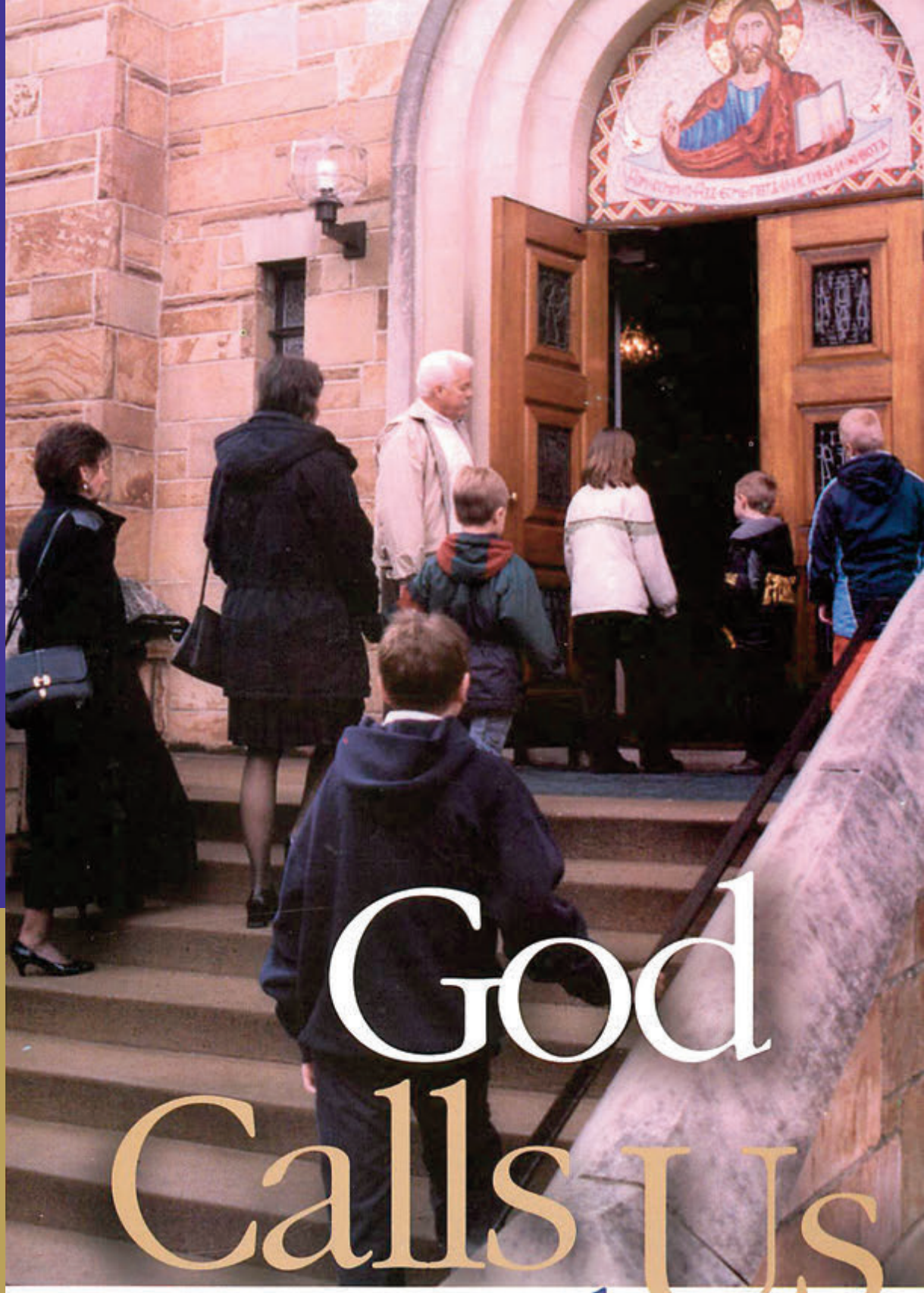
TEACHER RESOURCE MANUAL

GRADE 3



God Calls Us Together

God with Us Publications

God Calls Us Together

GOD WITH US PUBLICATIONS
2002

Catechesis is a work of the Church, a sharing in the teaching mission of the Body of Christ. Catechetical material, like iconography or liturgical chant, strives to speak of the Tradition of the Church. The individual's insights, perceptions, and experiences become significant in that they personalize this Tradition and give witness to it in our contemporary world.

Accordingly, each text is the work of the Byzantine Catholic Churches in the United States which participate in ECDD, the catechetical arm of the bishops of Eastern Catholic Associates. God Calls Us Together is the work of Marie Nester, M.Ed, in English, B.S. in Secondary Education. The text was reviewed and approved by all the hierarchs of the participating dioceses, their directors of religious education, diocesan catechetical staffs, and a review board drawn from the clergy and laity of these dioceses. Therefore, it represents the common faith and vision of their communities.

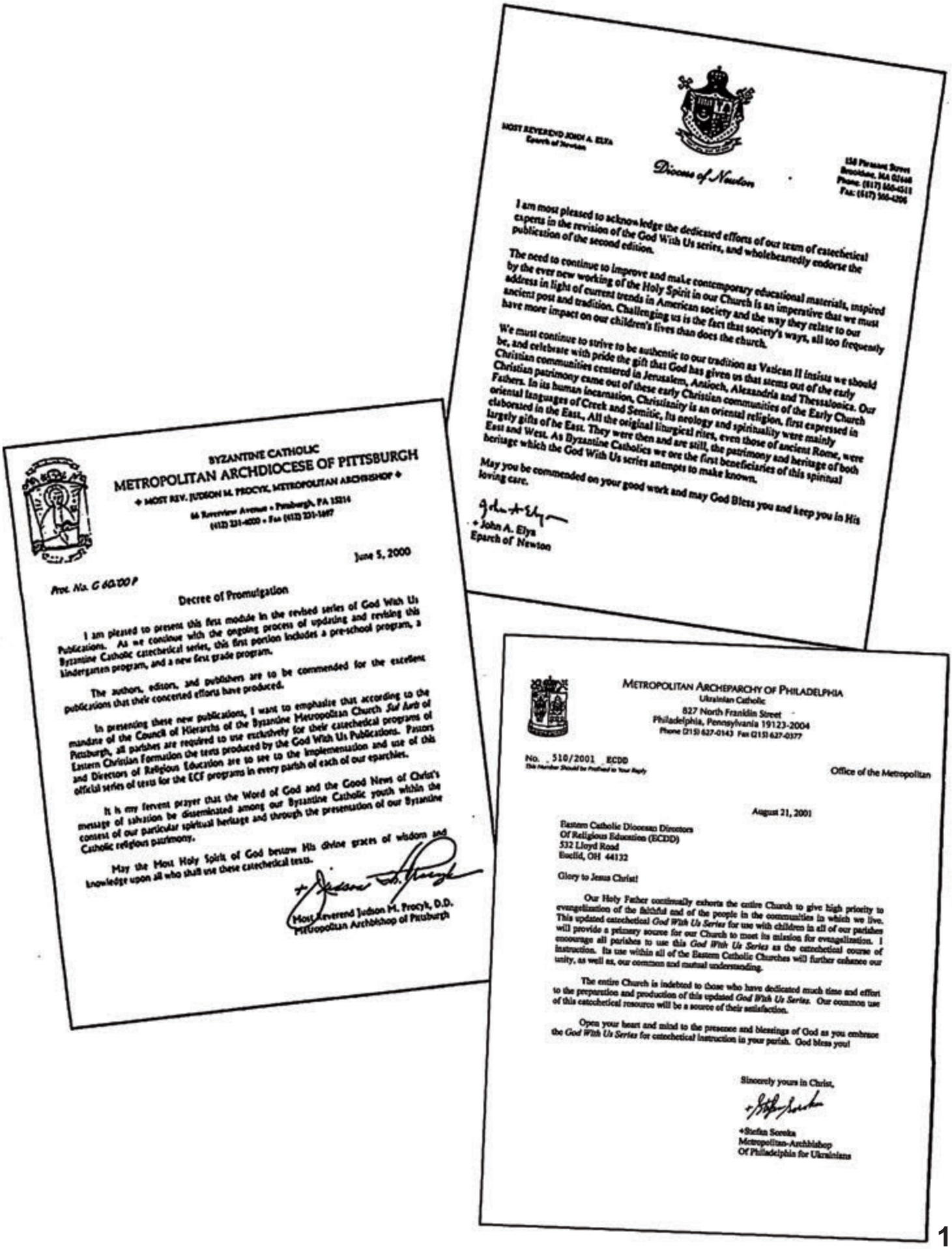
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June 5, 2000

Prot. No. C 60.00 P

Decree of Promulgation

I am pleased to present this first module in the revised series of God With Us Publications. As we continue with the ongoing process of updating and revising this Byzantine Catholic catechetical series, this first portion includes a pre-school program, a kindergarten program, and a new first grade program.

The authors, editors, and publishers are to be commended for the excellent publications that their concerted efforts have produced.

In presenting these new publications, I want to emphasize that according to the mandate of the Council of Hierarchs of the Byzantine Metropolitan Church *Sui Juris* of Pittsburgh, all parishes are required to use exclusively for their catechetical programs of Eastern Christian formation the texts produced by the God With Us Publications. Pastors and Directors of Religious Education are to see to the implementation and use of this official series of texts for the ECF programs in every parish of each of our eparchies.

It is my fervent prayer that the Word of God and the Good News of Christ's message of salvation be disseminated among our Byzantine Catholic youth within the context of our particular spiritual heritage and through the presentation of our Byzantine Catholic religious patrimony.

May the Most Holy Spirit of God bestow His divine graces of wisdom and knowledge upon all who shall use these catechetical texts.

✠ Judson M. Procyk

Most Reverend Judson M. Procyk, D.D.
Metropolitan Archbishop of Pittsburgh

MOST REVEREND JOHN A. ELYA
Eparch of Newton

Diocese of Newton

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I am most pleased to acknowledge the dedicated efforts of our team of catechetical experts in the revision of the God With Us series, and wholeheartedly endorse the publication of the second edition.

The need to continue to improve and make contemporary educational materials, inspired by the ever new working of the Holy Spirit in our Church is an imperative that we must address in light of current trends in American society and the way they relate to our ancient past and tradition. Challenging us is the fact that society's ways, all too frequently have more impact on our children's lives than does the church.

We must continue to strive to be authentic to our tradition as Vatican II insists we should be, and celebrate with pride the gift that God has given us that stems out of the early Christian communities centered in Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria and Thessalonica. Our Christian patrimony came out of these early Christian communities of the Early Church Fathers. In its human incarnation, Christianity is an oriental religion, first expressed in oriental languages of Greek and Semitic, its theology and spirituality were mainly elaborated in the East., All the original liturgical rites, even those of ancient Rome, were largely gifts of the East. They were then and are still, the patrimony and heritage of both East and West. As Byzantine Catholics we are the first beneficiaries of this spiritual heritage which the God With Us series attempts to make known.

May you be commended on your good work and may God Bless you and keep you in His loving care.

✠ John A. Elya
Eparch of Newton

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No. 510/2001 ECDD
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Office of the Metropolitan

August 21, 2001

Eastern Catholic Diocesan Directors
Of Religious Education (ECDD)
532 Lloyd Road
Euclid, OH 44132

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Our Holy Father continually exhorts the entire Church to give high priority to evangelization of the faithful and of the people in the communities in which we live. This updated catechetical *God With Us Series* for use with children in all of our parishes will provide a primary source for our Church to meet its mission for evangelization. I encourage all parishes to use this *God With Us Series* as the catechetical course of instruction. Its use within all of the Eastern Catholic Churches will further enhance our unity, as well as, our common and mutual understanding.

The entire Church is indebted to those who have dedicated much time and effort to the preparation and production of this updated *God With Us Series*. Our common use of this catechetical resource will be a source of their satisfaction.

Open your heart and mind to the presence and blessings of God as you embrace the *God With Us Series* for catechetical instruction in your parish. God bless you!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

✠ Stefan Soroka

+Stefan Soroka
Metropolitan-Archbishop
Of Philadelphia for Ukrainians

Our Common Heritage

The Byzantine or Greek tradition of Eastern Christianity grew out of the Greek-speaking cities of Asia Minor, especially Antioch and Constantinople. It took root throughout the Byzantine Empire and spread throughout eastern Europe as missions were developed. Thus, the same Byzantine spirituality formed Christians in areas as different as Sicily, the Slavic nations, and the Middle East.

Today in America several Churches of Byzantine heritage with varied ethnic roots exist side by side. Of these, the Ruthenian Metropolia of Pittsburgh, the Ukrainian Metropolia of Philadelphia, the Romanian Greek Catholic Eparchy of Canton and the Melkite Eparchy of Newton cooperated in the preparation and distribution of this series that is intended to serve Byzantine communities. The God With Us catechetical series highlights what is common to each—the Byzantine spirituality which is at the heart of each of these Churches' lives—and does not speak of particular differences. Each local church may choose to add particular material from its own ethnic heritage in its actual catechetical programs. The God With Us series, however, seeks only to provide a common witness to the Byzantine Catholic spirituality which is the hallmark of all these Churches.

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I

Total Eastern Christian Formation

O Lord our God, who dwell in light unapproachable: You are the fountain of wisdom and knowledge! Through the visitation of the all-holy Spirit You taught wisdom to Solomon and showed forth the fishermen as disciples and apostles, heralds of the Gospel Lord, who said "Let light shine forth from darkness," now shine Your eternal light in the hearts of those who teach and learn the knowledge of Your truth. Bestow on them the spirit of wisdom, the spirit of understanding. Brighten the eyes of their souls to understand and do your will. Let them be seen to be children of the light, bringing forth good fruit abundantly in every good deed through wisdom from on high. Grant that it be so through the intercession of Your all-holy, spotless and all-blameless Mother, of the holy and glorious apostles worthy of all praise, of the glorious hierarchs and teachers Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom, and of all Your saints. Amen,

The Goal of Christian Life and Catechesis

The goal of Christian life as intended by God is our divinization. The Scripture tells us that God has accomplished His divine plan in Christ so that we "might become sharers of the divine nature" (*2 Peter 1:3-4*). The Eastern Fathers stressed that this divinization was a process, one that begins in us with the mystery of baptism but which will not be completed until the resurrection of the dead on the last day. At baptism the divine light is kindled in our hearts, thus one of the patristic names for baptism was photismos or illumination. We are called to grow and deepen in the divine life so that the flame enkindled in baptism may flourish and eventually transfigure us with its radiance. For this to happen, we must come to an awareness that we have indeed "put on Christ" (*Galatians 3:27*). As Saint Simeon the New Theologian states, "We who have been divinized by grace and by adoption in baptism are also to be divinized in awareness and knowledge."

Catechesis is one way to realize this call to divinization. (In Saint Paul, "catechesis" refers to oral instruction, a handing on of all that has been received in and through Christ.) Catechesis makes us aware that we are in the light of the Lord and motivates us to manifest the life of the Spirit within us.

Catechesis in the Early Church and Today

In the early Church, divine services were the center of the Christian's life. At these services Christians experienced the mystical dimension of grace and were made aware of the life which was theirs in Christ. Catechesis was achieved primarily through liturgical worship. The early Christians were also shaped and formed by the teachings of the Gospel and by their experience of service and fellowship in theChristian community.

Catechesis today continues the tradition of integrating liturgical worship, Gospel teachings, and communal relationships. To help foster within our own parish communities the same integrated formational experience which the early Church enjoyed, the *Total Eastern Christian Formation and*

Developmental Program was developed. This program developed the *God With Us* catechetical series that promotes a holistic faith experience within the parish through unfolding the richness of our Eastern heritage.

Our Eastern Christian Tradition

Our own Eastern Christian Tradition provides an ideal way for expressing this unified understanding of Christian life. An authentically Eastern approach to theology preserves a harmonious, integrated understanding and celebration of our relationship to God. "Total" can be a synonym for the "Eastern Christian" all-embracing approach to the life of the Church.

For many years, some of us have viewed our Eastern Catholic Tradition as one of merely liturgical difference. We did not understand our heritage as an authentic interpretation of the Gospel message. At the Second Vatican Council the bishops recognized that the Eastern Tradition includes the spirituality and theology of the Fathers as well as the liturgical rite. Many of us need to rediscover the fullness of our Eastern Tradition that is integral, vital and dynamic!

Eastern Catholic Comprehensive Catechetical Program

For catechesis to be total, it must combine the revelation of the sacred mysteries with the daily life of prayer and worship and integrate this combination into Christian life. Such a catechesis must be coordinated, adult-centered and oriented toward the fullness of community life. A good catechetical program needs to recognize the stages of human growth and development if it is to help us develop Christian maturity. For these reasons the Eastern Catholic Churches seek to promote programs which are the following:

Total,
because all areas of the Christian life and witness are touched; because it seeks to use every medium for communicating the Christian message on every level: young child, youth, adolescent, young adult, senior citizens, aged, and those with special needs;

Eastern Christian,
because it expresses the Christian faith which is founded first and foremost on our primary relationship with Jesus Christ according to the traditions of the Eastern Churches through which we have received that faith along with our identity and self-understanding;

Formational,
because, while imparting information, it is concerned with forming mature Christians who can witness to their faith in every aspect of life; and

Developmental,
because it seeks to allow for a faith development which is based on recognized ability patterns and response patterns for each level, thereby providing for continual growth.

The Total Eastern Christian Formation and Development Program is comprehensive and challenging. It can succeed if we are willing to study the aspects of the program as well as the faith-tradition which inspired it. We are heirs to more than 2,000 years of experience; yet we are challenged, just as our ancestors had been, by the special needs of the time. Our challenge is to discover a way to present the eternal message of the Gospel to the culture in which we live. Our Eastern Christian Tradition, an integrated life of worship, study, and fellowship, has much to offer all of us seeking a holistic faith-centered life.

II

Introduction to the *God With Us* Series

The *God With Us* catechetical series was developed in response to a request from our bishops for a religious education program that would express the faith of the Eastern Catholic Churches. It was developed by the religious education offices of five of these eparchies. Since then it has been endorsed and/or mandated by most of the Byzantine eparchies in the United States and Canada.

The purpose of the *God With Us* catechetical series is to present the message of Christ with its demands, consequences and goals, The message or call of Christ continually draws us into closer union with God. The message is presented as seen, understood, and lived in the Byzantine Churches.

God Initiates and Fulfills

God Himself initiates and fulfills our search for meaning, growth, and transformation through communion with Himself. The search for meaning has manifested itself in many forms of religion. We search, but God gives. In the Judeo-Christian heritage, God has chosen to give not merely doctrines but Himself. God initiates the desire for union, and God alone can fulfill the longing.

The gift of God Himself to us is called "revelation." In the *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine* Revelation, the Second Vatican Council looked at revelation as the act by which God communicates Himself in a personal way:

> *In His goodness and wisdom, God chose to reveal Himself and to make known the hidden purpose of His will, by this through Christ, the Word was made flesh, man has access to the Father in the Holy Spirit and comes to share in the divine nature . . . so that He may invite and take men into fellowship with Himself {Dei Verbum 2).*

God unfolds His Divine Plan through events in the history of salvation and through the divinely inspired words which accompany these events and clarify them. Once hidden, the Divine Plan now becomes clarified in Christ—Christian revelation. This is the mystery of Christ that St. Paul explains as "to bring all things in the heavens and on earth into one under Christ's headship" (Ephesians 1:10).

God's Plan

The whole of the Christian message is summed up in the Paschal Mystery: that God became man and experienced "the cross, the tomb, the resurrection, the sitting at the right hand, the second and glorious coming" (Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom) that we might share in the divine nature. It is what God planned for His creation from all eternity. It is not meant to be seen only as an historical

event but as an event in eternity which is unfolded for us in every generation. For in this event, we are ushered into the courts of heavenly glory. In this event we find fulfilled our longing for communion with God and with one another.

Accordingly, a second purpose of the *God With Us* catechetical series is to prepare the students to celebrate in life and worship the Paschal Mystery. We celebrate the Paschal Mystery every Sunday in the context of our faith community, the church. This series seeks to develop the students' readiness to accept and make their own the lifestyle and tradition of the community of believers. The Divine Liturgy, in particular the Eucharist, is a focus of each book in the series.

Every class is to be an experience in which the ultimate purpose is to enable the students to totally celebrate the Divine Plan, both in liturgy and in the community life of the church.

III

The Catechetical Program and the Catechist

Catechetical programs are one aspect of the teaching mission of the Church, and we catechists are often referred to as "teachers." However, "teaching" does not convey the fullness of our task because the objective of a catechetical program transcends those of other teaching endeavors. We have a two-fold objective: conversion and an on-going relationship with God. God has implanted in all of us a desire to know Him and thus He is the first mover in this process. However, it is up to us to respond and to help our students respond. Our ministry as catechists involves pre-evangelization, a preparation to come "in touch" with God; evangelization, an introduction to God through Christ; and catechesis, a nurturing in conversion as we grow in our understanding of God and our Church.

Role of the Catechist

As catechists we introduce students to God's revelation in history and the Tradition of the Church. We must be ready, however, to go beyond simple teaching. Keep in mind that we are in a situation already alive with God. God is present in each of the students and within us. Together we stand in relationship to the message of God in each lesson. We must seek to draw a response from students and, at the same time, witness to the revelation of God, real and alive, in our own lives. The message of God in these lessons inspires us to seek God and to grow with our students in an understanding of God within us.

Another way in which catechesis differs from other forms of teaching can be seen in the knowledge we impart. Our task is to impart two kinds of knowledge: "knowledge about" and "knowledge of." Each of these deserves some attention.

Knowledge about. We gain a "knowledge about" someone or something from external sources. Facts, information, statistics, observations, or deductions form our "knowledge about" a subject. These sources give us theories and descriptions that can be explained and researched. "Knowledge about" a subject is developed through reading and studying. For example, we learn or gain "knowledge about" the Divine Liturgy by reading books about it.

Knowledge of. In our lifetime we learn through our experiences. In an informal setting we develop a "knowledge of" persons and things that become part of us. Our attendance at liturgical events and our involvement in church life have given us a "knowledge of" our Church and its traditions. This knowledge depends on our individual circumstances and our attitude. This "knowledge of" can be very profound in spirit. Our actions and words express this knowledge that has been experienced and felt. For example, we gain "knowledge of" the Divine Liturgy personally by participating wholeheartedly in it.

We will use both types of knowledge in the catechetical program. Our "knowledge about" our Church enhances our "knowledge of" our Church. Both types of information are necessary to develop a successful teaching-learning situation.

Qualities of a Good Catechist

We catechists strive for holiness. We speak freely and knowingly of God, our faith, and our quest, which at times may be a struggle. We possess helpful qualities such as good humor, play, honesty, patience, determination, kindness, and enthusiasm.

In addition, we are willing to share our faith attitudes and convictions. We must manifest the love of God in the classroom by active concern and love for our students. We teach as much by our example as our words; hence, we must present an authentic experience of Christian life. In short, our most important task is to "BE" what we teach.

A Good Learning Environment

Well-guided learning situations deepen students' awareness. In short, good teaching exposes more than it imposes as it assists students in developing deeper Christian lives. Our task as catechists is to provide a learning situation which encourages free, individual, and on-going growth. We, with the help of parents, must guide students to reach their fullest Christian potential.

We are dealing with three elements that influence children's religious disposition: awareness, attitude and action. Children will grow in an awareness of their innate worth and goodness as we accept them and show love and concern as we guide them towards Christ. Our students' attitude will be influenced by our joy, enthusiasm, concern, and prayer attitude. Their actions will be affected as we encourage them to act according to the Gospel teachings.

A good learning environment is one in which the teacher learns alongside the students. God is present in all students, giving them unique insights into the message taught. We learn from and appreciate these insights. Each student has a story to tell; we catechists do also. Together we grow in our understanding that God is with us. The best learning environment includes parents in this on-going process.

The Catechetical Program and the Parish

For many years Christian education stressed intellectual knowledge of correct doctrine rather than the formation of individual faith. Education was assumed to occur only in the classroom principally in a parochial school. As a result, Christian education was equated with the communication of information on religious topics.

Catechesis today intends to be more than informational: it is meant to be life-transforming and formational. Catechesis brings faith to a fuller maturity so that it can become a vibrant force in life. Catechesis goes hand in hand with the process of spiritual conversion, a lifelong metanoia. Christian education begins at baptism, is nurtured in the home by the faith of parents, and lasts an entire lifetime and beyond into the eternal mystery of God!

Since catechesis is an on-going process, the church family is involved. The parish community becomes a school of faith. The words and actions of parishioners and the quality of life together express the meaning of the faith. Relationships of members and interactions at activities often educate more effectively, for good or for bad, than the content of catechetical sessions themselves.

Therefore, we can no longer distinguish between the parish and the catechetical program. In reality the parish is the catechetical program. The formal lessons and programs generally referred to as catechetics are only a small part of what goes on to teach values, structure, and priorities in Christian life. The arbitrary limits placed upon the way we think and deal with catechetics need to be changed. We need to realize we transmit our faith through the way we live our lives together in the parish. Each parish must make an effort to harmonize parish life activities with the goals of Christian education.

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IV

Overview of the *God With Us Series*

The series offers materials for preschool through grade eight and is based on the primary forms of Holy Tradition: sacred Scripture, the writings of the Church Fathers, and the liturgical life of the Church. These are presented in ways to enable students to grow in their awareness of God's presence among us and to strengthen their commitment to the Lord.

The Lesson Plan

Each lesson plan in the manual notes the lesson objective, offers an overview of the lesson plan, and offers a section entitled "For the Catechist." This is written to explain the lesson. The section "Background Reading" includes more information on the ideas in the lesson. "For the Catechist" and "Background Reading" are not part of the Preschool lesson plan.

The lesson plan consists of the following:

Opening. The students gather at the icon corner for an opening prayer.
Introduction. The previous lesson is recalled and students are prepared then for the lesson of the day, bridging their experiences with the lesson content.

Read Text Aloud. Students read the text aloud. The manual offers questions and points for discussion during the reading. (This reading is not part of the plan for the younger children who cannot read.)

Activity. The lesson reinforcement is accomplished by one or more of the three activities offered. The activities are categorized as "Basic," which is a pencil-and-paper and marker worksheet review of the lesson; "Group," which is a game or activity for classes of several children; and "Craft," which is an art or a craft related to the lesson.

Closing. The students gather at the icon corner for a closing prayer.

Scripted lessons. The *Teacher Resource Manual* offers a full script for teaching the lesson. Words to speak are given in *italics*, and directions are given in [brackets]. However, the script is to be read prior to the lesson as an aid to presenting the lesson. DO NOT read the manual to the students. The manual also offers commentary and questions as the students work on the reinforcement activities in order to have them verbalize once again the main points of the lesson.

Supplementary Material. The names of icons from the Icon Packets and the names of pictures from *Teaching Pics* are included as an aid for many lessons. *The Icon Packet*s include 8 1/2" x 11" color pictures of icons with a description and a prayer on the reverse side. Teaching Pics include 80 full-color photographs on 8 1/2" x 11" cards. The text and suggested activities printed on the reverse side of the cards provide simple explanations and encourage further study. The *Icon Packets* and *Teaching Pics* can be purchased from Theological Book Service (1-877-484-1600).

Use of the cut and assemble paper construction kits, *Build Your Own Church* and *Build Your Own Iconostasis and Altar* (Department of Christian Education) is recommended in lessons 7, 8, and 9. These may be purchased from the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese (1-201-871-1355).

The Prayer Curriculum

The *God With Us* series will have an articulated sequence of prayers through the years. Our aim is to develop the children into people of prayer. In the classroom we can encourage meaningful prayer by making a place for an icon comer and beginning each prayer with a moment of quiet. Encourage parents to have an icon comer in their home for their family prayers.

The Liturgical Year

Each year of the series offers lessons on observances during the liturgical year. These lessons should be taught close to the actual date of the observance. Lessons on the Great Fast and Pascha are included for every grade of the series. All the texts except the Preschool one, *Glory to God!*, has an appendix entitled "Our Church Year." In this appendix are one-page lessons that include an icon and a description of the feast.

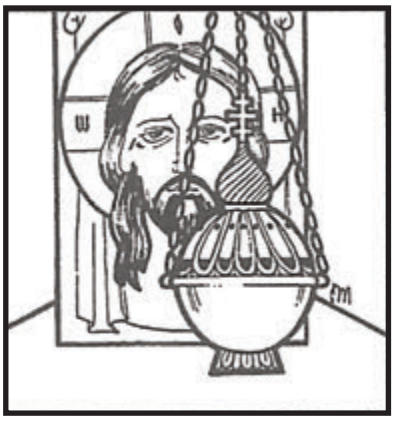
Planning the Year

There are 27 lessons in each book. The movable feasts such as Pascha, with the Great Fast preceding, make it difficult to write a text in which each lesson is appropriate to each week of the Church's year. In addition, each parish differs in the amount of class sessions allotted to teaching. A worksheet of 30 blocks is offered. The following guidelines suggest ways to use the blocks:

1. *Dates:* In the blocks write the dates of teaching sessions. Count the class sessions.
2. *Observances:* Pencil in when to teach the lessons.
3. *Count and plan:* Count the remaining blocks, plan the time for each lesson, and note their numbers in the blocks.
4. *Our Church Year:* If "Our Church Year" pages are used, pencil in when they would be taught.

V

The Icon Corner



In Eastern Christian Churches the icon is an image portraying or depicting Our Lord, the Mother of God, the feasts and the saints. It is not an ordinary picture but a representation of the spiritual dimension of whoever is depicted. Icons do not resemble photographs because they are intended to show us that whoever is represented has undergone a transformation, a change that results from responding to God's call.

An icon should be kept on a cloth-covered small table or stand usually in a corner of the classroom reserved for that purpose. Ideally, the pastor would visit the class, present the icon, and explain its significance. Preferably, the first icon to be presented to the class would be one of Our Lord. We know God is Spirit. Yet, we also know Jesus Christ because He took on the very same flesh of which we are made. This is what the Incarnation means—God became man. Through the icon of Christ we show and express our faith in this event. Parents and children should be encouraged to set up an icon corner in their house.

Icons are special and have a special place in church. They are on the icon screen, on the walls, on icon stands, and on the icon table in the front of the church. We venerate the holy persons represented on icons—we do not venerate the icon itself because that would be idolatry. We show respect and our love for the holy persons represented by bowing before the icons and kissing them and by placing flowers and lit candles before them. Before and during church services, the priest incenses icons.

Gathering at the icon corner before each class establishes a continuing respect for God's presence through the icon. Also, the icon corner is there for the children to visit during the quiet moments. Children can show love of God simply by sitting there quietly, by praying, and by venerating the icon.

Icons are teaching aids that help us remember God's presence. Packets of color icons are available from God With Us Publications. These icons can be slipped into a frame and placed in the icon corner according to which feast the Church is celebrating.

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VI

Series Overview by Grade

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Glory to God! is designed for children ages three and four. However, it can be used in a combined preschool and kindergarten classroom. A *Teacher Resource Manual,* consisting of 27 lessons, contains the program. Several reinforcement activities are offered for each lesson. The book can be used over the course of two years—the second year the lesson content remains the same, but a different reinforcement activity is offered. The main themes are thankfulness and learning about worshiping God. The program endeavors to follow the Church year.

Educational Objectives

Cognitive. The students should come to know and be able to answer the following questions:

1. Who made you and loves you? (God)
2. When presented with the icon of Jesus, respond to "Who is on the icon?" (Jesus or God)
3. When presented with the icon of the Theotokos, respond to "Who is on the icon?" (Mary, the Mother of God, or Theotokos)

Behavioral. The students should be able to do the following practices with sincerity:

1. Stand quietly for a moment before praying.
2. Pray with hands outstretched, open and facing upward, "To You, O Lord."

Attitudinal. The students should reflect an appreciation of the following:

1. God made us and loves us.
2. God's creation is wonderful. We are thankful for it.

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Prayers. The students should be able to say the following prayers with sincerity:

1. "To You, O Lord."
2. "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."
3. Liturgical responses: "To You, O Lord," "Amen," "Lord, have mercy."

Mysteries. The students will learn the following mysteries.

1. The students will learn about the mysteries of baptism and the Eucharist.

Observances. The students will learn about the following observances:

1. Nativity of Our Lord
2. Theophany
3. The Great Fast
4. Pascha
5. Pentecost

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God Is with Us! is designed for Kindergarten; however, it can be used with a combined Kindergarten-Grade 1 if desired. It is particularly oriented to the young child's relationship with God and the Church. The theme *"God is with us"* is presented particularly in the several lessons dealing with the birth of Jesus. The Preschool theme of thankfulness for God's many gifts is carried over into the first unit of this text, and the child's experience of Church, the last unit of the book, is carried over into the Grade 1 curriculum.

Educational Objectives

Cognitive. The students should come to know and be able to answer the following questions:

1. Who made you and loves you? (God)
2. Why do we come to church? (We come to church to worship God.)
3. What happens at Holy Communion? (We receive Jesus.)
4. What is the story of the Feast of the Nativity?

Behavioral. The students should be able to do the following practices with sincerity:

1. Stand quietly for a moment before praying.
2. Pray with hands outstretched, palms upward and together, "To You, O Lord."
3. Make the sign of the cross and say "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."
4. Respond during the Divine Liturgy as follows: "To You, O Lord" "Amen," "Lord, have mercy," "Alleluia," Trisagion Hymn ("Holy God..."), The Lord's Prayer.
5. Receive Holy Communion quietly and reverently.

Attitudinal. The students should reflect an appreciation of the following:

1. God made us and loves us.
2. We are made in God's image, and like God, we know how to love.
3. God's creation is wonderful, and we are thankful for it.
4. Because God made us and loves us, we try to do good.
5. Because God's house is the church, we act respectfully.

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Prayers. The students should be able to say the following prayers:

1. "To You, O Lord"
2. "In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit"
3. Liturgical responses: "To You, O Lord," "Amen," "Lord, have mercy," "Alleluia"
4. The Trisagion Prayer ("Holy God...")
5. The Lord's Prayer

Mysteries. The students will leam about the Eucharist.

Observances. The students will learn about the following observances:

1. Nativity of Our Lord
2. Theophany
3. The Great Fast
4. Pascha

The *God Is Love* curriculum is designed for Grade 1. However, it is flexible and can be used with a combined Kindergarten-Grade 1 if desired. As reading capabilities vary from non-readers to beginning readers, the following measures accommodate non-readers:

- many photographs and illustrations. These are woven into the lesson in the *Teacher Resource Manual* and allow non-readers to participate
- two of the four choices for reinforcement activities are worksheets ("Basic 1" for non-readers and "Basic 2" for beginning readers).
- simple words and repetition of phrases in the student text

Educational Objectives

Cognitive. The students should come to know and be able to answer the following questions:

1. Who made you and loves you? (God)
2. Who created the world? (God)
3. Who is the Trinity? (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—God)
4. Why do we come to church? (To worship God)

Behavioral. The students should be able to do the following practices with sincerity:

1. Pray with hands outstretched and palms upward.
2. Bow and make the sign of the cross with fingers in correct position.
3. Perform a prostration.
4. Receive Holy Communion quietly and reverently.

Attitudinal. The students should reflect an appreciation of the following:

1. Our church is a family.
2. We worship God with our whole bodies.
3. We honor those who love and care for us by loving them in return, serving them, and obeying them.
3. We try to do good.
4. We ask forgiveness when we do wrong, and we forgive others when they do wrong to us.

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Prayers. The students should be able to say the following prayers:

1. Doxology ("Glory be to the Father....")
2. The Trisagion Prayer ("Holy God....")
3. "O Most Holy Trinity"
4. The Lord's Prayer

Mysteries. The students will learn about the mystery of the Eucharist.

Observances. The students will learn about the following observances:

1. Nativity of Our Lord
2. The Great Fast
3. Palm Sunday
4. Pascha

All children have been called by Jesus to be His followers. Their response is one of belief in God— Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. As God has acted throughout the saving history of humankind, He acts for the child in the sacramental life of the Church.

God Gives Life, the Grade 2 book, leads the children to an awareness of this sacramental life. They study the mysteries of baptism, chrismation and the Eucharist and are helped to see themselves as one with Christ through these mysteries. They join with their friends in church and say "Our Father," forming Church in prayer, service and love.

Educational Objectives

Cognitive. Children should come to know and be able to answer the following questions:

1. Why are we called "Christians?" (We are called "Christians" because we are one with Christ through faith and baptism.)
2. Who were Jesus' disciples? (The disciples were the twelve Jesus called to follow Him.)
3. What is the phrase we use to describe Mary? (Mary is called the “Mother of God" or "Theotokos.”)
4. What do we celebrate on Theophany? (On Theophany we celebrate how the Trinity was revealed when Jesus was baptized in the Jordan.)
5. How does a person become a member of the people of God? (They receive the Mysteries of Baptism, Chrismation, and Eucharist)
6. What happens at Baptism? (We receive new life in Christ, become members of the Church, and we are cleansed of sin.)
7. What are the signs of the new life we receive in baptism? (The signs are water and the baptismal robe.)
8. What happens in chrismation? (We are sealed in our new life with the Holy Spirit.)
9. Why is the Eucharist so important? (Jesus becomes present to us and nourishes us as the Bread of Life.)

Behavioral. Children should be able to do the following:

1. Perform the practices taught in the previous grades.
2. Exhibit appropriate behavior on entering the church and receiving Holy Communion and blessed bread.
3 Pray from memory the troparion "Hail, O Mother of God," the Nicene Creed, and the Prayer before Communion
4. Sing the liturgical hymns presented ("First Antiphon," "All of You," "We Praise You," "One Is Holy," "We have seen the True Light," "Let our mouths be filled," "O Heavenly King").
5. Recite the two Great Commandments.
6. Recite the Ten Commandments.

Attitudinal. The child should reflect an appreciation of the following:

1. Our baptism is a personal call from God to follow Him.
2. The Holy Spirit, who came to us at our chrismation, will never leave us.
3. The Divine Liturgy is our thanksgiving for the gift of God's love.
4. Because we are part of God's family, we love God and each other.
5. As part of God's family, we celebrate the Lord's Day and Great Feasts.
6. As part of God's family, we obey God's commandments.

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Prayers. The students will be able to say the following prayers:

1. "Beginning Prayers"
2. "We Have Seen the True Light"
3. "All of You"
4. "It Is Truly Proper"
5. "Prayer before Communion"
6. "We Praise You"
7. "Let Our Mouths"
8. "Prayer for Forgiveness"

Mysteries, The students will learn about the following mysteries:

1. Baptism
2. Chrismation
3. Eucharist
4. Repentance

Observances, The students will learn about the following observances:

1. Nativity
2. Theophany
3. The Great Fast
4. Pascha

By Grade 3 children are ready to establish peer group relationships and engage in group activities. In addition to any other groups or organizations, they belong to Jesus' group, the Church.

God Calls Us Together, the Grade 3 book, emphasizes the importance of coming together as God's people, faithful to God and united in belief, love, and service. Together we believe the good news of salvation. Together we join in praying, listening to the Word, and breaking bread in the Eucharist. Together we serve one another in a bond of love.

We see the Church made visible in the church building and realized in the local community, under the leadership of our hierarchs. We see the Church as the communion of saints called to share fully, as does the Mother of God, in the divine glory of God's kingdom.

Educational Objectives

Cognitive. The students should come to know and be able to answer the following questions:

1. What is the Church? (The Church is the people of God who follow Jesus as their Lord.)
2. What are the three parts of the church building? (The three parts of the church building are the vestibule, the nave, and the sanctuary.)
3. Name three signs of God's presence found on the Holy Table? (The signs of God's presence are the tabernacle, the Gospel book, and the cross.)
4. What are icons? (Icons are the holy images of saints or events that remind us of God's presence.)
5. How do we imitate Jesus? (We imitate Jesus by serving one another.)
6. What is the Great Fast? (The Great Fast is our 40-day period of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving in preparation for Holy Week and Pascha.)
7. What is the Mystery of Repentance? (The Mystery of Repentance is our way to receive God's healing grace when we come to Him for forgiveness of our sins.)
8. Who are the saints? (The saints are those who have been filled with God's love and are with Him in glory.)
9. What do we remember on the Feast of the Dormition? (We remember that the Mother of God was taken from earth to heaven at her falling asleep.)
10. Name two differences in the Church's Lenten worship. (We do prostrations; we see red or purple vestments and covers for the holy table.)
11. What is the holy shroud and how is it used? (The holy shroud is a cloth with an icon of the body of Jesus written on it. It is placed in the tomb on Great and Holy Friday.)

Behavioral. The students should be able to do the following practices with sincerity:

1. Perform the practices taught in the previous grades.
2 Venerate icons in the appropriate manner.
3. Pray the Prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian with prostrations.
4. Sing the liturgical hymns presented.

Attitudinal. The students should reflect an appreciation of the following:

1. Through baptism we are part of God's people, the Church.
2. We are part of one community with the entire parish.
3. The church building and its furnishings reflect the presence of God.
4. Faith is trust in God's loving concern for us.
5. Service is how we act out our love for God.
6. Repentance is a turning to God in order to come closer to Him.

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Prayers. The students will be able to say the following prayers:

1. "Beginning Prayers"
2. "We Have Seen the True Light"
3. "All of You"
4. "It Is Truly Proper"
5. "Prayer before Communion"
6. "We Praise You"
7. "Let Our Mouths"
8. "Prayer for Forgiveness"

Mysteries. The students will learn about the following mysteries:

1. Baptism
2. Chrismation
3. Eucharist
4. Repentance
5. Holy Orders

Observances. The students will learn about the following observances:

1. Nativity of Christ
2. Pascha
3. Ascension
4. Pentecost

The drive to explore new things characterizes Grade 4 children. To some extent they realize that they are growing and want to grow even more. They are ready to grow in an awareness that God has given the promise of life and that He fulfills it in the person of His Son, Jesus Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

God's Promise is Fulfilled , the Grade 4 book, develops a deeper awareness of divine life by introducing the living world of the sacred Scriptures, particularly the Gospels. Each student receives a copy of the Bible which becomes a source of prayer during this year. Special stress is placed on the Exodus and the Ten Commandments, the two Great Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Beatitudes. Sin and repentance are expressed in terms of faithfulness and presented in the light of Peter's betrayal and Christ's forgiveness after the Resurrection.

The Feast of the Transfiguration is introduced and likeness to the glorified Christ *(theosis)* is presented as the goal of Christian living.

Educational Objectives

Cognitive. The students should come to know and be able to answer the following questions:

1. What is the Bible? (The Bible is the inspired Word of God.)
2. What is the Exodus? (The Exodus was the God-led deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt.)
3. What purpose did the Law serve? (The Law was given by God to the Israelites as a covenant sign that they were His special people.)
4. What are the Ten Commandments? (Name them.)
5. Who fulfilled all God's promises to the Israelites? (Jesus)
6. What was revealed when Jesus was baptized? (God was revealed as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.)
7. What is Jesus' new commandment? ("Love one another as I have loved you.")
8. Who are the four Gospel writers? (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John)
9. Identify elements of the biblical accounts in the icons of the Nativity and Transfiguration.
10. What does the Feast of the Transfiguration celebrate? (The Feast of the Transfiguration celebrates Jesus' glory as Son of God.)

Behavioral. The students should be able to do the following:

1. Perform the practices taught in previous grades.
2. Find scriptural citations in the Bible by chapter and verse.
3. Distinguish between the Old and New Testaments.
4. Distinguish between the types of New Testament books, particularly the Epistles and Gospels.
5. Exchange the Paschal greeting.
6. Chant psalms in the traditional manner.
7. Sing the liturgical hymns presented ("God Is with Us," the Beatitudes, and the Kondakia of the Theophany and Pascha).

Attitudinal. Children should reflect an appreciation of the following:

1. The Scriptures are to be reverenced as the Word of God.
2. The first three Commandments are a call to put God first in our lives.
3. The remaining Commandments are a call to love our neighbor.
4. God loves us faithfully even when we do not follow His way.
5. Prayer and fasting are important aspects to our Lenten discipline and the ongoing Christian life.

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Prayers. The students will be able to do the following:

1. Use the Bible in prayer
2. Use the psalms in prayer
3. Use the Beatitudes in prayer

Mysteries. The students will leam about the mystery of repentance.

Observances. The students will leam about the following observances:

1. Exaltation of the Holy Cross
2. Nativity of Christ
3. The Meeting of Our Lord in the Temple
4. The Great Fast
5. Pascha
6. Transfiguration of Christ

In Grade 5 children are striving to become more active initiators in their lives and so the order of the Father's plan for humankind is presented to them as a call to participate in its fulfillment. The children are presented with the model of Mary's response to God's call to her and shown that they too were called at their baptism
to say "yes" to God.

We Are God's People, the Grade 5 book, introduces Christian stewardship by exploring the many different ways in which Christians share the good news and minister to one another in the Church, in accordance with the particular gifts they have received from the Holy Spirit.

Christians respond in ways as diverse as martyrdom, monasticism, and ministry; we are the one Body of Christ. The liturgical elements introduced are the Akathist to the Mother of God and the Canticle of Mary. Also introduced are the scriptural accounts of the life of the early Church and the conversion of Paul. The stories of many saints and heroes of our faith are presented.

Educational Objectives

Cognitive. The students should come to know and be able to answer the following questions:

1. How are we incorporated into Christ? (We are incorporated into Christ in the Mystery of Baptism.)
2. What do we receive at the Mystery of Chrismation? (We receive the gift of the Holy Spirit in the mystery of chrismation.)
3. What do we receive in the Mystery of Holy Unction? (In the Mystery of Holy Unction, we receive strength and healing when we are sick.)
4. What happens in the Mystery of Crowning? (In the Mystery of Crowning, a couple becomes an image of God in their love and faithfulness.)
5. What happens in the Mystery of Holy Orders? (In the Mystery of Holy Orders men are set apart for special ministry in the Church.)
6. What is a Saint? (A saint is someone who has lived a good life in Christ and is recognized by the Church as being with the Lord.)
7. What two things do icons in the church remind us of? (Icons in the church remind us that we are in God's family, and they remind us of the stories of our faith.)
8. What do the following terms mean: apostles, martyrs, bishops, deacons, missionaries, monks, nuns, spiritual guides, hymnographers, iconographers?
9. What are the three sections of the Divine Liturgy? (Liturgy of Preparation, Liturgy of the Word, Liturgy of the Faithful)

Behavioral. The students should be able to do the following:

1. Locate, read and comprehend the designated New Testament passages.
2. Look up and cross-reference entries in the study guide.
3. Identify most of the Great Feasts.
4. Find information on their patron saint.
5. Prepare a report on one of the saints indicated.

Attitudinal. Children should reflect an appreciation of the following:

1. Like the saints, we too have been called to share the divine life we have received.
2. We should expect to grow and mature spiritually as well as physically.
3. Spiritual growth comes when we follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit and bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
4. The Holy Spirit gives a variety of gifts to members of the Church.
5. All of us with our diverse gifts are one in Christ.

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Prayers. The students will be able to say the following prayers:

1. Akathist to the Theotokos
2. Magnificat

Mysteries. The students will learn about the following mysteries.

1. Baptism
2. Chrismation
3. Eucharist
4. Holy Unction
5. Crowning
6. Holy Orders

Observances. The students will learn about the following observances:

1. Nativity of the Theotokos
2. Presentation of the Theotokos
3. Nativity of Our Lord
4. Annunciation
5. The Great Fast
6. Pascha
7. Dormition of the Theotokos

VII
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God Calls Us Together

Part 1:

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II. Suggested Letter to Parents 53

III. Liturgical Texts According to Jurisdictions 55

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Introductory Notes

The Grade 3 Child

Children in Grade 3 start to become more independent and self-motivated. Feeling more confident, they move away from the overly dependent relationships with their parents and family. They become more social and want to meet and join others. The Grade 3 text, God Calls Us Together, builds on that need to be part of the group. The lessons teach that the Church is the people of God who follow Jesus as their Lord. As Church we come together and grow closer to God through worship, sacramental life, and prayer. Your role as catechist will help all of you grow together to form a community of believers on this pilgrimage toward the fulness of the mystery of Christ. Enjoy the children's excitement as they learn to recognize Church as the people, but be realistic with expectations. Consider these general guidelines and be sensitive to the individual needs of the students as well.

Spiritual development. As children venture into new experiences outside the family, their relationship with parents and other adults must continue to be nurtured. Faith and trust from both parents and children bring about mutual respect. This in turn enables the children to deepen their faith life. They are ready to grow in the awareness and knowledge of Church as the people of God who follow Jesus as their Lord. Their interest in being a member of a group helps them understand that the Church praying together is a communal response to God's love. The Church asks them to remember all that God has done, and their loving relationship to God is enhanced as they pray as one in the Church.

Physical development. This is the age of tremendous individual differences: some are awkward while others excel at many activities; some are quick to complete projects while others are slow and think about every aspect. They are ready to work on their own, but you need to be aware of the amount of time necessary for everyone to complete the activities.

Mental development. Children at this age are beginning to coordinate many ideas and like to classify and order this information into "groupings." This is important for they can realize that family, relatives, and neighbors are all God's people, and this makes Church. They learn on a concrete level, not in abstractions; therefore, learning takes place through hands-on activities. They like to complete tasks correctly and are willing to work hard if they understand the expectations.

