

## TALKING ABOUT ORDINARY TIME >>>

Feasts of Mary and the Saints occur all during the Church Year. Ordinary Time is the longest of all the Church seasons. It has thirty-three or thirty-four Sundays. It is called Ordinary Time because all the Sundays are numbered in order. Ordinary Time is divided into two parts. The first is from the end of the Christmas season until Ash Wednesday. The second is from the end of the Easter season until the first Sunday of Advent, which begins the next cycle, or a new liturgical year. The Feast of Our Lady of Mercy occurs on January 1, during the first period of Ordinary Time.

### God's Word



Read **John 2:1-11**, the Gospel story of the Wedding Feast of Cana. It is the first miracle or sign in the Gospel according to John. It also helps us think about Mary's compassion for others and her trust in Jesus.

## HELPING YOUR CHILD UNDERSTAND >>>

### Mercy

- Most children this age understand mercy as being given another chance. They need to be encouraged to expand that understanding to include forgiveness.
- Usually at this age, children need some guidance to understand that as a follower of Jesus, they need to offer others mercy and forgiveness.
- For the most part, children learn the concept of mercy from receiving mercy. They need to trust that when they make mistakes, they are still loved.



## CATHOLIC FAMILY CUSTOMS >>>

### Mercy and Forgiveness

Each time a family member gives another an overt sign of forgiveness, or the benefit of the doubt, or minimizes negative responses to honest mistakes, he or she extends mercy to the other. When acting in these ways, you are giving your child an experience of, or an example of, God's (much greater) capacity for mercy and forgiveness.

## FAMILY PRAYER >>>



Say this prayer together at dinner on January 1 to celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy:

Mary, our Mother and model of Mercy, teach us to be merciful and kind to each other. We pray that you will ask God to show his mercy to all who are in need of it. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.



For a multimedia glossary of Catholic Faith Words, Sunday readings, seasonal and Saint resources, and chapter activities go to [aliveinchrist.osv.com](http://aliveinchrist.osv.com).