

# The Rose in Winter

The story of Saint Rita of Cascia

**Ages about 7-11** | Video 5:55 | Group lesson about 25-35 minutes

**Central truth** With Jesus' help, we can choose forgiveness, make peace, and keep hope when life is difficult.

**Learning goals** Recall Rita's choices; distinguish forgiveness from excusing harm; name one peaceful response and one way to seek help.

**Gather** Video access, one handout per child, pencils or crayons, and a Bible.

**Watch online** [Open this video on Servus Dei](#)

## Before watching | 2 minutes

Ask: What could you do when you feel angry without hurting someone back? Explain that Rita lived long ago in Italy and learned peacemaking from her parents.

## Watch and notice

Notice how Rita responds to family quarrels, sorrow, the closed monastery door, and the unexpected winter rose.

## Talk together | 6-8 minutes

### 1. What did Rita learn from her parents?

They helped people listen and forgive. Rita learned that making peace takes courage.

### 2. Why did Rita refuse revenge?

Hurting another family would not bring Paolo back. She followed Jesus by praying for her enemies.

### 3. How did Rita respond when the sisters refused her?

She prayed, persevered, and helped the quarreling families make peace.

### 4. What can we do when someone hurts us?

Speak up about what is wrong, ask a trusted adult for help, and choose a response that does not hurt someone back.

**Then respond and pray** Allow 6-8 minutes for a handout or the activity on page 2; finish with the closing prayer.

# Lead the response

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**Short family lesson** Watch the video, choose one recall question and one application question, then pray. About 12-18 minutes; the handout is optional.

## Choose a handout

**Draw & Tell** Draw Rita making peace and a safe, kind response to an ordinary disagreement. Invite spoken explanations.

**Read & Write** Use details from Rita's story to explain forgiveness and plan a peaceful response. Accept thoughtful answers, not a required personal disclosure.

## Adapt by readiness

Ages about 7-8: Read aloud; accept drawings or short spoken answers.

Ages about 9-11: Ask for a story detail and a practical plan, including seeking adult help when needed.

## Pause, ask, choose | Optional 4 minutes

Use an imagined situation: two children want the same game. Practice pausing, saying the problem calmly, asking for help, and choosing a fair turn-taking plan. No child plays a violent role.

**Look for understanding** A child names a peaceful choice and explains that forgiveness does not make wrongdoing acceptable or remove the need for help.

**Closing prayer** Jesus, give us courage to forgive, wisdom to ask for help, and patience to make peace. Help hope grow in our hearts. Saint Rita of Cascia, pray for us. Amen.

**At home** Choose one small act of peace with your family: listen patiently, offer a sincere apology, or take turns kindly.

**Handout answer notes** Parents: peacemaking. Rita: prayer, refusing revenge, reconciliation. Forgiveness: choosing not to answer harm with harm; speak up and seek help. Plans: safe, specific choices.

## Teach with care

Preview the film: it mentions the deaths of Rita's husband and sons without showing violence. Adapt for children experiencing grief; allow quiet participation. The rose and thorn wound are devotional traditions; dialogue is dramatized. Do not suggest that prayer guarantees a miracle or that suffering proves weak faith. Forgiveness never requires remaining in danger or keeping harmful secrets.

**Words to explain** Forgiveness: refusing revenge while naming wrong honestly. Hope: trusting God through difficulty. Monastery: a home for a religious community.

## Sources for the leader

Life and feast: [Order of Saint Augustine: Saint Rita](#)

Rose tradition: [Sanctuary of Saint Rita: A rose in winter](#)

# Let peace grow

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Rita chose forgiveness and kept trusting God through difficult days.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Adult helper** Read aloud. Invite drawing, pointing, or spoken answers. Writing is optional.

**1 Draw one way Rita helped people make peace.**



**2 Draw a safe, kind choice you could make in a disagreement.**



**Tell** What is happening in your pictures? Who could help if the problem is too big?

**Pray** Jesus, help me choose peace and ask for help. Saint Rita, pray for us. Amen.

**At home** Share your picture and one thing you learned about God or following Jesus.

# Choose forgiveness and hope

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Remember Rita's choices. Answer in your own words; use an imagined example if you prefer.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## 1 Remember

How did Rita help the quarreling families?

*Rita helped by ...*

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## 2 Explain

Does forgiveness mean pretending a wrong action was right? Explain.

*Forgiveness means ...*

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## 3 Choose

Imagine someone says an unkind thing. Name a peaceful response and a trusted adult you could ask for help.

*I could ...*

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**Pray** Jesus, help me choose peace and ask for help. Saint Rita, pray for us. Amen.

**Go deeper** What does Rita's story teach about hope when a problem does not disappear?