Emotional development. Eight-year-old children want to be independent, but they are concerned about doing things correctly. Therefore, they are anxious and less certain. They are serious about completing tasks and want to decide and plan their time frame. They are persistent in their need to complete a task correctly. Even though they may become angry and impatient, they are willing to persevere until the job is done. Emotional responses vary widely during this unpredictable age. The children are capable of giving to others. This is based on the life-giving love of God given to them through their parents as well as many other experiences of gift-giving. Now they are ready to learn to give of their time and talent to the Church.

Social development Children of this age are in the period of transition from being egocentric to being interdependent. The children are moving away from "everything for themselves" or "the teacher said" and are beginning to cooperate with others. They play games, and the rules become more meaningful. They can work together with others by sharing and giving to others. At this age friendship is important, and children are upset if they feel they hurt someone. They also begin to dialogue more, especially with friends. Through talking the children discover other points of view.

The Grade 3 Curriculum

God Calls Us Together is designed for children in Grade 3. The curriculum is found in the *Teacher Resource Manual*, consisting of 27 lessons. The fourth page of every lesson is a basic (a simple pencil and paper) activity that the teacher can use to reinforce the lesson. The unit "Observances" contains four lessons that deal with observances of the Church. These lessons should be taught at the appropriate time. The appendix, "Our Church Year," presents 21 Church feasts in single-page format. These may be added onto the end of a teaching session as the feasts occur. Although use of the appendix is optional, it is highly recommended as a way of keeping students connected to the liturgical year.

The Teacher Resource Manual offers complete and scripted lesson plans, worksheets, and craft patterns. It will be discussed further below. The focus of each lesson is the student text.

Educational Objectives

Cognitive. The students should come to know and be able to answer the following questions:

1. What is the Church? (The Church is the people of God who follow Jesus as their Lord.)
2. What are the three parts of the church building? (The three parts of the church building are the narthex, the nave, and the Holy Place.)
3. Name three signs of God's presence found on the Holy Table? (The signs of God's presence are the tabernacle, the Gospel Book, and the hand cross.)
4. What are icons? (Icons are the holy images of saints or events that recall God's presence.)
5. How do we imitate Jesus? (We imitate Jesus by serving one another.)
6. What is the Great Fast? (The Great Fast is our 40-day period of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving in preparation for Holy Week and Pascha.)
7. What is the Mystery of Repentance? (The Mystery of Repentance is our way to receive God's healing grace when we come to Him for forgiveness of our sins.)
8. Who are the saints? (The saints are those who have been filled with God's love and are with Him in glory.)
9. What do we remember on the Feast of the Dormition? (We remember that the Mother of God was taken from earth to heaven at her falling asleep.)
10. Name two differences in the Church's Great Fast worship. (We do prostrations; we see dark vestments and covers for the Holy Table.)
11. What is the Holy Shroud and how is it used? (The Holy Shroud is the cloth with an icon of the body of Jesus. It is placed in the tomb on Great and Holy Friday.)

Behavioral. The students should be able to do the following practices with sincerity:

1. Perform the practices taught in the previous grades.
2. Venerate icons in the appropriate manner.
3. Pray the Prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian with prostrations.
4. Sing the liturgical hymns presented: Hymn of the Incarnation, "We bow in worship," "Let My Prayer Rise," Hirmos of Pascha, and Troparion of Pascha.

Attitudinal. The students should reflect an appreciation of the following:

1. Through Baptism we are part of God's people, the Church.
2. We are part of one community with the entire parish.
3. The church building and its furnishings reflect the presence of God.
4. Faith is trust in God's loving concern for us.
5. Service is how we act out our love for God.
6. Repentance is a turning to God in order to come closer to Him.

Prayers. The students will be able to say the following prayers:

1. The Lord's Prayer
2. Hymn of the Incarnation
3. O Heavenly King
4. The Nicene Creed
5. The Prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian
6. Prayer of Forgiveness
7. Veneration of the Cross
8. The Jesus Prayer
9. Let My Prayer Rise
10. Hirmos of Pascha
11. Troparion of Pascha

Mysteries. The students will learn about the following Mysteries:
Baptism, Chrismation, Eucharist, and Repentance

Observances. The students will learn about the following observances:

1. Nativity of Christ
2. The Great Fast (Lessons in Unit 4)
3. Pascha
4. The Ascension
5. Pentecost

The lesson plan offers the lesson objective, overview of the lesson, background information, lesson plans, reinforcement activities, and all visual aids and craft patterns needed.

Objective. The objective states the aim that the lesson intends to achieve. It is shown at the top left of the first page.

Overview. The shaded box to the right gives an overview of the lesson. Each lesson consists of the following movements:

1. Opening Prayer
2. Introduction
3. Reading of Text
4. Reinforcement Activity (Activity Options)
5. Closing Prayer

For the Catechist. Information for teaching the lesson is found in this section. It is followed by further reading on topics covered in the lesson in a section entitled "Background Reading."

Lesson Plan. The *Teacher Resource Manual* offers a full script for teaching the lesson. Words to speak are given in *italics*, and directions are given in [brackets]. However, the script is for the teacher to read prior to the lesson as an aid to presenting the lesson. **DO NOT** read the manual to the students; this technique will lose the attention of the children. The manual also offers commentary and questions as the students work on the reinforcement activities in order to have them verbalize, once again, the main points of the lesson

Opening Prayer and Closing Prayers. Each teaching space should have a place for an icon and a candle. If possible, establish a permanent icon corner. A description of the icon corner is found in Part I of this manual.

Introduction. The introduction serves as a bridge between the child's experience and the lesson of the day. Often there are visual aids suggested. Many of these are offered on pages that are included in the lesson plan.

Lesson Reinforcement

Activities. Activities, Children remember what they do—it is preferable to offer a craft or game as lesson reinforcement. However, for classes of limited time, the basic activity is useful. Each lesson offers three ways to reinforce what the child has learned:

- Basic: a pencil and paper worksheet (the fourth page of the lesson in the student book).
- Group: an activity for the classes of several children.
- Craft: an art or craft project. The arts and crafts were designed to use ordinary materials with a few exceptions. These supplies are good to have on hand: construction paper, index cards, glitter and/or sequins, glue stick, glue, scissors, markers or crayons, hole punch, tape, yam or string.

Prayer Curriculum

The God With Us series will have an articulated sequence of prayers through the years. Our aim is to develop the children into people of prayer. Make a place for an icon comer in the classroom, and begin each prayer with a moment of quiet.

God Calls Us Together teaches liturgical prayers and prayers for the Great Fast. The Grade 3 prayers according to the usages of the various jurisdictions are found on the final pages of these "Introductory Notes." As an ongoing craft activity for this grade, the children are asked to make a prayer page for each new prayer. These pages are placed between the prayer book covers made during the craft activity in Lesson 1.

The Liturgical Year

The Grade 3 text includes a section called "Observances." In this section are lessons for the following:

1) The Nativity of Our Lord
2) Pascha
3) The Ascension
4) Pentecost

These lessons are to be presented on a day close to when the observance occurs. In addition, the final section of this text, "Our Church Year," offers an opportunity to follow the Church's entire liturgical year.

Our Church Year. In the appendix entitled "Our Church Year," each major observance of the Church Year has a page with an icon, a description of the observance, and details about the way our Church celebrates the observance. Allow 5-10 minutes for these pages at the beginning or end of your lesson on a day close to the observance. For planning purposes, the following is a listing of the dates:

Nativity of the Theotokos ... September 8
Exaltation of the Holy Cross . . . September 14
Entrance of the Theotokos . . . November 21
St. Nicholas ... December 6
The Maternity of St. Anna . .. December 9 (8)
Nativity of Our Lord.. . December 25
Holy Theophany of Christ.. . January 6
Three Holy Hierarchs . . . January 30
The Meeting of Our Lord,,, February 2
The Annunciation . .. March 25
The Entrance into Jerusalem ... The Sunday before Pascha
Great and Holy Week .. . The week before Pascha
Pascha. . .
Ascension ... Forty days after Pascha
Pentecost. . . Fifty days after Pascha
Birth of St. John the Baptist. .. June 24
Saints Peter and Paul. .. June 29
Prophet Elias ... July 20
The Transfiguration of Christ.. . August 6
The Dormition of the Theotokos ... August 15
Beheading of St. John the Baptist... August 29

Planning the Year

There are 27 lessons in *God Calls Us Together*. The movable observances such as Pascha make it difficult to write a text where each lesson is appropriate to each week of the Church's year. In addition, each parish differs in the amount of class sessions allotted to teaching. A worksheet with 30 blocks is offered on page 52. Here are some guidelines for using the blocks:

1. *Dates:* In the blocks write in the dates of your teaching sessions. Count the class sessions.
2. Observances: Pencil in when you will teach the four lessons: The Nativity of Our Lord, Pascha, the Ascension, and Pentecost.
3. *Count and Plan:* Count the remaining blocks and plan the date you will teach each lesson. Note their numbers in the blocks.
4. *Our Church Year:* Finally, if you wish to use the "Our Church Year" pages, pencil in when they would be used.

Planning Flexibility, The appendix, "Our Church Year," may be used for lessons if you have more than 27 class sessions (see corresponding *Teacher Resource Manual* page for ideas).

Background Reading Citations

Quotations in the background reading section are cited in abbreviated form. The following is a listing of the abbreviations:

CBL	*Come Bless the Lord Icon Packet* (God With Us Publications)
CF	*Celebrating Forgiveness* (God With Us Publications)
CLL	*Celebrating Life and Love* (God With Us Publications)
DC	*Guide for the Domestic Church* (Diocese of Newton)
FG	*The Face of God* (God With Us Publications)
GDC	*General Directory for Catechesis* (United States Catholic Conference)
JD	*Jesus, A Dialogue with the Saviour* (Diocese of Newton)
LLI	*Light for Life I: The Mystery Believed* (God With Us Publications)
LLII	*Light for Life II: The Mystery Celebrated* (God With Us Publications)
LLIII	*Light for Life III: The Mystery Lived* (God With Us Publications)
LW	*Life and Worship: The Mystery of Christ among Us: An Introduction to Eastern Liturgy* (God With Us Publications)
SLW	*A Stream of Living Water: An Introduction to Holy Tradition* (God With Us Publications)
STBH	*Shown to Be Holy: An Introduction to Eastern Christian Moral Thought* (God With Us Publications)
WEF	*With Eyes of Faith: An Introduction to Eastern Theology* (God With Us Publications)

Bible passages are taken from *The New American Bible, Saint Joseph Edition, 1992.*

Planning the Year Chart

(See “Planning the Year” on page 50)



God Calls Us Together

Dear Parents,
I am happy to welcome your child to our class this year.
I have the privilege of being your child's teacher; however, my role in passing on the faith is second to yours. St. John Chrysostom called the home "the domestic church." Your home and everything you say and do is a lesson for your child. One way your home can encourage the faith of the child is with an icon corner.

> "Customarily a corner is chosen which faces east and there the family's sacred objects are gathered. Most common are the icons of Christ and the Theotokos, the holy cross and icons of the patron saints of each member of the family" (*A Guide for the Domestic Church* 20).

Pray with your family at the icon corner each day. If possible, read Bible stories together there. Let the children bring flowers to place before the icons. If someone is sick, pray for him or her and light a candle at the icon corner.

St. John addressed parents in his Homily on Ephesians with the words, "This, then, is our task: to educate ourselves and our children in godliness." The most important act of passing on our faith is to be present at the Divine Liturgy every Sunday. Your child will learn from your diligent efforts and reverent attitude that God is first in your life.

Our class will be using the text *God Calls Us Together* from the *God With Us* series. On the back of this letter are the educational objectives for our year together. This year your child will make a prayer book that includes the prayers learned throughout the year. I hope you will join your child in prayer as he or she grows closer to God.

I am looking forward to an exciting year.

Sincerely,

God Calls Us Together

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Cognitive

The students should come to know and be able to answer the following questions:

1. What is the Church? (The Church is the people of God who follow Jesus as their Lord.)
2. What are the three parts of the church building? (The three parts of the church building are the narthex, the nave, and the Holy Place.)
3. Name three signs of God's presence found on the Holy Table? (The signs of God's presence are the tabernacle, the Gospel Book, and the hand cross.)
4. What are icons? (Icons are the holy images of Saints or events that recall God's presence.)
5. How do we imitate Jesus? (We imitate Jesus by serving one another.)
6. What is the Great Fast? (The Great Fast is our 40-day period of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving in preparation for Holy Week and Pascha.)
7. What is the Mystery of Repentance? (The Mystery of Repentance is our way to receive God's healing grace when we come to Him for forgiveness of our sins.)
8. Who are the Saints? (The Saints are those who have been filled with God's love and are with Him in glory.)
9. What do we remember on the Feast of the Dormition? (We remember that the Mother of God was taken from earth to heaven at her falling asleep.)
10. Name two differences in the Church's Great Fast worship. (We do prostrations; we see dark vestments and covers for the Holy Table.)
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Behavioral

The students should be able to do the following practices with sincerity:

1. Perform the practices taught in the previous grades.
2, Venerate icons in the appropriate manner.
3. Pray the Prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian with prostrations.
4. Sing the liturgical hymns presented: Hymn of the Incarnation, "We bow in worship," "Let My Prayer Rise," Hirmos of Pascha, and Troparion of Pascha.

Attitudinal

The students should reflect an appreciation of the following:

1. Through Baptism we are part of God's people, the Church.
2. We are part of one community with the entire parish.
3. The church building and its furnishings reflect the presence of God.
4. Faith is trust in God's loving concern for us.
5. Service is how we act out our love for God.
6. Repentance is a turning to God in order to come closer to Him.

Prayers

The students will be able to say the following prayers:

1. The Lord's Prayer
2. Hymn of the Incarnation
3. O Heavenly King
4. The Nicene Creed
5. The Prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian
6. Prayer of Forgiveness
7. Veneration of the Cross
8. The Jesus Prayer
9. Let My Prayer Rise
10. Hirmos of Pascha
11. Troparion of Pascha

Liturgical Texts According to Jurisdictions

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LITURGICAL PRAYERS
ACCORDING TO THE USAGE OF
THE MELKITE GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH
(GRADE THREE)

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (one God), Amen.

All lessons **Christian Greetings**

Ordinarily: Christ is in our midst! He both is and always will be.
At Christmas: Christ is born! Glorify Him!
At Pascha: Christ is risen! He is truly risen!

Lesson 1 **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever. Amen.

Lesson 2-5 **Hymn of the Incarnation**

Only-begotten Son and Word of God, immortal as You are, You condescended for our salvation to take flesh of the holy Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary, and without undergoing change, You became man. You were crucified, O Christ God, and crushed Death by Your death. You are One of the Holy Trinity, equal in glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit: save us.

Lessons 6-9,22,23, 27 **O Heavenly King**

O heavenly King, Consoler, Spirit of truth, present in all places and filling all things: the Treasury of blessings and the Giver of life! Come, O Good One, and dwell in us. Cleanse us of all stain and save our souls.

Lessons 10-15, 24 **The Nicene Creed**

I believe in one God, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and nvisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages: Light of light, true God of true God, begotten, not made, of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was made man; who was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried; who rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and is enthroned at the right hand of the Father; who will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead; and of whose kingdom there shall be no end.
And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who together with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified who spoke through the prophets.
In one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
I profess one baptism for the remission of sins.
I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.
Amen.

Lesson 16, 17 **Fasting Practices**

The traditional discipline is to be encouraged -
a) On all weekdays of the Fast: No food at all before noon. After that, no meat, fish or dairy products, wine or olive oil.
b) On Saturday and Sunday, no fasting after the Liturgy. Abstinence is maintained.
c) On the Annunciation and certain other Feasts, fish, wine and olive oil may be eaten.

The minimal practice -
a) On Pure Monday and the last three days of Holy Week: No food at all before noon. After that, no meat, fish or dairy products, wine or olive oil.
b) During the first week of the Fast, the remaining Fridays of the Fast (as on all Fridays of the year) and all of Holy Week, abstinence, at least from meat, is urged.

Lesson 16, 17, 20, 21 **The Prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian**

O Lord and Master of my life, grant that I may not be infected with the spirit of slothfulness and inquisitiveness, with the spirit of ambition and vain talking *(prostration)*.
Grant instead to me, Your servant, the spirit of purity and humility, the spirit of patience and neighborly love *(prostration)*.
O Lord and King, bestow upon me the grace of being aware of my sins and of not thinking evil of those of my brethren *(prostration)* for You are blessed for ever and ever. Amen.

Lesson 18 **Prayer for Forgiveness**

O God, absolve, remit and pardon our voluntary and involuntary sins, in word and deed, known and unknown, by day and by night, in mind and thought. Forgive us all in Your goodness and love for mankind.

Lesson 18, 19, 21 **Veneration of the Cross**

We bow in worship before Your cross, O Master, and we give praise to Your holy resurrection.

Lesson 19 **The Jesus Prayer**

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Lesson 20 **Let My Prayer Rise**

Let my prayer rise like incense before You, the lifting up of my hands like an evening sacrifice.

Lesson 25, 26 **Hirmos of Pascha**

The angel cried out to the One who is full of grace: Hail, O immaculate Virgin! Hail again, for your Son has risen from the tomb on the third day.
Shine, shine, O new Jerusalem, for the glory of the Lord has shone upon you.
Rejoice and be glad, O Sion; and you, O pure one, O Mother of God, exult in the resurrection of your Son.

Lesson 25, 26 **Troparion of Pascha**

Christ is risen from the dead and by His death He has trampled upon Death; and has given life to those who were in the tomb.

LITURGICAL PRAYERS
ACCORDING TO THE USAGE OF
THE ROMANIAN GREEK CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF CANTON
(GRADE THREE)

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

All lessons **Christian Greetings**

Ordinarily: Christ is in our midst! He both is and always will be.
At Christmas: Christ is born! Glorify Him!
At Pascha: Christ is risen! He is truly risen!

Lesson 1 **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever and ever. Amen.

Lesson 2-5 **Hymn of the Incarnation**

O only-begotten Son and Word of God, Thou who art immortal, yet didst condescend for the sake of our salvation to become incarnate of the holy Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary, without change becoming man, and being crucified, O Christ our God, with death Thou didst conquer Death. Thou who art One of the Holy Trinity, glorified together with the Father and the Holy Spirit: save us.

Lessons 6-9,22,23, 27 **O Heavenly King**

O heavenly King, Consoler, Spirit of truth, who art in all places and fillest all things: Treasury of goodness and Giver of life! Come, and take up Thine abode among us and cleanse us of every stain and save our souls, O Good One.

Lessons 10-15, 24 **The Nicene Creed**

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages: Light of light, true God of true God, begotten, not made, of one essence with the Father, by whom all things were made.
Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from Heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man;
He was crucified also for us, suffered under Pontius Pilate, and was buried.
The third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures. He ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He shall come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead; of whose kingdom there shall be no end.
And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who together with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.
And in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins.
I expect the Resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Lesson 16, 17 **Fasting Practices**

Strict fast and abstinence (no meat or dairy products) is required on the first day of the Great Fast and on Holy Friday. Ordinary abstinence is traditionally observed throughout the Great Fast and the Holy Week.

Lesson 16, 17, 20, 21 **The Prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian**

O Lord and Master of my life, grant that I may not be infected with the spirit of slothfulness and inquisitiveness, with the spirit of ambition and vain talking *(prostration).*
Grant instead to me, Your servant, the spirit of purity and humility, the spirit of patience and neighborly love *(prostration).*
O Lord and King, bestow upon me the grace of being aware of my sins and of not thinking evil of those of my brethren *(prostration)* for You are blessed forever and ever. Amen.

Lesson 18 **Prayer for Forgiveness**

O God, Spirit of truth, enlighten my mind that I may recognize my sins. Strengthen my will, O Good One, that I may deplore them heartily, confess them sincerely, and gain the strength to begin a new life. Help me, O God, with Thy holy grace. Amen.

Lesson 18, 19, 21 **Veneration of the Cross**

We worship Thy cross, O Christ, and we praise and glorify Thy holy resurrection.

Lesson 19 **The Jesus Prayer**

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Lesson 20 **Let My Prayer Rise**

Let my prayer rise like incense before You, the lifting up of my hands like an evening sacrifice.

Lesson 25, 26 **Hirmos of Pascha**

The angel declared unto her who is full of grace: Rejoice, O pure Virgin! And again I say, Rejoice! for thy Son has risen on the third day from the grave and has raised the dead. O you peoples, rejoice!
Shine, shine, O new Jerusalem, for the glory of the Lord has dawned over thee. Leap for joy and be glad, O Sion; and thou, O pure Mother of God, rejoice in the resurrection of thy Son.

Lesson 25, 26 **Troparion of Pascha**

Christ has risen from the dead trampling down Death with death and granting life to those in the graves.

LITURGICAL PRAYERS
ACCORDING TO THE USAGE OF
THE RUTHENIAN BYZANTINE CATHOLIC METROPOLITAN PROVINCE
(GRADE THREE)

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

All lessons **Christian Greetings**

Ordinarily: Christ is in our midst! He both is and always will be.
Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!
At Christmas: Christ is born! Glorify Him!
At Pascha: Christ is risen! Indeed He is risen!

Lesson 1 **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory —Father, Son and Holy Spirit— now and ever and forever. Amen.

Lesson 2-5 **Hymn of the Incarnation**

O only-begotten Son and Word of God, Who, being immortal deigned for our salvation to become incarnate of the holy Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary, and became man without change. You were also crucified, O Christ our God, and by death have trampled Death, being One of the Holy Trinity, glorified with the Father and the Holy Spirit: save us.

Lessons 6-9,22,23, 27 **O Heavenly King**

O heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of truth, You are everywhere present and fill all things: Treasury of blessings and Giver of life! Come and dwell within us. Cleanse us of all stain and save our souls, O gracious Lord.

Lessons 10-15, 24 **The Nicene Creed**

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, the only-begotten, born of the Father before all ages. Light of light, true God of true God, begotten, not made, of one substance with the Father, through Whom all things were made.
Who for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven and was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and Mary the Virgin, and became man.
He was also crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried. And He rose again on the third day, according to the Scriptures.
And He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead; and of His kingdom there will be no end.
And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, Who proceeds from the Father, Who together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke through the Prophets.
In One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.
I profess one baptism for the remission of sins.
I expect the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Lesson 16, 17 **Fasting Practices**

Strict fast and abstinence (no meat or dairy products) required on the first day of the Great Fast and on Holy Friday. Abstinence and other penances traditionally observed throughout the Great Fast required on Wednesdays and Fridays and on Holy Thursday and Holy Saturday.

Lesson 16, 17, 20, 21 **The Prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian**

O Lord and Master of my life, keep from me the spirit of indifference and discouragement, lust of power and idle chatter *(prostration)*.
Instead, grant to me, Your servant, the spirit of wholeness of being, humble-mindedness, patience and love *(prostration)*.
O Lord and King, grant me the grace to be aware of my sins and not to judge my brother *(prostration)* for You are blessed now and ever and forever. Amen.

Lesson 18 **Prayer for Forgiveness**

Father, Lord of heaven and earth, I confess to You all the hidden and open sins of my heart and mind which I have done. And I ask you, the loving Judge, for forgiveness of my sins and the grace to sin no more.

Lesson 18, 19, 21 **Veneration of the Cross**

Before Your cross we bow down in worship, O Master, and Your holy resurrection we glorify.

Lesson 19 **The Jesus Prayer**

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Lesson 20 **Let My Prayer Rise**

Let my prayer ascend to You like incense, and the lifting up of my hands like an evening sacrifice.

Lesson 25, 26 **Hirmos of Pascha**

The angel exclaimed to her, full of grace: Rejoice, O pure Virgin! Again I say rejoice! Your Son has risen from the grave on the third day.
Shine in splendor, O new Jerusalem, for the glory of the Lord is risen upon you, O Sion. Sing with joy and rejoice. And you, pure Mother of God, rejoice in the resurrection of your Son.

Lesson 25, 26 **Troparion of Pascha**

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down Death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life

LITURGICAL PRAYERS
ACCORDING TO THE USAGE OF
THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ST. JOSAPHAT
GRADE THREE

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

All lessons **Christian Greetings**

Ordinarily: Christ is among us! He is and will be.
Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!
At Christmas: Christ is born! Glorify Him!
At Pascha: Christ is risen! Truly He is risen!

Lesson 1 **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the Kingdom, the power and the glory of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit now and forever and ever. Amen.

Lesson 2-5 **Hymn of the Incarnation**

Only-begotten Son and Word of God, You are immortal. For our salvation You chose to take flesh of the holy Mother of God (Theotokos), the ever-virgin Mary. Without change You became human. You were crucified, O Christ God, but by death You conquered Death. Since You are One of the Holy Trinity, equal in glory to the Father and to the Holy Spirit: save us.

Lessons 6-9,22,23, 27 **O Heavenly King**

Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of truth, You are present everywhere and fill all things: Treasury of blessings and Giver of life! Come and dwell within us. Cleanse us of all stain and save our souls, O gracious Lord.

Lessons 10-15, 24 **The Nicene Creed**

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages: Light of light, true God of true God, begotten, not made, of one essence with the Father, by whom all things were made.
Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from Heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man;
He was crucified also for us, suffered under Pontius Pilate, and was buried.
The third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures. He ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He shall come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead; of whose kingdom there shall be no end.
And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who together with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.
And in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins.
I expect the Resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Lesson 16, 17 **Fasting Practices**

In virtue of rules enacted by the Synod of Bishops under the presidency of the Major Archbishop in 1969, the following rules of abstinence oblige in the United States:

- Abstinence from meat and all dairy products on the first day of the Great Fast and on Good Friday.
- Abstinence from meat on all Fridays of the year.
- During the Great Fast the faithful may also maintain the tradition of abstaining from meat on Wednesdays.

Lesson 16, 17, 20, 21 **The Prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian**

Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of discouragement and insensitivity, of domineering others and idle talk *(prostration).*
Give me, Your servant, the spirit of integrity, humility, patience and love (*prostration).*
Yes, Lord and King, let me see my own sins and refrain from judging my brothers and sisters.
(prostration) for You are blessed unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Lesson 18 **Prayer for Forgiveness**

Remit, pardon and forgive, O God, our sins — whether of malice or of weakness—whether in word, deed or thought—whether seen or unseen—whether in the night or day, forgive us all for Your are kind and loving.

Lesson 18, 19, 21 **Veneration of the Cross**

To Your cross, O Master, we bow in veneration, and we glorify Your holy resurrection.

Lesson 19 **The Jesus Prayer**

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Lesson 20 **Let My Prayer Rise**

Let my prayer arise before You like incense, the lifting up of my hands like the evening sacrifice.

Lesson 25, 26 **Hirmos of Pascha**

The angel exclaimed to the Lady full of grace: Rejoice, O pure Virgin! And again I say, Rejoice! Your Son is risen from the grave on the third day. With Himself He has raised all the dead. All you peoples, rejoice!
Shine, O shine, new Jerusalem, for the glory of the Lord has shone on you. Sing now and exult with joy, O Sion; and you, O pure Mother of God, adorn yourself in the splendor of your Son's resurrection.

Lesson 25, 26 **Troparion of Pascha**

Christ is risen from the dead. By death He conquered Death, and to those in the grave He granted life.

LITURGICAL PRAYERS
ACCORDING TO THE USAGE OF
THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC SYNOD
GRADE THREE

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

All lessons **Christian Greetings**

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Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the Kingdom, the power and the glory are Yours—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—now and always and forever and ever. Amen.

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Only-begotten Son and Word of God, You are immortal and You willed for our salvation to be made flesh of the holy Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary, and without change You became man. You were crucified, O Christ our God and trampled Death by death. You are One of the Holy Trinity, glorified with the Father and the Holy Spirit: save us.

Lessons 6-9,22,23, 27 **O Heavenly King**

Heavenly King, Advocate, Spirit of truth, who are everywhere present and fill all things: Treasury of blessings, Bestower of life! Come and dwell within us. Cleanse us of all that defiles us and, O good One, save our souls.

Lessons 10-15, 24 **The Nicene Creed**

I believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen.
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father. Light from light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, one in being with the Father. Through Him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation, He came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit He was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man.
He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate and suffered, and was buried. On the third day He rose again in fulfillment of the Scriptures; He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom will have no end.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father. With the Father and the Son He is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.
I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
I acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

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O Lord and Master of my life, drive from me the spirit of discouragement, negligence, ambition and idle talk *(prostration).*
Grant me, Your servant, the spirit of chastity, humility, patience and charity *(prostration).*
Yes, my Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins and not judge others *(prostration)* for You are blessed forever and ever. Amen.

Lesson 18 **Prayer for Forgiveness**

God, be merciful to me, a sinner.
God, cleanse me of my sins and have mercy on me.
1 have sinned without number: forgive me, O Lord.

Lesson 18, 19, 21 **Veneration of the Cross**

To Your cross, O Master, we bow in veneration, and we glorify Your holy resurrection.

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Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Lesson 20 **Let My Prayer Rise**

Let my prayer rise like incense before you; and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice.

Lesson 25, 26 **Hirmos of Pascha**

The angel cried out to the One full of grace: O chaste Virgin, rejoice! And again I say, Rejoice! Your Son is risen from the tomb on the third day and raised the dead. Let all people rejoice! Shine, shine, O Jerusalem, for the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. Exalt now and be glad, O Sion; and you, O chaste Mother of God, take delight in the resurrection of your Son.

Lesson 25, 26 **Troparion of Pascha**

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling Death by death and to those in the tombs giving life.

Part 3: Lesson Plans

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Our New Life with God

Objective: Students will be able to state that Jesus showed us how to live our new life with God and how to love everyone.

For the Catechist

Having friends and becoming part of a group are important for children in the third grade. They are ready to establish peer relationships and become active in group activities. The children discover themselves with and through others.

This social nature of man was created by God. From the very beginning "The Lord God said: 'It is not good for the man to be alone'" (Genesis 2:18). Children in Grade 3 start discovering this need to be together with other people
.
In the earlier grades of this series the children have been asked to look to the Trinity to learn how to share love and to belong to each other. This year the lessons ask the children to continue to think about this community of love as they learn about the establishment of the Church.

The theme of this year's lessons is identified in the book's title, *God Calls Us Together*. In Unit 1 the children learn the Church is the people of God who follow Jesus as their Lord; the Church is the Body of Christ on earth. Throughout the year they discover that we as members of the Church are called to enter into a loving relationship with God and with each other. We are responsible for establishing God's community of love.

Included in Unit 6 are the Feast of the Ascension and the Feast of Pentecost. Grade 3 is the first year to include these feast in the "Observances." Before His Ascension Jesus promised the apostles, "And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age" (Mt. 28:20). The Pentecost icon reminds us that together the apostles received the gift of the Holy Spirit sent to bring new life to the Church. Use these lessons to help the children appreciate God's love for all of us who come together to form the Church.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: "Our Father"
For all prayers in the opening and closing of each lesson, consult "Liturgical Texts for Jurisdictions" included in Part 2 (page 55) of this *Teacher Manual* for Grade 3. Use the approved wording for your jurisdiction.

Introduction: First day introduction
Need: leaves cut from patterns, pencils, and a paper bag

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read the text. Use questions in the teacher manual to discuss the lesson with the students.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

• *Basic*: The Greatest Commandment

• *Group:* Reenacting the Story of Zacchaeus

• *Craft:* "Prayer Book" Cover

Closing: "Our Father"

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord:
Icon of the Holy Trinity and
Icon of the Sign

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

Love One Another

"God invites us into a relationship with Himself, but He reveals Himself as a community of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We are invited into this primary community. The famous icon of the Holy Trinity under the form of the hospitality of Abraham (cf Gn 18:1-15) portrays three angels seated around a table. By the harmony and blending of the lines of their bodies they form a circle, a unity open, inviting us to join this community of life and love. By our hospitality to one another we become god-like. The psalmist exclaimed, 'Behold how good and how pleasant it is, when brethren dwell as one!' (Ps 132/133:1). The distinguishing mark of the Christian faith remains love for one another (cf Jn 15:17; 1 Jn 4:7-13) in the image of the Trinity" (*LLI 6*).

Relationships

"The Christian vision affirms that relationship, not individuality, is characteristic of the image of God. In the Trinity, there are not three individuals, but three persons, known by their relationships. We are made in that image. We are not meant to be individuals so much as to be persons, and there is a big difference. Individuality separates: we define ourselves in terms of what makes us different and separates us, leading to a disharmony. Persons are known by their relationship to one another. So when we want to know who we are, we should not look to what separates us from others, but what brings us together, because we are in the image of the God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit" (*LLIII 14*).

Images of the Church

"The Church expresses its thoughts on its own identity chiefly through imagery. In the various idea-pictures of the Tradition, the Church seeks to make concrete its experience of union with God. A few of the most significant images are:

"*Icon of the Trinity* - The unity of the Church is built on a solid foundation: the unity of God in the Holy Trinity. The Church is the historical expression of the work of the Trinity, and its life mirrors the life of God. Hence, our vision of the Church is closely connected to what we know of the mysteries of the Trinity. The Church is an icon of the Trinity and in a very real sense mirrors and reflects the life of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Church functions, 'led by the Spirit... to make God the Father and His incarnate Son present in a sense visible, while ceaselessly renewing and purifying herself under the guidance of the Holy Spirit' (*Church in the Modern World* 21). The Second Vatican Council taught, 'The universal Church is seen to be 'a people brought into unity from the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit' (*Constitution on the Church* 4).

"The Church must show the world the meaning of living in relationship, one person to another, as the Three Persons in God live in each other. The Church does not exist except as a group of people united in their belief in Christ, for 'where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in their midst' (Mt 18:20). Just as the identity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit comes from the relationship each has with the others, so the identify of the members of the Church flows from the relationship of love which generates life and produces good works. In doing so they present the Church as an image of the Trinity" (*LLI 66*).

The Lesson Plan

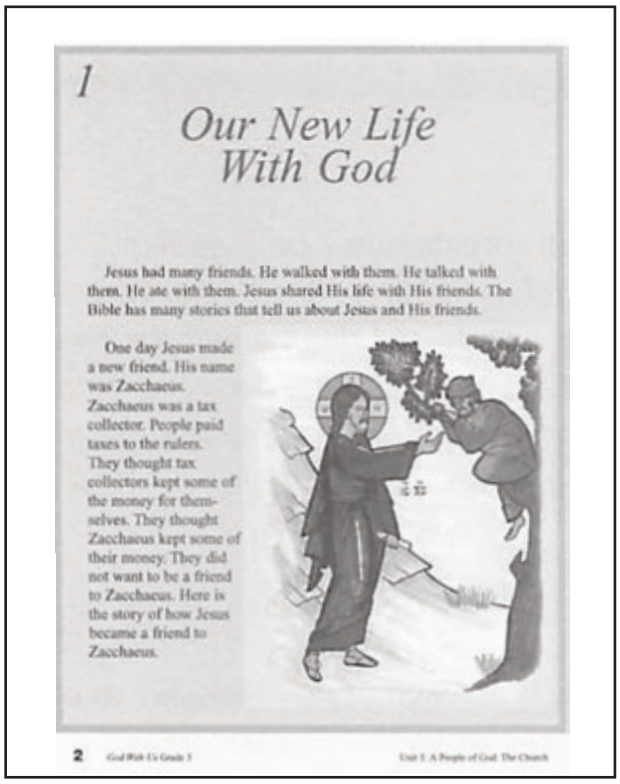
Opening

[Welcome the children with the Christian greeting according to your jurisdiction.] *Let's gather around the icon corner. Does anyone know the name of this icon? (Holy Trinity) We will start our prayers this morning with a moment of silence while we look at the angels and think about the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Now we will begin to pray the "Our Father." What do we do first? (We make the sign of the cross.) We gather our first three fingers together as one to remind us of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Let's pray together: "In the name .... Our Father. ..."* [Use the translation for your jurisdiction.]

Introduction

[Before the students arrive, place a construction paper leaf and pencil on each desk.] *Welcome to all of you. I am very happy to see you today, and I am sure you are happy to see each other. Many of us already know each other, but today we are going to get to know each other better. Please write your first name on the leaf on your desk. Then I will collect your leaf and put it in this paper bag.* [Give the students a minute to write their names. As you collect the leaves, say their name and "Glory to Jesus Christ."] *Now I want you to think of something you can do with a friend. Maybe it is something you did this summer with your friend. When I call the name on the leaf I take from the bag, I want you to share the activity you can do with a friend. Ready?* [After you say the name, ask the student to say the activity. Then, give the student the leaf and continue with all the names.] *Thank you for sharing some great activities. Now let's get to know each other even better. I am going to ask two of you to exchange leaves.* [Touch the desk of two students and have them exchange leaves. Continue to do this until all students are recognized.] *Now move closer to the person whose name is on the leaf. Introduce yourself by your name and identify one activity you like to do.* [Give students a few minutes even if they already know each other.]

Talking to each other is a good way to start to become friends. Did you know Jesus had friends too? We are going to read about one of Jesus' friends, Zacchaeus. The story is in the Bible. What is the Bible? (A book that teaches us about God) The Bible stories tell us how Jesus lived. Should we live the way Jesus did? (Yes) Jesus loved everyone. If we follow Jesus, we will love everyone too. If we love the way Jesus does, we become united to God. What does united mean? (To come together as one) [Clasp your hands together to show united.] *Let's read our lesson that teaches us how to love one another.* [Collect the leaves at the end of class and use them for name tags for the next class.]



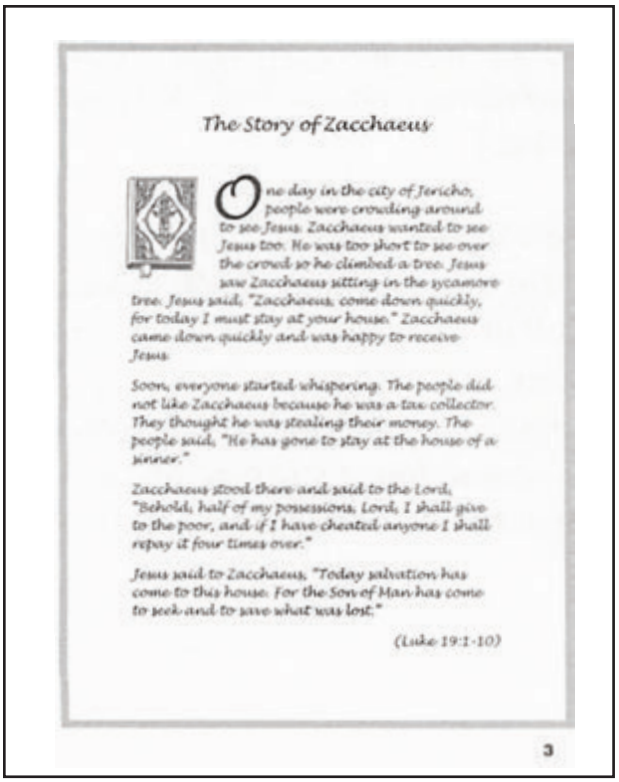
1

Our New Life With God

Jesus had many friends. He walked with them. He talked with them. He ate with them. Jesus shared His life with His friends. The Bible has many stories that tell us about Jesus and His friends.

One day Jesus made a new friend. His name was Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus was a tax collector. People paid taxes to the rulers. They thought tax collectors kept some of the money for themselves. They thought Zacchaeus kept some of their money. They did not want to be a friend to Zacchaeus. Here is the story of how Jesus became a friend to Zacchaeus.

2



The Story of Zacchaeus

One day in the city of Jericho, people were crowding around to see Jesus. Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus too. He was too short to see over the crowd so he climbed a tree. Jesus saw Zacchaeus sitting in the sycamore tree. Jesus said, "Zacchaeus, come down quickly, for today I must stay at your house." Zacchaeus came down quickly and was happy to receive Jesus.

Soon, everyone started whispering. The people did not like Zacchaeus because he was a tax collector. They thought he was stealing their money. The people said, "He has gone to stay at the house of a sinner."

Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Behold, half of my possessions, Lord, I shall give to the poor, and if I have cheated anyone I shall repay it four times over."

Jesus said to Zacchaeus, "Today salvation has come to this house. For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save what was lost."

(Luke 19:1-10)

3

Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

Our New Life with God

What is the name of this lesson? ("Our New Life with God") What do you think it means? (Living the way God wants; following God's way)

Here is the story of how Jesus became a friend to Zacchaeus.

Before we read the story, let's talk about why Zacchaeus did not have friends. What was his job? (Tax collector) Why didn't the people like tax collectors? (They thought they kept the money for themselves.) Listen closely to the story to find out what Jesus thinks of Zacchaeus.

Jesus said, "Zacchaeus, come down quickly for today I must stay at your house."

Why did Zacchaeus climb a sycamore tree? (He wanted to see Jesus.) How would you feel if Jesus said He wanted to stay in your house?

... if I have cheated anyone I shall repay it four times over."

What did Zacchaeus tell Jesus he will do? (He will give to the poor and will give back money he took.) "Four times over" means he will give back four times more than he took. If he took one dollar, he will pay back four.

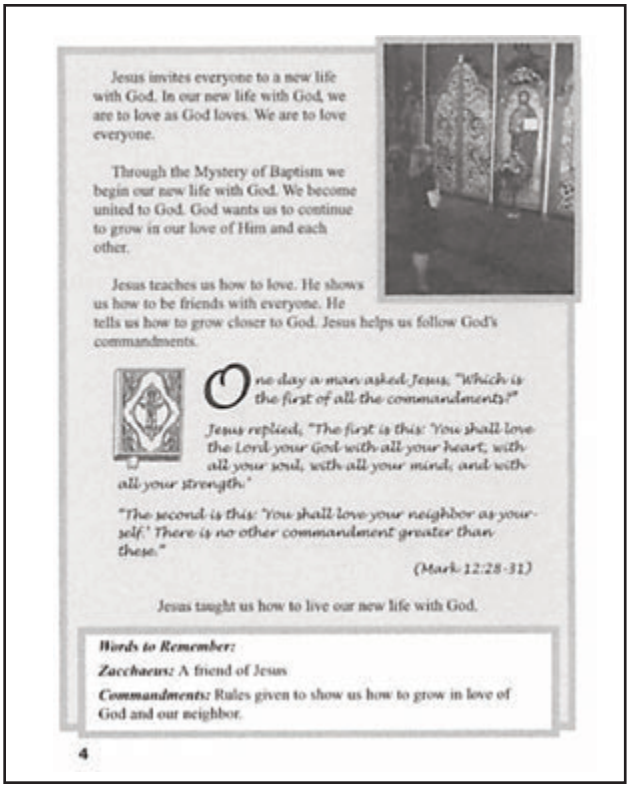
. . . and to save what was lost."

Jesus called to Zacchaeus, and Zacchaeus welcomed Jesus into his house. What did Zacchaeus say he will do now that He is a friend of Jesus? (He will give to the poor and pay back money he took.)

We are to love everyone.
What does it mean to live a new life with God? (We are to live the way God wants.) Who shows us how to live our new life? (Jesus) Whom should we love? (Everyone)

Jesus taught us how to live our new life with God.
Last year you learned about the 10 rules God gave us. What are they called? (The Ten Commandments) You also learned the Greatest Commandment, the one we just read. Let's read that together again. [Read aloud.] *What does it mean to "love your neighbor as yourself"? (Be nice to other people in the same way you want them to be nice to you.) God gave us the Greatest Commandment to tell us how to grow in love with Him and our neighbors.*

Now we have to do what Jesus tells us. Will that be hard? Why do you think it might be hard? What would the world be like if we all followed the Greatest Commandment? (Peaceful and loving) That is the way Jesus wants us to live.



Jesus invites everyone to a new life with God. In our new life with God, we are to love as God loves. We are to love everyone.

Through the Mystery of Baptism we begin our new life with God. We become united to God. God wants us to continue to grow in our love of Him and each other.

Jesus teaches us how to love. He shows us how to be friends with everyone. He tells us how to grow closer to God. Jesus helps us follow God's commandments.

One day a man asked Jesus, "Which is the first of all the commandments?"

Jesus replied, "The first is this: 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.'

"The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

(Mark 12:28-31)

Jesus taught us how to live our new life with God.

Words to Remember:

Zacchaeus: A friend of Jesus

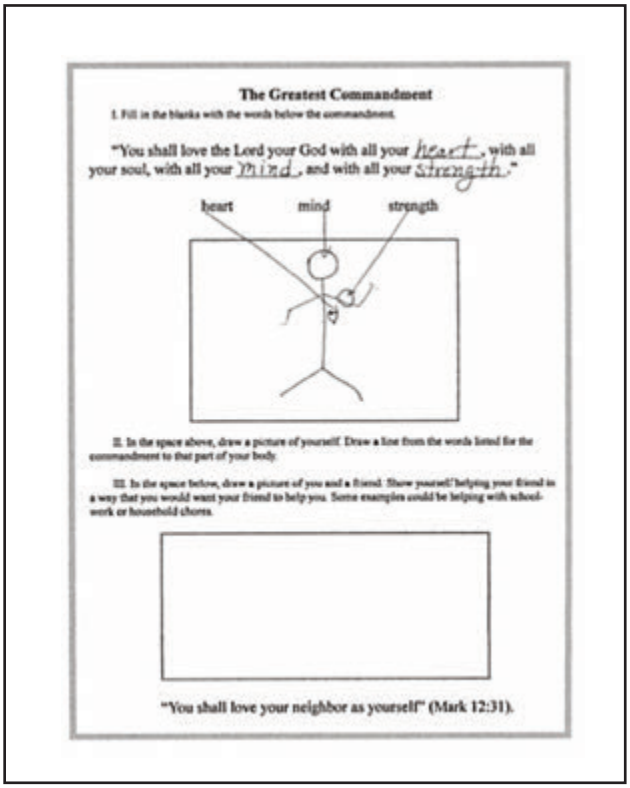
Commandments: Rules given to show us how to grow in love of God and our neighbor.

4

Activity Tracks

Basic: The Greatest Commandment

Jesus taught us the Greatest Commandment to tell us how to grow in our love of God and of each other. Let's read the words together. [Read aloud using their books.] *Today we are going to draw ourselves while we think about how we are to live.* [Encourage the reluctant drawers to use stick figures. Tell them to draw a line from mind to the head to represent "mind," another to the chest to represent "heart" and a third to the muscle in their arm to represent "strength."] *Let's read and complete the first part before we draw our pictures.* [Read and complete each section separately.]



The Greatest Commandment

I. Fill in the blanks with the words below the commandment.

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength."

heart mind strength

II. In the space above, draw a picture of yourself. Draw a line from the words listed for the commandment to that part of your body.

III. In the space below, draw a picture of you and a friend. Show yourself helping your friend in a way that you would want your friend to help you. Some examples could be helping with school-work or household chores.

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:31).

Group: Reenacting the Story of Zacchaeus

We listened to a Bible story today. What was the name of the tax collector in that story? Let's try to act out that story. Who do we need to act out this story? [As the students name Jesus, Zacchaeus, and the townspeople, ask for volunteers to play the parts.] *Let's pretend that chair is a tree. Zacchaeus, sit in the tree and try to make it look as if you are trying to see someone. Townspeople, you gather around Zacchaeus so he can't see through you. Now Jesus start walking near the tree. Townspeople, look happy that you are seeing Jesus.*

Jesus: Zacchaeus, come down from that tree. I want to stay at your house tonight. [Tell the person playing Jesus to say these words or something similar.]

Zacchaeus: Do you mean me? Okay!

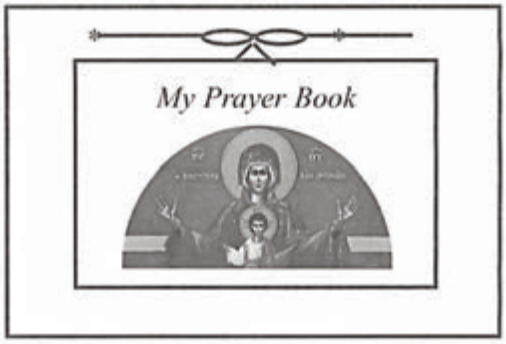
Townspeople: I can't believe Jesus likes Zacchaeus. Doesn't He know he is a thief? All tax collectors are thieves. [Encourage the students to complain.]

Zacchaeus: Thank You, Jesus. I will give money to the poor. If I cheated anyone, I will give them more money that I took. I'll give them four times more money than I took. Thank You, Jesus, for coming to my house.

Jesus and Zacchaeus smile and walk around the room one more time while the townspeople keep whispering, pointing, and gossiping.

[Praise and thank the students for the performance.] *All of you were great! Are the townspeople being unkind in this story? Why? What would they want Jesus to do? (They want Him to ignore Zacchaeus.) What does Jesus do? (Jesus calls to Zacchaeus, and Zacchaeus answers.) Jesus calls to us also. He wants us to walk with Him and follow Him every day even if our friends want us to ignore Him. What is Jesus asking us to do for other people? (Be kind; Treat them the way you want to be treated.)* [If there is time, encourage the children to talk about ways to be nice to everyone.]

