a ruthless ruler who “put to death all who challenged his authority” (page 215). Thus, he kept control over the land of Judea which pleased the Romans so much that they made Herod king of Judea. He remained in power until the time Jesus was born in Bethlehem. It was now a thousand years since David had become king of Israel and a little over nine hundred years since the death of Solomon and the downfall of the

once great nation of Israel. To get a good sense of the chronology of the significant events from the death of Solomon to the time of Jesus **take a look at the time line at the top of pages 172 – 175.**

Last week, you read the parable of Jonah from the Old Testament and the parable of the Lost Son from the book of Luke.

There is another great parable Jesus told in answer to the questions “Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” and “who is my neighbor?” : the parable of the Good Samaritan. **Turn in your bibles to Luke, Chapter 10, verses 25-37.** It, too, is a story of mercy, but this time the mercy is shown by one person toward another. This week, **please read the parable of the Good Samaritan.** To help you get a deeper meaning of the story, it is important to know that Jews and Samaritans of Jesus' time did not get along and, in fact, had bad feelings for one another for hundreds of years before that. Jews considered Samaritans as inferior and not as true worshipers of the one true God. They looked down on Samaritans and would not associate with them. Jesus uses the parable to instruct the people about the care and mercy we owe a fellow human being. Compassion does not ask about nationality or religion. Compassion simply seeks to ease the suffering of another person. Just as our heavenly Father has compassion on his people, so should we have compassion on one another.

Ask yourself: Who is my neighbor ? Write down your thoughts (use the back, if needed).

Here is a great question: Can you **love** somebody you have never met, someone whose name you do not know, someone who may even live in a different country ? Write down your thoughts (use the back, if needed).

Parent's signature _____