Craft: "Prayer Book" Cover



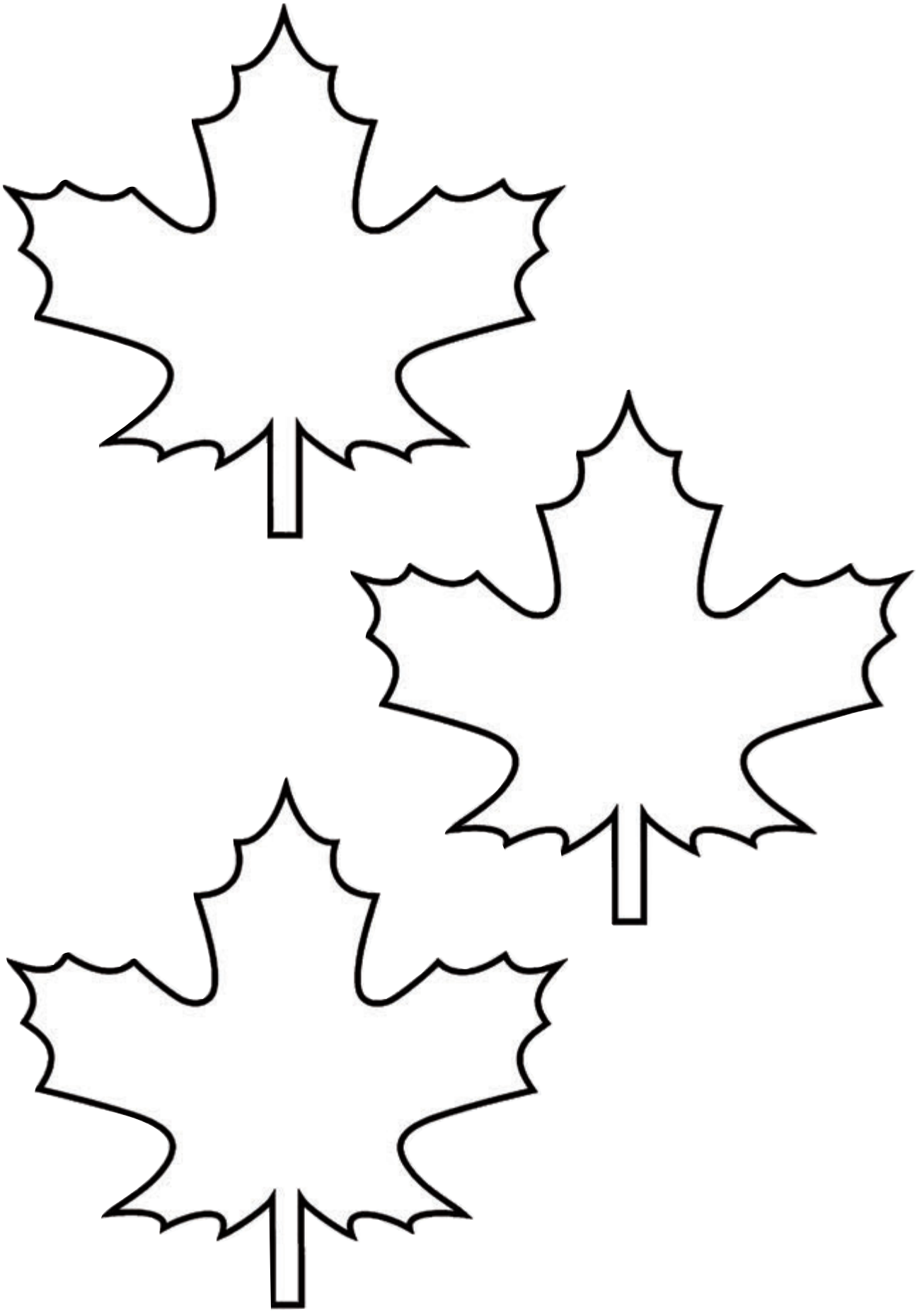
Materials: Icon of the Sign, prayer book worksheet, construction paper, yarn (24-inch length per student), glue, hole punch.

Jesus taught us how to love God and how to love one another. What are some ways we can show God we love Him completely? (By going to church and praying) Praying is a special way of being with God. When we pray, we are thinking about and talking with God. This year we are going to learn some new prayers. Today we are going to make a cover to keep a copy of the new prayers we learn. By the end of this year, each of you will have your own prayer book.

[Give each child a copy of the cover for their prayer book and a piece of construction paper. This cover will be pasted on the construction paper folded in half from the top down.] *Let's look at this icon.* [Hold up the Icon of the Sign.] *This is the Icon of the Sign. Who do we see in this icon? (The Theotokos and Jesus) It is called the Icon of the Sign: the sign is Christ—God becoming man. This icon helps us remember God is with us. We see the Theotokos with her arms raised, a way to show she is praying. We will put this icon on the front of our prayer books because the Theotokos' prayerful life is a perfect example for us to follow.*

Fold one piece of construction paper in half—from the top down. Glue your icon to the front of the cover. Punch two holes [1/2 inch from the top and 2 inches from each side] *below the top of the fold. Pull the yarn through the holes and tie in a bow on the front side. This is the cover for your prayer book. On the back of this cover, write your name. Each time we learn a new prayer, we will put a copy of it inside our cover.*

Closing: *Let's say our closing prayers. Stand quietly for one moment and think about our heart, mind, soul, and strength joining together to thank God. Let's start our prayer with the sign of the cross and say the "Our Father."*
[Dismiss the children with the Christian greeting according to your jurisdiction.]



MY PRAYER BOOK



MY PRAYER BOOK



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Jesus is Our Savior

Objective: The students will be able to
1) define Savior as a special leader who saves people and
2) explain that Jesus is our Savior Who brings us to eternal life.

For the Catechist

When we say Jesus saved us, children might wonder, "From what did Jesus save us?" Jesus saved us from eternal death and granted us eternal life. God's plan was to have us united to Him forever, but Adam and Eve broke that union by disobeying God. Jesus united us to God through His life, suffering, death, and resurrection. Jesus Christ, our Savior, granted us life.

God's Plan. God's plan includes granting us free will. Adam and Eve chose not to follow God's instructions. They separated themselves from God, the Source of Life. Just as a flower cut from the root will die, so too Adam and Eve cut off from God had to die. The biblical accounts in the Old Testament show how people continued to suffer the consequences of the separation from God. But the prophets kept reminding the people that God loves them and God will send a Savior. The prophets told the people to be patient for God's plan to be revealed. The Savior would bring them to eternal life, and unite them to God.

Our Salvation. This lesson explains at the children's level the mystery of God's plan. Since children enjoy mysteries, they will be able to relate to the surprise and wonderment of God's revelation: God sent us His Son to restore our unity with God. The mystery as to how the damage of Adam's separation from God would be repaired is revealed through Christ. "For if by that one person's transgression the many died, how much more did the grace of God and the gracious gift of the one person Jesus Christ overflow for the many" (Rom 5:15).

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: "O Only-begotten Son"

Introduction: Discussion of a favorite place

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read the text. Use questions in the teacher manual to discuss the lesson with the students.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

- *Basic*: Jesus Is Our Savior
- *Group:* "Resurrection Icon" puzzle
- *Craft:* "Jesus Is Our Savior" Refrigerator Magnet

Closing: "O Only-begotten Son"

[For Lesson 4 the children will need information about their baptism. At the end of class give the "My Baptism" worksheet at the end of this lesson to each child to take home to complete and return next week.]

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord:
The Descent into Hades

Teaching Pics:

Pascha (FlO)

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

The Mystery

"The unknown is frightening but mystery is not simply the unknowable. It is also the hope that what is veiled can be uncovered, at least within the limitations of our nature. St. Paul was able to write, 'God gave me the commission to preach among you His word in its fullness: that mystery hidden from ages and generations past but now revealed to His holy ones' (Cor 1:25-26).

Mystery actually implies that answers to our ultimate questions do exist, although we cannot comprehend them. By the very fact of their existence, mysteries call us to transcend our human nature and point towards the infinite" (*LLII* 11).

God's Plan

"Humanity's choice not to participate in God's plan for the world results in disaster. Adam and Eve lose their companionship with God and their access to the tree of life. They are condemned to eventual death: the men to work by sweat and toil and the women to experience pain in childbearing. They feel the pangs of guilt and lose the beautiful homeland that had been under their dominion. By his act of murder, Cain becomes a person despised, a wanderer without a real home in this world. As sin spreads, God destroys nearly the whole race He had made and restarts it with Noah. Through pride human beings lose the ability to communicate and become strangers to one another 'scattered all over the earth' (Gn 11:9). The results of sin are always death, alienation, and confusion. These tales succinctly tell the story of human history. From the very beginning we develop a habit of acting contrary to our true well-being by rejecting the plan of the Creator. In vain and false attempts to become like God on our own terms, we lost our true likeness to God" (*LLI 27*).

The New Adam

"Elsewhere St. Paul's imagery is not that of the courtroom, but of Eden. Christ is seen as the New Adam, giving humanity a fresh start. In Him we are recreated, brought back to paradise again. We often hear this theme at Christmas as our Church's poetry links Eden and Bethlehem and even see it in our homes where we set up the tree of life with all its exotic 'fruit'" (*WEF 35*).

Completion of the Father's Plan

"The Purpose of Christ's coming among us, then, was to complete the Father's plan for humanity, to restore the likeness lost in the beginning. But this new creation was not meant to end with Christ: it was meant to be passed on to us, just as our physical humanity - and our brokenness - are passed on to us from our first parents. 'God became man,' in the famous words of St. Irenaeus, 'so that man might become divine.' Just as we share the broken humanity of Adam, so too are we meant to share the completed humanity of Jesus. A Christian, then, is one whose imperfect and broken human nature is reconstituted by being mingled with Christ's perfected and deified human nature: grafted into Christ as branches on a vine (cf Jn 15:1-5). Again the anaphora of St. Basil expresses this concisely for us, 'He was found in the likeness of our lowly nature so that He might raise us to the likeness of His glory.'

"The Fathers called this process of recapturing the likeness to God through Christ by the term deification. St. Maximos the Confessor, for example, said that the Christian is to become a living icon of Christ, to become the same with Christ, and must even 'become' the Lord himself, adding, 'if this saying does not appear too strong to some.' Thus for these Fathers the imitation of Christ would not simply mean following His teachings or imitating His actions, but becoming one with Him in a true, organic way. God's way for us is no longer seen as the keeping of the law, but as becoming divine by participation in the divine energies through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit" (*STBH* 7-8).

The Original Plan

"Christ came to bring all back to the original plan, which was put on hold by Adam's sin. Before Christ, everything was getting more and more 'unglued,' separated, falling further from union and communion. Now another force is at work. Things are coming back together in Christ. The Fathers call this 'Recapitulation' (*anakephaleosis*). Everything finds it proper place again, with Christ as head:

'He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For in Him were created all things in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things were created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He Himself might be preeminent. For it pleased God to make absolute fullness reside in Him and through Him to reconcile all things in His person, whether those on earth or those in heaven making peace by the blood of His cross' (Col 1:15-20, NAB)" (*LLIII* 16).

Christ: The Center of All

"Christ is the center of all reality: everything is made through Him; everything is revealed through Him; everything finds its fulfillment in Him. This was realized only after His Resurrection and Ascension. We began to see that He came in order that we might have new life, and that we might have the divine likeness restored in us.

"The incarnation is the key to our understanding of the normal Christian life, our spirituality. Christ is not simply the perfect Man to show us that it could be done, but to actually communicate this life to us. He is God who became one of us so that we could bear God within us, so that the likeness could be restored in us as well as in Himself. Christ is the first-fruits of those who were asleep, the first-born from among the dead; we are meant to be the rest of the crop. This is why St. Peter the Apostle could write that we might become sharers in the divine nature:

> 'His [God's] divine power has bestowed on us everything that makes for life and devotion, through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and power. Through these, He has bestowed on us the precious and very great promises, *so that through them you may come to share in the divine nature*, after escaping from the corruption that is in the world because of evil desire' (*2* Peter *1:3-4*) " (*LLIII* 16-17).

Theosis

"This is what the Eastern Churches call Theosis, the central concept in our spirituality: that we might become deified, divinized, by having the life of God live within us. What Christ is by nature, we are to become by adoption.

"St. Irenaeus originally seems to have made the statement that St. Athanasius and most of the Fathers after him have echoed: 'God became man so that we might become God.' The Word of God takes on our nature so that we might have God's life in us restoring the likeness....

"Christ's followers only realized this at the climax of God's plan for us: the coming of the Holy Spirit" (*LLIII* 17).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

[Welcome the children with the Christian greeting according to your jurisdiction.] *Today we will start our prayers by making the sign of the cross and bowing with respect as we say, "In the name of the Father . . . ." Our prayer today is one that you have heard before. We sing* [or say] *this prayer during the beginning of the Divine Liturgy.* [Use the prayer worksheet with the translation for your jurisdiction. Make copies for the students. These copies will be placed in their prayer books as part of the craft in Lesson 4.] *Let's begin, "O Only-begotten Son . . . ." How many of you recognize the words? We say this prayer during every Divine Liturgy.*

Introduction

Does anyone remember how we are to love God? I'll start saying the Greatest Commandment that we learned last week, but I'll need your help. When I point to a part of my body, I'd like you to point to that same part of your body and say the word with me: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your [point to your heart and let the children say heart]*, with all your soul, with all your* [point to your mind and let the children say mind]*, and with all your* [point to your muscles and let the children say strength]*" and "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Jesus taught us how to grow together in God's love. He showed us how to live so we can be united to God. What does united mean? (Together as one)* [Clasp hands together to show one.]

Before we turn to our books, let's think about a favorite place. Close your eyes and think about a place you like to be. Okay, open your eyes. I was thinking about the woods near our house, and I was going for a walk with my family. Would anyone else like to describe your favorite place? [Share for a few minutes.] *How would you feel if you could never go to your favorite place? I'd probably try to figure out a way to get there again. Would you?*

Today we are going to read about a perfect place that God created. It is called Paradise. Does anyone know who lived in Paradise? (Adam and Eve) What happened when they disobeyed God? (They lost Paradise.) And they were not united to God anymore. But God had a very special plan to help us. God sent us His son Jesus. Jesus saved us from being without God forever.

Let's turn to our lesson.



2

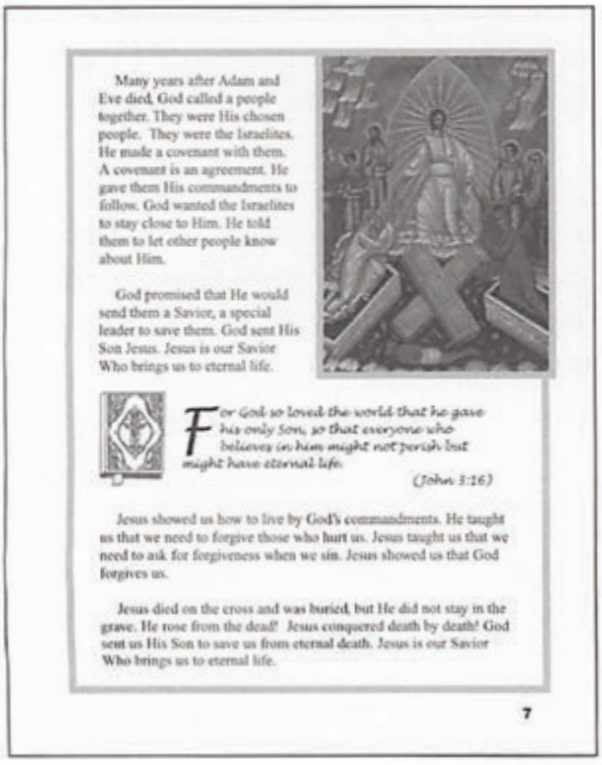
Jesus is Our Savior

God created Adam and Eve to be with Him forever. They lived in Paradise. There was no sickness, sorrow, or death. God's plan was for them to be happy. Adam and Eve did not listen to God. They did not listen, just as children do not listen to their parents.

Adam and Eve did not follow what God told them to do. They did what they wanted. They did not stay united to God. What they did brought sin into the world. Now people would have to suffer and die. Adam and Eve, who were made to live forever, would have to die too.

God's plan included a way to save Adam and Eve and all humanity.

6



Many years after Adam and Eve died, God called a people together. They were His chosen people. They were the Israelites. He made a covenant with them. A covenant is an agreement. He gave them His commandments to follow. God wanted the Israelites to stay close to Him. He told them to let other people know about Him.

God promised that He would send them a Savior, a special leader to save them. God sent His Son Jesus. Jesus is our Savior Who brings us to eternal life.

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)

Jesus showed us how to live by God's commandments. He taught us that we need to forgive those who hurt us. Jesus taught us that we need to ask for forgiveness when we sin. Jesus showed us that God forgives us.

Jesus died on the cross and was buried, but He did not stay in the grave. He rose from the dead! Jesus conquered death by death! God sent us His Son to save us from eternal death. Jesus is our Savior Who brings us to eternal life.

7

Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

Our New Life with God

Does anyone know what Savior means?
Why do you think Jesus is our Savior? [Let the children share ideas.] *Let's read our lesson to learn about Jesus, Our Savior.*

... would have to die too.

What was God's plan for Adam and Eve? (To live with Him in Paradise forever) Why didn't Adam and Eve follow God's plan? (They wanted to do what they wanted, not what God wanted.) What happened when Adam and Eve followed their own plan? (They broke away from God.) Just like a flower will die if it is cut from its root, Adam and Eve would have to die because they cut themselves off from God. They cut themselves off from the Source of Life, and the consequence is their death.

God sent His Son Jesus.

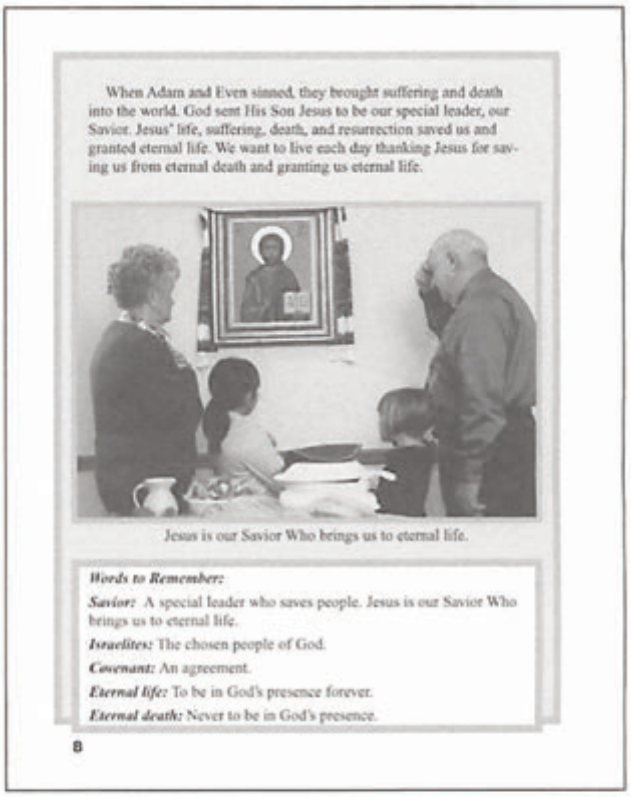
Who were the Israelites? (The chosen people of God) What are commandments? (Rules, laws) Last year you learned about Moses and the commandments. How many commandments were given to Moses? (10) What is a covenant? (An agreement)

... brought us to eternal life.

Who did God send? (His Son) What happened after Jesus died on the cross and was buried? (He rose from the dead!) What feast day celebrates Jesus' resurrection from the dead? (Pascha) Jesus united us to God forever.

...and granting us eternal life.
Through Jesus' suffering and death on the cross, God forgave Adam and Eve for choosing their own plan. God gave us forgiveness for all of our sins. Jesus' resurrection united us to God forever. How do we stay united to God? (We love Him and follow His ways.) What are some ways we can show Jesus we thank Him for granting us eternal life? (We can pray, be nice to everyone, follow the commandments, go to church.)

Jesus is our Savior Who brings us to eternal life.
Why is Jesus called our Savior? (He saved us and brought us to eternal life.) Let's look at the icon on this page. Who is Jesus pulling from the grave? (Adam and Eve) He is saving them and all people from eternal death. He is uniting them to God.



When Adam and Even sinned, they brought suffering and death into the world. God sent His Son Jesus to be our special leader, our Savior. Jesus' life, suffering, death, and resurrection saved us and granted eternal life. We want to live each day thanking Jesus for saving us from eternal death and granting us eternal life.

Jesus is our Savior Who brings us to eternal life.

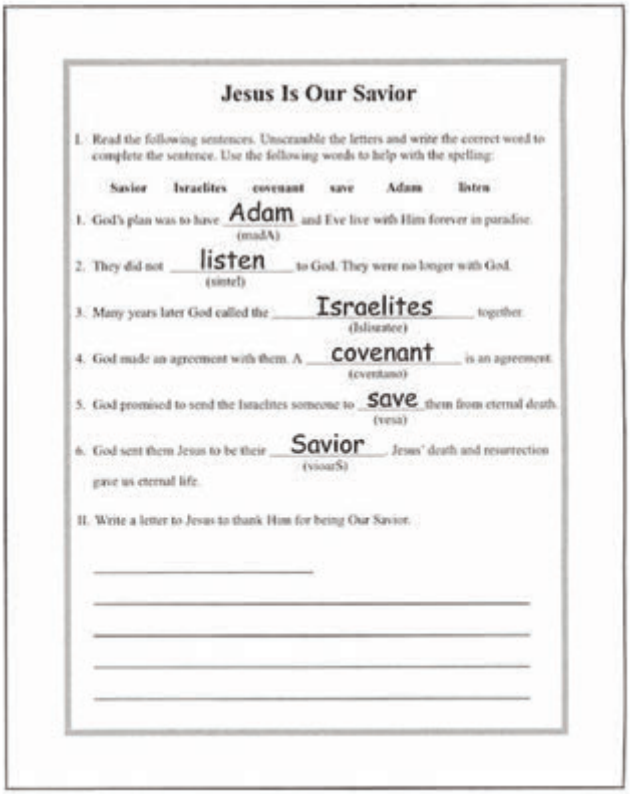
Words to Remember:
Savior: A special leader who saves people. Jesus is our Savior Who brings us to eternal life.
Israelites: The chosen people of God.
Covenant: An agreement.
Eternal life: To be in God's presence forever.
Eternal death: Never to be in God's presence.

8

Activity Tracks

Basic: Jesus Is Our Savior
(This worksheet is in the student text.)

Today we learned that Jesus did many wonderful things for us. What did Jesus do for us? (He saved us and brought us to eternal life.) Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection saved us. What do we call Jesus because He saved us? (Our Savior) Unscramble the words that tell us how Jesus saved us. Then on the lines at the bottom of the page write a thank you note to Jesus.



Jesus Is Our Savior

I. Read the following sentences. Unscramble the letters and write the correct word to complete the sentence. Use the following words to help with the spelling:

Savior **Israelites** **covenant** **save** **Adam** **listen**

1. God's plan was to have Adam (madA) and Eve live with Him forever in paradise.
2. They did not listen (sintel) to God. They were no longer with God.
3. Many years later God called the Israelites (Isliseatee) together.
4. God made an agreement with them. A covenant (cventano) is an agreement.
5. God promised to send the Israelites someone to save (vesa) them from eternal death.
6. God sent them Jesus to be their Savior (vsoarS) Jesus' death and resurrection gave us eternal life.

II. Write a letter to Jesus to thank Him for being Our Savior.

Group: "Resurrection Icon" puzzle

Materials: "Resurrection icon" worksheet puzzle pieces, [Cut along the dark lines to make puzzle pieces and hide them around the room before the students arrive], one 11" x 14" piece of black construction paper, glue, and a marker

Today we are going to put a puzzle together. The final puzzle will look like the Resurrection icon, but we have to find all the pieces first. I have them hidden around the room. When you find a piece, bring it over to the table so we can complete the picture.

[Keep the final center piece. When all the other pieces are found, tell them you have the final piece.] *Jesus will complete the picture for us. Now let's gather around the table and glue the pieces together on this heavier construction paper. Let's add the title, "Jesus Is Our Savior." Why is Jesus our Savior? (He saved us and brought us to eternal life.) How did Jesus unite us to God? (Through Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection, we were united to God.)*



Craft: "Jesus Is Our Savior" Refrigerator Magnet

Materials: "Jesus Is Our Savior" worksheet, strip of magnets with adhesive backs, glue, gold sequins, small paper dessert plates

[Have sample ready to show children.] *Today we are going to make a sign for our refrigerator. What do you think our sign from today's lesson should be? (Jesus is our Savior) Let's glue the circle onto the center of the paper plate. Decorate the rest of the plate with gold sequins. Attach two magnets—one at the top of the plate and one at the bottom.*

Closing

For our closing prayer we are going to say the same prayer we said at the beginning of class. This prayer is our way to thank Jesus for saving us. "O only begotten Son. . . ."

[For Lesson 4 the children will need information about their baptism. Give the "My Baptism" worksheet from the last page in this lesson to each child to take home to complete and return next week.]

Hymn of the Incarnation

Only-begotten Son and Word of God, immortal as You are, You condescended for our salvation to take flesh of the holy Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary, and without undergoing change, You became man. You were crucified, O Christ God, and crushed Death by Your death. You are One of the Holy Trinity, equal in glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit: save us.

Melkite Greek Catholic Church

Hymn of the Incarnation

O only-begotten Son and Word of God, Thou who art immortal, yet didst condescend for the sake of our salvation to become incarnate of the holy Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary, without change becoming man, and being crucified, O Christ our God, with death Thou didst conquer Death. Thou who art One of the Holy Trinity, glorified together with the Father and the Holy Spirit: save us.

Romanian Greek Catholic Diocese of Canton

Hymn of the Incarnation

O only-begotten Son and Word of God, Who, being immortal deigned for our salvation to become incarnate of the holy Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary, and became man without change. You were also crucified, O Christ our God, and by death have trampled Death, being One of the Holy Trinity, glorified with the Father and the Holy Spirit: save us.

Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic Metro-politan Province

Hymn of the Incarnation

Only-begotten Son and Word of God, You are immortal. For our salvation You chose to take flesh of the holy Mother of God (Theotokos), the ever-virgin Mary. Without change You became human. You were crucified, O Christ God, but by death You conquered Death. Since You are One of the Holy Trinity, equal in glory to the Father and to the Holy Spirit: save us.

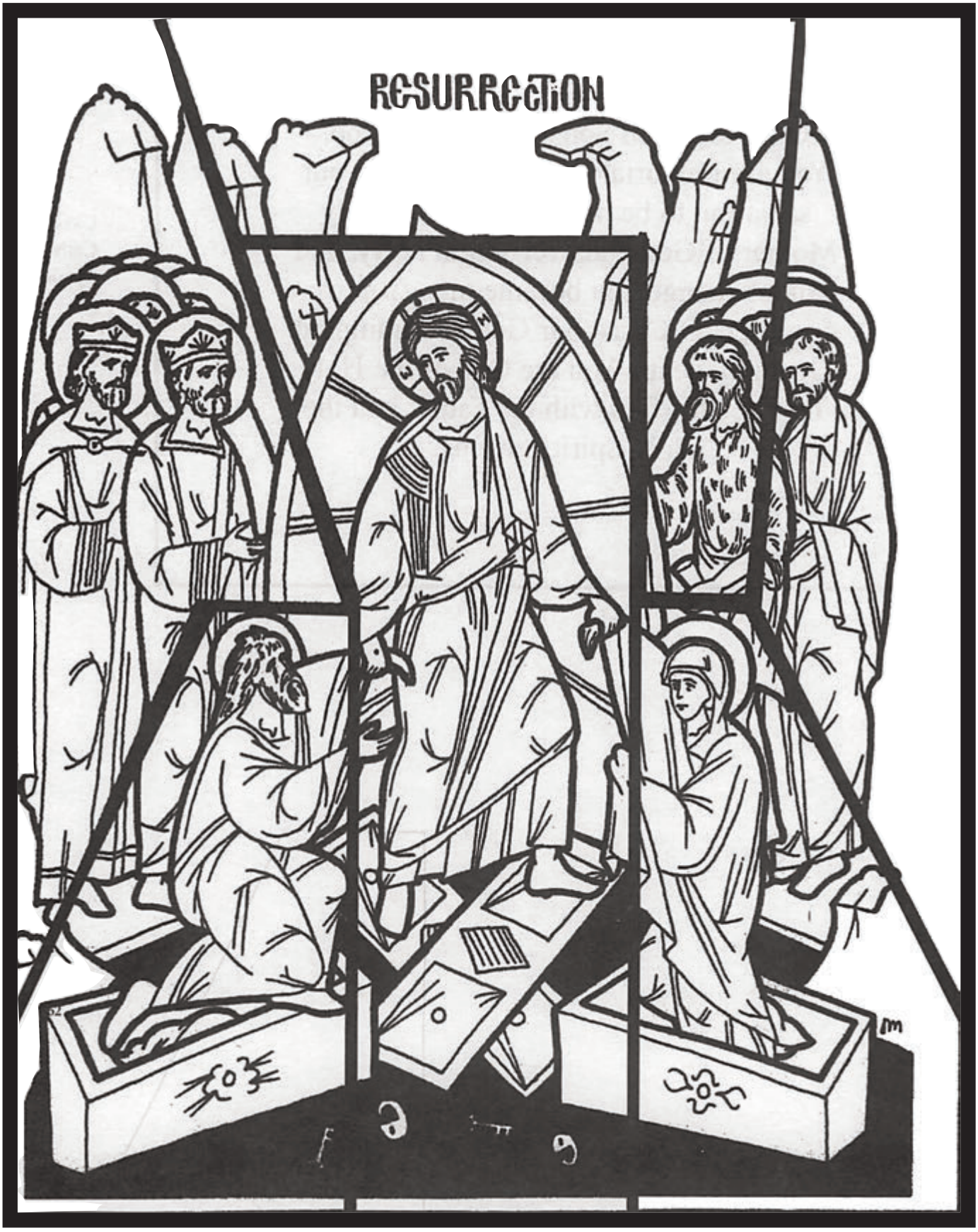
Ukrainian Catholic Diocese of St. Josaphat

Hymn of the Incarnation

Only-begotten Son and Word of God,
You are immortal and You willed for our
salvation to be made flesh of the holy
Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary, and
without change You became man. You were
crucified, O Christ our God and trampled
Death by death. You are One of the Holy
Trinity, glorified with the Father and the
Holy Spirit: save us.

Ukrainian
Catholic
Synod

Enlarge this puzzle and paste onto heavier paper. Cut along dark lines to make puzzle pieces.
Continue with the "Group" activity instructions.




JESUS
IS
OUR
SAVIOR


JESUS
IS
OUR
SAVIOR

Dear Parents,

Learning about becoming a member of the Church is part of Lesson 4 that we will discuss in two weeks. This year our text, God Calls Us Together, emphasizes that we respond to God's call by receiving the Mysteries of Baptism, Chrismation, and Eucharist.

Please help your children learn more about their baptismal day, the day they became a member of the Church. If possible, spend some time looking at pictures and sharing stories. While you are discussing their day, please complete the following information. We will use the information to complete the activity called "I Am a Member of Our Church," part of Lesson 4.

I will collect these completed forms at the beginning of the next two classes. If you would like,

send in one or two pictures for the children to share.

Child's Full Name_____

Parents' Names _____

Date of Birth_____

Location (town)_____

Date of Baptism _____

Church of Baptism _____

Godparents' Names_____

Thank you for helping your children learn more about the day they became a member of the Church.

Sincerely,

Jesus is Our Savior

Objective: The students will be able to identify the way Jesus calls His followers and tells them to "make disciples of all the nations" so that everyone can be saved.

For the Catechist

Children in third grade like to be called to join a group or activity. They like to be chosen by someone else. In this lesson they learn how Jesus is calling them to follow Him. They learn to hear His call by listening to the words in the Gospel readings.

Also, the children learn how the first disciples were willing to leave their family and jobs to follow Jesus. The Gospel readings tell us the disciples, the followers of Jesus, played a special part in Jesus' life. After Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection, these disciples joined together and organized the Church, "Now you are Christ's body" (I Cor 12:27). The disciples told other people about the love and forgiveness that Jesus offered. They called all people to become members of the Church.

Following Jesus is a choice. Even though the disciples were called, they had the final decision as to whether they would follow. We also have a choice. For many of us the choice was made for us by our parents, who chose to have us baptized. Through our baptism we became followers of Jesus and members of the Church. In earlier grades the children learned that they said "Yes" to Jesus at their baptism. This year they are learning that all members of the Church say "Yes" to Jesus. As members of the Church we are called to share this Good News with other people and "make disciples of all nations."

This lesson, "Jesus Calls All People to Be Saved," helps to explain the key concept of theosis: God created us to live united to Him now and forever. The concept of theosis is foundational to an understanding of Eastern Christian thought and is repeated in every text of the series.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: "O Only-begotten Son"
[Collect the "My Baptism" worksheets sent home last week. Remind anyone who forgot to bring it next week.]

Introduction: Discussion of crowds of people **Need:** Bring in a picture of a place where many people gather.

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read the text. Use questions in the teacher manual to discuss the lesson with the students.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

- *Basic*: We Follow Jesus
- *Group:* Guess the Word
- *Craft:* "Jesus Calls All People" Collage

Closing: "O Only-begotten Son"

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord:
The Descent into Hades
Packet II:
Parable of the Last Judgment

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

"Disciples

"Kerygma—Kerygma originally meant the proclamation of a herald or messenger. In the early Church, it came to mean the first preaching of the mystery of Jesus. The early Christians, living in a world ignorant of Christ, were acutely conscious of their mandate to proclaim Christ and to preach the good news of salvation. Just before He ascended to the Father, Jesus commanded His followers to 'make disciples of all the nations Teach them to carry out everything I have commanded you' (Mt 28:19-20). He told them, 'you are to be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, yes, even to the ends of the earth' (Acts 1:8).

"Christians have the duty of being witnesses (*martyrs*) to the Gospel of Christ. We may proclaim it directly by words, but we also affirm it by our way of life. Bearing witness means more than teaching. It includes a personal involvement in the message that is proclaimed. The Gospel is not a mere recitation of facts; it is the proclamation of an event which actively involves the listener. Jesus heals, forgives, raises and teaches us as surely He did the original hearers. The teaching of the Church is not a collection of stories from the past, but a living tradition that challenges us to an active faith of mercy and justice. Hence, the writings of the apostles and evangelists are read at every Liturgy and the Gospel Book is treated with great honor" (*LLI* 71).

Baptism

"Baptism admits the Christian into the life of the Trinity. It also makes a person a member of the Church. These two passages—the first from the limitations of our natural life into the divine life, and the second from selfish individuality into the Body of Christ, which is the Church (Col 1:18)—are inseparable. Authentic Christian faith and participation in the divine life presume membership in the Church and participation in a believing community. Life in the Trinity is real. We have truly become children of the Father; Christ is our brother; the Spirit fills our lives. This makes a real difference in how we live and act and in how we relate to others" (*LLI* 73).

The Church

"This fellowship with the Holy Trinity comes to us in the Church, the assembly of those whom God has called to be His people. While the Holy Spirit is the continuation of Christ's divine presence among us, the Church is His Body, the extension of His physical presence in the world. The Church is thus the Temple of God in which the Spirit dwells, as die human body is the dwelling place of the human spirit. The Fathers called the Church t**he communion in the Holy Spirit,** the fellowship He builds which joins us to God in a divine community. Our mission as Church, our purpose for being, is *'to proclaim the wonderful acts of God'* (*1* Pt 2:9): to be a witness of God's revealing love to all mankind. As members of the Church, we are part of Christ's Body, inseparably joined in Him to the Trinity, the living stones which make up God's temple. In this is our life" (*DC* 10).

Choice of the Twelve

"[He appointed the twelve:] Simon, whom he named Peter; James, son of Zebedee; and John the brother of James, whom he named Boanerges, that is, sons of thunder; Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus; Thaddaeus, Simon the Cananean, and Judas Iscariot who betrayed him" (Mk 3:16-19).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

[Welcome the children with the Christian greeting according to your jurisdiction. Collect the "My Baptism" worksheets.] *This morning we are going to continue learning the prayer we started last week. Did anyone hear that prayer at the beginning of Divine Liturgy this week? Let's begin our prayer with the sign of the cross: "In the name of the Father . . . ."* [The sign of the cross should be made at the beginning of all prayers. It will not be listed after this lesson.] *Now let's pray: "O Only-begotten Son . . . ."* [Use the prayer worksheet that you used last week.]

Introduction

Before we start today, I'd like to tell you about an exciting place I visited last summer. [Tell the students about a place that was very crowded—the shore, a concert, a baseball game. Bring in pictures of a crowd if possible.] *Did any of you ever visit a crowded place? Where? Were you glad you were there? Why? Today I am going to tell you about a crowd of people that gathered around Jesus.*

Jesus liked to tell people about God. When Jesus talked about God, people stopped what they were doing and listened to what He said. Do you think you would have stopped to listen to Jesus? One day many people gathered on a mountainside to listen to Jesus. He told them how they should live so they can go to heaven. They were willing to change so that they could be with God forever. There is a special name given to the sermon Jesus spoke that day; it is the Beatitudes (Mt 5:3-12). [If there is time, read the Beatitudes. The children will recognize the words from church songs.] *The people were happy because Jesus told them they will be blessed in heaven if they listen to God and show love in everything they do. Would you want to be part of the crowd that listened to Jesus? Would you leave something that you are doing to listen to Jesus?*

Today we are going to read about some people who left their jobs and homes to follow Jesus. We call these followers of Jesus disciples.

Let's turn to our book to read about the disciples



3

Jesus Calls All People to Be Saved

We listen to a Gospel reading every time we attend the Divine Liturgy. We listen to stories about Jesus and His followers.

In one of the Gospel stories we hear about the day Jesus saw many people following Him. He went up on the mountainside and sat down. There He taught the people about the kind of life God wants us to live. He said that those who follow God's ways should "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven" (Matthew 5:12). The lesson Jesus gave that day is called the Beatitudes.

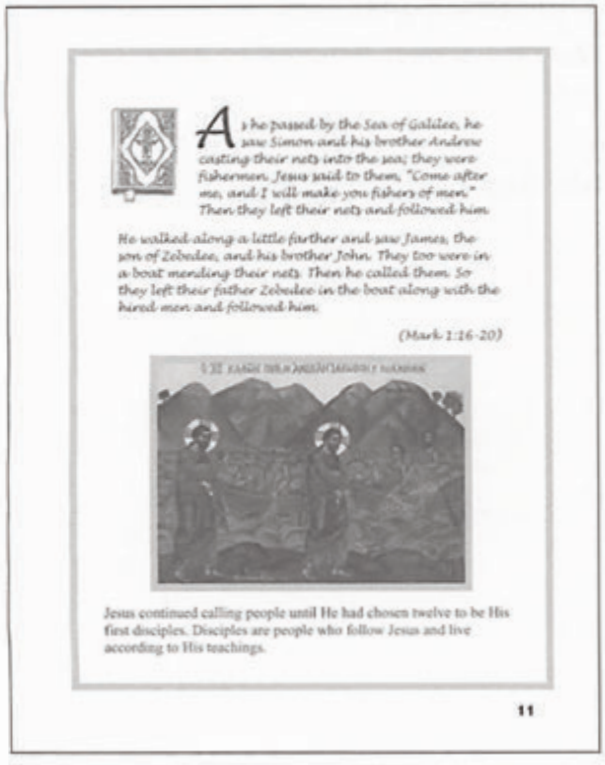
Also in the Gospels we read many stories about the way Jesus called people to follow Him. Some of the people were fishermen. They were casting out their nets when Jesus called them. Let's read one of these Bible stories.

10

Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

The lesson Jesus gave that day is called the Beatitudes.
What is the name of today's lesson? (Jesus Calls All People to Be Saved) We read that Jesus is teaching many people gathered on a mountainside. Why were the people listening to Jesus? (He was talking about God.) He was telling them how God wanted them to live. What did He tell them? (If they follow God's ways, they will go to heaven.) Jesus is calling them to be saved.



As he passed by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting their nets into the sea; they were fishermen. Jesus said to them, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men." Then they left their nets and followed him.

He walked along a little further and saw James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They too were in a boat mending their nets. Then he called them. So they left their father Zebedee in the boat along with the hired men and followed him.

(Mark 1:16-20)

Jesus continued calling people until He had chosen twelve to be His first disciples. Disciples are people who follow Jesus and live according to His teachings.

11

Disciples are people who follow Jesus and live according to His teachings.
Who called out to the fishermen? (Jesus)
What did they do? (They left their jobs and followed Jesus.) What is a disciple? (Follower of Jesus) How many disciples were called by Jesus to be his first followers? (12)

What do you think they thought when Jesus called them? How would you feel if Jesus called to you?

Jesus calls out to all of us, "Come after me" (Mark 1:17).

Does Jesus want all people to follow Him? (Yes) What words tell us this? ("Make disciples of all nations") Jesus wants everyone on earth from all the nations to be His follower. He wants all people to have eternal life.

Let's review: *What is a disciple? (A follower of Jesus who lives according to His teachings) What did Jesus tell His followers? ("Make disciples of all the nations") The disciples told the people the Good News. What is the Good News? (Jesus death and resurrection united us to God and gave us eternal life.) Should we also tell other people about this Good News? (Yes) Why? (Jesus wants all people to be saved.) Can you think of any ways to tell people the Good News? (By inviting friends to church, by having friends pray with you before you eat)*



In the Gospels we read that Jesus told His followers, "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20). He tells His followers to go to all nations. Jesus wants everyone throughout the world to be saved.

The followers of Jesus did as He commanded. They shared the Good News of Jesus. They told people that Jesus is risen from the dead. They told people that Jesus united us to God and granted us eternal life.

Jesus wants everyone to hear that He saved us. Jesus wants everyone to be with God. Jesus calls out to all of us, "Come after me" (Mark 1:17).

Jesus wants us be His disciples.
Jesus wants us to tell other people the Good News.

Words to Remember:

Disciples: People who follow Jesus and live according to His teachings.

The Good News: Jesus' death and resurrection saved us from eternal death and granted us eternal life.

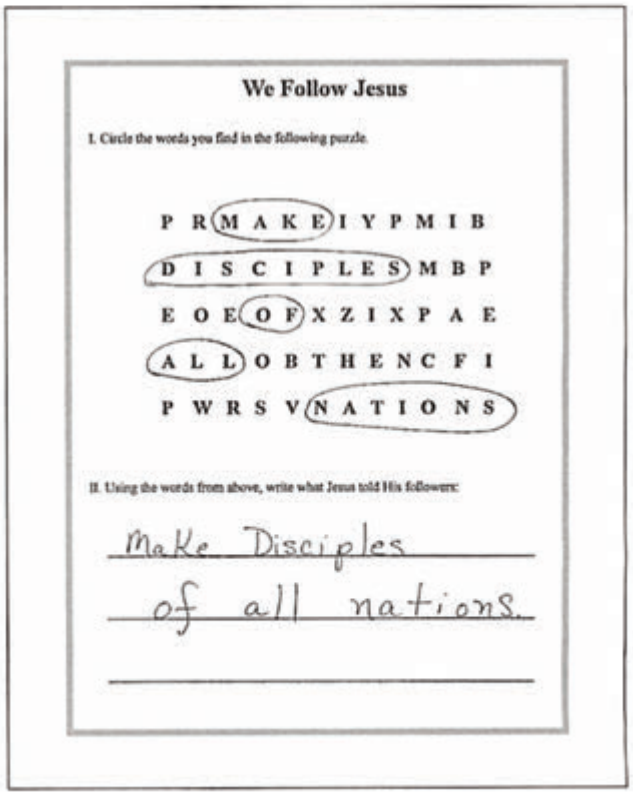
12

Activity Tracks

Basic: We Follow Jesus

[This worksheet is in the student text.]

Jesus asks us to follow Him and to encourage other people to follow Him too. Find the words that tell us what Jesus said to the disciples. Write those words at the bottom of the page. Remember that Jesus wants us to tell other people about Him. Jesus wants everyone to have eternal life.



We Follow Jesus

I. Circle the words you find in the following puzzle.

P R M A K E I Y P M I B
D I S C I P L E S M B P
E O E O F X Z I X P A E
A L L O B T H E N C F I
P W R S V N A T I O N S

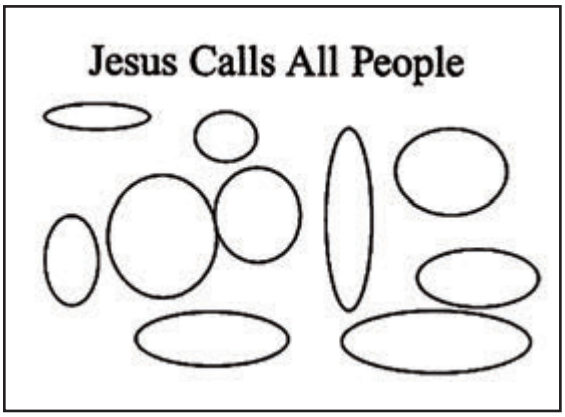
II. Using the words from above, write what Jesus told His followers:

Make Disciples
of all nations.

Group: Guess the Word

Materials: "Good News" worksheet, "Cross Segment" worksheet

[Have the children guess the letters for the words. When a letter is guessed correctly, add another segment to the cross.] *Today we are going to talk about the words we learned today. But before we talk about them, we will have to guess what they are. I have the words written on these papers. I need someone to volunteer. Pick one word, and on the board write a space for each letter of the word. The rest of us will try to guess the letters in the word. A part of the cross is drawn each time the guess is right. When we have all the letters, the student who is at the board will tell what he or she learned about that word in today's lesson.* [Follow this procedure until all the words are chosen.]



Craft: "Jesus Calls All People" Collage

Materials: Construction paper, magazines, glue, "Jesus Calls All People" worksheet, and scissors

[Have sample ready to show children.] *Today we learned that Jesus calls all people to be saved. Let's look at some of the people in these pictures.* [Hold up various pictures from magazines. The people should represent all ages and nationalities.] *Does Jesus want all of these people to follow Him? (Yes) If we cut out these pictures and paste them on construction paper, we can make a collage of the people Jesus calls. Today we are going to make our own collage showing the people Jesus is calling. What if some of these people aren't following Jesus? Who should tell them about Jesus? (We should.) Let's make our collage.* [To each student give a title strip from the worksheet, construction paper, magazines, and scissors.]

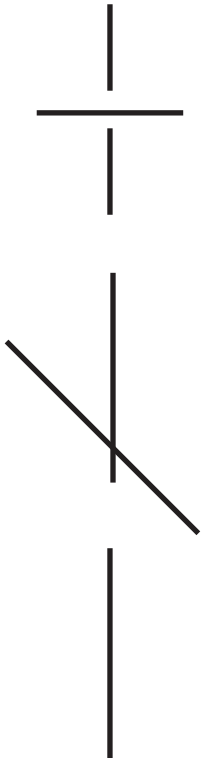
Closing

Let's say the prayer we have been learning, "O Only-begotten Son ...." [Modify text according to your jurisdiction.]

[Remind students who forgot to bring in their "My Baptism" worksheet to remember to bring it next week.]

Good News	**Baptized**
Jesus	**Disciple**
Nations	**Church**

"Cross Segment" Worksheet



Jesus Calls All People

Jesus Calls All People

Jesus Calls All People

Jesus Calls All People

Our Church Follows Jesus

Objective: The students will be able to state that 1) our Church follows Jesus and 2) we became members of the Church through Baptism and Chrismation. One way we stay united to Jesus is by receiving Holy Communion.

For the Catechist

Mysteries of Baptism and Chrismation each year of their religious instruction. That means the information about these Mysteries will be a review. This year the aim is to help them realize that through these Mysteries they become members of the Church. The concept of the Church being the Body of Christ is difficult, but the concept of belonging to a group is familiar to them. They will come to realize that through Baptism and Chrismation they belong to the group of followers that form the Church.

Baptism and Chrismation establish our membership in the Church. That means that we followers are now able to receive the Eucharist, the Body and Blood of Christ. The Eucharist is a very important way for us to join with all the baptized people of the Church. Together we are united to God.

In this lesson the children will read that through Baptism we "put on Christ" and become members of the Church; through Chrismation, we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit to help us live out our new life with Christ; and through the Eucharist, we join with all the other members of the Body of Christ, the Church, to receive Jesus.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: "O Only-begotten Son"

Introduction: Discussion of belonging to a group.

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read the text. Use questions in the teacher manual to discuss the lesson with the students.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

- *Basic*: I Am A Member of Our Church
- *Group:* "Come and Join Us" Song
- *Craft:* "O Only-begotten Son" Prayer Page

Closing: "O Only-begotten Son"

Icon Packets:

*Packet II:*Communion of the Apostles

Teaching Pics:

Holy Baptism (S3, S4, S5)
Holy Communion (S11)

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

The Church

"This fellowship with the Holy Trinity comes to us in the Church, the assembly of those whom God has called to be His people. While the Holy Spirit is the continuation of Christ's divine presence among us, the Church is His Body, the extension of His physical presence in the world. The Church is thus the Temple of God in which the Spirit dwells, as the human body is the dwelling place of the human spirit. The Fathers called t**he Church the communion in the Holy Spirit**, the fellowship He builds which joins us to God in a divine community. Our mission as Church, our purpose for being, is *'to proclaim the wonderful acts of God'* (1 Pt 2:9): to be a witness of God's revealing love to all mankind. As members of the Church, we are part of Christ's Body, inseparably joined in Him to the Trinity, the living stones which make up God's temple. In this is our life" *(DC* 10).

Baptism

"Baptism admits the Christian into the life of the Trinity. It also makes a person a member of the Church. These two passages—the first from the limitations of our natural life into the divine life, and the second from selfish individuality into the Body of Christ, which is the Church (Col 1:18)—are inseparable. Authentic Christian faith and participation in the divine life presume membership in the Church and participation in a believing community. Life in the Trinity is real. We have truly become children of the Father; Christ is our brother; the Spirit fills our lives. This makes a real difference in how we live and act and in how we relate to others" (*LLI* 73).

Chrismation

"The apostolic tradition affirms that each believer is called to be a temple of the Spirit. This is why the newly baptized receive the gift of the Spirit in the mystery of chrismation. In this sacrament the believer is anointed with myron (olive oil mixed with many fragrances) on several parts of the body. The multitude of fragrances symbolizes the variety of gifts of the Spirit, and the different anointings symbolize that the faithful Christian receives the Spirit for all the needs of life. St. Simeon of Thessalonica remarked that in this mystery the baptized and chrismated person received all the divine gifts, except holy priesthood (*On the Holy Mysteries* 66, PG 155, 229). Thus the whole Church is built up by this diversity of gifts which are received by the new member of the Body of Christ. Through these gifts of the Holy Spirit, the individual person is joined uniquely to the Body as an integral part to assist in its growth and perfection" (*LLI* 74-75).

Holy Eucharist

"The Eucharist is the Body and Blood of Christ, the gift from the heart of His passion and resurrection. Both as elements and as action the Eucharist is Christ, who died and rose for our salvation. The Eucharist is a truly 'Divine' Liturgy, because it is a mighty work of God undertaken for our sanctification. When we partake of it, we are made one in Christ and united with God: Father, Son, and Spirit. It is called a mystery since the way in which it happens is beyond our comprehension. Nevertheless, by participating in it with faith we can grow continually in our understanding of God's great love for us" (*LLII* 57).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

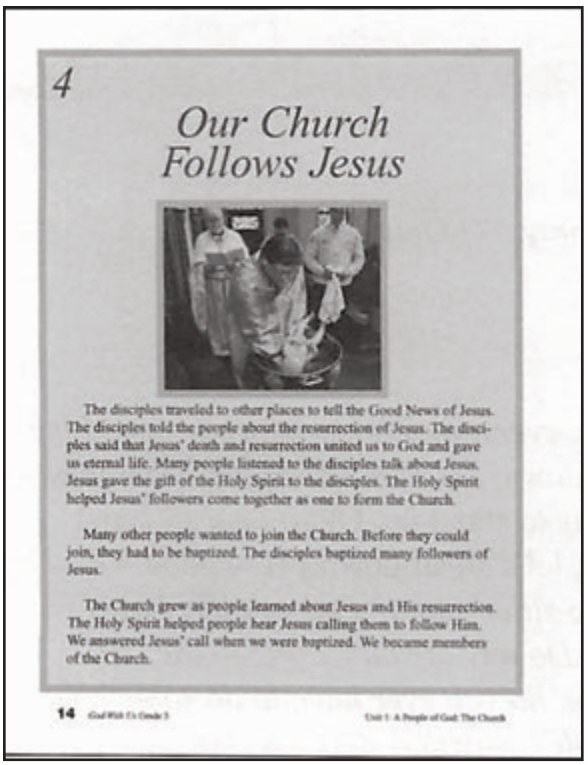
[After the traditional greeting and the sign of the cross:] *Let's pray, "O Only-begotten Son*
[Modify text according to your jurisdiction.]

Introduction

Let's go back to our seats in a different way this morning. First, everyone who is wearing something green this morning gets to sit down. Now the rest of us can sit down. Let's try this again. [You may add the following: Anyone who is wearing something white gets to stand up. Okay, let's all stand up. Now anyone who is wearing glasses gets to sit down. Okay, let's all sit down.] *Very good. Okay, please be seated. Did you like being the one who was chosen to sit or stand? Did you like having other people join you? Being a member of a group can be fun. Do any of you belong to the Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, or a sports team? When you join that group, do you ever have to do something special? What do you have to do? (Wear uniforms, learn the rules, practice, do projects)*

Today we are going to learn about a very special group of which you are a member. You are a member of the Church. You became a member when you were baptized. As members of the Church we belong to the group of people who follow Jesus. Who remembers the name for the followers of Jesus? (Disciples) Does anyone remember what Jesus told the disciples to do? (Make disciples of all nations.) Jesus wanted all people to be united to God. Through our baptism, we are united to God.

Let's turn to our lesson.



4

Our Church Follows Jesus

The disciples traveled to other places to tell the Good News of Jesus. The disciples told the people about the resurrection of Jesus. The disciples said that Jesus' death and resurrection united us to God and gave us eternal life. Many people listened to the disciples talk about Jesus. Jesus gave the gift of the Holy Spirit to the disciples. The Holy Spirit helped Jesus' followers come together as one to form the Church.

Many other people wanted to join the Church. Before they could join, they had to be baptized. The disciples baptized many followers of Jesus.

The Church grew as people learned about Jesus and His resurrection. The Holy Spirit helped people hear Jesus calling them to follow Him. We answered Jesus' call when we were baptized. We became members of the Church.

14

Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

What is happening in the picture on this page? Do any of you remember being baptized? Do you have pictures of your baptism?

... to form the Church.
What did the disciples tell the people about Jesus? (The resurrection of Jesus) Who helped the disciples come together as one? (The Holy Spirit)

We became members of the Church.
When did we become members? (When we were baptized)



Many of us said "Yes" to Jesus even before we could talk. We were baptized when we were babies. Our parents wanted us to be united to Jesus. They wanted us to become members of the Church.

Our godparents were with us at our baptism. They answered "Yes" for us if we were too small to talk. If you were a baby when you were baptized, your godparents said "Yes" for you.

In Baptism the priest uses blessed water and olive oil to bring us new life. We are covered with a white robe as a sign of our new life. We receive a white candle to show that we are filled with light. We truly believe the words of the Bible:

"*For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ... for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*" (Galatians 3:27-28).

These words are familiar. At special times of the year we sing them during the Divine Liturgy:

"All you, who have been baptized into Christ,
have put on Christ. Alleluia."

After we are baptized, we receive the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit in the Mystery of Chrismation. The priest uses a special oil, chrism, that has been blessed by the Bishop or Patriarch. The word chrism is in the name Chrismation.

The priest anoints our head, chest, back, hands, and feet. He seals in the gift of the Holy Spirit. We receive this gift because we have become members of our Church.

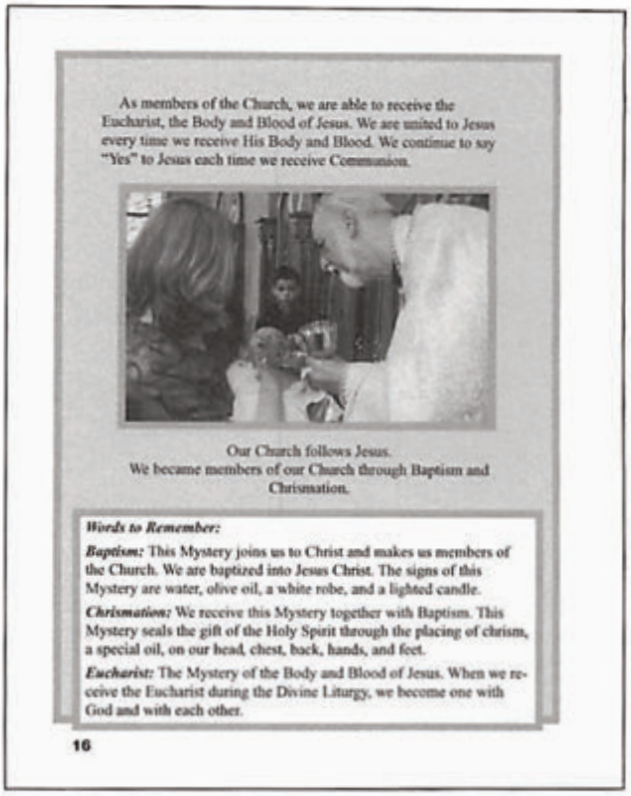
15

"All you who have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ, Alleluia."
Does anyone remember singing this song?
We sing this as part of the Divine Liturgy during special seasons. Why do we put on white clothes and hold a white candle when we are baptized? (To show we have been filled with light.)

We receive this gift because we have become members of the Church.
What parts of the body are sealed with holy oil? (Head, chest, back, hands, and feet) Let's point to those parts as we say them. What is the name of the oil used? (Chrism) Is the word chrism in the word chrismation?

We continue to say "Yes" to Jesus each time we receive Communion.
Who are we united to each time we receive Holy Communion? (Jesus) Also we are united to everyone else who receives Holy Communion. What two mysteries did we receive before we received Communion? (Baptism and Chrismation) What did we join when we received those mysteries? (The Church) Every time we receive Communion we join together with all the other people who were baptized. All of us members of the Church become one. As one we form the Body of Christ.

Let's review: *As members of the Church, whom do we follow? (Jesus) Name the two Mysteries through which we became members of the Church. (Baptism and Chrismation) To whom are we united when we receive Holy Communion? (To Jesus and everyone else who says "Yes" to Jesus) Why do we follow Jesus? (To unite ourselves to God and to gain eternal life) What does eternal mean? (Forever) We will be with God forever.*



As members of the Church, we are able to receive the Eucharist, the Body and Blood of Jesus. We are united to Jesus every time we receive His Body and Blood. We continue to say "Yes" to Jesus each time we receive Communion.

Our Church follows Jesus.
We became members of our Church through Baptism and Chrismation.

Words to Remember:

Baptism: This Mystery joins us to Christ and makes us members of the Church. We are baptized into Jesus Christ. The signs of this Mystery are water, olive oil, a white robe, and a lighted candle.

Chrismation: We receive this Mystery together with Baptism. This Mystery seals the gift of the Holy Spirit through the placing of chrism, a special oil, on our head, chest, back, hands, and feet.

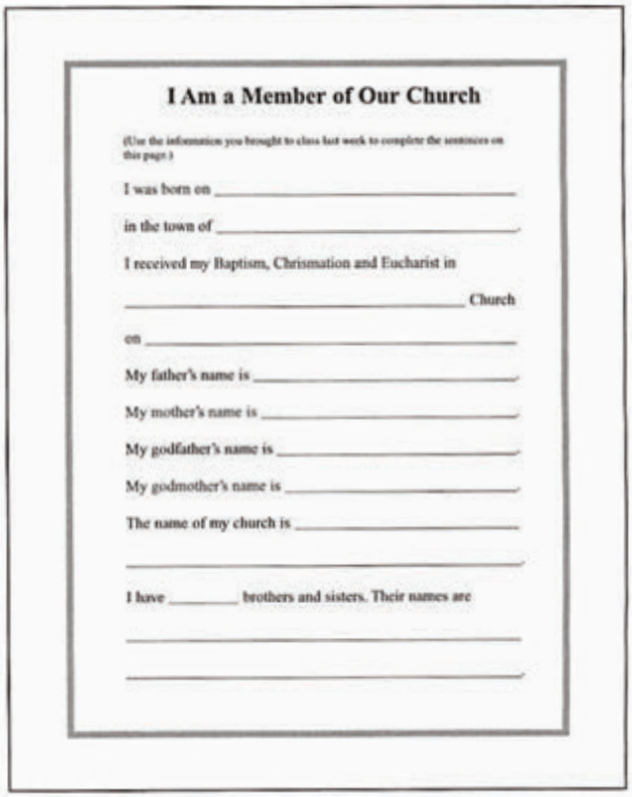
Eucharist: The Mystery of the Body and Blood of Jesus. When we receive the Eucharist during the Divine Liturgy, we become one with God and with each other.

16

Activity Tracks

Basic: I Am a Member of Our Church
[This worksheet is in the student text.]

Today we learned we are members of a special group of followers. We are members of the Church. When did we become members? (When we were baptized) Please use your nicest printing or writing to complete this page. Use the information your parents sent in last week. [If you asked the parents to send in pictures, let the children share their pictures after they complete their writing.]



I Am a Member of Our Church

(Use the information you brought to class last week to complete the sentences on this page.)

I was born on _____

in the town of _____.

I received my Baptism, Chrismation and Eucharist in

_____ Church

on _____

My father's name is _____.

My mother's name is _____.

My godfather's name is _____.

My godmother's name is _____.

The name of my church is _____

_____.

I have _____ brothers and sisters. Their names are

_____

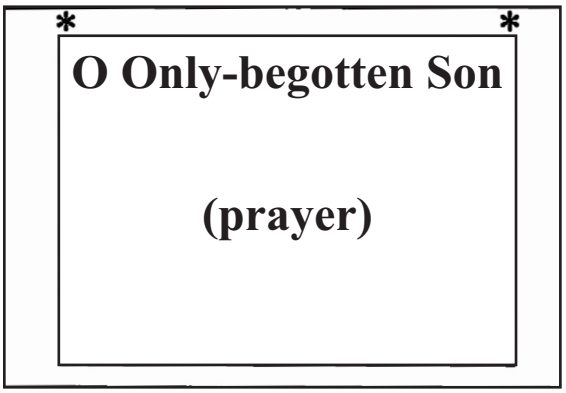
_____.

Group: "Come and Join Us" Song

Materials: "Come and Join Us" Song worksheet

Today we are going to sing a song. The tune is like the one for "Are You Sleeping?" Does anyone know that song? Let's sing this song together. [Give out copies of the worksheet at the end of this lesson.]

Come and join us; come and join us.
We are one; we are one.
We all have been baptized; we all have been baptized.
We are one; we are one.
[Continue singing all the stanzas.]



Craft: "O Only-begotten Son" Prayer Page

Materials: Prayer pages from Lesson 2 (pages 89-91) in this Teacher Manual), heavier white paper or construction paper (1/2 sheet per student), hole punch, markers, stickers or stars, scissors, and glue

[Have sample ready to show children.] *We have been saying a special prayer at the beginning and end of our classes. What are the first few words? (O only begotten Son) Where do we hear this prayer? (During the Divine Liturgy) Today we are going to make a prayer page. Throughout this year we are going to make prayer pages for each new prayer. We will put this page inside the cover we made during the first class. At the end of the year, you will have your own little prayer book.*

Paste the prayer on a half sheet of construction paper or the heavier white paper. You can draw pictures around the prayer, or you can add the stars or stickers I have here. Punch two holes to match the ones on the prayer cover. Untie the yarn on our prayer book cover and add this new page. Now pull the yarn through the holes and tie.

Closing

Let's use our new prayer page to say our closing prayer, "O Only-begotten Son. ..."

Come and Join Us

Come and join us; come and join us.
We are one; we are one.
We all have been baptized; we all have been baptized.
We are one; we are one.

Come and join us; come and join us.
We are one; we are one.
We all have been chrismated; we all have been chrismated.
We are one; we are one.

Come and join us; come and join us.
We are one; we are one.
We receive the Eucharist; we receive the Eucharist.
We are one; we are one.

Come and Join Us

Come and join us; come and join us.
We are one; we are one.
We all have been baptized; we all have been baptized.
We are one; we are one.

Come and join us; come and join us.
We are one; we are one.
We all have been chrismated; we all have been chrismated.
We are one; we are one.

Come and join us; come and join us.
We are one; we are one.
We receive the Eucharist; we receive the Eucharist.
We are one; we are one.

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God's People Are the Church

Objective: The students will be able to 1) state the Church is formed by the followers of Jesus Christ and 2) identity the importance of every person's talent in the Church.

For the Catechist

People are often accustomed to think of Church as a building where they worship. Others think of it as a structured organization in which they are some insignificant part. For a complete understanding of Church we turn to both biblical and traditional teaching. The Church is living, not as an object but as people joined in relationship with one another in the Holy Spirit.

As Church we form a pilgrimage that is directed to the Kingdom of God. The Bible incorporates many descriptive images for the Church: "the Body of Christ," "a royal priesthood," "a flock whose shepherd is God," "a vineyard to be cultivated by the heavenly vine dresser," and "an edifice of the Spirit."

The Second Vatican Council emphasizes the unity of the Church with the statement: "It has pleased God to make men holy and save them not merely as individuals without any mutual bonds, but by making them into a single people, a people which acknowledges Him in truth and serves Him in holiness . . .

"God has gathered together as one all those who in faith look upon Jesus as the author of salvation and the source of unity and peace, and has established them as the Church . . ." (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, #9-10).

This concept was introduced in the last lesson: The followers of Jesus joined together to form the Church. As the Body of Christ the people worked to "make disciples of all nations." As disciples of Jesus Christ we want to be united to God and be granted eternal life. This lesson builds on the fact that we individuals are important in helping each other gain salvation. We as the Church must work together to form the Body of Christ.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: "O Only-begotten Son"

Introduction: Discussion of the importance of everyone's talents **Need:** "Puzzle" worksheet

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read the text. Use questions in the teacher manual to discuss the lesson with the students.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

• *Basic*: Our Church Family

• *Group:* "Our Church" Paper Chain

• *Craft:* "Thank You" Cards

Closing: *"*O Only-begotten Son"

Icon Packets:

Packet II: Great Commissioning

Teaching Pics:

House Blessing (F14)

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

The Church, the Body of Christ

"Another dimension of liturgical piety is rooted in our understanding of liturgy as an action of the community. Any act of liturgical worship, no matter how small, is a gathering of the Body with Christ its Head. As such it stands as a witness against the strong trend toward individualism and privacy which diminishes the communal dimension of human life. God, however, has created and called us from all the nations and races of the earth to be one people: 'Once you were no people, but now you are God's people' (1 Pt 2:10). Our Lord prayed that we be a people whose unity reflects the oneness of God: '...one, even as we [the Father and Jesus] are one' (Jn 17:11). It is in this context that St. Augustine is reputed to have said, 'A solitary Christian is not a Christian.' Liturgical piety acknowledges that every liturgical assembly is an affirmation and strengthening of the Church as one Body in Christ: 'Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in their midst (Mt. 18:20)'" (*LLII* 98-99).

We Grow in Faith

"The Scriptural word for the way the believer puts one faith in God is *eis* ('into'). Our Lord told the apostles to 'baptize [all nations] into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' (Mt 28:19). Accordingly at every baptism we sing, "All of you who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ, alleluia" (cf Gal 3:27). Baptism *into* means most accurately that we belong to Him in whose name we have been baptized. We more than belong; we 'become' Christ as if we were embraced by Him. We express a faith that is more than just a belief in a set of propositions. It is a process of becoming what we believe, of moving towards union with the Trinity to whom we belong by baptism" (*LLI* 2). "Faith requires a commitment to Christ and also to His Church, since the Lord identified Himself with His people, the Church. '[God] has put all things under Christ's feet and has made Him, thus exalted, head of the Church which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills the universe in all its parts' (Eph 1:22-23 NAB). Thus faith leading to baptism, expressed in a positive way, forms 'a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people claimed for God's own (1 Pt 2:9)' "(*LLI* 4-5).

The Image of the Body

"St. Paul connects two aspects of Christian life with this image of the body. First of all he notes that the members of the Church, each with their different gifts, complement one another like the organs of the body. They are interrelated and live as a whole, rather than compete for greater recognition. St. John Chrysostom was to elaborate on this idea in his commentary on this epistle. He notes that there must be differences of gift and function in the Church or it would not be a body, only a single cell. An organism demands that its elements be distinct; yet if they are not all in harmony, the whole is not what it was meant to be:

> *'What is more lowly in the body than hair? Yet were*
> *you to remove the hair from the eyebrows and lashes,*
> *you would have destroyed the beauty of the entire face.*
> *... Even though the harm is slight, the whole appearance*
> *had been destroyed.' 30 Homily on 1 Corinthians*

"Because the Church is a body, St. Paul reminds us, there are different parts or functions in it; not all are exactly the same. And because the Church is the body of Christ, these roles and tasks are of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, Paul insists, there is no place for competition or envy in the body. All its members serve important purposes" (*WEF* 73).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Let's pray using our prayer books we started last week. Let's pray, "O, only-begotten Son....."
[Modify text according to your jurisdiction.]

Introduction

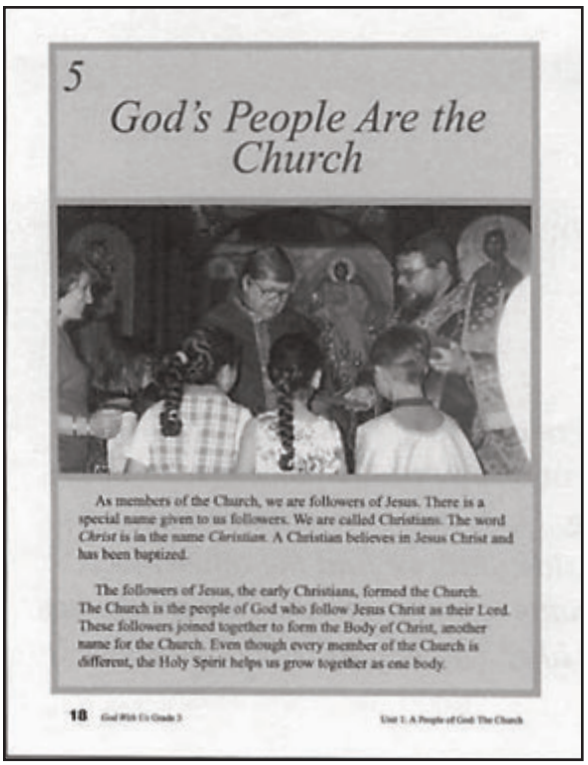
Before we start class today, I need your help with this puzzle. Here are the pieces. Let's see if we can put it together. [If you have many students, make more than one copy of the pieces. Take out one of the pieces from each set.] *It seems as if apiece is missing. Does that ever happen to you at home? What do you do? I guess we just have to put the puzzle aside until we find the other piece.* [Go to your desk and find the piece.] *Look what I found. Who wants to put it in? But this puzzle has no picture or words, but it does have a shape. What does it look like? (A church) Let's add some words.* [Take the puzzle apart and give each child a piece.]

Before we add words, let's talk about what we learned about the Church.
What is a disciple? (A follower of Jesus) The disciples told the people about the Good News. What is the Good News? (Jesus united us with God and gave us eternal life.) The people who listened to the disciples wanted to join them and the Church. What did they have to do to join the Church? (They had to be baptized.) All of us are members of the Church, and last week we talked about our baptism. We are member of a specific church here in ____[say the name of your town]. What is the name of our church?

Now we can finish our puzzle. I want us to think of all the people who go to our church. We join together to make____[say the name of your church]. special. We have our priest, Father _____; our deacon,_____; our cantor,_____. Can you name some other people who are part of our church? [Possibilities: baking ladies, altar servers, custodian, choir members, parishioners. You don't have to have their specific names.] *Now we can finish our puzzle. Let's write one name on each piece.* [Assign names or have the names written on papers and have the students glue them to the puzzle pieces.] *Now we can do our puzzle again.*

Puzzles are fun to put together because we get to see the whole picture when we are done. Now we have __[say the name of your church] .
We are people working and praying together to be one with God.

Let's turn to our lesson.



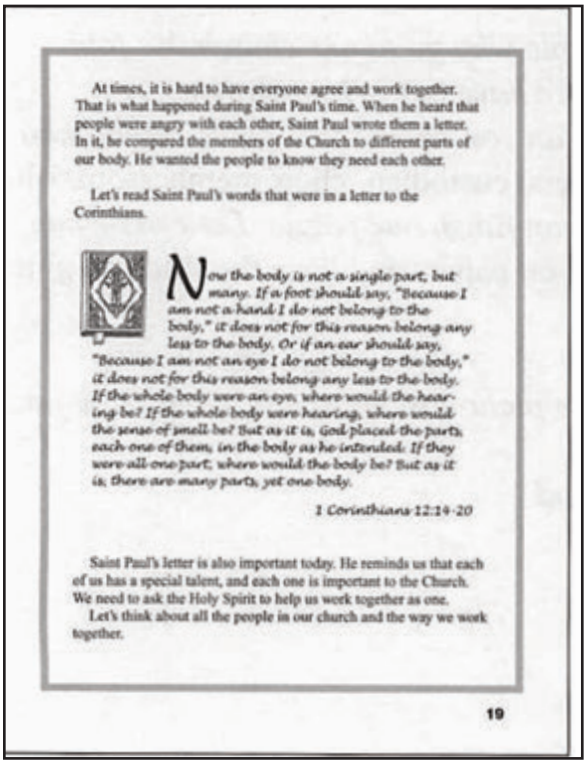
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God's People Are the Church

As members of the Church, we are followers of Jesus. There is a special name given to us followers. We are called Christians. The word *Christ* is in the name *Christian*. A Christian believes in Jesus Christ and has been baptized.

The followers of Jesus, the early Christians, formed the Church. The Church is the people of God who follow Jesus Christ as their Lord. These followers joined together to form the Body of Christ, another name for the Church. Even though every member of the Church is different, the Holy Spirit helps us grow together as one body.

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At times, it is hard to have everyone agree and work together. That is what happened during Saint Paul's time. When he heard that people were angry with each other, Saint Paul wrote them a letter. In it, he compared the members of the Church to different parts of our body. He wanted the people to know they need each other.

Let's read Saint Paul's words that were in a letter to the Corinthians.

Now the body is not a single part, but many. If a foot should say, "Because I am not a hand I do not belong to the body," it does not for this reason belong any less to the body. Or if an ear should say, "Because I am not an eye I do not belong to the body," it does not for this reason belong any less to the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God placed the parts, each one of them, in the body as he intended. If they were all one part, where would the body be? But as it is, there are many parts, yet one body.

1 Corinthians 12:14-20

Saint Paul's letter is also important today. He reminds us that each of us has a special talent, and each one is important to the Church. We need to ask the Holy Spirit to help us work together as one.

Let's think about all the people in our church and the way we work together.

19

Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

Where do you think this picture was taken? (In Church) Every time we come to church, we unite ourselves with God and with each other. Let's learn how the people in the Church become the Body of Christ.

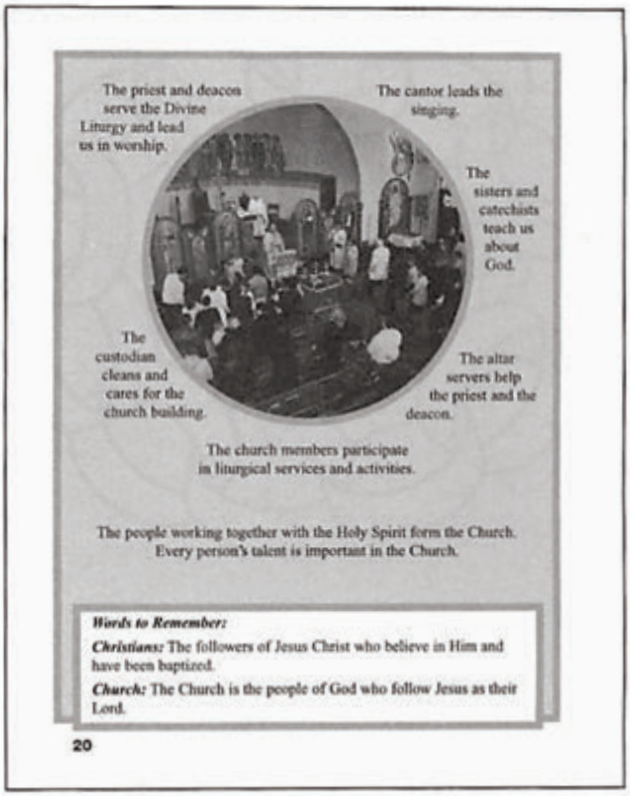
Even though every member of the Church is different, the Holy Spirit helps us grow together as one body.
What is a Christian? (A person who believes in Jesus Christ) What is the Church called? (The Body of Christ)

He wanted the people to know they need each other.
Who wrote a letter about working together? (St. Paul)

But as it is, there are many parts, yet one body.
Did you ever have a cold? What happens to the way food tastes when you have a cold? (Nothing tastes right or good) Scientists tell us smelling our food is important for tasting it. Maybe the food doesn't taste good because we can't smell it; both work together. That is another way to describe what St. Paul is saying in his letter. What is he trying to teach the people? (We need to work together.) Was St. Paul's description a good way to teach the people?

Every person's talent is important in the Church.
Who are some of the members of our church? (Priest, nuns, cantor, catechists, custodians, all the people who participate in the church services and activities) Why are these people important? What do you do in our church?
[Encourage the children to discover ways they help the community—being in church to sing and pray, participating in the Divine Liturgy, greeting people, listening to the priest, helping at festivals or with church projects.]

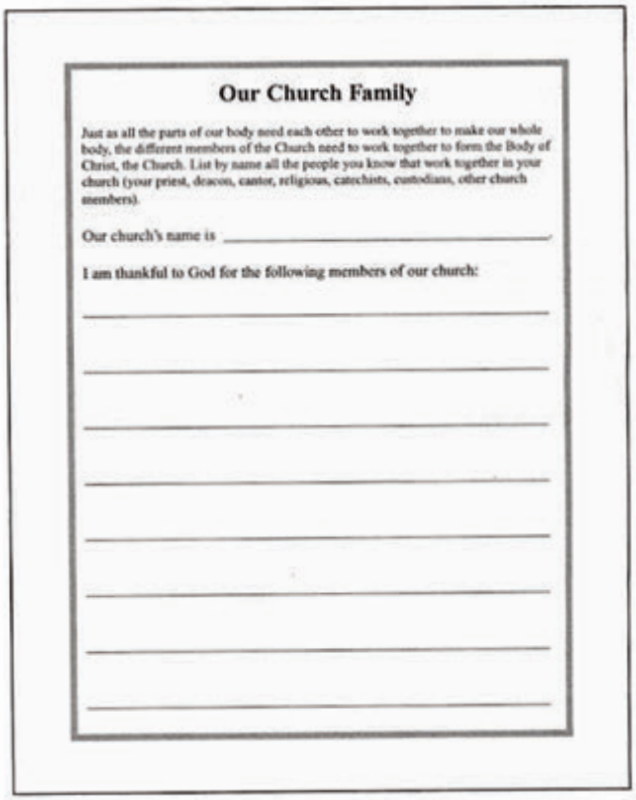
Let's review: *Are we Christian? (Yes) Why? (We follow Jesus.) How did we become a member of the Church? (We were baptized.) What does Saint Paul ask us to do? (Work together as one body.) We are called to form the Body of Christ. We must offer our talents to* [say the name of your parish].

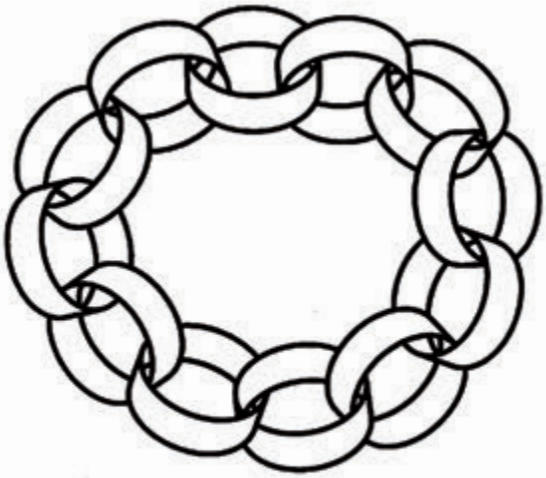


Activity Tracks

Basic: Our Church Family

Today we learned that all of us are important in our church. Now we are going to list some of the names of the people whom we know in our church. [If possible, find the correct spelling of the names of the people. Some parishes might have a directory that would even include a picture. If possible invite some of these people into the classroom—maybe one person a week for one month. Have the students remember that person in their prayers for one week.]





Group: "Our Church" Paper Chain

Materials: 6" x 1/2" strips of construction paper, markers, stapler or glue, masking tape, poster board.

We learned that the Church is the people of God who follow Jesus Christ as their Lord. We people have to learn how to work together so that we can form one body, the "Body of Christ."

Today we are going to show how connected we are here at _____Church. Let's link together the names of some of the people in our church. [Give each child a strip of construction paper.] *Let's look at our activity page to see some of the names we have listed. Write one of those names on your paper.* [Assign names to include everyone. Have one link that says "People who come to church" and have the students add their names and/or their family members' names.] *We will staple the names together to make a chain. Let's connect the chain to form a circle and hang it on our poster board.* [Write the name of your church at the top of the poster board.] *Let's hang our poster in the room to show how all of us work together to form our church.*



Craft: "Thank You" Cards

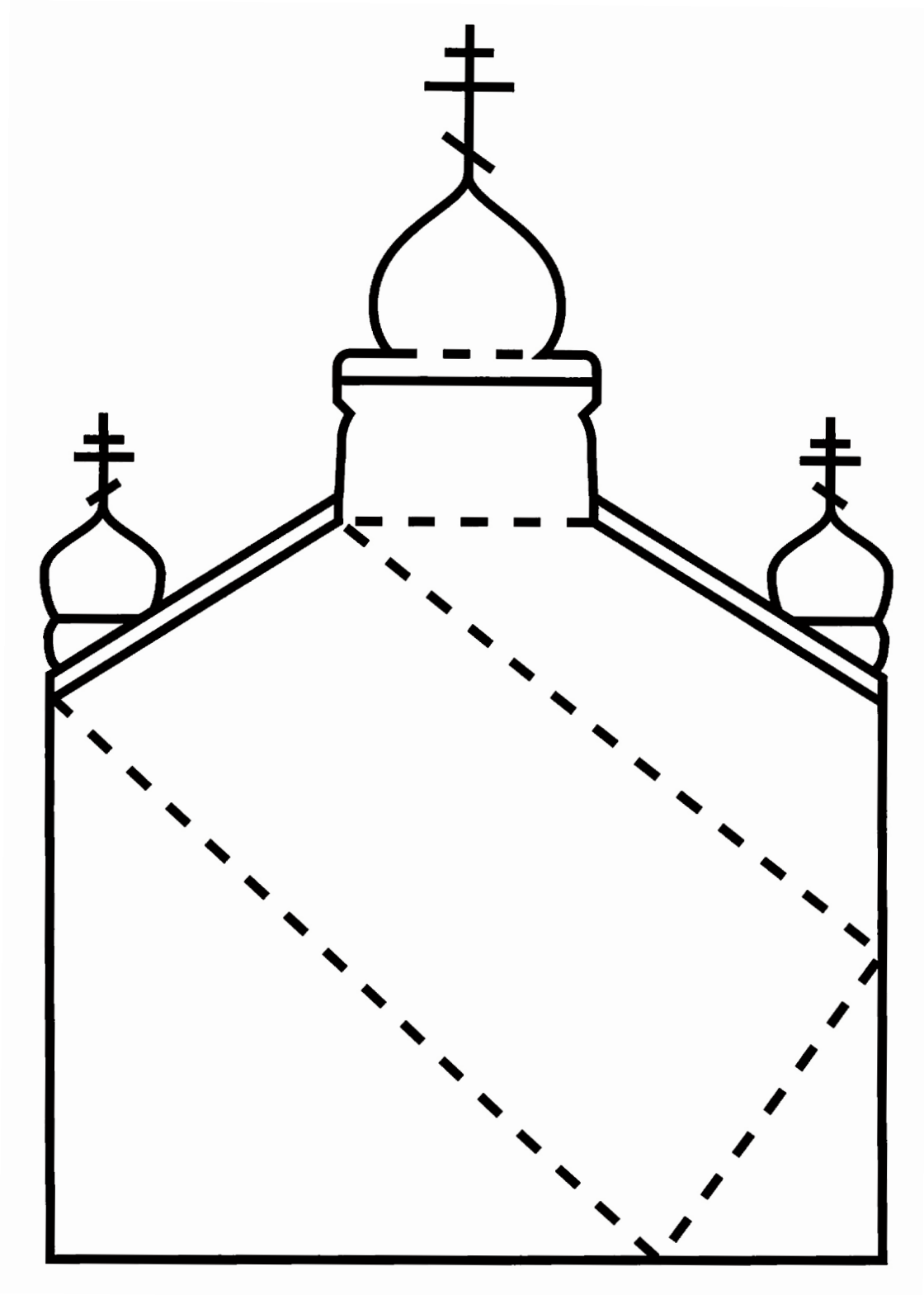
Materials: "Thank you cards" worksheet, markers, stickers and envelopes (optional)

[Have sample ready to show children.] *Today we are going to make thank you cards for all the people we have listed on our activity page. We want them to know we appreciate everything they do for us. On the inside of the card, let's thank them for what they do and sign our names.* [If there is time, let the children decorate the cards with pictures or stickers. Mail the cards or have the students give them if the people are available. If you invite the people into your classroom, you can give them out then.]

Closing

Let's see if we can say our prayer, "O, only-begotten Son.. . ." without looking at our prayer page. Next week we will begin learning a new prayer.

(Cut out the outline of the church. Paste onto heavier paper. Cut on dotted lines to make puzzle pieces.)



Thank You

Thank You

The Church Has Leaders

Objective: The students will be able to identify the names of Church leaders who look to Jesus as the perfect example of a leader.

For the Catechist

Because children learn by experience, their experiences with the Church are primarily with their own parish. This is where they pray and worship. Also, they are beginning to realize that there are other people in many other churches who worship as they do. All these people are united because they have Christ as their leader. The children also recognize that the Church has other leaders who follow Jesus Christ. They are beginning to recognize the hierarchy of the church.

Children in Grade 3 are most familiar with their parish priest, who leads in worship, preaches, and administers the Mysteries. This lesson seeks to introduce them to the principal figures in the wider Church. Before this lesson the catechist should obtain accurate information about and, if possible, pictures of your bishop and the other important figures in your particular Church (Metropolitan, Patriarch, etc.). Your diocesan publication is a good source for pictures of the Church's hierarchs.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: "O Heavenly King"

Introduction: Discussion about the need for leaders. **Need:** a ball

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read the text. Use questions in the teacher manual to discuss the lesson with the students.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

• *Basic*: Who Am I?

• *Group:* "Our Church Leaders" Poster

• *Craft:* "O Heavenly King" Prayer Page

Closing: "O Heavenly King"

[For next week's lesson, arrange to have the church open and lit for the church tour that is part of the "Introduction." For next week's craft have the students bring in an empty shoe box.]

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord: Three Holy Hierarchs

Teaching Pics:

Holy Orders (S17, S18, S19)

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

Holy Orders

"Since its beginning, the Church has recognized these gifts of the Spirit within it and has confirmed the Spirit's work by setting apart some people for the permanent exercise of ministries within the community. Of these the ranks of bishop, priest and deacon fall into the category of holy orders, recognized as a sacramental state within the Church" (*DC* 96).

Bishops in the Christian Community

"The Second Vatican Council gave much importance to the proclamation and transmission of the Gospel in the episcopal ministry. 'Among the principal duties of Bishops, that of preaching the Gospel excels.' In carrying out this task, Bishops are above all, 'heralds of the faith,' seeking new disciples for Jesus Christ, and 'authentic teachers,' transmitting the faith to be professed and lived to those entrusted to their care. Missionary proclamation and catechesis are two closely united aspects of the prophetic ministry of Bishops. To perform this duty Bishops receive 'the charism of truth.' The Bishops are 'beyond all others the ones primarily responsible for catechesis and catechists par excellence.' In the Church's history the preponderant role of great and saintly Bishops is evident. Their writings and initiative mark the richest period of the catechumenate. They regarded catechesis as one of the most fundamental tasks of their ministry" (*GDC* 209).

Priests in the Christian Community

"The function proper to the presbyterate in the catechetical task arises from the sacrament of Holy Orders which they have received. 'Through that sacrament priests, by the anointing of the Holy Spirit, are signed with a special character and so are configured to Christ the priest, in such a way that they are able to act in the person of Christ the head.' In virtue of this ontological configuration to Christ, the ministry of the priest is a service which forms the Christian community and coordinates and strengthens other charisms and services. In catechesis the sacrament of Holy Orders constitutes priests as 'educators of the faith.' They work, therefore, to see that the faithful are properly formed and reach true Christian maturity. Conscious, on the other hand, that their 'ministerial Priesthood' is at the service of 'the common Priesthood of the faithful,' priests foster the vocation and work of catechists and assist them in carrying out a function which springs from Baptism and is exercised in virtue of a mission entrusted to them by the Church. Thus priests put into effect the request which the Second Vatican Council made of them: 'to recognize and promote the dignity of the laity and their specific role in the Church's mission'" (*GDC* 210-211).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Today we are going to start learning another prayer for this year. The prayer is "O Heavenly King." [Use your jurisdiction's prayer page at the end of this lesson.] *Let's start with the sign of the cross and pray: "O Heavenly King..."*

Introduction

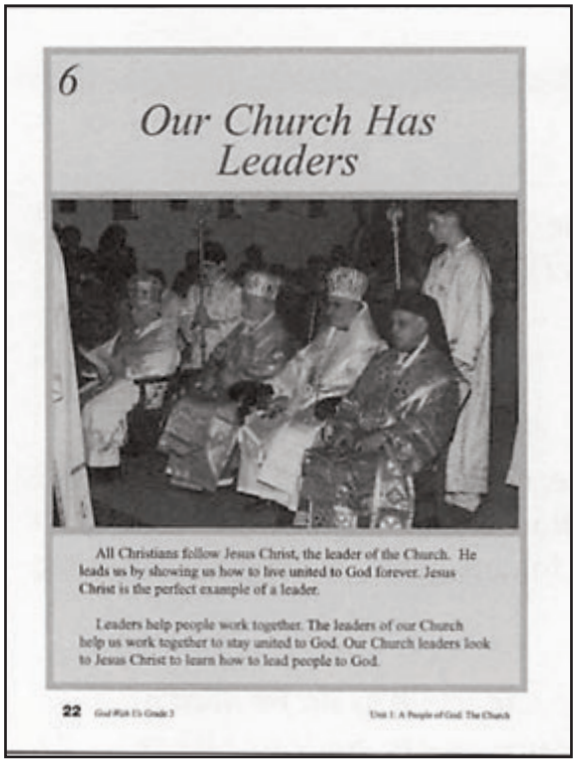
Let's start class today with a game. I brought a ball for the game. Okay, let's start. [Toss the ball.By now the children will ask about the game.] *I don't know what we should play. Do you have ideas? How do you play that game?* [Let someone tell the rules for any game. If the game is not too rowdy, play for a few minutes.] *Okay, let's sit down.*

Did we know what to do with the ball at first? Why not? (No one told us.) Why do we need a leader? (It is easier because we know what is expected. We have someone to guide us.) When we do not have a leader, we very easily get mixed up. In this case we didn't know what to do with the ball.

The followers of Jesus felt the same way. They liked having Jesus as their leader. Jesus was leading them and teaching them about God. Does anyone remember the name given to the first followers of Jesus? (Disciples) After Jesus died and rose from the dead, the disciples continued to follow His teachings. These people joined together to form the Church. Did they invite other people to join them? (Yes) Last week we learned the name of the followers of Jesus Christ who believe in Him and have been baptized. What is the name? (Christians).

We are Christians because we have been baptized and we follow Jesus. Today we are going to learn how our Church and our Church leaders follow Jesus.

Let's turn to our lesson to learn about our Church leaders.



6

Our Church Has Leaders

All Christians follow Jesus Christ, the leader of the Church. He leads us by showing us how to live united to God forever. Jesus Christ is the perfect example of a leader.

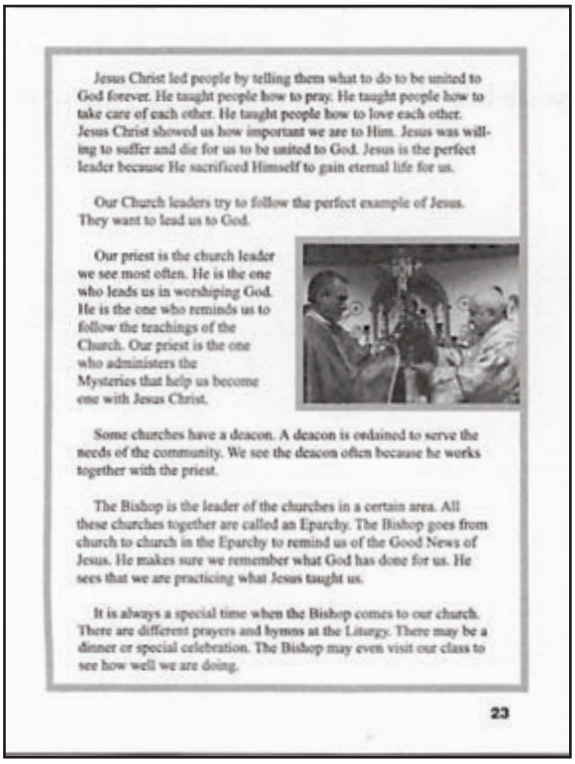
Leaders help people work together. The leaders of our Church help us work together to stay united to God. Our Church leaders look to Jesus Christ to learn how to lead people to God.

22

Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

Jesus Christ is the perfect example of a leader.
Where is Jesus leading us? (Jesus is leading us to God.) That is why we follow Jesus. We see many leaders in the picture. They want us to grow closer to God.



Jesus Christ led people by telling them what to do to be united to God forever. He taught people how to pray. He taught people how to take care of each other. He taught people how to love each other. Jesus Christ showed us how important we are to Him. Jesus was willing to suffer and die for us to be united to God. Jesus is the perfect leader because He sacrificed Himself to gain eternal life for us.

Our Church leaders try to follow the perfect example of Jesus. They want to lead us to God.

Our priest is the church leader we see most often. He is the one who leads us in worshiping God. He is the one who reminds us to follow the teachings of the Church. Our priest is the one who administers the Mysteries that help us become one with Jesus Christ.

Some churches have a deacon. A deacon is ordained to serve the needs of the community. We see the deacon often because he works together with the priest.

The Bishop is the leader of the churches in a certain area. All these churches together are called an Eparchy. The Bishop goes from church to church in the Eparchy to remind us of the Good News of Jesus. He makes sure we remember what God has done for us. He sees that we are practicing what Jesus taught us.

It is always a special time when the Bishop comes to our church. There are different prayers and hymns at the Liturgy. There may be a dinner or special celebration. The Bishop may even visit our class to see how well we are doing.

23

... He sacrificed Himself to gain eternal life for us.
What are some ways Jesus taught us to be united with God? (He taught us to pray, take care of each other, and love each other.)

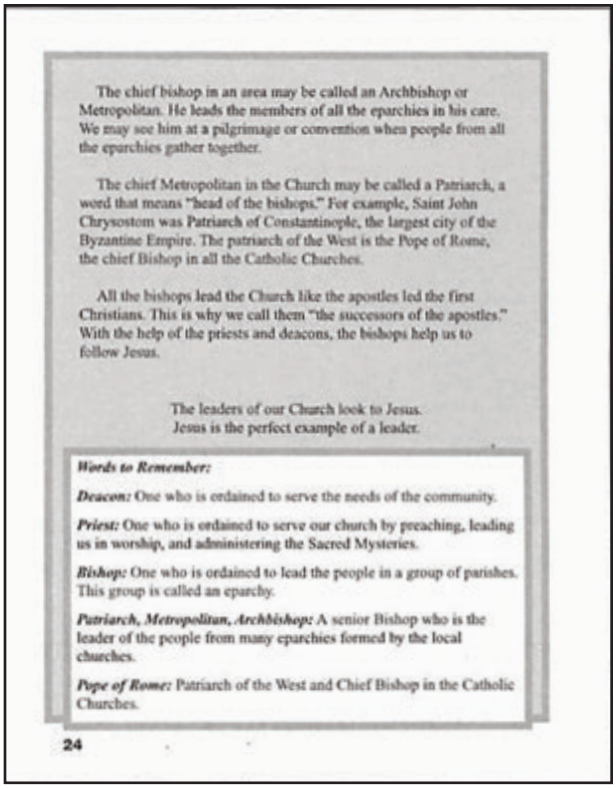
Our Church leaders try to follow the perfect example of Jesus.
What do our Church leaders try to do? (Follow the perfect example of Jesus) Who is the priest in our church? Who is the deacon in our church? (Ask this if you have a deacon.) *What are some ways they help us stay united to God? (Lead us in worship, preach and administer the Mysteries)*

The Bishop may even visit our class to see how well we are doing.
[If your church has been visited recently by the Bishop, discuss the visit with the children.]

... when people from all the eparchies gather together.
Who is our Bishop? What is the name of the chief bishop of an area? (Archbishop or Metropolitan)

... the bishops help us to follow Jesus.
What is the name of the Pope?
[If possible, have a picture of the church leaders. Pictures can be found in religious newspapers, magazine, and newsletters.]

The leaders of the Church lead us to Jesus. They help us learn about the traditions of our Church. We have wonderful leaders who love us. They show us the way to Jesus. Would any of you want to become a leader in our Church? Would any of you boys want to become a priest? What a wonderful way to live your life—leading people to Jesus



The chief bishop in an area may be called an Archbishop or Metropolitan. He leads the members of all the eparchies in his care. We may see him at a pilgrimage or convention when people from all the eparchies gather together.

The chief Metropolitan in the Church may be called a Patriarch, a word that means "head of the bishops." For example, Saint John Chrysostom was Patriarch of Constantinople, the largest city of the Byzantine Empire. The patriarch of the West is the Pope of Rome, the chief Bishop in all the Catholic Churches.

All the bishops lead the Church like the apostles led the first Christians. This is why we call them "the successors of the apostles." With the help of the priests and deacons, the bishops help us to follow Jesus.

The leaders of our Church look to Jesus.
Jesus is the perfect example of a leader.

Words to Remember:

Deacon: One who is ordained to serve the needs of the community.

Priest: One who is ordained to serve our church by preaching, leading us in worship, and administering the Sacred Mysteries.

Bishop: One who is ordained to lead the people in a group of parishes. This group is called an eparchy.

Patriarch, Metropolitan, Archbishop: A senior Bishop who is the leader of the people from many eparchies formed by the local churches.

Pope of Rome: Patriarch of the West and Chief Bishop in the Catholic Churches.

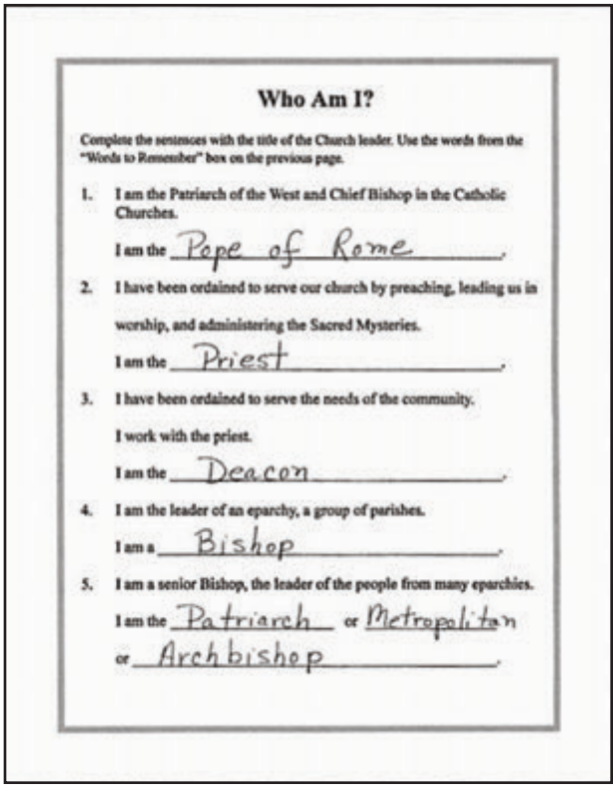
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Activity Tracks

Basic: Who Am I?
[This worksheet is in the student text.]

Today we learned about many leaders of the Church. Did you know we had so many leaders? Let's see how many you remember.
[Ask the students to name them. If possible, hold up the picture and ask them for the name.]

Now we are going to play a guessing game. Read the description of the church leader, and fill in the name of that leader. You may look in the "Words to Remember" box on the previous page for the correct spelling of the name.



Who Am I?

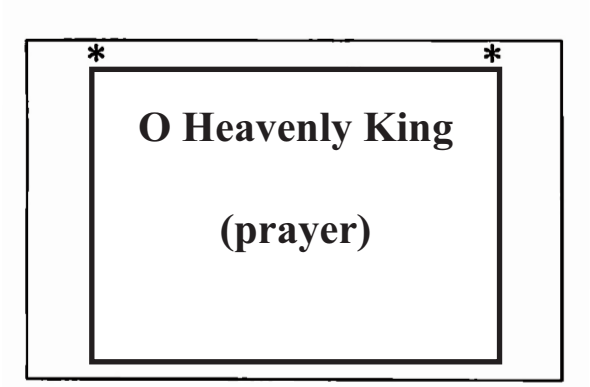
Complete the sentences with the title of the Church leader. Use the words from the "Words to Remember" box on the previous page.

1. **I am the Patriarch of the West and Chief Bishop in the Catholic Churches.**
   I am the Pope of Rome.
2. **I have been ordained to serve our church by preaching, leading us in worship, and administering the Sacred Mysteries.**
   I am the Priest.
3. **I have been ordained to serve the needs of the community.**
   I work with the priest.
   I am the Deacon.
4. **I am the leader of an eparchy, a group of parishes.**
   I am a Bishop.
5. **I am a senior Bishop, the leader of the people from many eparchies.**
   I am the Patriarch **or** Metropolitan **or** Archbishop.

Group: "Our Church Leaders" Poster

Materials: Poster board, "Church Leaders" worksheet, glue, and markers

We learned about many Church leaders today. Each Church leader wears a special vestment. Today we are going to make a poster that illustrates the vestments of a deacon, a priest, and a bishop. [Have the students color the vestments if there is time.] *At the top of the poster let's write "Our Church Leaders."* [If you have a picture of your deacon, priest, and bishop, add the pictures to the poster.]



Craft: "O Heavenly King" Prayer Page

Materials: Prayer worksheet, heavier white paper or construction paper (1/2 sheet per student), hole punch, markers, stickers or stars, scissors, and glue

[Have sample ready to show children.]
Today we are going to make another page for our prayer book. What prayer do we have in our books already? ("O Only Begotten Son")

Today we are going to add the prayer page we used at the beginning of class to our prayer book. What was the name of the prayer? ("O Heavenly King") Paste the prayer on a half sheet of construction paper or the heavier white paper. You can draw pictures around the prayer, or you can add the stars or stickers I have here. Punch two holes to match the ones on the prayer cover. Untie the yarn on our prayer book cover and add this new page. Now pull the yarn through the holes and tie.

Closing

Let's start with the sign of the cross and pray:
"O Heavenly King...."

[For next week's lesson, arrange to have the church open and lit for the church tour that is part of the "Introduction." For next week's craft have the students bring in an empty shoe box.]

O Heavenly King

O heavenly King, Consoler, Spirit of truth, present in all places and filling all things: the Treasury of blessings and the Giver of life! Come, O Good One, and dwell in us. Cleanse us of all stain and save our souls.

Melkite Greek Catholic Church

O Heavenly King

O heavenly King, Consoler, Spirit of truth, who art in all places and fillest all things: Treasury of goodness and Giver of life! Come, and take up Thine abode among us and cleanse us of every stain and save our souls, O Good One

Romanian Greek Catholic Diocese of Canton

O Heavenly King

O heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of truth, You are everywhere present and fill all things: Treasury of blessings and Giver of life! Come and dwell within us. Cleanse us of all stain and save our souls, O gracious Lord.

Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic Metro-politan Province

O Heavenly King

Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of truth, You are present everywhere and fill all things: Treasury of blessings and Giver of life! Come and dwell within us. Cleanse us of all stain and save our souls, O gracious Lord.

Ukrainian Catholic Diocese of St. Josaphat

O Heavenly King

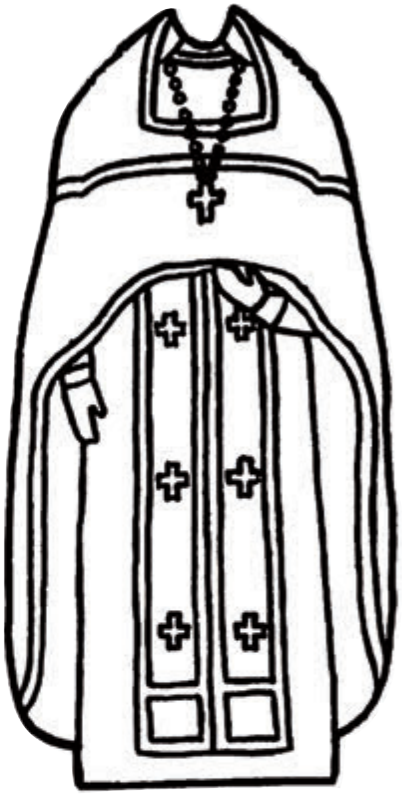
Heavenly King, Advocate, Spirit of truth, who are everywhere present and fill all things: Treasury of blessings, Bestower of life! Come and dwell within us. Cleanse us of all that defiles us and, O good One, save our souls.

Ukrainian Catholic Synod





Bishop’s Vestments



Priest’s Vestments



Deacon’s Vestments

Unit 1
A People of God: The Church

Review

1. What is the Greatest Commandment?
(Lesson 1: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength and you shall love your neighbor as yourself.")

2. Why is Jesus called our Savior?
(Lesson 2: Jesus saved us and gave us eternal life.)

3. Why does Jesus want everyone to be saved?
(Lesson 3: Jesus wants everyone to be with God.)

4. What is a Christian?
(Lesson 5: A Christian is a follower of Jesus Christ who believes in Him and has been baptized.)

5. What is the Church?
(Lesson 5: The Church is the people of God who follow Jesus as their Lord.)

6. Whom do our Church leaders follow?
(Lesson 6: They follow Jesus, the perfect example of a leader.)

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God Is with Us in Our Church

Objective: The students will be able to identify the three parts of the church building: the narthex, nave, and Holy Place.

For the Catechist

For the children in Grade 3 the word church usually means the building where they go to attend services and to be with their family and friends. They are just starting to understand that Church also means the followers of Jesus, the concept introduced in the last unit. This unit shows how the structure of the church building leads the followers of Jesus into the presence of God. The children will learn we go to church to share our common faith and to come together to worship God.

The Power of United Prayer. Jesus tells us we must join in prayer: "Again, [amen,] I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my heavenly Father. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Mt 18:19-20). God calls us together to pray. Our churches give us that opportunity to pray in an environment that reflects our unity with God. We need to encourage the children to attend the Divine Liturgy and other services because God wants us to come together to pray.

Church Buildings. Churches are recognized by their unique structure that says this is the house of God. This unit helps the children understand the ways our church buildings express our worship. The physical arrangement reflects God is with us, and the sacred signs call us to God. Our church buildings are our heaven on earth.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: "O Heavenly King"

Introduction: Tour of the church
Need: Guide pictures from the church worksheet

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read the text. Use questions in the teacher manual to discuss the lesson with the students.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

- *Basic*: This Is My Church
- *Group:* "How Do We Know?" Game
- *Craft:* "Our Church" Diorama
  Alternate: Build Your Own Church Kit

Closing: "O Heavenly King"

[For next week, ask your priest if he would be willing to let the children look at the Holy Table. If possible, have him tell the children about the signs of God's presence on the Holy Table.]

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord: Christ Pantocrator

Teaching Pics:

Great Censing (DL11)

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

The Sacred Church Building

"The church building becomes for us a sacred space, a visible icon of the kingdom of God. Our worship becomes a sacred time wherein we come collectively into God's presence to be united with Him and each other for our sanctification. The church structure, therefore, is given a special blessing or consecration by the bishop. It is almost a kind of baptism to mark this place as a special one where the Lord acts, a portal into the Kingdom of God. The Church also celebrates rites of blessing over all the items used in liturgical worship—icons, vestments, sacred vessels, altar cloths, reliquaries, palms, candles—each of which shares in the function of the church building" (*LLII* 92).

The Structure of the Church

"St. Maximos the Confessor has emphasized that both parts of the Church structure share a common purpose (Mystagogy 2). Maximos affirms that the structure of the church building is an icon symbolizing the unity between God and humanity, between spirit and flesh, between the future and the past, and between symbol and reality. Thus the church structure represents the purpose of the Church itself to lead us into the presence of God, so that we can be united with Him. Through the very structure of the church building the invisible reality of the Church is presented to our bodily eyes even as we and our gifts are transformed into a heavenly reality" (*LLI* 14).

The Byzantine Church Building

"All these aspects of worship find concrete expression in the Byzantine church building. Standing before the Pantokrator, the image of the inexpressible God, we find ourselves called to bow down and acknowledge our true status before God. We are surrounded by appointments recalling both the temple of Jerusalem and its heavenly prototype (cf Ex 25:1-27:21), but clearly focused on the mystery of Christ at work among us. Standing shoulder to shoulder with the icons of the saints we take our place in the community of the Holy Spirit" (*LLII* 12).

The Purpose of the Church Building

"Some people feel that church buildings are unnecessary since God is present everywhere, even in the field under the stars. If silent prayer for communing with God were the sole purpose of the church building, this argument would have weight, as many other places would serve this purpose as well. Of course, we sometimes take refuge in our churches as places of quiet and peace for private prayer, but the true purpose of the church building becomes manifest only with the liturgy celebrated there. There are essential aspects of His presence and His relationship to us which can be perceived best in the church building as it comes alive through use. In the Church's liturgical worship God is truly acting in the midst of His people. The Lord is at work, creating us anew: salvation is a continuous happening, as the Fathers often proclaimed. Hence, in the divine services, we are present to the saving events of Christ's paschal mystery as well as to the entire Church across time and space, which lives through His saving acts. The timeless and universal effect of these events is accented when they are celebrated in a properly appointed church building representing the fullness of creation touched by the saving hand of God" (*LLII* 12-13).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Let's start our prayers with the sign of the cross and pray: "O Heavenly King. . . ."

Introduction

Today we are going on a tour. Has anyone ever gone on a tour of a building? Why do people go on a tour? Today we are going on a tour of our church. I want you to look at details about our church. In fact, I have some cards here that identify some of the places we will look. [Use the cards from the Church Tour worksheet page.] *I will give each of you a card. We will go into the church as a group. Then I want you to walk to that part of the building that matches your card. How should we act in church? (We must be quiet and behave in a respectful manner.) That is right. We are in God's presence; we are in God's house. We must act respectfully. Okay, let's go to church.*

[In advance arrange to have the lights on in the church. Have each student venerate the icon on the icon table or stand before they walk to the location on their card. Then have the students return to the back of the church.]

Now we are going to walk around the church, and when we come to the place that your card describes, I want you to read your card. [Go to the icon stand first. Then continue until all the cards are read. Return to the classroom at the end of the tour.]

Did you ever go on tour of a church? Where? [Let the students tell about a church they might have visited.] *We go to church to be with God. What are some other reasons you come to church? (To pray, to go to the Divine Liturgy and other church services) Last week we learned that Church also means the followers of Jesus Christ. This week we will learn about the church building where the followers of Jesus gather.*

Does a church building look different from other buildings? What are some ways we can tell we are walking by a church? (The cross, the domes, the icons on the building) Our church buildings show us in many ways that we are in the presence of God.

Let's turn to our lesson to read about our church.



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God is With Us in Our Church

We have learned that the Church is the people of God who follow Jesus as their Lord. It is always good for people to gather together to share their common faith. That is why we go to church. Our church building is our place to come together to worship God.

Jesus wants us to know that God is with us when we come together to pray. In the Bible we read that Jesus told the disciples, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20). Every time we are in church, we are in the presence of God.

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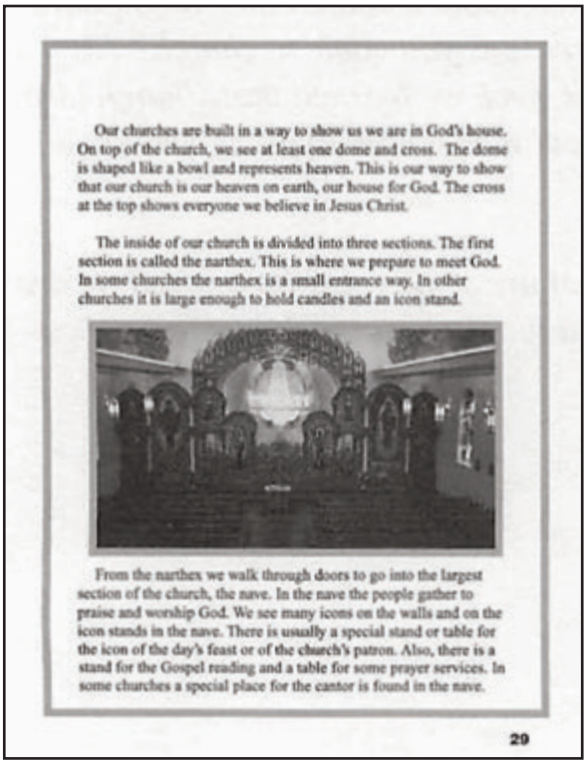
Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

Does the church on this page look like our church? What is the same? What is different? Why do we have church buildings? Let's turn to our lesson.

... to gather together to share their common faith.
What does faith mean? (What we believe) Christians share a common faith, a common belief. In whom does a Christian believe? (In Jesus Christ) Why do we go to church? (To come together to worship and pray to God) What does worship mean? (To honor)

Every time we are in church, we are in the presence of God.
When will Jesus be with us? (When we come together to pray) How do we know? (He told us according to the Gospel.) Why is "God Is with Us in Our Church " a good title for this lesson? (God is with us when we are in church; we are in the presence of God.)



Our churches are built in a way to show us we are in God's house. On top of the church, we see at least one dome and cross. The dome is shaped like a bowl and represents heaven. This is our way to show that our church is our heaven on earth, our house for God. The cross at the top shows everyone we believe in Jesus Christ.

The inside of our church is divided into three sections. The first section is called the narthex. This is where we prepare to meet God. In some churches the narthex is a small entrance way. In other churches it is large enough to hold candles and an icon stand.

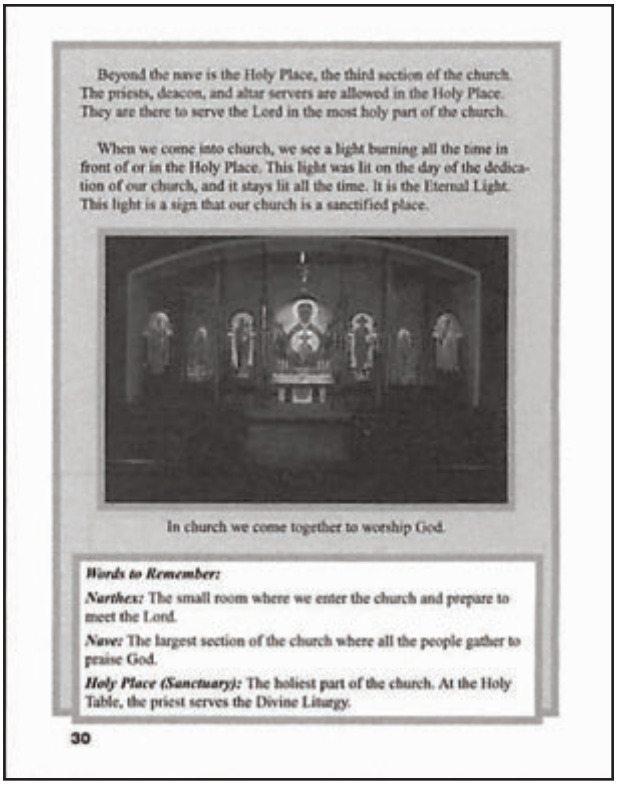
From the narthex we walk through doors to go into the largest section of the church, the nave. In the nave the people gather to praise and worship God. We see many icons on the walls and on the icon stands in the nave. There is usually a special stand or table for the icon of the day's feast or of the church's patron. Also, there is a stand for the Gospel reading and a table for some prayer services. In some churches a special place for the cantor is found in the nave.

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... to hold candles and an icon stand.
What does the dome on the church represent? (Heaven) What is on top of the dome? (A cross) Whom does the cross say we believe in? (Jesus) What is the narthex? (The entrance way where we prepare to meet God)

... a special place for the cantor is found in the nave.
What is icon table or stand? (The small table in the front of the nave) When we come to church, we should walk up to the icon stand(s), cross ourselves, bow, and kiss the icon. We may light a candle too. These are ways we worship God in His house.

... our church is a sanctified place.
What does sanctified mean? (Holy) Who is allowed in the Holy Place? (Priest, deacon, and altar servers) Why is the eternal lamp burning? (It is a sign that our church is holy.) On what day was this light lit? (On the dedication day of the church) How long will it stay lit? (Forever)


Beyond the nave is the Holy Place, the third section of the church. The priests, deacon, and altar servers are allowed in the Holy Place. They are there to serve the Lord in the most holy part of the church.

When we come into church, we see a light burning all the time in front of or in the Holy Place. This light was lit on the day of the dedication of our church, and it stays lit all the time. It is the Eternal Light. This light is a sign that our church is a sanctified place.

In church we come together to worship God.

Words to Remember:

Narthex: The small room where we enter the church and prepare to meet the Lord.

Nave: The largest section of the church where all the people gather to praise God.

Holy Place (Sanctuary): The holiest part of the church. At the Holy Table, the priest serves the Divine Liturgy.

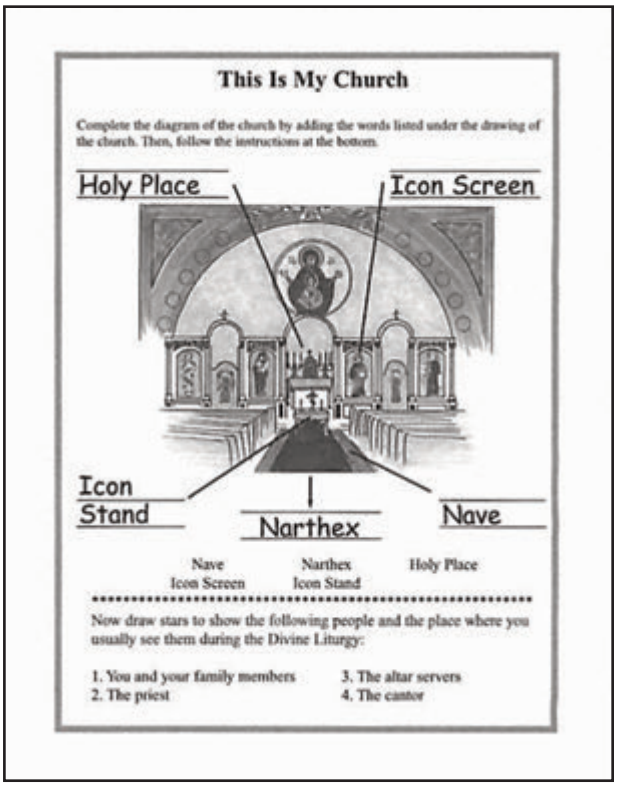
30

Let's review: *What is the section of the church that you first walk into called? (The narthex) What is the middle section called? (The nave) What is the next section? (The Holy Place) In the narthex we prepare to meet God, in the nave we join together to pray to God, and in the Holy Place God is present. Should we be quiet in church? (Yes) Why? (We are in God's house; we should show our respect.)*

Activity Tracks

Basic: This Is My Church
[This worksheet is in the student text.]

Let's say the words at the bottom of the page. Now write the word on the line in the part of the church where it belongs. [Give a few minutes to complete this. Walk around and ask the students to say the word as they write it.] *Now let's read the instructions at the bottom and follow the directions. We are going to make this a picture of our church,* [Say the name of your church and have them write the name at the top. Read each sentence, and wait until the students make the stars.] *Do you always sit in the same place? What is closest to you to remind you God is with you?* [Allow time for discussion.]


This Is My Church

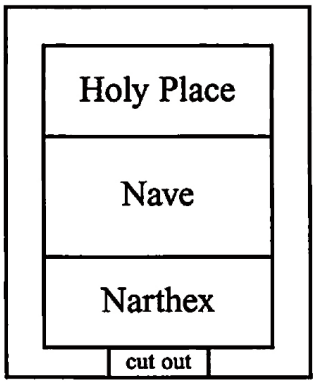
Complete the diagram of the church by adding the words listed under the drawing of the church. Then, follow the instructions at the bottom.

Holy Place
Icon Screen
Icon Stand
Narthex
Nave

Nave
Icon Screen
Narthex
Icon Stand
Holy Place

Now draw stars to show the following people and the place where you usually see them during the Divine Liturgy:

1. You and your family members
2. The priest
3. The altar servers
4. The cantor



Group: "How Do We Know?" Game

Materials: Game cube made from worksheet

We learned about the different parts of the church today. Now we are going to play a game. [In advance make the game cube from the worksheet.] *When it is your turn, roll the cube. Identify something you can find in that part of the church. How does it show us God is with us?* [You can turn this into a competition with teams and points.]

Craft: "Our Church" Diorama

Materials: shoe box, markers

[Have sample ready to show children.] *Today we are going to start making a model of our church. We will use a shoe box for the walls. First let's draw two lines to separate the box into three sections. Let's cut out a door on one of the smaller sides of the box—either end. This will be the door entrance to the church. Now we will know where to put the items in the church. Let's write the name of that part of the church on the bottom of the box (the floor of the church). What do we call the part of the church we walk into from the front door? (Narthex) Let's print that in the first section of the box after the door. What is the next part of the church? (Nave) Let's print that. What is the next part called? (Holy Place) Let's print that. Next week we will complete our diorama.* [Remind the children who forgot their shoe boxes to bring one in next week.]

Alternate: Build Your Own Church kit

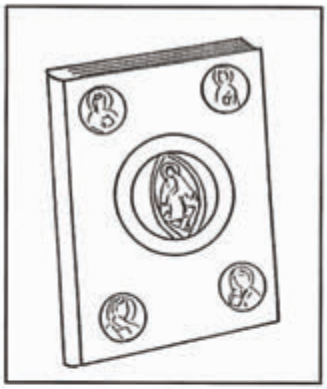
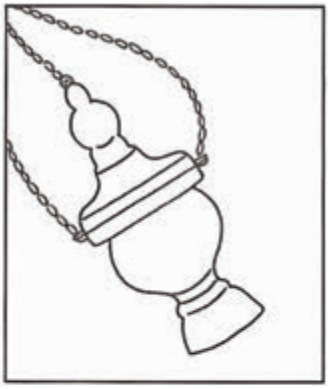
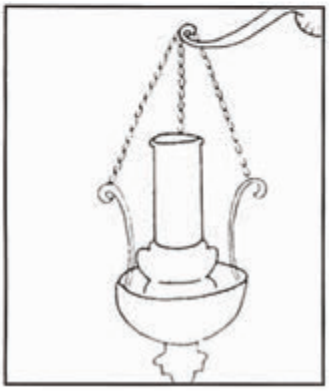
Materials: Kit, scissors, contact cement, tape.

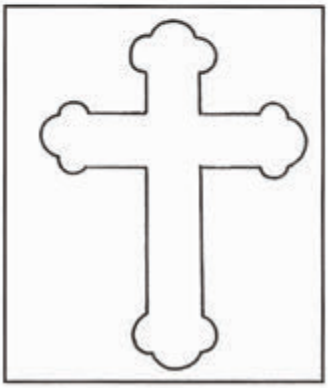
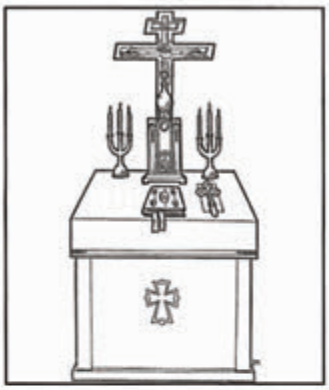
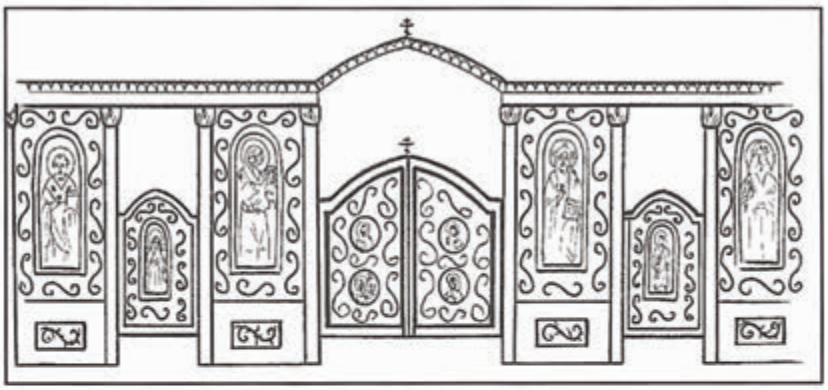
Disassemble the book, giving each student a page to cut out. Following the instructions given in the book, help the students assemble the model, using contact cement. You may wish to reinforce the joints with a heavy, clear plastic tape. Be sure that students recognize the distinctions between the narthex, the nave and the holy place (apse). If you do not complete the project, set it aside until lesson 9.

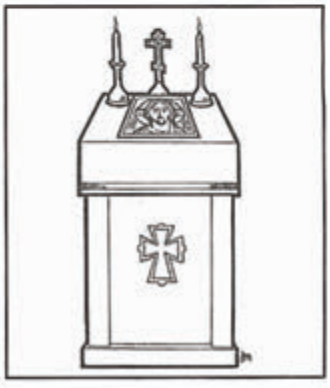
Closing

[Use the prayer page from last week. Modify the text for your jurisdiction.] *Let's start with the sign of the cross and pray, "O Heavenly King. ..."*

[For next week, ask your priest if he would be willing to let the children look at the Holy Table. If possible, have him tell the children about the signs of God's presence on the Holy Table.]

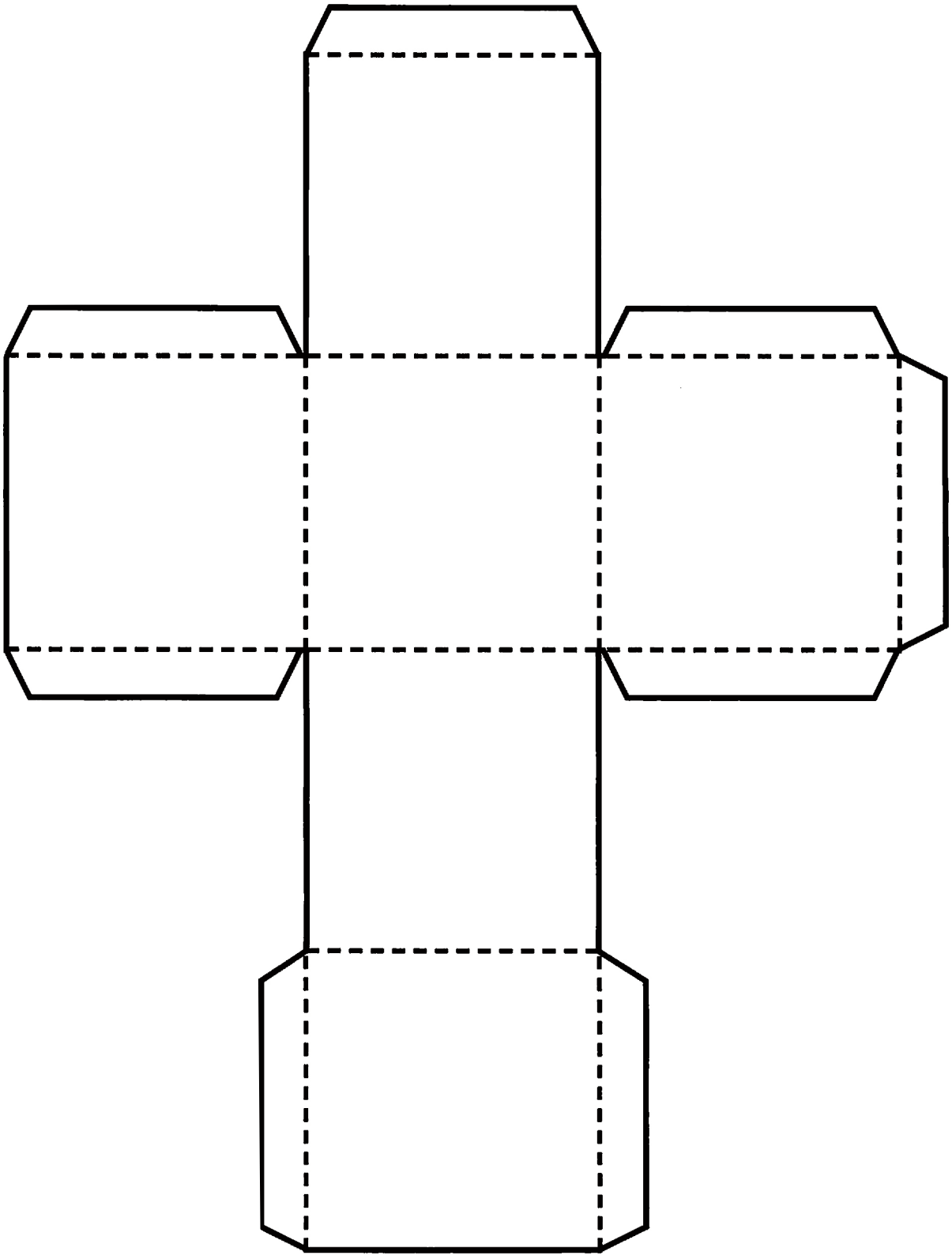







Duplicate this page. Cut out the names and paste to the back of the pictures from the previous page.

Censer	Gospel Book	Baptismal Font
Hand Cross	Candles	Eternal Lamp
Icon Screen		Holy Table
Icon Table	View from the Narthex To the Nave	



Directions: Cut along the black lines. Fold along the broken lines. Insert the tabs to make a cube. Write the following words on the different sides of the cube: Narthex, Nave, Holy Place

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ΜΡ
ΘΥ
ΙC ΧC


ΙC
ΧC

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We Meet the Lord Jesus in the Holy Place

Objective: The students will be able to name three signs of God's presence found on the Holy Table: the Gospel Book, the hand cross and the Tabernacle.

For the Catechist

A sign is something that identifies a location or points to an action. When we see a stop sign, we know to stop. When we see the name of a street on a sign, we know our location. Symbols identify a real experience. A symbol participates in the reality of the experience. Our church has both signs and symbols to help us realize God is with us. This lesson reinforces the meaning of the signs of God's presence in the Holy Place.

In the Preschool book there is a lesson about the Holy Table. The children learned to recognize and name what is on the Holy Table. This year the children will build on this knowledge and learn how these signs point to God's presence in the Holy Place.

One of the psalms praises God's presence in the Holy Place: "O Lord, I love the house where you dwell, the tenting-place of your glory" (Psalm 26:8). We also need to learn to love God's house, our church, because God is there. By encouraging the children to attend the Divine Liturgy and other church services, we are helping them learn to want to be in the presence of the Lord. By learning to want to be with God, they will learn to think about God always. This will help them make the right choices as they grow older.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: "O Heavenly King"
[If your priest agreed to tell the children about the signs of God's presence on the Holy Table, have the children go right to the church. Say the opening prayer in church.]

Introduction: Coming together at the table **Need:** white tablecloth, Bible, and cross

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read the text. Use questions in the teacher manual to discuss the lesson with the students.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

- *Basic*: Our Church
- *Group:* Guess the Word
- *Craft:* Our Church Diorama
  Alternate: Build Your Own Iconostasis and Altar kit

Closing: "O Heavenly King"

[Ask children to bring in a picture from home for next week's lesson.]

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord: The Four Evangelists

Teaching Pics:

Divine Liturgy (DL 2, DL 8, DL 17)

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

The Holy Place

"The sanctuary and the nave have been given different meanings. The altar area represents the throne of God, become truly present as 'our Father in heaven' who has 'lowered the heavens' to dwell among us in His only Son. The nave, place of the worshipping community, signifies the pilgrim Church on its journey toward the kingdom of God. The goal of this pilgrim Church is to achieve unity with God beginning in this life and culminating in the future world. ('Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.')" (*LLII* 14).

The Altar, The Holy Table

"The altar is separated from the nave as befitting God's place. It is on a raised platform, set back from the rest of the church and has a screen in front of it. All this serves to remind us that we are NOT God, and God is NOT us. Out of His love for us He comes to us and becomes one of us, but He still remains forever beyond us. As He has willed to come down to us, so even today His Word is read in the middle of the congregation, and the gifts are brought out to the people, both at the Great Entrance and for Communion, for He must come to us; we cannot go to Him without His help. For this reason also, most of the other Mysteries of the Church are celebrated in the midst of the people.

"In most churches today the bema is no longer found. Instead, there is a raised area in front of the icon screen usually extending its width, called the solea. In the center of the solea is a small rounded extension, the ambon, from which the Gospel is read. Again, we see the physical reality of the Word reaching out to us, and not staying 'in its place'" (*LW* 44).

The Gospels

"The evangelists do not present a photographic reproduction of Jesus' words and deeds. They sketch a portrait of the meaning behind His words and deeds as understood by the Church enlightened through the Holy Spirit. Our understanding of the Gospels and the other Scriptures, as well as the whole pattern of God's dealings with humanity, is aided when we come to appreciate this stance" (*LLI* 49).

The Gospel Readings

"During the course of the year the Byzantine Churches read all of the four Gospels at divine services. The Gospel of St. Matthew is read from Pentecost to the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (September 14). The Gospel of St. Luke is read from then to the beginning of the Great Fast. The Gospel of St. Mark is read during the Great Fast. The weekday readings of Mark occur at the ends of the periods of Matthew and Luke. The Gospel of St. John is read during the fifty days from Pascha (Easter) to Pentecost, representing the most ancient part of the cycle. Additionally, the Gospel passages recounting special events in our Lord's life are read on the annual commemorating feasts. Only part of the public reading of the Gospel can be heard if attendance is limited to Sundays and Holydays" (*LLI* 50).

The Proclamation of the Good News

"The Gospels are the Word of God, not because they mechanically reproduce everything that Christ said but because they are written about him under the impulse of the Spirit whom Christ has sent. "I have told you all this while I am still here with you. The Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and will call to your minds all that I have told you" (John 14:25-26). The Holy Spirit came and 'overshadowed' the Evangelists. He inspired them to verbalize in the best possible way the message of the Gospel.

"The Gospels translate into human language and into human experience the life-giving Incarnation of the Son, who thus became again 'incarnate of the Holy Spirit' in the word of man. God allows us to meet him in his mystery in this other way. The Word of God is now living with us forever in a Book through which he still comes alive in us and will awaken in us the same life that he awakened in its authors and in those to whom he originally spoke" (FG 147).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Before beginning, cover your classroom table with a table cloth. Put the Bible and a cross on the table. Then begin, *today we are going to pray at this table. Let's pray,"O Heavenly King."*
[If your priest agreed to tell the children about the signs of God's presence on the Holy Table, have the children go right to the church. Say the opening prayer in church. Use this time with the priest for the introduction. If you were unable to arrange a tour, continue with the "Introduction" below.]

Introduction

Praying by the table with the white cloth was special today. What else was on that table? (A Bible and a cross) Now we are going to move the Bible and the cross to our icon table. This time we are going to gather around the table and talk about the many important meals we have at a dinner table. Soon it will be Thanksgiving. How many of you enjoy a special Thanksgiving dinner? What are some other special dinners? (Birthdays, Christmas, Pascha)

Why do we gather around the table when it is time to eat? (We want to be together while we eat.) At church the same thing happens. We want to be near each other when we worship God. We come together to receive the Body and Blood of Jesus. The table we gather around is the Holy Table. Does anyone remember the name of the holiest part of the church? (Holy Place) The Holy Table is in that part, the Holy Place. At the Holy Table the priest offers the gift of bread and wine. Just as we joined together to eat at the table this morning, we join together in church to eat of the Body and Blood of Jesus that was prepared at the Holy Table.

Is there anything else on the Holy Table in church? [Arrange for the children to go into church even if your priest is not available. Let the children venerate the icon on the icon table and stop there.] *Where is the Holy Table? (On the other side of the icon screen) Are you able to see anything on the Holy Table?* [This might be possible in some churches.] *(Gospel Book, the cross, the tabernacle, and candles) Let's venerate the icon on the icon table before we go back to our rooms. Let's walk quietly back to the room.*

Last week we learned that we should kiss the icon on the icon table when we come to church. Does anyone remember why? (To meet and worship God as soon as we come to church.) Today we learned that Jesus is present in the Holy Place. The icon table is right before the Holy Place. That is a good place to go to start worshiping God.

Let's turn to our lesson.


8

We Meet the Lord Jesus in the Holy Place

When we come into church, we bow to honor God. We know we are in God's presence. We kiss the icon on the icon table. We may light a candle as our offering to God.

32

Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

... we bow to honor God.
Why do we bow when we come into church? (To honor God. God is present in church.) Why should we make the sign of the cross and bow when we enter and leave the church? (To show respect to God)
What does respect mean? (To honor, to value, to worship)


At the front of the church is the Holy Place, the most special part of the church. In the Holy Place there are many signs that show God is with us. Many of these signs are on the Holy Table. The Holy Table is in the middle of the Holy Place. At this table the priest serves the Divine Liturgy. At this table the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. From this Holy Table, the priest takes the Eucharist to the people receiving Holy Communion.

The Tabernacle is also on the Holy Table. The tabernacle is the place in which Eucharist from the Divine Liturgy is kept. Our priest or deacon takes the Eucharist from the Tabernacle to people who are sick and cannot come to church.

33

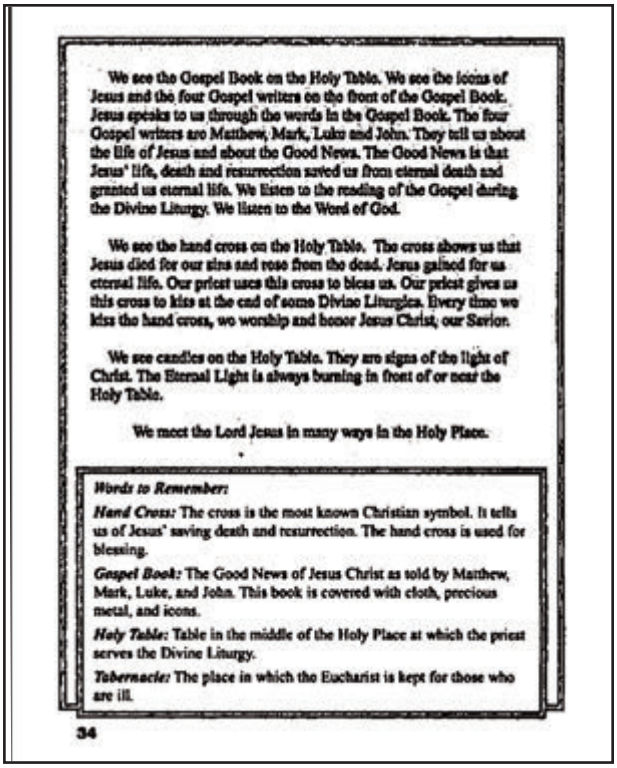
... the priest takes the Eucharist to the people receiving Holy Communion.
In what part of the church is the Holy Table? (In the Holy Place) The Divine Liturgy is celebrated at the Holy Table. What does the priest do at the Holy Table? (Changes the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus) The priest takes the Holy Communion from the Holy Table to the people who are waiting in the nave of the church. From the Holy Place Jesus comes to us.

[Have the children name what they see on the Holy Table in the picture. As you read the next page, you might want to have the children turn back to look at the picture again.]

We listen to the reading of the Gospel during the Divine Liturgy.
Who wrote the Gospels? (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) When do we listen to the Gospel reading? (During the Divine Liturgy.) Who speaks to us in the Gospel? (Jesus)

Every time we kiss the hand cross, we worship and honor Jesus Christ, our Savior.
We learned in our second lesson that a Savior is a special leader who brings people to eternal life. Why is Jesus our Savior? (He granted us eternal life.) Why should we worship and honor Him? (We want to thank Him for uniting us to God.)

We meet the Lord Jesus in many ways in the Holy Place.
Name three signs of God's presence on the Holy Table. (The Gospel Book, Tabernacle, and hand cross) What are some ways we meet and worship God through these signs? (Kissing icons, receiving the Eucharist, listening to the Gospel, kissing the hand cross)



We see the Gospel Book on the Holy Table. We see the icons of Jesus and the four Gospel writers on the front of the Gospel Book. Jesus speaks to us through the words in the Gospel Book. The four Gospel writers are Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. They tell us about the life of Jesus and about the Good News. The Good News is that Jesus' life, death and resurrection saved us from eternal death and granted us eternal life. We listen to the reading of the Gospel during the Divine Liturgy. We listen to the Word of God.

We see the hand cross on the Holy Table. The cross shows us that Jesus died for our sins and rose from the dead. Jesus gained for us eternal life. Our priest uses this cross to bless us. Our priest gives us this cross to kiss at the end of some Divine Liturgies. Every time we kiss the hand cross, we worship and honor Jesus Christ, our Savior.

We see candles on the Holy Table. They are signs of the light of Christ. The Eternal Light is always burning in front of or near the Holy Table.

We meet the Lord Jesus in many ways in the Holy Place.

Words to Remember:

Hand Cross: The cross is the most known Christian symbol. It tells us of Jesus' saving death and resurrection. The hand cross is used for blessing.

Gospel Book: The Good News of Jesus Christ as told by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. This book is covered with cloth, precious metal, and icons.

Holy Table: Table in the middle of the Holy Place at which the priest serves the Divine Liturgy.

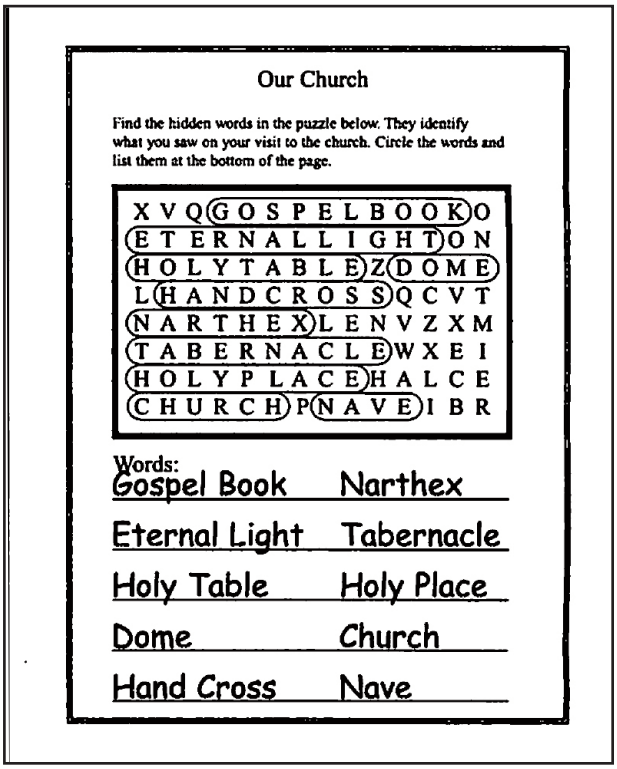
Tabernacle: The place in which the Eucharist is kept for those who are ill.

34

Activity Tracks

Basic: Our Church
[This worksheet is in the student text.]

During the past two weeks, we have been learning about our church. Today's worksheet gives you a chance to see how many words you remember. Circle the letters that spell the word. Then list the words at the bottom of the page. [Even if there are two words such as Gospel Book, count it as one. There are ten words in the puzzle.]



Our Church

Find the hidden words in the puzzle below. They identify what you saw on your visit to the church. Circle the words and list them at the bottom of the page.

X V Q (G O S P E L B O O K) O
(E T E R N A L L I G H T) O N
(H O L Y T A B L E) Z (D O M E)
L (H A N D C R O S S) Q C V T
(N A R T H E X) L E N V Z X M
(T A B E R N A C L E) W X E I
(H O L Y P L A C E) H A L C E
(C H U R C H) P (N A V E) I B R

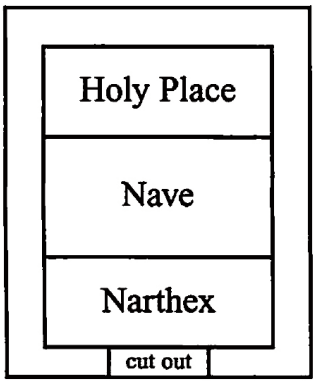
Words:

Gospel Book	Narthex
Eternal Light	Tabernacle
Holy Table	Holy Place
Dome	Church
Hand Cross	Nave

Group: Guess the Word

Materials: "Our Church" worksheet, chalkboard and chalk or large sheet of paper and marker

[Have the children guess the letters for the words. When a letter is right, add a segment to the drawing of the church—either start with a blank page and add the lines or start with the outline and use a marker to darken the drawing.] *Today we are going to talk about the words we learned. But before we talk about them, we will have to guess what they are. I have some of the words on my desk. I need someone to volunteer. Pick one word, and on the board write a space for each letter of the word. The rest of us will try to guess the letters in the word. A part of the church is drawn each time the guess is right. When we have all the letters, the student who is at the board will tell what he or she learned about that word in today's lesson.* [Follow this procedure until all the words are guessed.]



Craft: "Our Church" Diorama

Materials: Box that was used last week, "Holy Place" and "Icon Screen" worksheets (copied onto card stock), scissors, markers, and glue

Today we will furnish our church with an icon screen and a holy table. Have the children color, then cut out the drawings on the Holy Place worksheets. Glue the icon screen in the box on the line between the holy place and the nave. Glue the holy table in the middle of the holy place. Help the children identity the items on the holy table and the icons on the holy screen.

[If there is time, cover the outside of the box with construction paper.] *Write the name of our church on the side of the box. Let's add one more part to our church. Draw a star in the part of the nave where you and your family sit.* [If you have room, display the churches and Holy Tables around the room for a few weeks before the students take them home.]

Alternate: Build Your Own Church kit

Materials: Kit, scissors, contact cement, tape.

Disassemble the book, giving each student some items to cut out and color. Following the instructions given in the book, help the students assemble the model, using contact cement. You may wish to reinforce the joints with a heavy, clear plastic tape. Be sure that students can identify the items on the holy table. If you do not complete the project, set it aside until lesson 9.

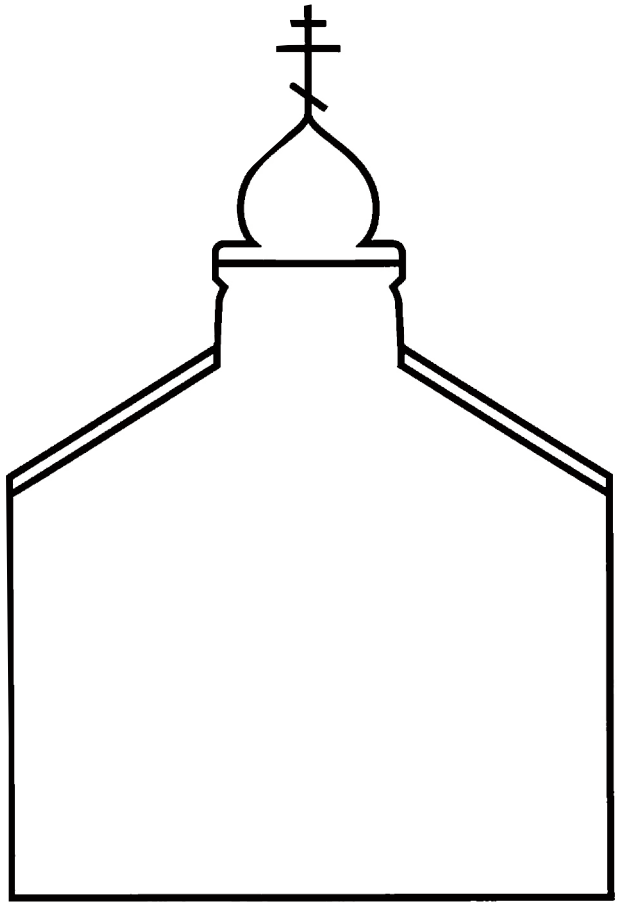
Closing

Let's make the sign of the cross and pray, "O Heavenly King." We can use our prayer books to help us with the words. [Keep the prayer books available on the icon table.]

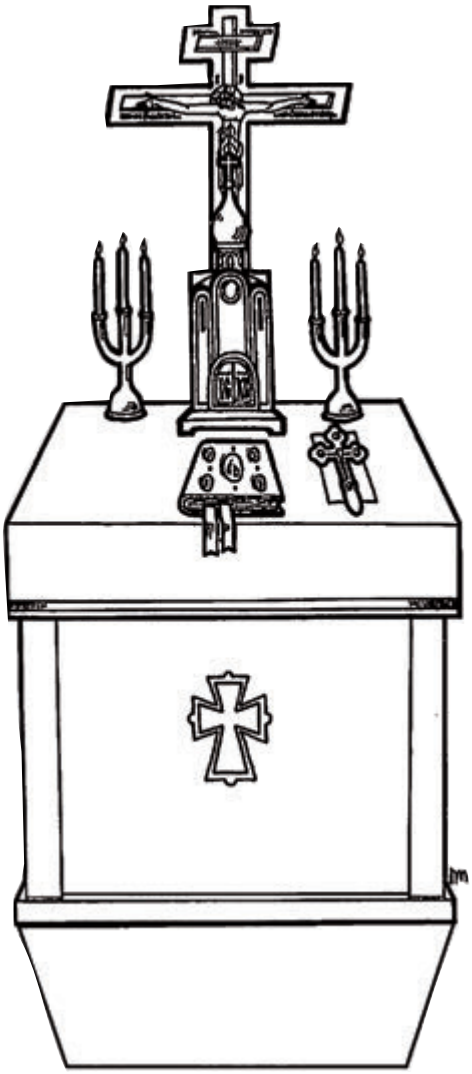
For next week I'd like you to bring in one picture of any members of your family. [This picture will be used to introduce the concept of image that will be discussed in the icon lesson.] *Please remember to bring in a picture.*

Gospel Book	**Narthex**
Tabernacle	**Holy Table**
Holy Place	**Eternal Light**

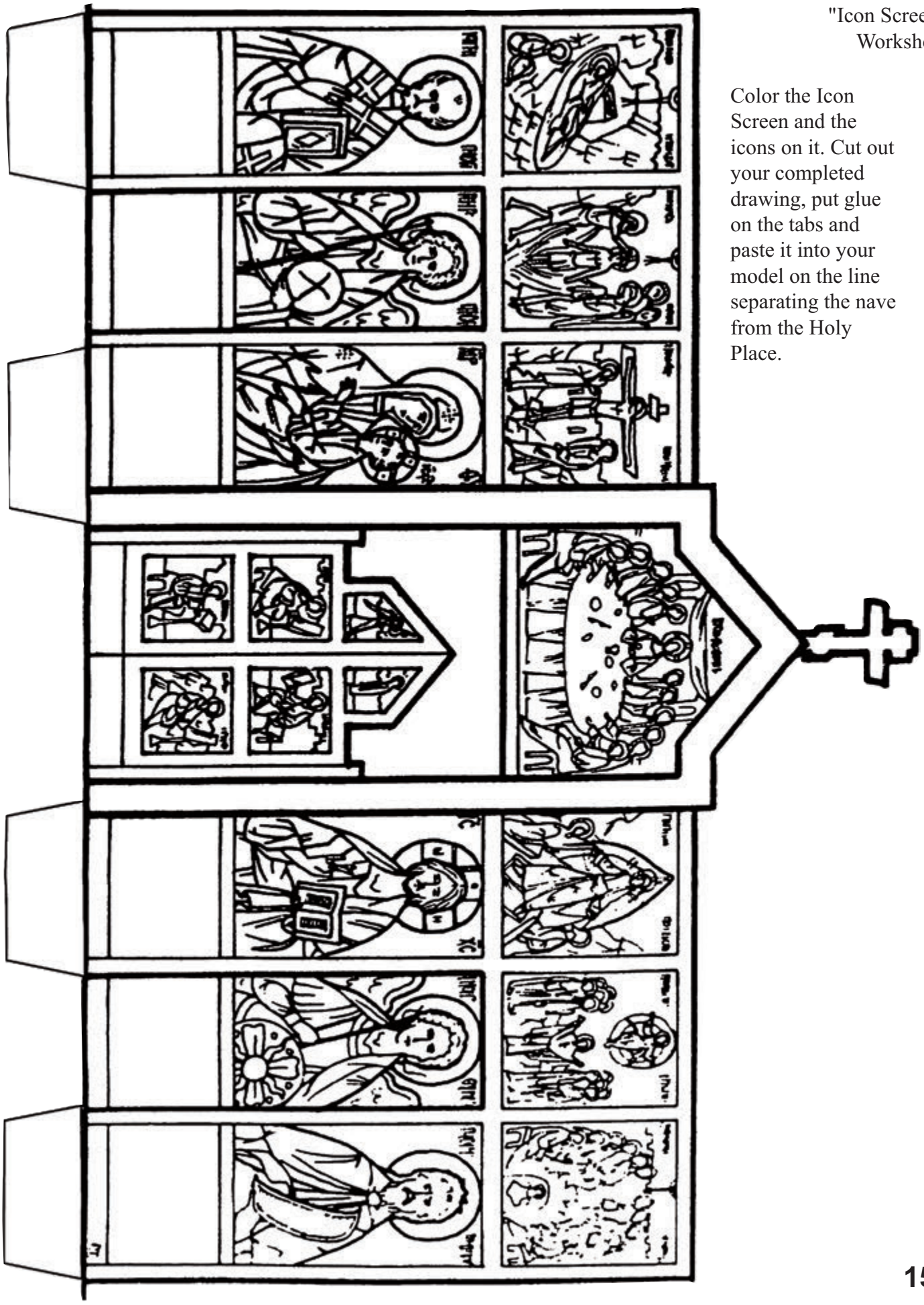
"Church" Worksheet



Color the Holy Table and the items on it. Cut out your completed drawing, put glue on the tab and paste it into your model in the holy place.



Color the Icon Screen and the icons on it. Cut out your completed drawing, put glue on the tabs and paste it into your model on the line separating the nave from the Holy Place.



We Meet the Lord Jesus in Icons

Objective: The students will be able to define icons as the holy images of Saints or events that recall God's presence.

For the Catechist

Learning about icons can be a lifetime commitment. Each line and color adds to our encounter with God. Through icons we experience the peace that one day can be ours if we follow Jesus. Through icons we remember God's promise to be with us always. That is the reason we should have icon corners in our homes. We need to pray in front of our icons and remember that we are in God's presence every minute of every day.

Children in Grade 3 have been looking at and learning about icons since they started coming to church. In the "Observances" unit of each grade level in this series, they have read and learned about many icons. In this lesson they are going to learn that the icons and the icon screen are an important part of our church buildings. Our icons help us remember we are part of an ancient Church family in communion with the Holy Spirit. Our icons help us recall the people who have been called by God to form the Church, the Body of Christ.

Icons. Icons are unlike any other form of art. They are purposely not natural looking. The figure or scene is presented in a "transfigured" state, as existing in eternity. Icons are an aid to meditation and prayer and have been termed "windows" through which we may glimpse the stillness and peace of heaven. They are valued as teaching tools in the same vein as the Gospel. Just as the evangelists, iconographers pray and fast before they visually write the inspired Word of God. They pray for direction from the Holy Spirit to help them write their visual expression of the Word

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: "O Heavenly King"

Introduction: Discussion of icons
Need: picture from home, icons

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read the text. Use questions in the teacher manual to discuss the lesson with the students.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

- *Basic*: The Icon Screen
- *Group:* "Our Church" Review
- *Craft:* Icon Album
  Alternate: Build Your Own... Kits

Closing: "O Heavenly King"

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord: The Icon Screen,
Saint Nicholas, Saint Stephen,
Saint Michael the Archangel

Teaching Pics:

Great Censing (DL11)

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

Iconography

"Iconography, therefore, is more than simply an invitation to remember a person or event. It is in addition an attempt to make present the meaning of what is depicted, so that we can share in the reality of what God is doing for us. Such a participation is only possible in the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus the discipline of the Church requires prayer for the inspiration of the Spirit by the Iconographer and those who will pray through the icons. Iconography is an expression of Tradition in shape, color, and form, or as one theologian put it, Icons are theology in color'" (*SLW* 13).

Icons

"The walls of Byzantine church buildings are usually covered with icons, proclaiming a 'theology in color.' They follow certain traditional forms in portraying the scenes or persons depicted in order to reveal the teaching of the Church. They visually attract the beholder by expressing levels of meaning too complex for words. Icons derive from the mystery of the incarnation, in that Christ is 'the icon of the invisible God' (Col, 1:15). In the incarnation God has become visible in human form, making it possible to depict Him in Christ.... The icons of the saints are painted according to the same principles as the icon of Christ to show deification by the Spirit into the image of God. The saints' eyes, the mirrors of the soul, are open wide to represent wisdom and spiritual insight. Their posture and clothing are harmoniously arranged to represent integrity and wholeness of being. Icons de-emphasize physical features (physiognomy) in order to lead us to a perception of spiritual reality and beauty" (*LLII* 13).

Veneration of Icons

"We pray whenever possible standing before an icon which is considered in our Tradition a 'window to heaven.' We bow before them and kiss them as part of our prayer in order to honor the holy ones depicted on them. God became man in a depictable way; His Spirit visibly enlivens the saints. This is why we can paint and venerate icons as part of our prayer life. In doing so we proclaim that God has truly assumed everything human, except sin, and transfigured all creation by His light."

"Perhaps the most common method for venerating icons is as follows: 1) Make a metany. 2) Kiss the principal figure(s) on the icon. Usually we kiss the hand, the foot or the hem of the garment of Christ or the saint represented. When venerating icons depicting several figures, such as the Theotokos carrying the child Jesus, many people kiss each principal figure on the icon. 3) Make another metany. 4) If candles are available, light one, place it in the proper receptacle and offer your prayer" *(DC* 44).

The Icon Screen

"The icon screen is the most distinctive feature of the Byzantine church structure. Its practical function is to set apart the altar area from the main body of the church (the nave). This architectural purpose of the icon screen was drawn from the style of other public structures in the Roman and Byzantine Empire. The usual division between the area for the public and that for the official function was a low fence, often enhanced by columns with an architrave (a lintel running along the tops of the columns). Icons were given a more prominent place on the screen after the ninth century controversy with the iconoclasts (icon breakers) had highlighted the connection with the incarnation" (*LLII* 13-14).

"The theological function of the icon screen is to be the 'gate of paradise,' proclaiming that, through Christ, 'the reflection of the Father's glory, the exact representation of the Father's being' (Heb 1:3), we have access to the Father and to the Kingdom of God. The icons of the Mother of God, the apostles, the gospel scenes on the screen are placed there because of their connection with the mystery of the incarnation. Likewise the Church, represented by the icons of the parish patrons, is there as the continuation of the incarnation, affording us spiritual and bodily unity with God" (*LLII* 14).

The Presence of God in the Icon

"We call the sacred painting of our Church icons because they manifest the otherwise hidden presence of God and are sacraments which put the soul in direct contact with this presence. The icon is a witness which in some way extends the presence of the saints, of the Holy Scriptures, and makes them present realities. The theology of icons, which received its formal pronouncement at the Seventh Ecumenical Council of Nicea (787 A.D.), is based on the doctrines of the Incarnation of the Redemption.

"'Christ,' says St. Paul, 'is the icon of the invisible God' (Col. 1:15). Christ is the Icon of the Father because he manifests the Father to mankind. 'He who sees me, sees the Father,' Jesus said to Thomas. The underlying idea of icon, as indeed of the Logos, the Word of God, is the manifestation of the hidden. The icon not only manifest the hidden, it shares in the reality of what it represents. 'Icon does not demand equality with the archetype,' wrote St. John of Damascus, 'but in fact we know that Christ, the Icon of the Father, is identical with the Father in every particular, differing from him only by the fact of being begotten" (FG 151).

The Icon: A Presentation of the Beauty of God's Love

"Thus an icon of Christ or of a Saint tells us next to nothing about his 'real' physical appearance. It does not give any detail of the person's social or historical background. A Saint announces the end of time when everything is perfected in the risen Christ in the parousia. An icon, therefore, radiates the influence of man beyond human history. It bears history in itself, but it proclaims it in a different manner. We contemplate the mystery that the icon portrays as in silence and awe because the powerlessness of human words compels us to veneration by silence and meditation.

"The icon is not only an aesthetic entity, it is also a little compendium of the faith and worship life of the Church. It is, in miniature, the life of the Church as lived in Christ. A saving truth is not communicated by word alone but by awakening the vital forces of life, and by the presentation of beauty. It is because God loved us that he turned a visible face toward us, a human face. He turned to us the face of absolute beauty, a face filled with the fullness of God and the fullness of being. It is the love of this beauty, and the beauty of this love which the icon bears and reveals" (FG 154).

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The Lesson Plan

Opening

Let's pray the prayer we have been learning. What are the first three words? ("O Heavenly King") Let's pray. [Use their prayer books.]

Introduction

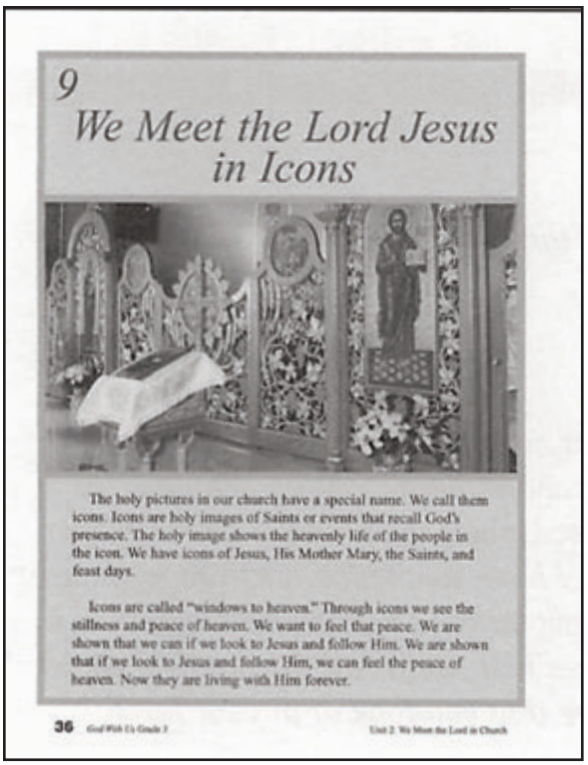
Last week I asked you to bring in a picture of your family. Does everyone have one? [Have some available from a church event for those who forgot.] *Let's hear about these pictures. Who are the people in it? Where was it taken?* [After all pictures are discussed, place them on the desk.] *What do you do with special pictures at home? (They are in frames.) I have some pictures from my house.* [Show pictures of family members—parents, children, nieces, nephews.] *I keep these pictures in a frame so that I can look at them throughout the day. The pictures help me recall the family member and the event in the picture. Does anyone have a special picture that you look at in your house?* [Allow them to discuss.]

Is this a picture? [Display an icon of a saint and let the students respond.] *Let's see what is different between this icon and the pictures you brought in. Does the saint look like a person we would see outside? (Not really) An icon is an image of a real person, but the iconographer, the person who wrote this icon, made this person look a little different. Does our camera do that to us? Do we look different on our pictures? (No, we should not look different.) Our pictures show us the way we are.*

The icon is different because it shows us more than a person's appearance. The icons show us the love of God. This love of God is shown in the people and the events. The icons help us remember how we have to live to be with God forever. Does anyone have an icon at home? [Allow time for discussion.]

Do you look at this icon every day? What else should we do when we see an icon? (We should cross ourselves, bow, and kiss the icon.) That is our way to honor the love of God shown through the icon and to remember God is with us.

Let's turn to our books to read more about icons.



9

We Meet the Lord Jesus in Icons

The holy pictures in our church have a special name. We call them icons. Icons are holy images of Saints or events that recall God's presence. The holy image shows the heavenly life of the people in the icon. We have icons of Jesus, His Mother Mary, the Saints, and feast days.

Icons are called "windows to heaven." Through icons we see the stillness and peace of heaven. We want to feel that peace. We are shown that we can if we look to Jesus and follow Him. We are shown that if we look to Jesus and follow Him, we can feel the peace of heaven. Now they are living with Him forever.

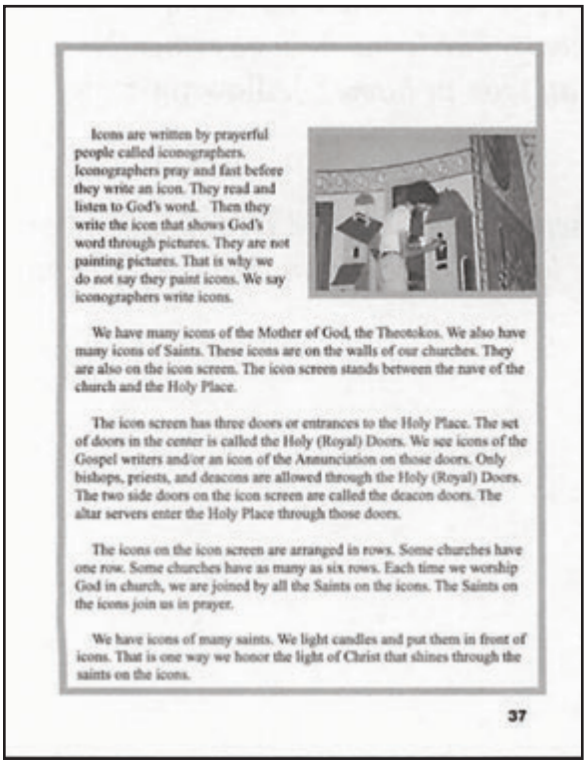
36

Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

Does the icon screen in our church look like the one in the picture? What is the same? What is different?
Let's read our lesson.

Now they are living with Him forever.
Is an icon a picture? (No) What is an icon? (Holy images of Saints or events that recall God's presence.) Name some icons. (Jesus, His Mother Mary, Saints, feast days)



Icons are written by prayerful people called iconographers. Iconographers pray and fast before they write an icon. They read and listen to God's word. Then they write the icon that shows God's word through pictures. They are not painting pictures. That is why we do not say they paint icons. We say iconographers write icons.

We have many icons of the Mother of God, the Theotokos. We also have many icons of Saints. These icons are on the walls of our churches. They are also on the icon screen. The icon screen stands between the nave of the church and the Holy Place.

The icon screen has three doors or entrances to the Holy Place. The set of doors in the center is called the Holy (Royal) Doors. We see icons of the Gospel writers and/or an icon of the Annunciation on those doors. Only bishops, priests, and deacons are allowed through the Holy (Royal) Doors. The two side doors on the icon screen are called the deacon doors. The altar servers enter the Holy Place through those doors.

The icons on the icon screen are arranged in rows. Some churches have one row. Some churches have as many as six rows. Each time we worship God in church, we are joined by all the Saints on the icons. The Saints on the icons join us in prayer.

We have icons of many saints. We light candles and put them in front of icons. That is one way we honor the light of Christ that shines through the saints on the icons.

37

We say iconographers write icons.
What is an iconographer? (A prayerful person who writes icons) How do iconographers prepare? (They pray and fast.) What does the icon screen do? (Stands between the nave and the Holy Place)

The altar servers enter the Holy Place through those doors.
How many doors are on the icon screen? (Three) What are they? (The Holy (Royal) Doors and the deacon doors) Who enters the Royal Doors? (Bishops, priests, and deacons)

.. . join us in prayer.
Who joins us in our prayers in church? (All the Saints on the icons) What are they praying for? (For us to be followers of Christ)

We venerate icons in our church and in our homes.
What does venerate mean? (To honor and respect) When we venerate an icon, we call to mind God's presence in the person or the event shown on the icon. How do we show our respect? (We cross ourselves, bow, and kiss the icon.)

Each time we bow and kiss the icon we are honoring God's presence.
Where are some places we see icons in church? (On the walls, on the icon screen, on the icon table) Where is the icon screen? (Standing between the nave and the Holy Place)

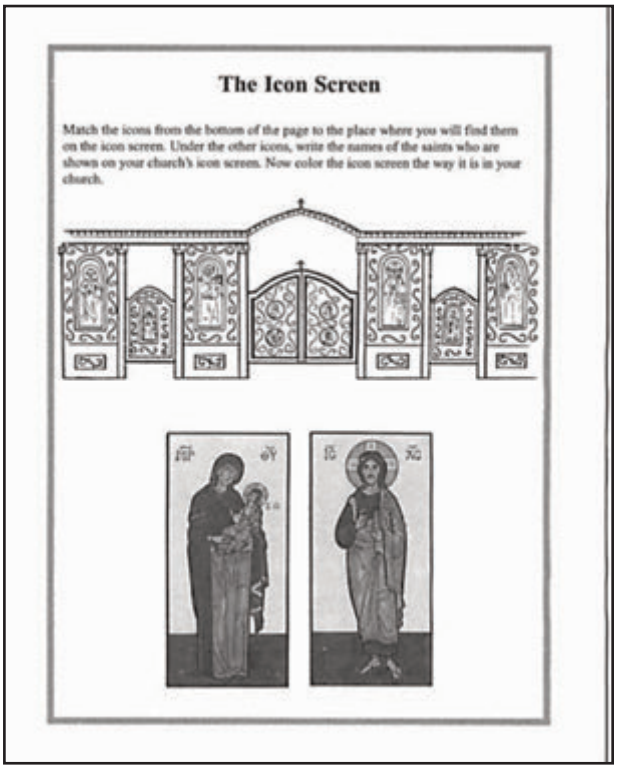
Do we see many icons with Jesus? (Yes) What are some of the icons with Jesus? (Resurrection, Nativity) Jesus is calling us to follow Him. We meet the Lord Jesus in icons, and He is showing us the way to God. Of what do the icons remind us? (God is with us.)



Activity Tracks

Basic: Icon Screen
[This worksheet is in the student text.]

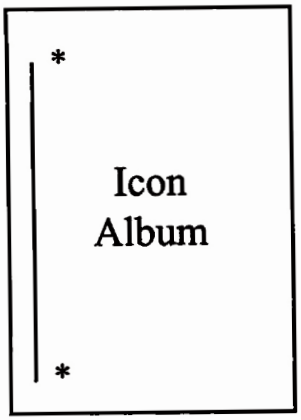
What is the name of the screen that separates the Holy Place from the nave? (The icon screen) Today we are going to complete the icon screen on this page. We are going to match the icon with the correct place for it on the icon screen. [If there is time, let the children color the icons.]



Group: "Our Church" Review

Materials: Review worksheet (paste the questions on 3 x 5 notecards and use throughout the year), ball, waste basket or bucket

[Use the review worksheet for the questions. Include any other question. Also, decide where the students should stand to throw the ball so it is fair for everyone.] *We have learned about Jesus calling us and about how we meet Jesus in our church. Today we are going to review the details by answering questions I have on these cards. When you get an answer correct, you get to throw the ball into the basket. You get two points for every basket. If you are wrong, the other team gets to answer the question and tries for the basket. Let's divide in teams.*



Craft: Icon Album

Materials: Pictures and explanation of icons from bulletin covers or use the icons from the "Icon" worksheet, white construction paper, hole punch, scissors, and yarn

[Have sample ready to show children.] *Today we are going to make an album of icons. Are icons pictures? (No) They are images, so we won't call it a photo album. We will include two icons. Below the icon on the worksheet are a few sentences telling details about the icon. Cut out and paste the icon on a half sheet of construction paper. Write the name of the icon underneath it. Add one sentence to tell something about the icon.* [If time, have them make a cover sheet. Punch holes and fasten with yarn.]

Alternate: *Build Your Own...* kit
Materials: Kits, scissors, contact cement, tape.

Complete any work on the *Build Your Own...* kits used in the two previous lessons. Use the models to review the division of the church building and the items on the holy table.

Closing: Let's pray, "O Heavenly King. [Use their prayer books.]

Name three signs of God's presence found on the Holy Table? (The Gospel Book, the hand cross, and the Tabernacle)

What are icons?
(The holy images of Saints or events that recall God's presence)

What are the three parts of the church building?
(The narthex, the nave, and the Holy Place)

What is the Church?
(The people of God who follow Jesus as their Lord.)

What is the Greatest Commandment? (Love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength and your neighbor as yourself.)

Why is Jesus called our Savior?
(Jesus saved us and gave us eternal life.)

Why does Jesus want everyone to be saved?
(Jesus wants everyone to be with God.)

What is a Christian?
(A follower of Jesus Christ who believes in Him and has been baptized)

What is the Church?
(The Church is the people of God who follow Jesus as their Lord.)

Whom do our Church leaders follow?
(They follow Jesus, the perfect example of a leader.)



Saint Nicholas was Archbishop of Myra. in Lycia in the fourth century. He is called the Wonder-worker. He is shown with his right hand raised in blessing and his left hand holds the Gospel Book. As bishop he blesses his people in the name of Christ and brings the Word of Truth to them.



This is an icon of Christ the Teacher. This icon is placed to the right of the Holy Doors on the icon screen. Jesus' right hand is raised in blessing, and his left hand is holding the Gospel Book. Jesus teaches us and shows us the way to God.

Unit 2
We Meet the Lord in Church

Review

1. What are the three parts of the church building?
(Lesson 7: The three parts of the church building are
the narthex, the nave, and the Holy Place.)

2. Name three signs of God's presence found on the Holy Table.
(Lesson 8: Three signs of God's presence are
the Gospel Book, the hand cross, and the Tabernacle.)

3.What are icons?
(Lesson 9: Icons are the holy images of Saints or events
that recall God's presence.)

4. What is the Church?
(Lesson 5: The Church is the people of God who follow Jesus
as their Lord.)

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We Meet the Lord Jesus in Icons

Objective: The students will be able to identify the ways we prepare for the Nativity of Jesus: we pray, fast, and give alms during the Nativity Fast.

For the Catechist

Preparing for Christmas involves traditions to which children look forward. Many of these activities are family events that help us prepare for the birth of Jesus. Our Church family also prepares in a special way for the Nativity: we observe the Nativity Fast (Philip's Fast). In this *God With Us* series, lessons on the Great Fast have been included in all the earlier grade levels. This is the first year for the introduction of the Nativity Fast, which asks us to prepare in the same way as we do during the Great Fast.

The Church asks us to prepare by praying, fasting, and almsgiving. The Nativity Fast starts on November 15, the day after the Feast of St. Philip on November 14, and lasts through December 24. We do not fast on Sundays. The other fasting practices for each jurisdiction are included in this teacher manual in "Part II Liturgical Texts for Each Jurisdiction." Children should be encouraged to see these fasting practices as our way to prepare by saying "No" to certain foods and "Yes" to Jesus.

Throughout the Nativity Fast, we need to stay focused on preparing ourselves to meet Jesus. This is difficult at times because many people are celebrating before December 25. We need to remind ourselves to use this preparation time to wait for Jesus, the fulfillment of the Scriptures (Mt. 1:22-23):

> "All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 'Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall call him Emmanuel,' which means 'God is with us.'"

This lesson should be taught as close to November 15 as possible. That means other lessons might have to be rearranged to accommodate the liturgical cycle. The lesson on the Nativity of Jesus Christ is in the last unit called "Observances."

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: The Creed

Introduction: Ways to prepare
Need: One magazine or personal picture of a vacation place and one of a party

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read the text. Use questions in the teacher manual to discuss the lesson with the students.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

- *Basic*: We Prepare for the Nativity
- *Group:* "How Will You Prepare?" Game
- *Craft:* "The Creed" Prayer Page

Closing: The Creed

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord:
The Nativity of Christ

Teaching Pics:

Nativity of Christ (F3)

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

Fasting

"There is another way which the dining table offers us as a means of non-verbal prayer, and that is fasting. Not eating, like feasting, is a way of using our mealtimes to glorify God who is our true nourishment. Christ Himself fasted, as the gospels record, and He told His followers to do the same. In that way, many Fathers taught, the Fall which was caused by eating out of turn is reversed.

"Fasting is the necessary complement to feasting. If feasting is a daily event for us, we are no longer celebrating the Lord when we feast: simply satisfying our desires. If we give ourselves over to the rhythm of feasting and fasting, then our table actually becomes a place where God is glorified. All our eating becomes sacramental: a means of communion with the Lifegiver" (*DC* 32).

Fasting, Praying and Almsgiving

"Fasting is counterproductive to spiritual growth unless it is coupled with prayer and almsgiving. Simply not doing something can create a vacuum, and so the time and energy usually devoted to eating or entertainment needs to be redirected. Just not eating will probably not draw us closer to the Lord" (*DC* 33-34).

"Increasing your religious activity can mean attending divine services more frequently, reading, using religious video or audio cassettes or devoting time to charitable concerns, such as working in a shelter for the homeless. Many people keep a container on their dining table and place in it the cost of the foods they are giving up, to be used for charitable purposes. By maintaining the link between prayer, fasting and almsgiving, we increase the possibility that we will be sincerely fasting in the spirit as well as in the body" (*DC* 34).

Children and Fasting

"Our society teaches constant and unchecked consumption: if you want it, get it now! Children quickly absorb this principle from television, especially from the commercials aimed at them during children's programming. By teaching them to fast we provide a check on the untrammeled spirit of acquisition our culture endorses.

"Teaching children to fast can also help in another way. By enabling them to do without pizza or cheeseburgers, we are preparing them to say no to drugs or illicit sex. If we insist that they cannot survive without one kind of food when so many other kinds are available, can we reasonably expect them to say no in the back seat of a Pontiac?

"While we may not want to deprive children of something nutritious such as milk, there are a number of foods from which they would do well to abstain (candy, cookies, artificial breakfast cereals, soft drinks and the like, i.e. junk food). Not only foods but entertainment has been a traditional subject for fasting. Young people could be brought to fast from TV or the stereo and replace them with the bible games and videos mentioned above. Many people regulate these items anyway; certainly fast times are ideal for suggesting such activities to honor the Lord" (*DC* 34).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Today we are going to begin learning the Creed. I think once you begin saying it, you will remember hearing the words. Do we say the Creed during the Divine Liturgy? (Yes) Let's begin with the sign of the cross. [Use the prayer page at the end of this lesson. These are the same pages that will be used for the craft.]

Introduction

Let's start class with a game today. I am going to hold up a picture of a place, and you tell me how we have to prepare for this place. [Hold up a picture of a vacation spot—the seashore, the mountains.] *Maybe some of you have gone on vacation to this place. What did you need to do to get ready? (Tickets, reservations, suitcases, money)* [Hold up a picture of a birthday party or celebration.] *What are these people doing? (Having a party) What did they have to do to get ready? (Send out invitations, get food, decorate) Okay, I think we planned enough today.*

We just shared all the ways we can plan for something special. When we get ready to go somewhere or do something special, we have to plan. How many of you help your family plan for something special? After the plans are made, we have to wait. Sometimes we get tired of waiting. But finally we get to go on our vacation or have our party. How do we feel then?

Our Church also prepares for certain events throughout the year. Also, our Church asks us to prepare ourselves so that we are ready to celebrate the event. One of those times is now. We are getting ready to prepare to celebrate Jesus' birthday. We have to get ready. What is the name of the feast that honors the birth of Jesus? (The Nativity) [Show the Nativity icon.] *We are starting our preparation time this week. We call this preparation time the Nativity Fast (Philip's Fast).*

Let's turn to our books to find out how we prepare.



10
As Church, We Prepare for the Nativity

We do many different activities during the week.

We play with our friends. We eat meals with our families. We go to church. We go to school.

Some weeks, however, are different. They are different because we know something special is going to happen. We spend those weeks preparing and waiting for the special event.

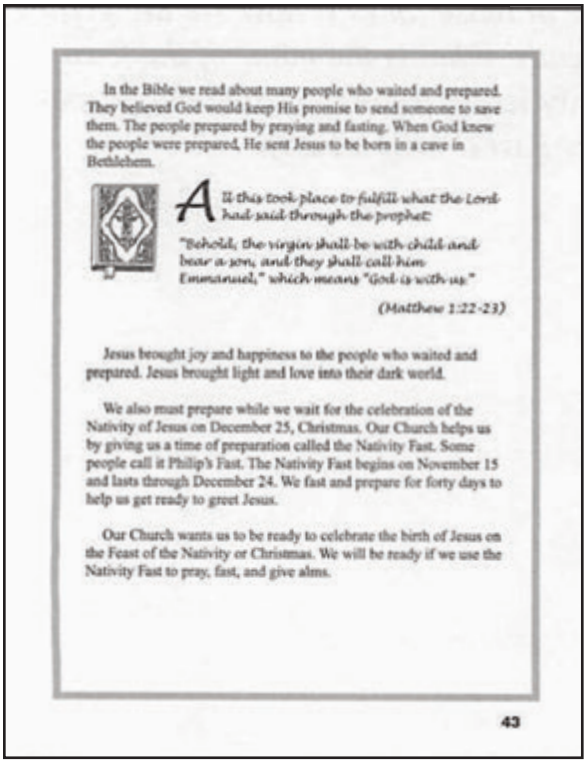
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Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

What are the people doing in the pictures on the first page of our lesson? Do you do those things every day? What else do you do every day or week? [Allow responses.]
Let's start our reading.

We spend those weeks preparing and waiting for the special event.
What are some things you do while you wait for an important day? (Mark off the calendar, make a list of what needs to be done)



In the Bible we read about many people who waited and prepared. They believed God would keep His promise to send someone to save them. The people prepared by praying and fasting. When God knew the people were prepared, He sent Jesus to be born in a cave in Bethlehem.

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet:

"Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall call him Emmanuel," which means "God is with us."

(Matthew 1:22-23)

Jesus brought joy and happiness to the people who waited and prepared. Jesus brought light and love into their dark world.

We also must prepare while we wait for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus on December 25, Christmas. Our Church helps us by giving us a time of preparation called the Nativity Fast. Some people call it Philip's Fast. The Nativity Fast begins on November 15 and lasts through December 24. We fast and prepare for forty days to help us get ready to greet Jesus.

Our Church wants us to be ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus on the Feast of the Nativity or Christmas. We will be ready if we use the Nativity Fast to pray, fast, and give alms.

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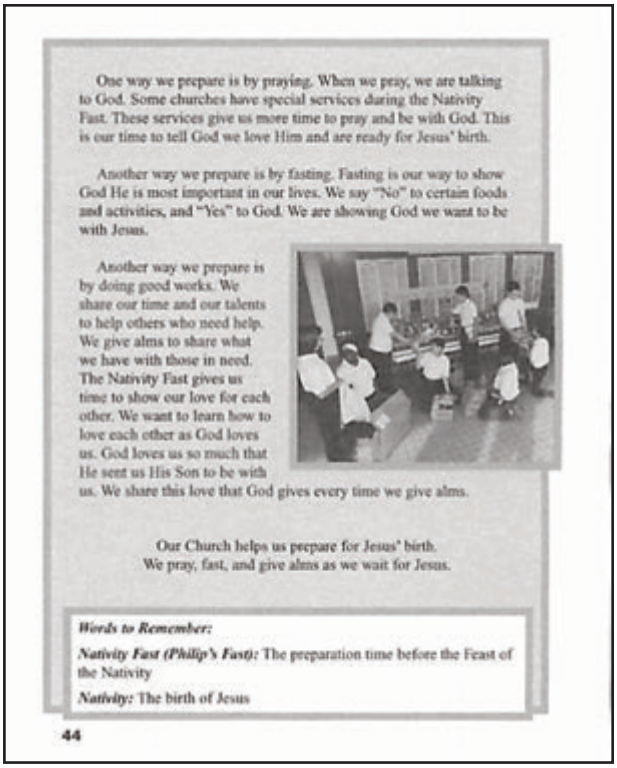
...which means 'God is with us"' (Mt. 1:22-23).
What was God's promise? (To send His Son)
What does Emmanuel mean? (God is with us.)

Jesus brought light and love into their dark world.
Where was Jesus born? (In Bethlehem) What did Jesus bring into the world? (Light and love)

...to help us get ready to greet Jesus.
What do we call this time of preparation? (Nativity Fast) When does it start? (November 15) What is the last day? (December 24) How many days is that? (40)

We pray, fast, and give alms as we wait for Jesus.
What are three ways we prepare for the birth of Jesus? (We pray, fast, and give alms.) To whom do we talk when we pray? (God) What do we do when we fast? (We say "No" to certain foods and "Yes" to God.) What does it mean to give alms? (We share what we have with those who have less.)

Let's review: *What are some foods from which we can fast?* [The fasting rules for each jurisdiction are listed in "Part II: Liturgical Texts" in this Teacher Manual. Encourage the students to add other food items.] *What are some prayers we can say during this time? Are there any special church services we can attend? How can we give alms?* [If your church has special collections, encourage the children to donate. Maybe your class can collect for the local food bank.]



One way we prepare is by praying. When we pray, we are talking to God. Some churches have special services during the Nativity Fast. These services give us more time to pray and be with God. This is our time to tell God we love Him and are ready for Jesus' birth.

Another way we prepare is by fasting. Fasting is our way to show God He is most important in our lives. We say "No" to certain foods and activities, and "Yes" to God. We are showing God we want to be with Jesus.

Another way we prepare is by doing good works. We share our time and our talents to help others who need help. We give alms to share what we have with those in need. The Nativity Fast gives us time to show our love for each other. We want to learn how to love each other as God loves us. God loves us so much that He sent us His Son to be with us. We share this love that God gives every time we give alms.

Our Church helps us prepare for Jesus' birth.
We pray, fast, and give alms as we wait for Jesus.

Words to Remember:
Nativity Fast (Philip's Fast): The preparation time before the Feast of the Nativity
Nativity: The birth of Jesus

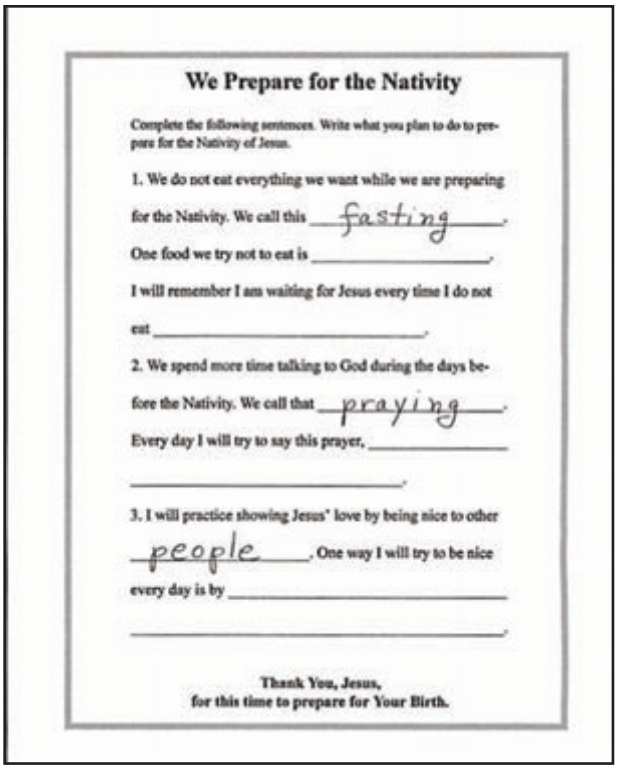
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Activity Tracks

Basic: We Prepare for the Nativity
[This worksheet is in the student text.]

Today we learned how to prepare for Jesus' birth. What are the three ways? (Praying, fasting, and giving alms) Now let's think about ways we can do all of them. Complete the sentences on this page. Write what you plan to do to help you prepare for the birth of Jesus.

[Help the students complete the sentences. Use the rules for fasting for your jurisdiction to help students complete the sentence on fasting.]



We Prepare for the Nativity

Complete the following sentences. Write what you plan to do to prepare for the Nativity of Jesus.

1. We do not eat everything we want while we are preparing for the Nativity. We call this fasting.
One food we try not to eat is _____.
I will remember I am waiting for Jesus every time I do not eat _____.

2. We spend more time talking to God during the days before the Nativity. We call that praying.
Every day I will try to say this prayer, _____
_____.

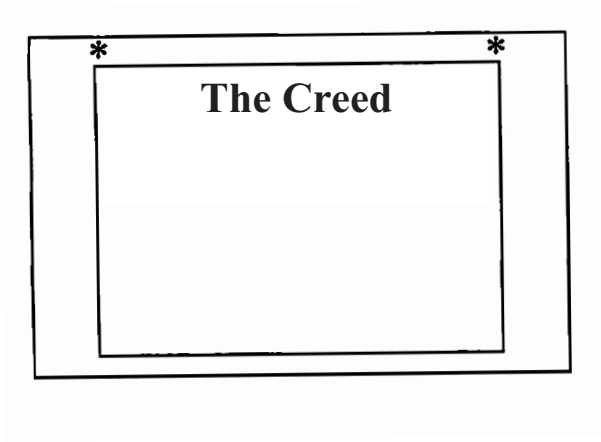
3. I will practice showing Jesus' love by being nice to other people. One way I will try to be nice every day is by _____
_____.

Thank You, Jesus,
for this time to prepare for Your Birth.

Group: "How Will You Prepare?" Game

Materials: Beach ball or any kind of ball

We learned we are to prepare for the birth of Jesus. What is this season of preparation called? (Nativity Fast) Today we are going to think of ways we can prepare. Let's stand in a circle. We are going to pass the beach ball around. I need a volunteer to come to the front of the room and cover your eyes. You will say stop whenever you want and turn around. The person holding the ball will have to say one specific way to prepare. Then these two people will trade places. I will be the first one to cover my eyes. [Suggest specific ways to prepare: eating no meat on Wednesdays and Fridays (Friday is a fast day all year); going to Confession; saying extra prayers at night; attending additional church services]



Craft: The Creed" Prayer Page

Materials: "The Creed" worksheets according to each translations, heavier white paper or construction paper (1/2 sheet per student), hole punch, markers, stickers or stars, scissors, and glue

[Have sample ready to show children.] *We said the Creed at the beginning of our class today. What are the first two words? (I believe) Where do we hear the Creed? (During the Divine Liturgy) Today we are going to make another page to add to our prayer book.*

Paste the words on a half sheet of construction paper. You can draw pictures around the words, or you can add the stars or stickers I have here. Punch two holes to match the ones on the prayer cover. Untie the yarn on your prayer book cover and add this new page. Now pull the yarn through the holes and tie.

Closing: Let's pray, *"I believe in one God..."*

The Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth,
and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages: Light of light, true God of true God, begotten, not made, of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was made man; who was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried; who rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and is enthroned at the right hand of the Father;
who will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead;
and of whose kingdom there shall be no end.
And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father,
who together with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified
who spoke through the prophets.
In one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
I profess one baptism for the remission of sins.
I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life
of the world to come.
Amen.

Melkite Greek Catholic Church

The Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth,
and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages: Light of light, true God of true God, begotten, not made, of one essence with the Father, by whom all things were made.
Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from Heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man;
He was crucified also for us, suffered under Pontius Pilate, and was buried.
The third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures. He ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He shall come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead;
of whose kingdom there shall be no end.
And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who together with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified;
who spoke by the prophets.
And in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins.
I expect the Resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.
Amen.

Romanian Greek Catholic Diocese of Canton

The Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, the only-begotten, born of the Father before all ages. Light of light, true God of true God, begotten, not made, of one substance with the Father, through Whom all things were made.
Who for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven and was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and Mary the Virgin, and became man.
He was also crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried.
And He rose again on the third day, according to the Scriptures.
And He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead; and of His kingdom there will be no end.
And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, Who proceeds from the Father, Who together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke through the Prophets.
In One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.
I profess one baptism for the remission of sins.
I expect the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.
Amen.

Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic Metro-politan Province

The Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages. Light of light, true God of true God, begotten, not created, of one essence with the Father, through whom all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became man;
He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and he suffered and was buried. On the third day he rose according to the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead. His kingdom will have no end.
And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified; who spoke through the prophets.
In one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
I acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
I expect the resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come.
Amen

Ukrainian Catholic Diocese of St. Josaphat

The Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is seen and unseen.
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father. Light from light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, one in being with the Father.
Through Him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation, He came down from heaven: by the power of the
Holy Spirit He was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man.
He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate and suffered, and was buried.
On the third day He rose again in fulfillment of the Scriptures; He ascended into
heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to
judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom will have no end.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father.
With the Father and the Son He is worshipped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
I acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.
Amen.

Ukrainian
Catholic
Synod

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We Meet the Lord Jesus in Icons

Objective: The students will be able to explain that the Creed is a statement of our faith.

For the Catechist

Most children in Grade 3 have learned to trust their parents to take care of their basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter. Some children might have other family members or guardians they trust as their caregivers.

This lesson builds on that feeling of trust. The children will discover that trust is also part of their spiritual life.

God wants us to trust our whole life to Him. We must learn to let go of our need to be in control and let God take charge of our life. Also, we must learn to trust God's promise to be with us always.

Before Jesus ascended into heaven, He told the apostles: "I am with you always, until the end of the age" (Mt 28:20). But the early Church started to have problems understanding everything Jesus told them. The interpretation of Jesus as God and man led to many disagreements. There was no definitive statement identifying the truth for the followers of Jesus Christ. As a result the Council of Nicaea was called in 325 A.D. The members of the council wrote a statement of the faith called the Nicene Creed. The statement identifies our belief and trust in God based on Scripture and Tradition.

This statement of faith is said at all baptisms. Through Baptism we join with the every member of the Church (past and present) to profess our belief and trust in God. As members of the Church, we continue to state these beliefs every time we say the Creed during the Divine Liturgy and during our prayers.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: The Creed

Introduction: Discussion of trust
Need: white cloths for blindfolds

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read the text. Use questions in the teacher manual to discuss the lesson with the students.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

- *Basic*: I Believe
- *Group:* The Creed
- *Craft: "*I Believe" Refrigerator Magnet

Closing: The Creed

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord:
Christ Pantocrator

Teaching Pics:

Nativity of Christ (F3)

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

The Nicene Creed

"A good example of a creed used to defend the Christian faith is the Nicene Creed. With the rise of Arianism (a heresy which maintained that Christ was a perfect creature created by God the Father), the Church saw the need to devise a statement extracted from Scripture and Tradition as a pronouncement against the error. The Council of Nicaea was convened in 325 A.D. to discuss the heresy. The participants formulated a creed which stated in clear terms that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, and that He is, 'consubstantial' with the Father. The Greek word, **homoousios** means *the same nature*. This creed was used as a touchstone to separate those who kept to the true faith from those who embraced the erroneous concept of Christ, a way to test the accuracy of the faith of individual members of the Church—or rather, to see who was indeed a true member of the Church as opposed to those who had slipped from the fold by embracing a lie" (*SLW* 72).

The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed

"This Nicene Creed is not the one we know today. Rather, a further development of this creed (known as that of Nicaea-Constantinople) is the one most used and recognized today. But the Nicene Creed was the model for the other creeds which developed afterwards. The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed was confirmed in 451 A.D. by participants in the Council of Chalcedon, who saw the roots of it in the further development of doctrinal synthesis at the earlier Council of Constantinople. Through the action of the Council of Chalcedon, the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed supplanted the earlier statement of Nicaea and made it the one which we regularly use in our services.

"The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed adds to the simpler Nicene Creed further statements concerning the Holy Spirit: 'And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the Father, and Who together with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, Who spoke through the prophets.' Here the Holy Spirit is clearly recognized as being divine in nature by stating that the worship due the Father and the Son is similarly due the Spirit.

"The Council of Chalcedon reaffirmed the necessity of accepting the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed and finalized its development by decreeing that no change should be made in it.

"The later addition of the words 'and from the Son' (Latin: filioque) in the Latin West would cause grave theological problems for the Eastern Churches, ultimately contributing to the Great Schism of 1054" (*SLW* 72-73).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Today we are going to continue saying the Creed. Did you say this prayer during the Divine Liturgy this week? Let's begin with the sign of the cross. [Use the prayer page according to your jurisdiction.]

Introduction

Today we are going to play a game that requires all of us to cooperate. We are going to help each other walk to his or her chair. Does that sound difficult? The problem will be the person you are helping will be wearing a blindfold. Let's have partners working together. Let's have everyone come to the front of the room. [Either have them choose friends, or you can match them. Give each group a cloth.] *Help your partner wrap the cloth around his or her eyes. Make sure he or she cannot see. Now lead your partner to his or her seat. Don't bump into anything. Now let's do the same thing except this time we change roles. The first leader will now become the follower.*

Now that everyone is at his or her seat, let's talk about what you thought when I told you to do this. Were you afraid you might bump something? Did anyone not like wearing a blindfold? Why not? Did we have to trust our friends? Why did you have to trust them? (We had to trust that they would not let us get hurt.) Did we have to believe they would help us? [Give the children time to share their feelings.] *Did anyone ever play this game before? Do you ever have to trust someone like this even when you don't have on a blindfold? Whom do we have to trust? Each day we have to trust our family to be therefor us. Each week we believe that the priest will be at church for the Divine Liturgy. And people trust us. What do our parents believe we are doing at school? (Learning and being good) They trust us to do what we say we are doing.*

We also trust God every day. We believe that God will take care of us as He promised.

Let's turn to our books to read the words we say to announce our trust in God.



11
As Church, We Believe

The people who followed Jesus liked to hear the stories He told them. Jesus wanted the people to hear how much God loves them. He also wanted them to hear how much they are to love God. Jesus' followers believed His words because they knew Jesus was leading them to God. They knew Jesus was telling the truth.

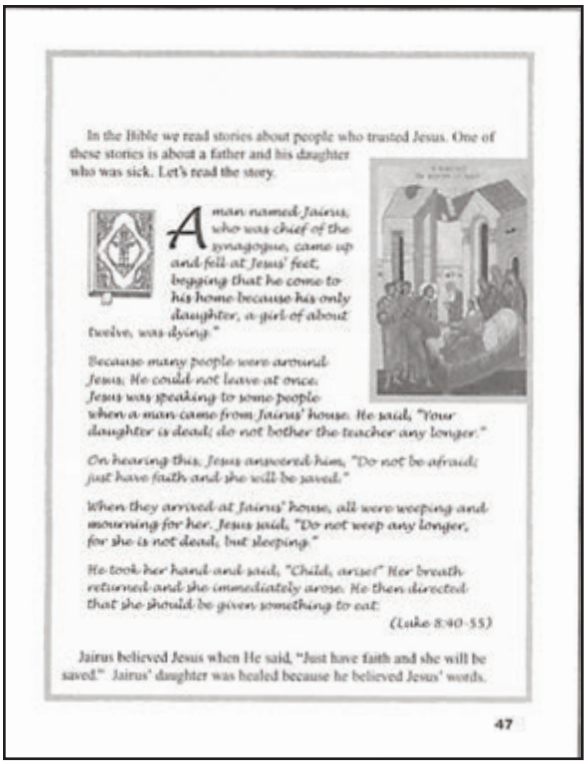
We listen to the truth every time we listen to the Word of God. The Bible tells us how we should live to keep close to God. We need to listen and believe the words that we hear. God wants us to believe and trust His words.

46

Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

God wants us to believe and trust His words.
Jesus' followers listened when He spoke. Why? (He spoke the truth; He was leading them to God.) We tell the truth to the people we love. Jesus loves us and tells us the truth.



In the Bible we read stories about people who trusted Jesus. One of these stories is about a father and his daughter who was sick. Let's read the story.

A man named Jairus, who was chief of the synagogue, came up and fell at Jesus' feet, begging that he come to his home because his only daughter, a girl of about twelve, was dying.

Because many people were around Jesus, He could not leave at once. Jesus was speaking to some people when a man came from Jairus' house. He said, "Your daughter is dead; do not bother the teacher any longer."

On hearing this, Jesus answered him, "Do not be afraid; just have faith and she will be saved."

When they arrived at Jairus' house, all were weeping and mourning for her. Jesus said, "Do not weep any longer, for she is not dead, but sleeping."

He took her hand and said, "Child, arise!" Her breath returned and she immediately arose. He then directed that she should be given something to eat.

(Luke 8:40-55)

Jairus believed Jesus when He said, "Just have faith and she will be saved." Jairus' daughter was healed because he believed Jesus' words.

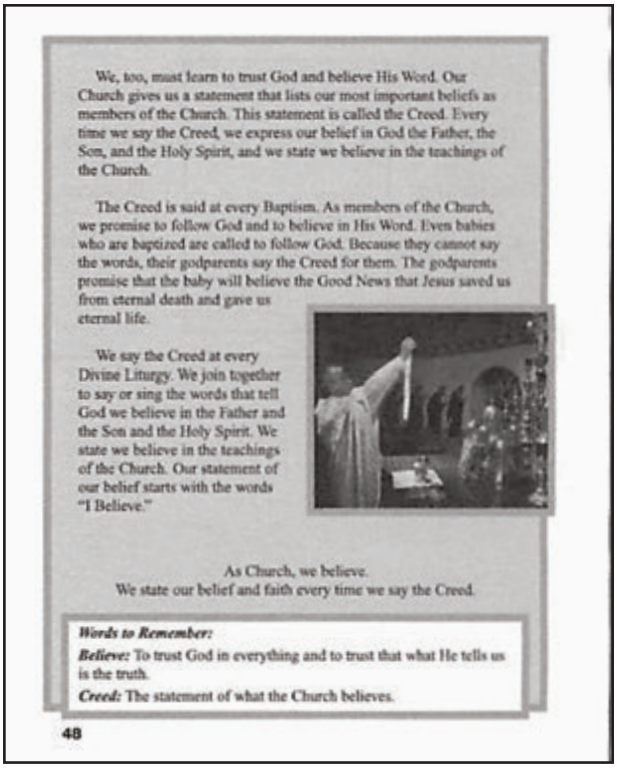
47

...Jairus' daughter was healed because he believed Jesus' words.
What was wrong with Jairus' daughter? (She was dying.) What did Jesus say even after He heard the news that she died? (Trust) Did Jesus wake her? (Yes) How do you think everyone felt? (Surprised) What would you think if you were there?

... teachings of the Church.
When we say the Creed, we say we believe in whom? (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit)

... starts with the words "I Believe."
What news do we believe in? (The Good News) What is the Good News? (Jesus saved us from eternal death and granted us eternal life.) Why is the Creed said at every Baptism? (We become members of the Church, and we say what we believe as members.)

We say the Creed during the Divine Liturgy to tell God we Church members believe in Him and His teachings. Do you say the words of the Creed during the Divine Liturgy? What is the Creed? (A statement of our belief)



We, too, must learn to trust God and believe His Word. Our Church gives us a statement that lists our most important beliefs as members of the Church. This statement is called the Creed. Every time we say the Creed, we express our belief in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and we state we believe in the teachings of the Church.

The Creed is said at every Baptism. As members of the Church, we promise to follow God and to believe in His Word. Even babies who are baptized are called to follow God. Because they cannot say the words, their godparents say the Creed for them. The godparents promise that the baby will believe the Good News that Jesus saved us from eternal death and gave us eternal life.

We say the Creed at every Divine Liturgy. We join together to say or sing the words that tell God we believe in the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. We state we believe in the teachings of the Church. Our statement of our belief starts with the words "I Believe."

As Church, we believe.
We state our belief and faith every time we say the Creed.

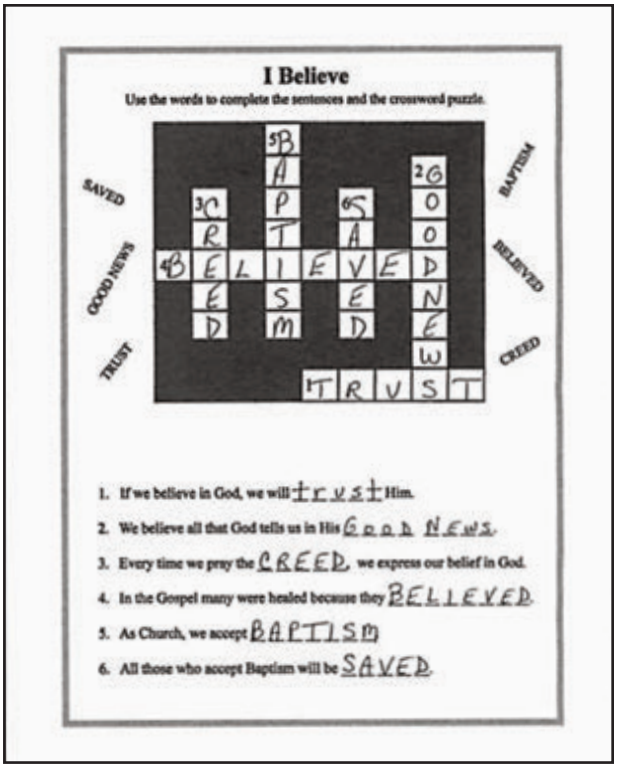
Words to Remember:
Believe: To trust God in everything and to trust that what He tells us is the truth.
Creed: The statement of what the Church believes.

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Activity Tracks

Basic: I Believe
[This worksheet is in the student text.]

The Creed is the statement of everything we believe as members of the Church. Use the words to complete the statements about our belief and complete the crossword puzzle.

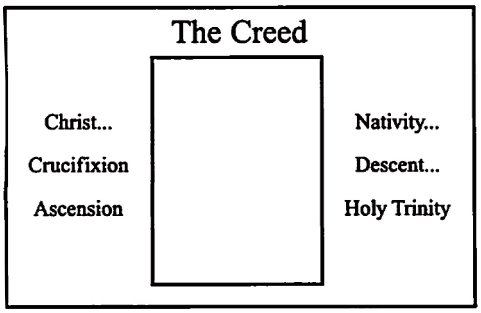


I Believe

Use the words to complete the sentences and the crossword puzzle.

SAVED
GOOD NEWS
TRUST
BAPTISM
BELIEVED
CREED

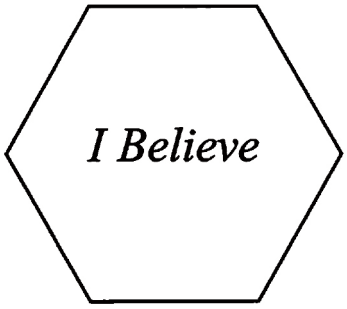
1. If we believe in God, we will TRUST Him.
2. We believe all that God tells us in His GOOD NEWS.
3. Every time we pray the CREED, we express our belief in God.
4. In the Gospel many were healed because they BELIEVED.
5. As Church, we accept BAPTISM
6. All those who accept Baptism will be SAVED.



Group: The Creed

Materials: poster board and the following icons from the *Come Bless the Lord* icon packet: Christ Pantocrator, Nativity of Christ, the Crucifixion, the Descent into Hades, the Ascension, and the Holy Trinity

Today we learned about The Creed. What is it? (A statement of our belief) When we look at our icons, we see events that recall these beliefs. Today I have some icons that show what we believe. We are going to make a picture that matches our icons with our statements of belief. After we match them to words of The Creed, let's write the name of the icon on the poster board.. [Enlarge your jurisdiction's words on the prayer pages in the last lesson.] *Let's glue The Creed in the center of our poster board. Now let's write the names of the icons.* [If possible, take pictures of the icons or duplicate the ones in the icon packet and glue them onto the poster board.]



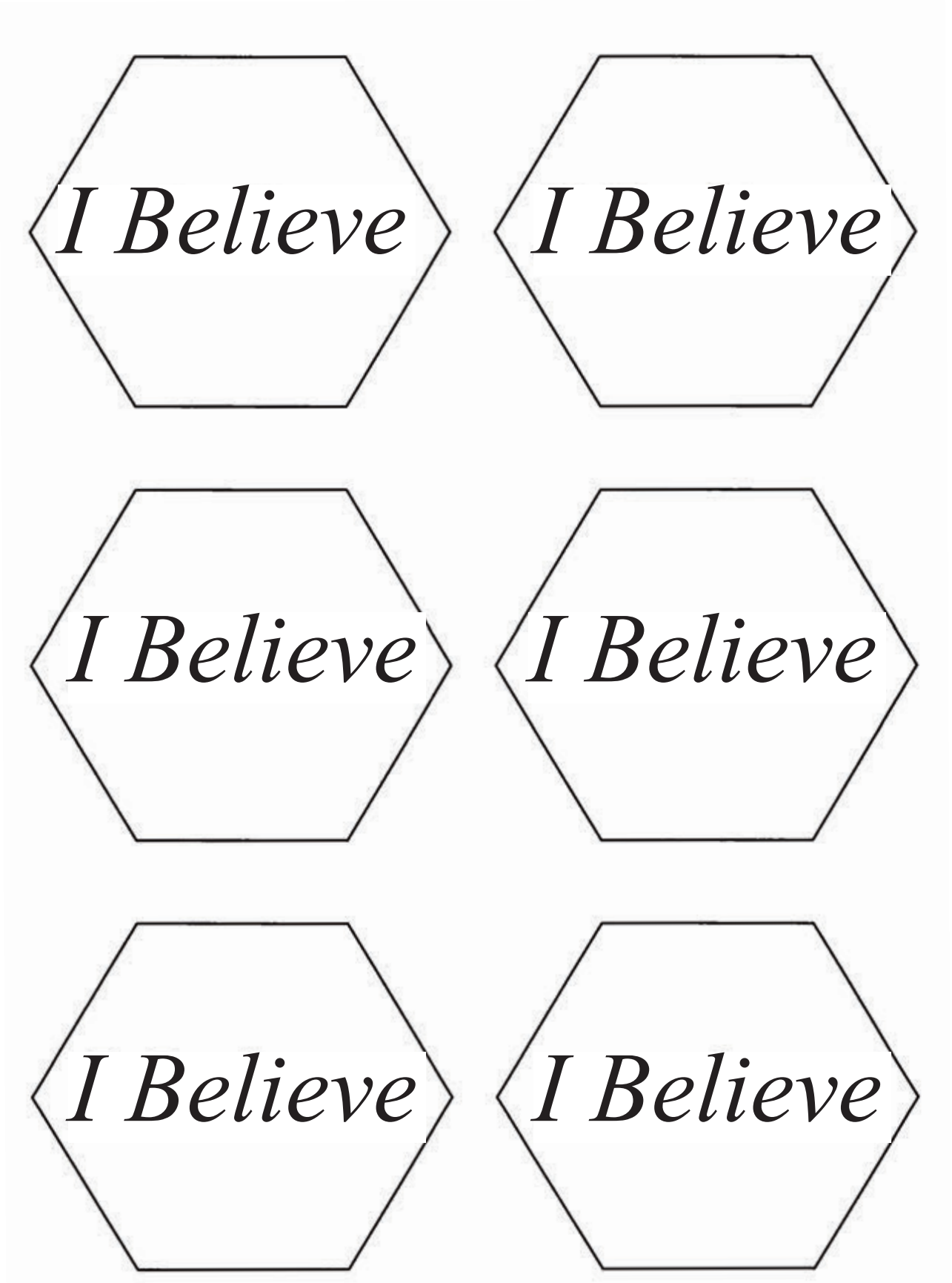
Craft: "I Believe" Refrigerator Magnet

Materials: Construction paper, clear contact paper, magnet strips, "I Believe" worksheet, markers

Today we are going to make a magnet for our refrigerator. Cut out and color the "I Believe" strip. Cover it with contact paper to make it sturdy, and paste a magnet strip on the back. Where can you put this to remind you that you are a member of the Church and you believe and trust God?

Closing:

Remember to say the Creed during the Divine Liturgy every time you are in church. Let's pray it now. We will begin with the sign of the cross. [Have the children use their prayer books.]


I Believe
I Believe
I Believe
I Believe
I Believe
I Believe

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As Church, We Worship

Objective: The students will be able to list the ways we worship God in church where we come together as one.

For the Catechist

A spirit of reverence in worship is essential. When we enter the church or wherever we pray, we have to adopt an unhurried attitude as we strive to respond to what God has done for us in Jesus Christ.

At each Liturgy we worship God and thank Him. In our acts of worship, we stand, kneel, and bow to give glory to God. In this lesson the children learn that the Church as one body shows outwardly the love and belief that is shared.

The Divine Liturgy is the greatest prayer of our Church. It is all of God's people praying together. We remember all that God has done for us, and we express our dependency upon Him. By receiving Christ in the Eucharist, we show that we cannot live without Him.

Use this lesson to encourage the children to actively participate in the Divine Liturgy. Encourage the children to focus on the presence of Jesus in our midst as we gather to pray; therefore, we would want to give Jesus our full attention

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: The Creed

Introduction: Play the game Simon Says.

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read the text. Use questions in the teacher manual to discuss the lesson with the students.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

• *Basic*: Thank You, God

• *Group:* "Alleluia" Game

• *Craft:* "Alleluia" Sign

Closing: The Creed

[For next week's craft, ask your priest for a list of homebound people in your parish.]

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord:
The Holy Trinity

Teaching Pics:

Divine Liturgy (DL6, DL10, DL22)

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

Liturgical Life

"Of the several aspects common to parish life, worship is the high point. Our tradition has a rich and varied life of worship in which we are able to share. As we set our calendars, we should take into consideration the times when our parish family gathers to stand together before the Lord and should plan accordingly. The more regularly we gather in the wider fellowship of the church, the more deeply our domestic church will be immersed in our spiritual tradition" (*DC* 41-42).

The Body in Worship

"For centuries our worship has included elements of the physical. The Body is used in a number of ways to accentuate our prayer. Some of these gestures are:

"The Sign of the Cross - is made in Byzantine practice by joining the thumb and first two fingers of the right hand while folding the remaining two fingers into the palm Then one blesses oneself by bringing the right hand to the forehead and then to the abdomen (In the name of the Father'), then to the right shoulder ('and of the Son' - who sits at the Father's right) and finally to the left ('and of the Holy Spirit').

"The sign of the cross is generally made whenever the persons of the Trinity are mentioned in prayer or to indicate an individual's desire to make the words of a prayer especially his.

"The Metany - is the ordinary gesture of reverence made when entering a church., before beginning prayer, at certain prayers (e.g. 'Holy God...' or 'Come, let us worship...'), upon kissing an icon or the cross or receiving any holy thing (the Eucharist, antidoron, anointing, etc). It is made (usually three times in succession) by bowing from the waist with the right hand extended downward then rising to make the sign of the cross.

"The Great Metany or Prostration - is a more solemn form of the metany generally used during the Great Fast or when venerating the cross on September 14. Instead of bowing, we made the sign of the cross then kneel on both knees and touch the forehead and both palms to the ground for a moment before rising" (*DC* 43-44).

Music in Worship

"Traditionally, all prayer in Eastern liturgical services is sung, because song is the most heightened form of speech available to us and it is the best form of everything which we want to offer to God. For the same reason the texts of our hymns are generally poetry, another heightened form of speech" (*DC* 44-45).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Today we are going to continue saying the Creed. Did you say the Creed during the Divine Liturgy this week? Let's begin with the sign of the cross. [Use the prayer worksheet according to your jurisdiction.]

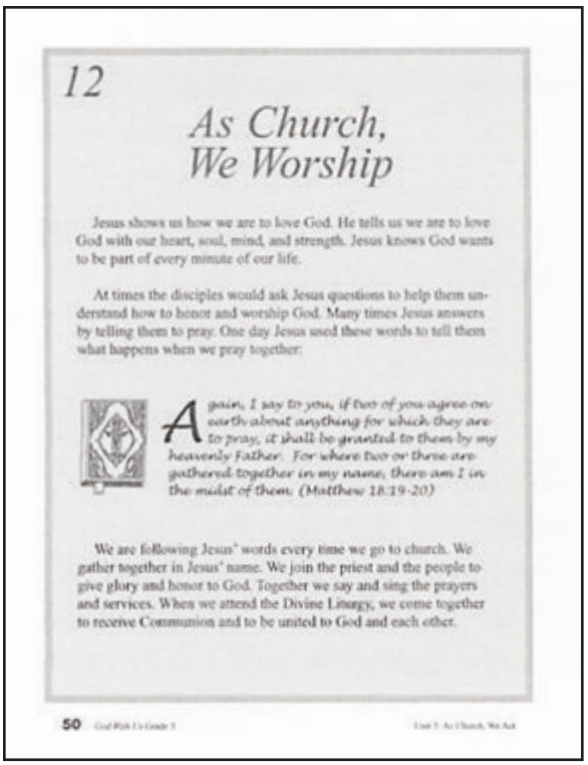
Introduction

Before we start the lesson, let's play a game. It is called Simon Says. Does anyone know how to play it? [Let someone tell the rules.] *Now, I am going to be the leader. You must do what I say as long as I say Simon says. Simon says stand up. Simon says sit down. Stand up.* [If someone stood up, remind them you didn't say Simon says.] *Simon says stand up. Simon says make the sign of the cross. Simon says sing "Amen." Simon says bow. Sing "Amen."* [Remind them you didn't say Simon says.] *Simon says sit down.*

Okay, let's stop. How many of you have played that game before? In that game we did each activity as a group: we stood up together; we sat down together. Why is it good being part of a group?

Jesus also calls us to join together. Does anyone remember the name given to us who follow Jesus? (Christians) We Christians join together to form the Church. We also come together to honor and worship God. Where do we go to do that? (Your church s name) During the Divine Liturgy we join together as a group. We become one body and join together to worship God. What are some things other than sitting and standing that we do together in church? (Sing, bow, pray, go to Communion) All of these are ways we worship God.

Let's turn to our lesson to learn more about worshiping God.



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As Church, We Worship

Jesus shows us how we are to love God. He tells us we are to love God with our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Jesus knows God wants to be part of every minute of our life.

At times the disciples would ask Jesus questions to help them understand how to honor and worship God. Many times Jesus answers by telling them to pray. One day Jesus used these words to tell them what happens when we pray together:

Again, I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my heavenly Father. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. (Matthew 18:19-20)

We are following Jesus' words every time we go to church. We gather together in Jesus' name. We join the priest and the people to give glory and honor to God. Together we say and sing the prayers and services. When we attend the Divine Liturgy, we come together to receive Communion and to be united to God and each other.

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Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

... what happens when we pray together:
When we come together in church, we become one group. We are members of the group from [Say the name of your church.] *What did Jesus tell us He will do when we gather together in His name? (Hear our prayer and be with us.)*



The Divine Liturgy is our greatest form of worship to God. It is our time to come together to honor and thank God for everything. Just as Jesus told the disciples, He will be with us as we gather in His name. Throughout the Divine Liturgy, we have many ways to show Jesus we are thankful He is with us.

Every time we sing in church, we are worshiping God. Our songs praise God and glorify His name. We sing "Alleluia" to thank God for all that He has done for us. God has given us everything that we have, and we are grateful.

As one body, we stand to show honor to God. We always stand when the Gospel is carried or read by the priest. We stand to show our respect to the Word of God. Standing during the Divine Liturgy is our way to show God we honor and worship His being with us through His words.

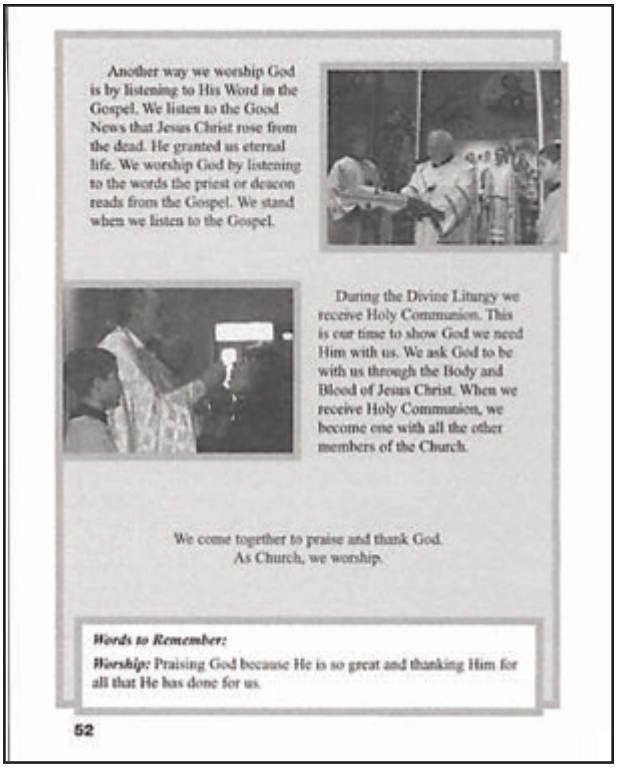
Bowing is another way we worship God. We bow our heads to show God that He is our Lord and Master. We show our respect for His glory and honor. Each time we cross ourselves we bow to honor the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

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... we have many ways to show Jesus we are thankful He is with us.
Why do we sing? (To praise God and thank Him) Why do we bow? (To honor God) Why do we stand? (To honor God) Each time we move with respect with our bodies we say we thank You, God, for everything. We say we know you are with us.

As Church, we worship.
What are some of the ways we worship in church? (We pray, sing, stand, bow, listen to the Gospel reading, and receive the Eucharist.) Why do we worship God? (To praise Him and thank Him) God has been so good to us. We should want to praise and thank Him often. What is one way we can do that? (By going to church)

Let's review: *What did Jesus tell us He will do when we gather together in His name? (Hear our prayer and be with us.) Each time we make the sign of the cross and bow, we say we thank You, God, for everything. Let's all stand now and make the sign of the cross and bow. Let's show God how much we love Him.*


Another way we worship God is by listening to His Word in the Gospel. We listen to the Good News that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. He granted us eternal life. We worship God by listening to the words the priest or deacon reads from the Gospel. We stand when we listen to the Gospel.

During the Divine Liturgy we receive Holy Communion. This is our time to show God we need Him with us. We ask God to be with us through the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. When we receive Holy Communion, we become one with all the other members of the Church.

We come together to praise and thank God.
As Church, we worship.

Words to Remember:
Worship: Praising God because He is so great and thanking Him for all that He has done for us.

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Activity Tracks

Basic: Thank You God
[This worksheet is in the student text.]

Today we are going to write some of the things God has done for us. After we make our list, write a prayer to thank God. [If there is time, have the students read their prayer aloud. Some might want to sing it.]


Thank You, God

We worship God in many ways. We thank Him for all that He has done for us. Think of all the ways God has blessed you. On the lines on the top half of this paper, make a list of God's blessings. On the bottom lines, write a prayer to God to thank Him for these blessings.

My Prayer to God

Group: "Alleluia" Game

We learned that we worship God in many ways. What are some of the ways? (Praying, singing, etc.) Now we are going to praise God is a special way. We are going to say "Alleluia" every time we think of something to thank God for. We are going to walk in a circle around the room. When I say stop, anyone who is thinking of something to be grateful for, raise your hand. I'll call on someone who will walk into the center of the circle and tell us what the blessing is. All of us will say, "Alleluia." That person stays in the center. We will keep doing this until everyone is in the center.



Craft: "Alleluia" Sign
Materials: "Alleluia" worksheet, plastic canvas cut 7" by 2", 1/8" ribbon cut in 36" lengths, markers, masking or regular tape, magnet strips and glue

[Have sample ready to show children.] *Last week we made a magnet for our refrigerator. What did it say? (I Believe) Today we are going to make "Alleluia" signs to place below our "I Believe" sign. Why would we put them by each other? (We are thanking God for everything we believe in the Creed.) What does Alleluia mean? (Praise to God.)*

Cut out the "Alleluia" from the worksheet. Color the white around the word. [On one end of the ribbon, tightly wrap tape to create a sharp point to pull through the holes of the plastic canvas.] *Use the pointed end of the ribbon as a needle. Pull the ribbon from the back to the front through one hole in the center of the bottom side of the canvas; pull the ribbon from the back to the front through the corner hole on the canvas; pull the ribbon from the back to the front through the center of the next side; pull the ribbon from the back to the front through the next corner hole. Continue doing this until all sides are covered. Tie the two ends into a bow. The bow will hang from the bottom of your sign. Next glue the "Alleluia" onto the plastic canvas decorated with the ribbon. Glue two magnet strips on both ends of the canvas.*

Closing:

Let's get our prayer books and turn to the Creed for our closing prayer. I hope you are remembering to say the Creed during the Divine Liturgy every time you are there. Let's begin with the sign of the cross.

[For next week's craft, ask your priest for a list of home-bound people in your parish.]

Alleluia

Alleluia

Alleluia

Alleluia

Alleluia

As Church, We Show Our Love

Objective: The students will be able to summarize the parable of the Samaritan and explain the way it shows how we are to love each other.

For the Catechist

Our culture tends to idealize and perhaps abuse the word *love*. Children are heard saying, "We love pizza; we love this movie; we love this color." In these situations the children are just saying a word. Children in Grade 3 are ready to understand this word *love* has many different meanings. This lesson begins to explain the word love as Jesus used it.

First, we must remember that God initiates any movement of grace. God first loves us, and we respond by loving Him. One way we show our love for God is by loving each other. This requires us to stop thinking only of ourselves and begin thinking about others. This is not easy for any of us. We have to work at learning to love each other. We have to ask the Holy Spirit to help us grow in God's love.

Children experience love on many different levels. Their parents, family and friends love and care for them. This initial love teaches them to love. As they mature, they will continually grow in love. Their understanding of God's love for them grows as they experience their love for one another.

Sometimes it is hard to understand how we are to love each other. Jesus tells us we are to love each other as He loves us:

> "This is my commandment:
> Love one another
> as I love you" (John 15:12).

We can learn how to love the way God wants by learning about the lives of our saints. Even in modern times we have examples of people

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: The Creed

Introduction: Discussion about helping
Need: adhesive bandages

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read the text. Use questions in the teacher manual to discuss the lesson with the students.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

- *Basic*: The Message of Jesus
- *Group:* The Good Samaritan
- *Craft:* "Thinking of You" Card

Closing: The Creed

Icon Packets:

Packet II:
Parable of the Good Samaritan

Teaching Pics:

#

who live their life focused on God. Mother Teresa is a good example. She believed in the dignity of all of God's people, and she was willing to help everyone, especially the poor. We need to learn to love like the Saints and holy people.

The Parable of The Good Samaritan
To understand this parable fully, we should be aware of the extreme contrast Jesus is making, the priest and Levite (temple assistant) held respected roles in Jewish society. The Samaritans, who considered themselves as traditionalist Hebrews, were reviled by the Jews and there was generally bad blood between them. The point of the parable is that the religious leaders fail at loving their neighbor while the religious outcast is the one to imitate.

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

Christian Hospitality
"The traditional way sharing is exercised in the domestic church is in hospitality, the willingness to share all we are and all we have with others. Hospitality is a principal exercise of the priesthood of the domestic church. By taking the small section of the world under their control and sharing it with others, the Christian family sanctifies it and makes of it an offering to God.

"Christians exercise their domestic priesthood to the fullest when their home is open to others in the spirit of Christ. The Christian community should be especially welcome as was the case in the early Church, where people put what they had 'at the service of the saints' (1 Cor 16:15). The domestic church, then, should be a place where guests are the rule rather than the exception.

"We should not confuse hospitality with entertaining: inviting those who will invite us in turn. Everyone does that! Christ says that we best imitate God when we show concern for those from whom we can expect no repayment (cf Mt 5:43-48). And so hospitality is most Christian when it is extended to those from whom we do not expect any return" (*DC* 36).

Liturgy and Community
"Similarly, true liturgical piety cannot be separated from the love of our neighbor. As St. Maximos the Confessor points out, the aim of the Church's mysteries is to enable each of us to become 'as much as possible like Christ and bringing into open manifestation through Christ-like behavior the gift of the Holy Spirit given once by holy baptism.' As mutual forgiveness and reconciliation are the prerequisites for a worshipping community, care for those in need are its first consequence. Our liturgical life 'results in identifying one's self as far as in one lies, as God has done, with the man who is in want of any kind of help: not letting him go uncared for and destitute, but taking the trouble to show by our deeds that our affection for both God and neighbor is alive.' The Divine Liturgy, the holy mysteries and the daily services are all occasions for deepening our sense of faith and our feelings toward God and others" (*LLII* 99).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Today we are going to continue saying the Creed. Did you say the Creed during the Divine Liturgy this week? Let's begin with the sign of the cross. [Use the prayer worksheet according to your jurisdiction.]

Introduction

Last week we learned about the different ways we worship God in church. Does anyone remember any of the ways? (Praying, singing, standing, listening to the Gospel, receiving the Eucharist) In how many of these ways did you worship this week? When we worship, we thank God for all the good He has sent us. Who are we with when we worship? (Our family and the other church members)

We like to be with the people we know. But God wants us to help all people. Before we begin, I am going to give each of you an adhesive bandage. Why do we use adhesive bandages? Do they help us? I want all of us to think about a time we would need to give an adhesive bandage to someone else. What are some of these times? Why would we want to help someone? Remember how we learned that God created us to be happy with Him forever. Do you think God wants us to help other people be happy? I guess you could think of what God wants us to do as similar to what we do with this adhesive bandage. He wants us to help people who are hurt. He wants us to offer our help. Sometimes our help could be as small as giving an adhesive bandage, but that is what God would have done. He wants us to do the same.

We do like to help the people we love. Who are some of the people we love? But God wants us to help even the strangers. Let's turn to today's lesson to learn more.



13

As Church, We Show Love

In the Bible we read stories about Jesus helping other people. We also read stories that Jesus tells to teach a lesson. These stories are called parables. Jesus tells parables to help us learn how we are to love. When we read a parable, we hear how people treat each other. Jesus wants us to learn how we should act if the same thing happened to us. Through these parables, Jesus teaches us how God wants us to love and treat others.

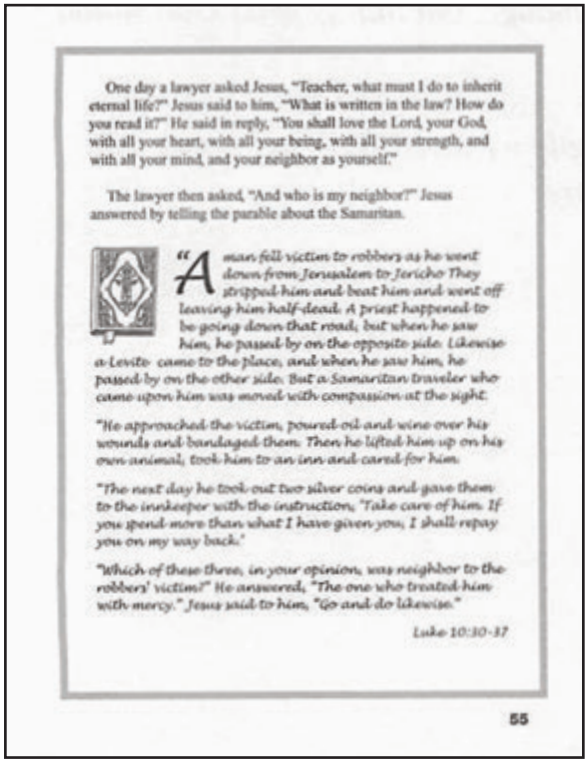
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Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

... Jesus teaches us how God wants us to love and treat others.

What is a parable? (A Bible story that teaches a lesson) Why did Jesus tell parables? (To teach us how to love and take care of each other)



One day a lawyer asked Jesus, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read it?" He said in reply, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself."

The lawyer then asked, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus answered by telling the parable about the Samaritan.

"A man fell victim to robbers as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho They stripped him and beat him and went off leaving him half-dead. A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. Likewise a Levite came to the place, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight.

"He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds and bandaged them. Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn and cared for him.

"The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction, 'Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back.'

"Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers' victim?" He answered, "The one who treated him with mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Luke 10:30-37

55

. ."And who is my neighbor?"

What question did the lawyer ask? (How should we love God?) The Gospel gives us the complete answer Jesus told the lawyer The complete answer is on this page. Let's read the answer together: "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself (Lk 10:27).'

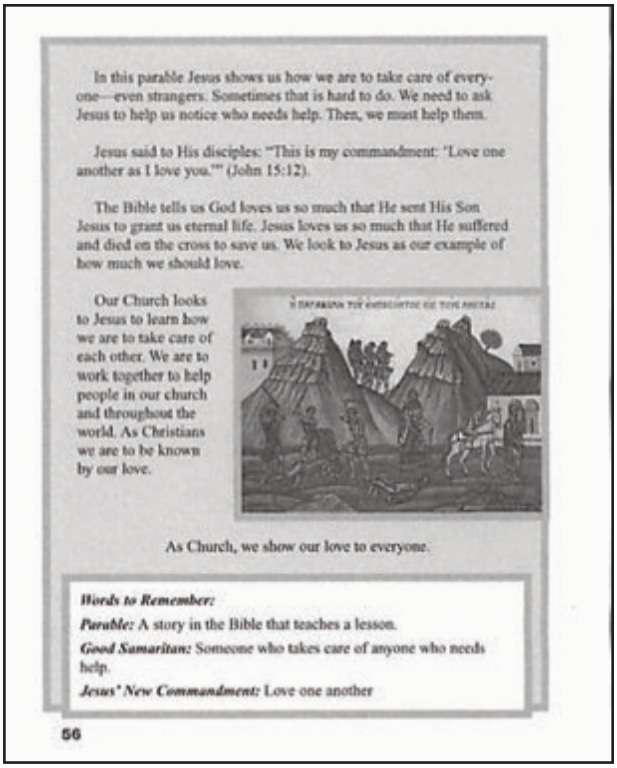
"Go and do likewise."

What story did Jesus tell to show what we are to do for our neighbors? (The Good Samaritan) Is anyone surprised that the Samaritan did all this? Do people in the world today help like this? Do you know of anyone?
[Allow the children to tell some stories.]

...as I love you
What is Jesus' commandment? (To love one another) How much? (As much as He loves us)

... our example of how much we should love.
How can we show our love for each other? (By being nice—not rude and mean—and by helping people—not hurting them. By taking care of each other) How did God show His love for us? (By sending us Jesus). Does anyone remember the name we call Jesus Who saved us? (Our Savior) What is a savior? (A special leader who brings people to eternal life.) Jesus is our Savior.

Let's review: *What can we do to show that we love each other and take care of each other? (Help strangers, help friends and family members) Jesus wants everyone to know we are His followers. He wants them to know we are Christians by our love*



In this parable Jesus shows us how we are to take care of everyone—even strangers. Sometimes that is hard to do. We need to ask Jesus to help us notice who needs help. Then, we must help them.

Jesus said to His disciples: "This is my commandment: 'Love one another as I love you.'" (John 15:12).

The Bible tells us God loves us so much that He sent His Son Jesus to grant us eternal life. Jesus loves us so much that He suffered and died on the cross to save us. We look to Jesus as our example of how much we should love.

Our Church looks to Jesus to learn how we are to take care of each other. We are to work together to help people in our church and throughout the world. As Christians we are to be known by our love.

As Church, we show our love to everyone.

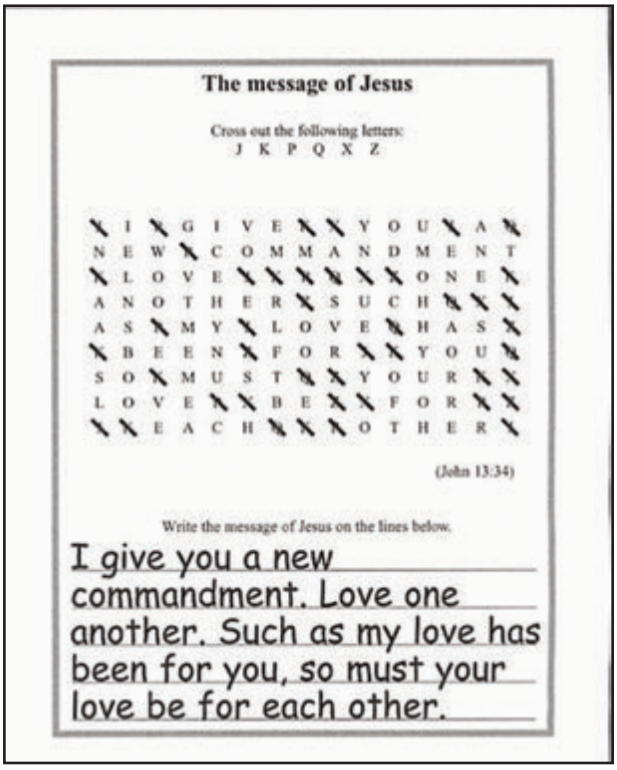
Words to Remember:
Parable: A story in the Bible that teaches a lesson.
Good Samaritan: Someone who takes care of anyone who needs help.
Jesus' New Commandment: Love one another

56

Activity Tracks

Basic: The Message is Jesus
[This worksheet is in the student text.]

Today we learned that people can tell we believe in Jesus Christ. How can they tell? (By our love) Let's follow the instructions and cross out some letters. The final message has the words Jesus told his disciples. Find out how much we are to love one another. [While the students are working on this worksheet, ask them to state what we can do to show people we love them.]



The message of Jesus

Cross out the following letters:
J K P Q X Z

I G I V E Y O U A
N E W C O M M A N D M E N T
L O V E O N E
A N O T H E R S U C H
A S M Y L O V E H A S
B E E N F O R Y O U
S O M U S T Y O U R
L O V E B E F O R
E A C H O T H E R

(John 13:34)

Write the message of Jesus on the lines below.

I give you a new commandment. Love one another. Such as my love has been for you, so must your love be for each other.

Group: The Good Samaritan

Materials: "Good Samaritan" worksheet

[Duplicate the worksheet and cut out the passages that are in the right order on the worksheet. Let the children pick a passage from the shuffled pile. Give them a few minutes to arrange themselves. If the class is large, set up teams to see who can arrange the story in the shortest amount of time. Also, you can ask the students to act out the part that they read.]

For our activity today we are going to read the story of the Good Samaritan again. But this time there is a problem. The words are out of sequence. Pick up one of the papers on the pile. When everyone has one, turn them over and work with each other to put the story in order. When you think it is right, I want you to line up in the front of the room. Then, let's hear the story as you read the lines you are holding. We will be working together as we hear how Jesus wants us to take care of each other.



Craft: "Thinking of You" Cards

Materials: Construction paper, markers, and sparkles, "Thinking of You" worksheet, envelopes (3 5/8" x 6 1/2"), stamps, and the list of names and addresses.

[Have sample ready to show children. If possible, arrange for a parent to help address and seal the envelopes.] *Today we learned that people should know we are Christians by our love. What does that mean? Today we are going to make cards to send to the homebound people of our church. Who are they? (People who are sick and unable to go to church) We are showing our love for them by letting them know we are thinking of them. On the inside of the card, let's write our names.* [Have a child or parent write at the bottom of the card: "Children from _____Church."] [If this lesson is taught during the Nativity Fast, you can have the children add Christmas stickers to the cards. Get a list of names and addresses from the priest in advance.]

Closing

We are going to say the Creed. Let's begin with the sign of the cross. [Use their prayer books.]

There was a man going down from Jerusalem to Jericho who fell prey to robbers. They stripped him, beat him and then went off leaving him half-dead.

A priest happened to be going down the same road; he saw him but continued on.

Likewise there was a Levite who came the same way; he saw him and went on.

But a Samaritan who was journeying along came on him and was moved to pity at the sight.

He approached him and dressed his wounds, pouring in oil and wine. He then hoisted him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, where he cared for him.

The next day he took out two silver pieces and gave them to the innkeeper with the request: "Look after him, and if there is any further expense I will repay you on my way back."

Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the man who fell in with the robbers?"

The answer came, "The one who treated him with compassion." Jesus said to him, "Then go and do the same.'

Thinking of You

Thinking of You

As Church, We Serve

Objective: The students will be able to state that Jesus came to serve us. We imitate Jesus by serving one another.

For the Catechist

In lesson 13 the children learned that we show our love to each other by being kind and helpful. Now they will learn that another way to show our love is by serving each other.

Jesus said, "I am among you as the one who serves " (Lk 22:27). We look to Jesus as our perfect example of how to serve other people. He shows us that the natural flow from love is service. This service extends toward all of God's people—poor, elderly, disabled, suffering, and minorities. The children in Grade 3 are ready to think about ways to give service to others.

This lesson also identifies our church members who serve the community: the priest, deacon, sisters, cantor, catechists, altar servers, custodians, and other volunteers. These members give glory to God as they serve the parish family.

The children are ready to follow the example of service shown to them by their family, catechist, and other parishioners. They are becoming aware of their responsibility to serve all people because we are all sons and daughters of God.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: The Creed

Introduction: Discussion about helping even when not asked

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read the text. Use questions in the teacher manual to discuss the lesson with the students.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

• *Basic*: We Serve All People

• *Group:* People Who Serve in Our Church

• *Craft:* Our Family Circle

Closing: The Creed

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord: The Holy Trinity

Teaching Pics:

Divine Liturgy: (DL7, DL9, DL11)

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

Service to the Church

"All of these roles, from bishop to candle-bearer are functions of service to the Church. They build up the Body of Christ by enabling it to worship with order, dignity, and beauty so that this Body, the Church, may eagerly fulfill its priestly service in union with Christ. The co-ministering of all these roles in one divine service becomes an icon of the entire Church, where each of us fulfills the task to which the Lord calls us and thus come together as one Body in Him" (*LW* 65).

Sacramental Orders

"The orders of **bishop, priest**, and **deacon** are considered sacramental orders because they call for a permanent commitment to a particular kind of ministry or service in the Church that requires a special enabling by the gift of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands" (*LW* 64).

Other Ministries in the Church

"There are other ministries necessary for the proper celebration of the Liturgy but not requiring the same degree of commitment. These lesser orders are given by the laying on of the hands of the bishop outside the altar (sanctuary). The *minor orders* of **acolyte or candle bearer, lector, cantor and subdeacon** are still given today for specific roles in worship. In the early Church, other ministries such as **catechist** or **teacher** were blessed in the same way.

"Each of these roles are regularly fulfilled today by members of the parish. The office of cantor is of particular importance, for the music of the Church is perhaps the most significant aspect of a beautiful celebration of the Divine Services. The cantor can lift the hearts of the faithful 'to welcome the King of all,' and should lead them to proclaim in song their faith, their hope, and their love of the God of salvation" (*LW* 64).

Altar Servers

"The server contributes to the solemnity of processions and symbolizes the Light of Christ, the 'real light which gives light to every man coming into the world.' (John 1:9) The role of server is very important. Without servers the clergy are not free to fulfill their ministry of prayer properly and must do several jobs at once. Unfortunately, the ministry of server is often considered as intended for children. This seems to have arisen when monasteries began taking in boys for schooling and introduced them to the service of the Church in this way. Today many parishes employ adults or at least teenagers for this role" (*LW* 65).

Discerning Your Call—Other Ministries

"Within either life-style, all are called to various forms of "ministry", ways in which we serve the community of the Church and the world. The Church is "made up of" interdependent ministries. We all serve one another, thus building up the Body of Christ. Some are "gifts", charisms given by the Spirit to a person for the good of others. They include time, talents and treasures entrusted to us by God to be used in service to others (*LLIII* 25).

"On the local level, the community also calls people to specific ministries within the community, some of which require the "setting aside" by the bishop: cantors, readers, servers, catechists, and others. In these capacities they build up their community by their union with Christ the servant of all" (*LLIII* 26).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Today we are going to continue saying the Creed. Did you say the Creed during the Divine Liturgy this week? Let's begin with the sign of the cross. [Use the prayer worksheet according to your jurisdiction.]

Introduction

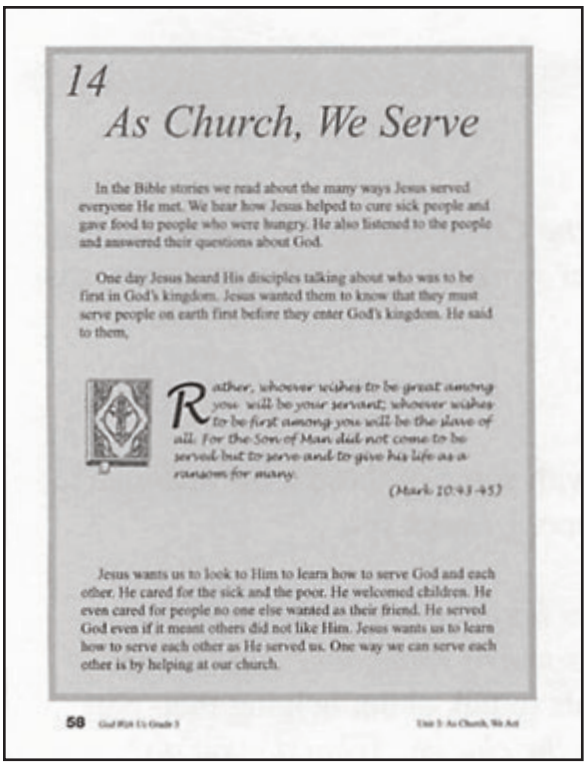
Before we start class today, I need help. [Ask students to help with some of these jobs: organize the books, give out pencils, put a new icon on the table, give out paper.] *Thank you.*

I always appreciate help with anything I have to do. I am always happy when someone offers to help even if I don't ask. Do any of you help at home? What are some of your jobs? Now do any of you help even if you don't have that job? [Encourage the students to talk about helping their parents, other relatives, and neighbors.] *Do any of you help here at the church? What do you do?* [Possible answers: altar server, picnic worker, festival worker] *When you are helping in this way, you are serving other people because you are reaching out to help. Many times you provide a service for someone without being asked. You see or know someone needs help so you serve them. Were you helpers providing a service today? (Yes) What was that service? (We helped you; we gave out what we need for today.)*

Last week we read the story about the Good Samaritan. In that story we read how someone served another person. Let's see who can tell us that story. [Help students tell the story.]

In the Gospel we read that Jesus said He came to serve us. We should follow Jesus' example on how to serve other people. He helped everyone. We are to help everyone also—not just our family and friends. Why do you think we should serve everyone? (God wants us to serve.)

Today we are going to learn about serving each other and our church. Let's turn to our lesson.



14

As Church, We Serve

In the Bible stories we read about the many ways Jesus served everyone He met. We hear how Jesus helped to cure sick people and gave food to people who were hungry. He also listened to the people and answered their questions about God.

One day Jesus heard His disciples talking about who was to be first in God's kingdom. Jesus wanted them to know that they must serve people on earth first before they enter God's kingdom. He said to them,

Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all. For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.

(Mark 10:43-45)

Jesus wants us to look to Him to learn how to serve God and each other. He cared for the sick and the poor. He welcomed children. He even cared for people no one else wanted as their friend. He served God even if it meant others did not like Him. Jesus wants us to learn how to serve each other as He served us. One way we can serve each other is by helping at our church.

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Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

As Church, We Serve.

Let's think of some ways we serve each other. (Serve food, service the car) Serve means to offer something to someone. Many times we serve people by helping. We offer them our help so they can get done faster. Jesus served us in a special way. Let's read.

... to give his life as a ransom for many.

Did Jesus come to be served? (No) He came to serve. Who is our perfect example to follow to learn how to serve? (Jesus) Whom should we serve? (Each other; and we should help at our church)



We have many people who serve in our church. The priest and deacon serve the Divine Liturgy. They help us become and stay united to God.

Nuns, sisters, monks, and brothers serve the Church in many ways. They serve in hospitals, parishes, and schools. The teach us, take care of the sick, and serve the Church family in many ways. Also, they pray for us.

Our church cantor serves God by singing praises during the Divine Liturgy and other services. The cantor serves us by leading as we sing our prayers to God. In some churches, the cantor has organized a choir. The cantor and choir members lead us in singing our praise to God.

Catechists are the men and women who teach the religious education classes for the children and the adults of our parish. They read and study to learn how to grow closer to God. They serve the Church by helping other people learn how to grow closer to God.

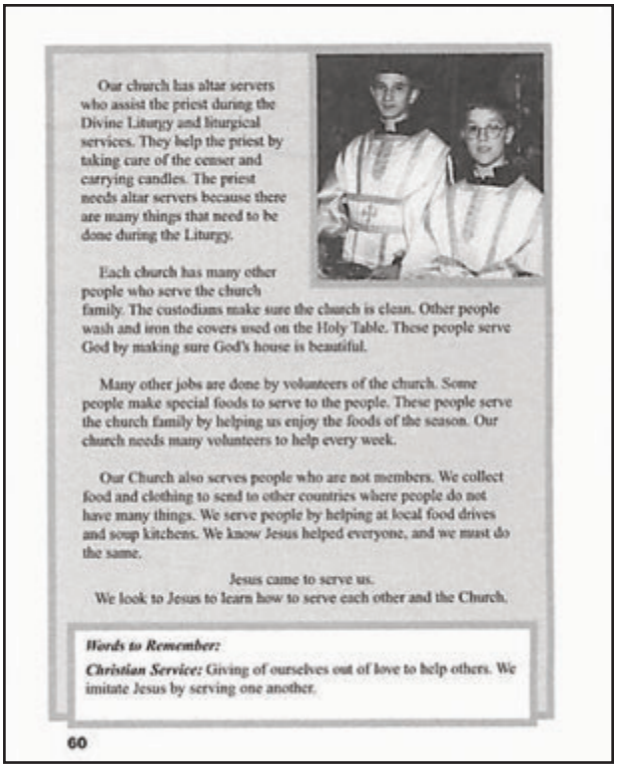
59

Also, they pray for us.

How does the priest help us grow closer to God? (Leading us in worship, administering the Mysteries) Who are some other people who serve us in the Church and pray for us? (Deacons, sister, monks, and cantors)

We know Jesus helped everyone, and we must do the same.
Who are some of the other people who serve our church? (The altar servers, the cantor, the custodian, the volunteers) Why are they willing to serve the church? (They love God and they love God's house, the church.) Let's think of some other ways we can serve each other. (We can feed the poor, visit the sick, give shelter.)

Let's review: *Did Jesus come to be served? (No) Why did He come? (To serve) Jesus served us by suffering and dying so we can have eternal life. What do we call Jesus because He gave us eternal life? (Our Savior) What did He save us from? (Eternal death) We thank Jesus for serving us. We ask Jesus to help us learn how to serve as He did. How do we imitate Jesus? (By serving one another)*



Our church has altar servers who assist the priest during the Divine Liturgy and liturgical services. They help the priest by taking care of the censer and carrying candles. The priest needs altar servers because there are many things that need to be done during the Liturgy.

Each church has many other people who serve the church family. The custodians make sure the church is clean. Other people wash and iron the covers used on the Holy Table. These people serve God by making sure God's house is beautiful.

Many other jobs are done by volunteers of the church. Some people make special foods to serve to the people. These people serve the church family by helping us enjoy the foods of the season. Our church needs many volunteers to help every week.

Our Church also serves people who are not members. We collect food and clothing to send to other countries where people do not have many things. We serve people by helping at local food drives and soup kitchens. We know Jesus helped everyone, and we must do the same.

Jesus came to serve us.
We look to Jesus to learn how to serve each other and the Church.

Words to Remember:
Christian Service: Giving of ourselves out of love to help others. We imitate Jesus by serving one another.

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Activity Tracks

Basic: We Serve All People
[This worksheet is in the student text.]

Complete the sentences and find the hidden word. When we are done with the activity, let's see if we can name the people who serve in our church. Let's think of ways we can serve in our church.



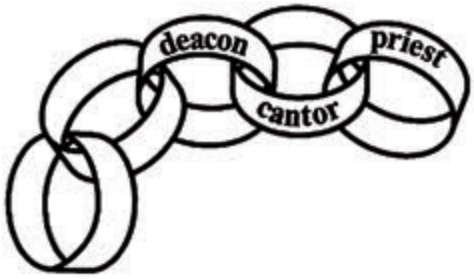
We Serve All People

Complete the following sentences with the words from the bottom of the page. Use the letters from the boxes to find the hidden word.

1. PRIESTS serve the Divine Liturgy.
2. The DEACON helps the priest serve the Divine Liturgy.
3. ALTARSERVERS assist the priest during the Divine Liturgy and liturgical services.
4. VOLUNTEERS help around the church every week by doing special jobs.
5. SISTERS serve the Church and pray for us.
6. The CANTOR leads us as we sing our prayers to God.
7. We need EVERYONE to serve God and each other.

cantor volunteers everyone sisters
priests deacon altar servers

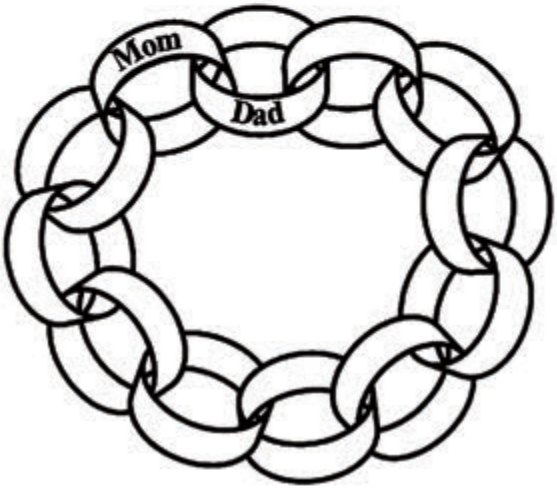
The hidden word
SERVICE



Group: People Who Serve in Our Church

Materials: Construction paper cut into 6" by 2" strips, stapler or glue, markers

Today we learned about the many people who serve in our church. We are going to make a circle of links that identify all the people who help in our church. First on the strips of paper, let's write the names of the people who serve in our church. [If you don't know the name of the person, list the service. Have the students add a link with their name.] *We are going to write their names on each paper strip. Now let's glue the ends of the strips after we link each one together. Now we have a chain of people who serve in our church. The chain is ready for more links to be added as we continue to have more people serve in our church.* [Display the chain in the room.]



Craft: Our Family Circle

Materials: Construction paper cut into 6" by 2" strips (4 or more per student), stapler or tape, markers

Today we learned about the many people who serve in our church. We also can serve in many ways in our family. On the strips of paper, write your family members' names. Don't forget to include yourselves. On the other side of the paper, write one way that family member serves each other. Can you think of some ways you serve your family? (Washing dishes, cleaning, setting the table) Now let's glue the ends of the strips after we link each one together. Now we have a chain of your family members. Let's link this chain to make a circle. This is your family circle of love. How do we show our love for each other? (By serving each other)

Closing

We are going to say the Creed during our closing prayer. Remember to say the Creed during the Divine Liturgy every time you are there. Let's begin with the sign of the cross. [Use their prayer books.]

As Church, We Serve

Objective: Students will be able to state that we receive the Body and Blood of Jesus every time we receive Holy Communion. When we receive the Eucharist, we become one with Jesus Christ and with each other

For the Catechist

In this lesson the children are told the story of the Passover. They will learn that Jesus transformed the ancient Passover feast of deliverance from slavery in Egypt into a new deliverance. Jesus delivers us from eternal death through the giving of His life. In this series the story of Moses is in the Grade 1 book, but this lesson includes the first reference to the Passover meal.

There is more involved in Jesus' last Passover meal than we can realize at one time: the memory of Jesus' farewell, Jesus' sacrificial act, the New Covenant between God and man, the forgiveness of sins, thanksgiving to God, and the expectation of the Kingdom. The Passover meal recalls what God has done and points to His Kingdom. This lesson connects the Passover meal to the Eucharist in the Divine Liturgy.

During the Passover meal, Jesus told His disciples to listen and to act:

> "While they were eating, he took bread,
> said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them
> and said, "Take it; this is my body."
> Then he took a cup, gave thanks,
> and gave it to them, and they all drank from it.
> He said to them, "This is my blood of the
> covenant, which will be shed for many."
> (Mark 14:22-24)

By receiving the Body and Blood of Jesus, we make Jesus a part of our lives. We join with all the other people who have received Jesus. Together we make up the Body of Christ, the Church.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: The Creed

Introduction: Discussion of Passover
Need: Matzoh or crackers

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read the text. Use questions in the teacher manual to discuss the lesson with the students.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

- *Basic*: We Are One
- *Group:* "Holy Communion" Filmstrip
- *Craft:* The Prosphora

Closing: The Creed

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord: The Mystical Supper

Teaching Pics:

Divine Liturgy: DL1, DL2, DL3, DL4, DL19, DL20, DL22

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

Passover

"These events in Christ's life took place during Passover, the most holy feast of the Jewish religious year. The Passover celebrated the Israelites' release from bondage in Egypt and their exodus to the promised land. The miracles God performed on their behalf to free them were remembered by means of various rituals. Most important of these was the sacrificing of the passover or paschal lamb. According to the Book of Exodus, a lamb was slaughtered by each Hebrew family and its blood smeared on the doorway. When the plague came killing the first-born son of each household, it spared those homes marked by the blood of the lamb. Death 'passed over' God's chosen people" (*LLII* 56).

Christ our Passover

"Christ fulfilled this mystery when He Himself took the place of the paschal lamb and shed His blood on the doorpost of the Cross. He is God's first-born and only Son, whose blood saved the whole world from sin and led us all from death to life. St. Paul exclaims in joy, 'Christ our Passover has been sacrificed' (I Cor 5:7). The Gospel of St. John places our Lord's death on the Day of Preparation, when the passover lambs were being slaughtered in the Jerusalem temple, to show that Jesus fulfilled all the sacrifices of the Old Testament. This mystery expressed, 'Christ entered [the sanctuary], not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood and achieved eternal redemption' (Heb 9:12). Here was fulfilled St. John the Baptist's prophetic identification of Jesus at the beginning of His ministry, "There is the Lamb of God' (Jn 1:36)" (*LLII* 57).

The Last Supper

"All four gospels as well as St. Paul tell us how, just before His death, Christ celebrated a 'last supper' with His apostles: a meal the evangelists are careful to present in the context of the Jewish Passover. Jesus took bread and wine and identified them as His body and blood. He gave us a new ritual to celebrate: one that is not merely symbolic but real, freeing us from the death of sin whenever we participate in it with faith. Henceforth whenever we would receive Communion, we would be truly united with Christ both in our body and our spirit. We therefore call the bread of the Divine Liturgy the 'Lamb.' The Eucharist is truly our Lord, the Lamb of God, the One who suffered, died and is risen, the perfect fulfillment of all sacrifices" (*LLII* 57).

The Divine Liturgy

"When we present these rites and words, when the bread and wine are placed on the holy table and consecrated, we experience this amplified reality as 'Christ is among us.' We are forged together as Church in a sanctifying action which frees us from sin and fills us with the Spirit in the fullness of the future kingdom experienced in the present. When we eat and drink the Body and Blood of Christ, we unite with God in the Holy Trinity through the Word who became flesh for our sake. St. John Chrysostom declared this mystery, 'For it was not enough for [Christ] to be made man, and to be struck and slaughtered, but He also comingles Himself with us, and not by faith only but in very deed, He makes us His body ... and we are made one body and one flesh with Christ' (*Homily on the Gospel of St. Matthew* 82.5)" (*LLII* 61).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Today we are going to continue saying the Creed. Did you say the Creed during the Divine Liturgy this week? Let's begin with the sign of the cross. [Use the prayer worksheet according to your jurisdiction.]

Introduction

Today I have a Bible story to tell you. It is the story about Moses. Do any of you remember learning about Moses? [Let the children share what they know]

In the Bible is a story about Moses and the Jewish people living in Egypt. These people were slaves. They wanted to be free. The ruler of Egypt would not allow them to be free to leave. God gave Moses special instructions for the Jewish people to follow. Finally, they were set free, and they left Egypt quickly. The ruler of Egypt changed his mind and tried to stop them, but the people were gone.

Each year the Jewish people tell this story at their Passover meal called a seder. They remember all that God had done and how He had freed the Jews. Because this meal is so different and special, a set of rules tells what is to be eaten, when it is to be eaten and what is to be said. On what holiday do they have this meal? (Passover) In eating this meal the Jewish people praise and thank God for saving them. God saved them by giving special instructions to Moses. The people had to kill a lamb, put blood on doorways, and mix dough without yeast. Why did the people follow God's instructions? (They loved Him and believed Him.) If all this was done, they would not be killed.

Because the people left Egypt in a hurry, they did not have time to put yeast into their dough to let it rise. When it was baked, the bread was flat like this matzoh we are eating. Today people eat this matzoh at their Passover meals to remember how quickly the Jewish people had to leave to be saved from the Pharaoh. [Hold up a matzoh cracker.] *This is a matzoh cracker. This is a special part of the meal.*

Since Jesus followed the Jewish traditions, His family celebrated Passover. Let's read about something very special that Jesus did at His last Passover.



15
As Church, We Receive

Jesus followed the Jewish traditions of His family. Every year the Jewish people gather to praise and thank God for leading the Israelites out of Egypt.

The Israelites were the chosen people of God. God promised to save them. They believed and trusted God who helped them many times.

God helped the Israelites when they were slaves in Egypt. They prayed to God to save them, and He did. The Jewish people have a special religious observance that praises and thanks God for saving their ancestors from slavery in Egypt. This observance called Passover is celebrated every year.

Jesus and the twelve disciples were together for Passover.

62

Reading of Text

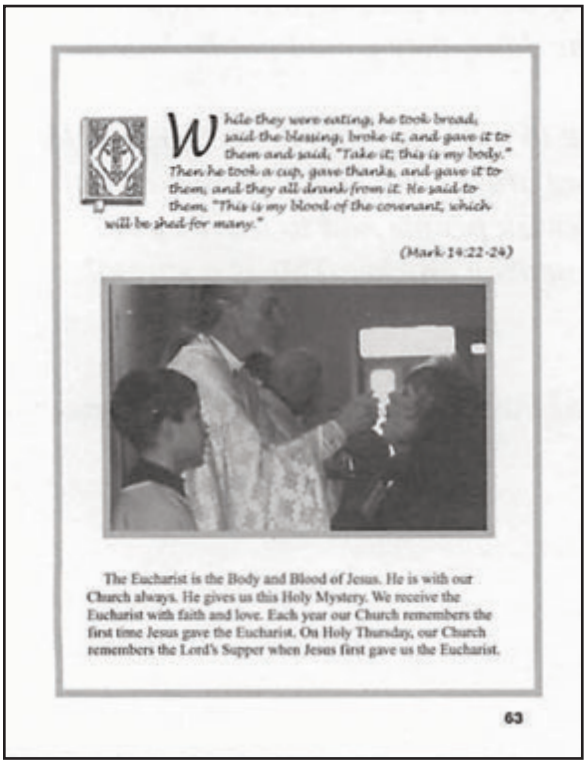
As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

As Church, We Receive

[Have the students turn to the first page of their lesson.]
Does anyone know what this is? (The icon of the Last Supper) Who are these people? (Jesus and His twelve disciples.) This is a picture of Jesus and disciples at His last Passover meal.

Jesus and the twelve disciples were together for Passover.

What is Passover? (A special religious observance of the Jewish people) Why do they celebrate it? (To thank God for saving their ancestors, the Israelites)



While they were eating, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them and said, "Take it; this is my body." Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, and they all drank from it. He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed for many."

(Mark 14:22-24)

The Eucharist is the Body and Blood of Jesus. He is with our Church always. He gives us this Holy Mystery. We receive the Eucharist with faith and love. Each year our Church remembers the first time Jesus gave the Eucharist. On Holy Thursday, our Church remembers the Lord's Supper when Jesus first gave us the Eucharist.

63

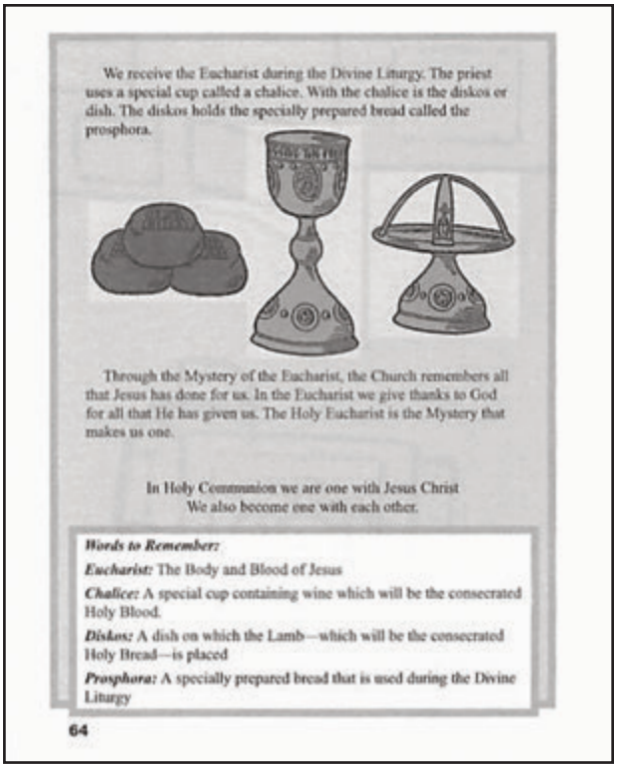
... our Church remembers the Lord's Supper when Jesus first gave us the Eucharist.

At His last Passover meal, Jesus took bread and wine and blessed them. What did He say they would become? (The Body and Blood of Jesus) What day of our Church year do we observe the fist Lord's Supper? (Holy Thursday)

The Holy Eucharist is the Mystery that makes us one.

In church we come together as one to receive Communion. What is the name of the special bread? (Prosphora) What is the name of the cup for Communion? (Chalice) What is the name of the dish? (Diskos) The Eucharist is a special meal prepared at the Lord's table. The bread is cut and placed on the diskos. The largest piece of bread placed in the center of the diskos is called the Lamb. What do the bread and wine become? (The Body and Blood of Jesus) With whom do we unite when we receive the Eucharist? (Jesus and each other) We join together as one.

Let's review: *What is the name given to all of us joined together as the Body of Christ on earth? (The Church) As one Church, we receive the Lord Jesus in the Eucharist.*



We receive the Eucharist during the Divine Liturgy. The priest uses a special cup called a chalice. With the chalice is the diskos or dish. The diskos holds the specially prepared bread called the prosphora.

Through the Mystery of the Eucharist, the Church remembers all that Jesus has done for us. In the Eucharist we give thanks to God for all that He has given us. The Holy Eucharist is the Mystery that makes us one.

In Holy Communion we are one with Jesus Christ
We also become one with each other.

Words to Remember:

Eucharist: The Body and Blood of Jesus

Chalice: A special cup containing wine which will be the consecrated Holy Blood.

Diskos: A dish on which the Lamb—which will be the consecrated Holy Bread—is placed

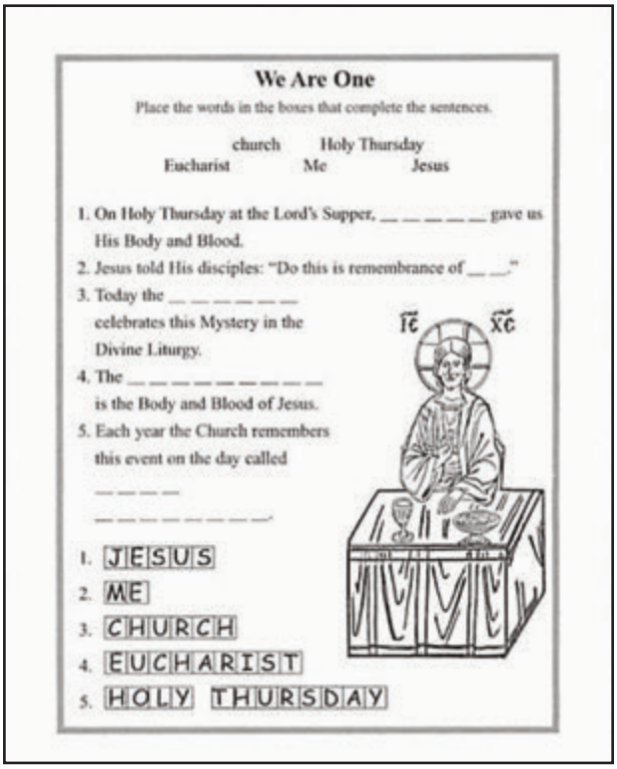
Prosphora: A specially prepared bread that is used during the Divine Liturgy

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Activity Tracks

Basic: We Are One
[This worksheet is in the student text.]

Today we are going to review the words that are important when we talk about the Eucharist. Let's do the worksheet.



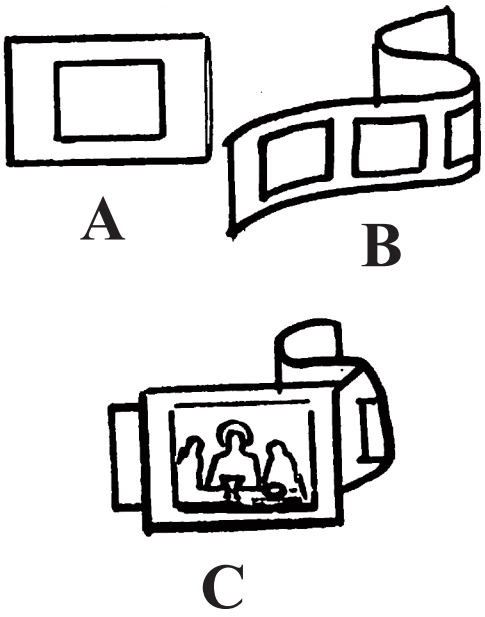
We Are One

Place the words in the boxes that complete the sentences.

church Holy Thursday
Eucharist Me Jesus

1. On Holy Thursday at the Lord's Supper, __ __ __ __ __ gave us His Body and Blood.
2. Jesus told His disciples: "Do this is remembrance of __ __."
3. Today the __ __ __ __ __ __ celebrates this Mystery in the Divine Liturgy.
4. The __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ is the Body and Blood of Jesus.
5. Each year the Church remembers this event on the day called __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __.

1. JESUS
2. ME
3. CHURCH
4. EUCHARIST
5. HOLY THURSDAY



Group: "Holy Communion" Filmstrip

Materials: One 3 5/8" by 6 1/2" envelope for each group of 3 children, 3 1/4" by 12" strip of white paper, markers, scissors

Today we read about everything that happened on Holy Thursday. Now we are going to make a filmstrip that shows what took place that day. We are going to cut a 4" by 3 1/4 " window on the front side of this envelope. [You could have this cut in advance.] *Now we will seal the envelope and cut the ends open. On this strip of paper that will slide through the envelope* [show students] *we need to draw pictures to tell the story of the Lord's Supper and the Eucharist.* [Some suggestions: Jesus and the disciples around the table; diskos and Communion bread; chalice and wine; priest and people worshipping in church.]

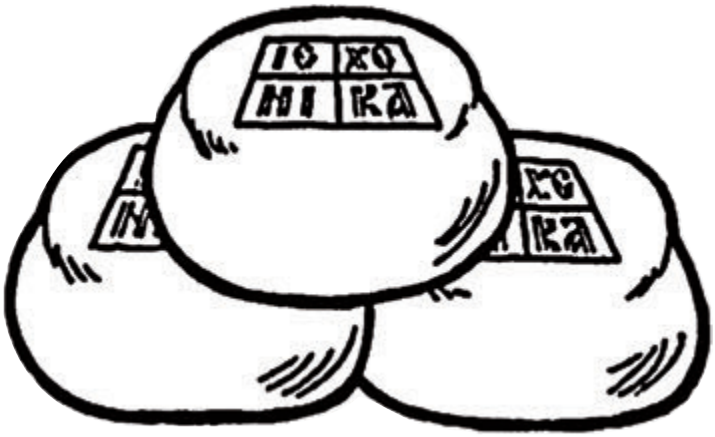
Now let's thread the picture strip into the television envelope. Roll up the paper and hold it in one hand. As we unroll and pull through, picture by picture, we can share the story with each other.

Craft: The Prosphora
Materials: Follow the recipe on the worksheet.

Closing

We are going to say the Creed for our closing prayer. Let's begin with the sign of the cross.

Preparing the Holy Bread



There are many variations to the recipe for phosphora and these are often found in ethnic cookbooks. The following, adapted from A Guide for the Domestic Church, is typical of the bread of Greek or Southern churches. For a Ukrainian recipe, see We Are Children of Light, available from the Sister Servants of Mary Immaculate, 5 Austin Terrace, Toronto, ON M5K 1Y1.

A basic bread dough recipe is used in preparing the holy bread. The most distinctive sign that this bread is meant for the Eucharist is that, before baking, it is marked with the seal or stamp on which the divine name is inscribed. This seal consists of a cross, around which is written the Greek inscription IC XC NIKA (Jesus Christ is victorious), some loaves contain only one such inscription; others contain several (meant to be used in larger celebrations) as well as indications for the other particles cut during the prothesis or preparation rite. Usually made of wood (but increasingly of plastic or ceramic as well), these seals are available from Eastern Church suppliers and often from ethnic grocers as well.

One popular recipe is on the following page.

Holy Bread

1 pkg. compressed dry yeast
2 1/2 cups water
2 tsp. salt
6 3/4 to 7 cups unbleached flour (Crutchfield is a good brand)

Dilute yeast in warm water.

Add salt, half of the flour and stir.

Mix the remainder of the flour by hand until the dough is firm.

Knead until dough is smooth.

Divide the dough and place in 8", 9" or 10" cake pans that have been floured only; do not grease pan. Keep in mind that the dough should be smoothed out to cover the bottom half of the depth of the pan.

Take the eucharist seal and dip it into flour. Shake off the excess flour, then press firmly and evenly in the center of the dough.

Remove the seal and let the dough rise, covered, until almost doubled in bulk. As the dough will also rise in the oven, take care that it does not rise so much that the seal will be erased.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Before baking, take kitchen scissors and cut the dough at an angle around the perimeter of the bread midway between the edge of the pan and the seal, taking care not to cut though to the bottom. Then take a toothpick and prick the outer edge of the seal. Do not pierce the center section of the seal.

Bake in a 400 degree oven for 30 minutes or until done. Bread should be golden in color. Immediately after taking the bread from the oven, wipe the face of the bread with a clean, damp cloth which has been soaked in cold water.

Cover the bread with a dry cloth and allow to cool. Put bread in a plastic bag when cool.

While mixing, kneading and waiting for the bread to rise or bake, you can pray for the intentions you wish to commemorate during the Liturgy. When you bring the bread to church, include a list of the intentions you wish to commemorate.

Unit 3
As Church We Act

Review

1. How do we imitate Jesus?
(Lesson 14: We imitate Jesus by serving one another.)

2. What is the name of the preparation for the Nativity?
(Lesson 10: The name is the Nativity Fast.)

3. What is the Creed?
(Lesson 11: The Creed is a statement of what the Church believes.)

4. What is the Greatest Commandment?
(Lesson 1: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength and you shall love your neighbor as yourself.)

5. What is a Savior? Why is Jesus called our Savior?
(Lesson 2: A Savior is a special leader who brings people to eternal life. Jesus is our Savior because He gave us eternal life.)

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The Great Fast: A Holy Season

Objective: The students will be able to identify the Great Fast as our 40-day period of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving in preparation for Holy Week and Pascha. The first Sunday of the Great Fast is called the Sunday of Orthodoxy.

For the Catechist

The Great Fast is the time of the Church's renewal and our personal renewal. We need to come back to God and repent for our sins by prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. The Great Fast is that time when the whole Church strives to do something positive as we open our minds and hearts to God's Word.

The Great Fast is a positive experience! It deepens our faith and improves our lives. There is a note of optimism that pervades all Great Fast celebrations. The end is in some small way already in view although the melodies are somber, the prayers are longer and penitential, and the bright vestments are replaced by dark ones.

The six lessons in this unit on the Great Fast emphasize the journey we must take during this 40-day preparation. Also, the lessons identify the liturgical services, songs, and prayers of the Great Fast. Encourage the children and their families to participate in the many ways our Church gives us to prepare for Pascha.

Prayer of St. Ephrem. St. Ephrem was a fourth century monk from Syria known for many spiritual writings. If any single prayer were to be designated the *Prayer of Great Fast*, this is it. This brief prayer combines beauty with simplicity as it reminds us to be faithful to the spirit of the Great Fast. When we say this prayer, we make a profound bow at the end of each stanza.

The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. This Liturgy is one of the most characteristic services of the Great Fast season. It consists of vespers to which a Communion Service has been added.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: Prayer of St. Ephrem

Introduction: : Discussion of preparation
Need: toy car and a map, forty sheets of paper, sign that says The Great Fast

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read the text.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

- *Basic*: Our Journey
- *Group:* Forty Footprints
- *Craft:* My Forty-day Calendar

Closing: Prayer of St. Ephrem

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord: Christ Pantocrator

Teaching Pics:

Presanctified Liturgy (GL3)
Orthodoxy Sunday (GL5)

Sunday of Orthodoxy. The first Sunday of the Great Fast is called the Sunday of Orthodoxy. On this day we remember the victory of orthodoxy in the controversy over the holy icons. The term Orthodoxy finds its roots in the Greek word *orthodoxia* (*orthos* that means right and *doxsa* that means praising) which signifies the true faith and the true worship of God. The Byzantine Church during the 8th and 9th centuries battled against the heresy of iconoclasm (i.e., literally "breakers of icons"). This day honors the validation and restoration of icons in the life of our Church. Some parishes honor this Sunday with a procession of children and adults carrying icons.

Saint Basil's Liturgy. We know that we have special Lenten services like the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts during this season. In addition, all the usual services are longer, with additional prayers, psalms and hymns. The Liturgy of St. Basil is used on the Sundays of the Great Fast and during the Holy Week for this reason. The priest's prayers, especially the anaphora, are longer. The anaphora reminds us of the whole plan of God for our salvation. As we listen to these prayers, we realize the greatness of God's love for us which we recall during this time.

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

The Great Fast

"In addition to the fifty-day period of joyful celebration after Pascha, the Church has a forty-day period of penitential preparation for Pascha, called the *Great Fast (Lent)*. In the Eastern Churches Lent begins on the Monday after Cheesefare Sunday (always the seventh Sunday before Easter) and ends on the Friday before, Lazarus Saturday, a period of exactly forty days" (*LLII* 40).

The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

"The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is one of the most characteristic services of the Lenten season. It consists of vespers to which a Communion Service has been added. It does not have an oblation or an anaphora and so is not a complete celebration of the eucharistic Liturgy. An anaphora commemorates our Lord's resurrection. In the Gospel story of Christ's appearance at Emmaus, we see that the disciples 'recognized' the Lord when 'he took bread, pronounced the blessing, then broke the bread and began to distribute it to them' (Lk 24:30). This four-fold action is certainly the celebration of the Eucharist, and in the Gospel story we see that the Christian faithful always discover the risen Lord in the celebration of the Divine Liturgy.

"The whole season of the Great Fast has a different symbolism. Here instead of celebrating the Resurrection, our prayers, fasting, almsgiving and acts of penance symbolize the forty year journey of the people of Israel through the Sinai desert to the Promised Land. The 'Promised Land' of the Christian is the Resurrection of our Lord giving the fullness of life to all who believe in Him. The Byzantine Churches came to consider it inappropriate to pray the anaphora on the weekdays of Lent and formulated another service, 'revealed by the God of unspeakable and invisible mysteries' (Prayer Before the Our Father). It consists of an entrance with the Holy Gifts that have been consecrated the previous Sunday, and their distribution in Holy Communion.

"Today the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is prescribed for Wednesdays and Fridays of Lent, though originally it was celebrated every day of the Great Fast, including Good Friday" (*LLII* 70-71).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Today we are going to begin learning the Prayer of St. Ephrem, a special prayer we say during the Great Fast. This prayer includes profound bows. To do a profound bow we kneel and bow our forehead to the floor. How many of you remember doing this bow last year? This is our way to show God we offer ourselves to Him. The Prayer of St. Ephrem has three profound bows. [Use the prayer sheet for your jurisdiction at the end of this lesson. These sheets will be the prayer page used for the craft in Lesson 17.] *Let's begin with the sign of the cross.*

Introduction

[On the wall tape a map and a picture of a car.] *If you or I were to use these two items today, what would we probably be doing? (Going on a trip) Another word for a trip is a journey. Do you like to go on a journey in your car? Where are some of the places we might go?*

Today we are going to pretend that we are going on a journey. On the wall are taped three sheets of paper with the following words: CAR, FAMILY, JOURNEY. [Divide the class into three groups. Each group goes to the sheet assigned and writes suggestions of what should be done before going on the journey. Suggestions: Car—Get the car checked, fill it with gas ; Family—Pack clothes, prepare and pack food; Journey—Decide where to go, mark out the roads] *This is done before you go on a journey. What is necessary before we are able to begin our journey? (Preparation) To go on a journey, you prepare. We did a similar activity for another lesson. Does anyone remember what feast day we were preparing for then? (The Nativity of Jesus) What is the name of that fast? (Nativity Fast)*

This time our special journey leads us to the Feast of the Resurrection or Pascha. Our Church began this journey this week. We call this time of preparation the Great Fast. How many days are there in the Great Fast? (40)

Today we are going to make a road to remind us of the journey we are on during the Great Fast. How many days does the Church give us to prepare? (40) We will use one sheet of paper for each day. [Give the children forty sheets of paper to lay on the floor to form a road symbolizing the journey. If the area in which you have class is limited, cut the paper into smaller pieces so the children can still participate in entering the JOURNEY. Place a large sign that says The Great Fast beside the first block of the road that will end at the icon corner.] *Let's count to forty as we walk on this road to our icon corner. During the Great Fast we are on a journey with Jesus to the cross and His glorious Resurrection. Let's open our books to learn about the Great Fast*



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The Great Fast: A Holy Season

Have you noticed any changes in our church this week? Maybe some of you noticed the altar covers are a dark color. Maybe some of you noticed our songs have a different melody.

Our Church uses these changes to show us we are in a time of preparation for the Feast of the Resurrection or Pascha. This special time is called the Great Fast. The Great Fast is our 40-day period of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving in preparation for Holy Week and Pascha. During these forty days we remember all that God has done for us, and we dedicate ourselves to serve Him more completely.

The Great Fast is a serious time. It is like a journey or a trip. When we go away, it takes time to get there. As we go on a journey, we think more and more about getting there. As we enter the Great Fast, we think more about Holy Week, Great Friday, and Jesus' saving death and Resurrection. Each day of the Great Fast helps us grow closer to God as we prepare for the death and the Holy Resurrection of Jesus.

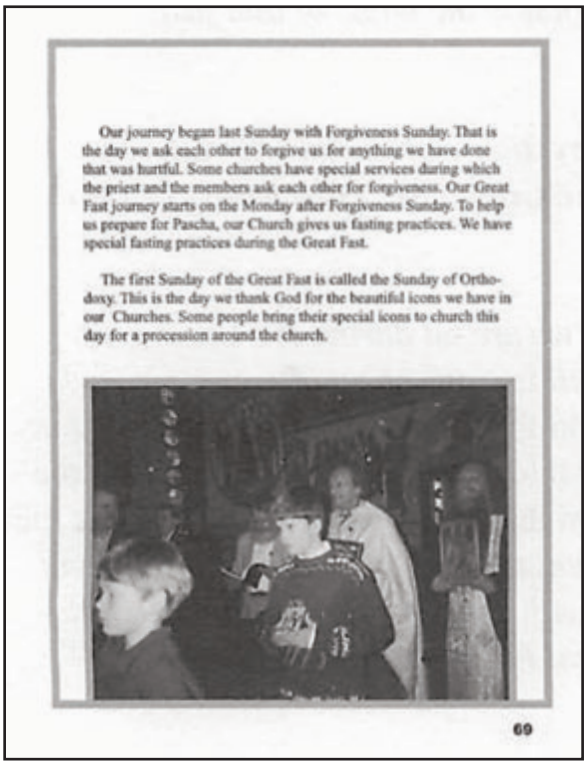
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Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

Maybe some of you noticed our songs have a different melody.
Did you notice these changes? How many of you were in church this week? [Discuss the services you have in your church.]

... for the death and the Holy Resurrection of Jesus.
What is this holy season of preparation called? (The Great Fast) How long is it? (40 days) What is the Great Fast? (Our 40-day period of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving in preparation for Holy Week and Pascha.)



Our journey began last Sunday with Forgiveness Sunday. That is the day we ask each other to forgive us for anything we have done that was hurtful. Some churches have special services during which the priest and the members ask each other for forgiveness. Our Great Fast journey starts on the Monday after Forgiveness Sunday. To help us prepare for Pascha, our Church gives us fasting practices. We have special fasting practices during the Great Fast.

The first Sunday of the Great Fast is called the Sunday of Orthodoxy. This is the day we thank God for the beautiful icons we have in our Churches. Some people bring their special icons to church this day for a procession around the church.

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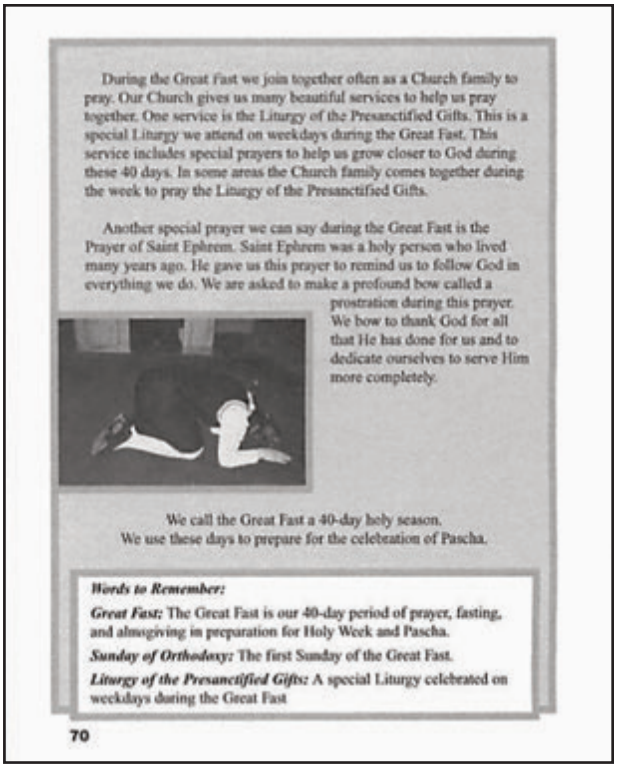
We have special fasting practices during the Great Fast.
What do we do on Forgiveness Sunday? (We ask each other for forgiveness.) What fasting practices are we to follow? [For the fasting practices for your jurisdiction, look to "Part II—Liturgical Texts" in this teacher manual]

... for a procession around the church.
What is the first Sunday of the Great Fast called? (The Sunday of Orthodoxy) On this Sunday we venerate our icons. Do you have a special icon? [If your church has the tradition of a procession, let the children show the icons they brought.]

... during the week to pray the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts.
What is the name of this special liturgy? (The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts) When do we pray this liturgy? (On week days during the Great Fast.)

... dedicate ourselves to serve Him more completely.
What is a prayer we can say during the Great Fast? (Prayer of Saint Ephrem) How do we bow during this prayer? (A profound bow, a prostration) We will say this prayer and we will bow at the end of class.

Let's review: *How many days do we have for the Great Fast? (40) What are we preparing for? (Pascha) What is the Great Fast? (Our 40-day period of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving in preparation for Holy Week and Pascha.)*



During the Great Fast we join together often as a Church family to pray. Our Church gives us many beautiful services to help us pray together. One service is the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. This is a special Liturgy we attend on weekdays during the Great Fast. This service includes special prayers to help us grow closer to God during these 40 days. In some areas the Church family comes together during the week to pray the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts.

Another special prayer we can say during the Great Fast is the Prayer of Saint Ephrem. Saint Ephrem was a holy person who lived many years ago. He gave us this prayer to remind us to follow God in everything we do. We are asked to make a profound bow called a prostration during this prayer. We bow to thank God for all that He has done for us and to dedicate ourselves to serve Him more completely.

We call the Great Fast a 40-day holy season.
We use these days to prepare for the celebration of Pascha.

Words to Remember:

Great Fast: The Great Fast is our 40-day period of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving in preparation for Holy Week and Pascha.

Sunday of Orthodoxy: The first Sunday of the Great Fast.

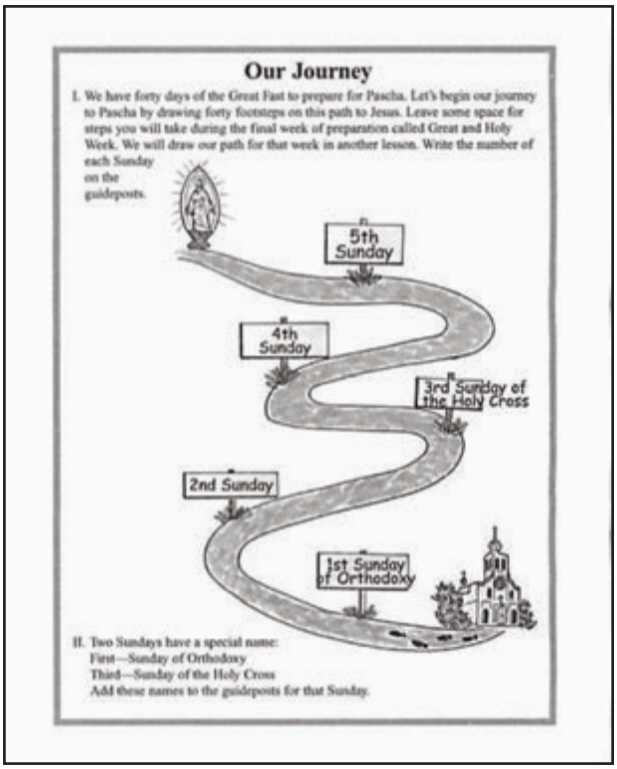
Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts: A special Liturgy celebrated on weekdays during the Great Fast

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Activity Tracks

Basic: Our Journey

Let's draw forty footprints on the path of our journey. Why are there forty? (For the forty days of the Great Fast)



Our Journey

I. We have forty days of the Great Fast to prepare for Pascha. Let's begin our journey to Pascha by drawing forty footsteps on this path to Jesus. Leave some space for steps you will take during the final week of preparation called Great and Holy Week. We will draw our path for that week in another lesson. Write the number of each Sunday on the guideposts.

5th Sunday

4th Sunday

3rd Sunday of the Holy Cross

2nd Sunday

1st Sunday of Orthodoxy

II. Two Sundays have a special name:
First—Sunday of Orthodoxy
Third—Sunday of the Holy Cross
Add these names to the guideposts for that Sunday.

Group: Forty Footprints

Materials: construction paper, glue, markers



We are going to make a reminder of the forty days we must travel. We are going to make forty footprints, which are pasted toe-to-heel. [Depending on the size of the class, the children can trace and cut out one or two sets of their own footsteps—the footsteps are pasted toe-to-heel. Do this on a long table or the floor.]

Now that all the steps have been pasted together, let's print the following message in large letters: LENT IS OUR JOURNEY TO THE RESURRECTION! [1 letter per footstep. Allow one blank footstep between words.]

[Make guideposts for each Sunday of the Great Fast.
Directions: Cut a 2" x 6" sheet of construction paper to form a pointer. Attach a post 1" x 4" cut from a sheet of construction paper.
Each week write the name of the Sunday on the pointer and paste the sign post to indicate the number of steps traveled.]

These are guideposts that we will add each Sunday. Does anyone remember the name of this first Sunday? (Sunday of Orthodoxy) I'm going to write "First Sunday" on the pointer, and we will add the guidepost next to the seventh step.

[The completed project should be placed on the wall or somewhere that is easily visible and can be seen as a reminder each week. If you do not have a permanent classroom, roll up the steps carefully and be sure to bring them to class each week.]

Craft: My Forty-day Calendar

Materials: Construction paper, glue, markers, and "Calendar" Worksheet that can be modified for any year

[Have sample ready to show children.] *We are going to make our own reminder of the forty days. Glue our white grid onto construction paper. At the top write the month and the dates for this year. On this calendar we will draw smaller footsteps. Where can you keep this calendar at home to help you remember to use each day to walk closer to God? (On the refrigerator, near the icon corner) Don't forget to mark each day with a footprint.*

Closing

The Prayer of St. Ephrem has three profound bows. After we say each section, we make a profound bow. Have a prayerful Great Fast.

The Prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian

O Lord and Master of my life, grant that I may not be infected with the spirit of slothfulness and inquisitiveness, with the spirit of ambition and vain talking (prostration).
Grant instead to me, Your servant, the spirit of purity and humility, the spirit of patience and neighborly love (prostration).
O Lord and King, bestow upon me the grace of being aware of my sins and of not thinking evil of those of my brethren (prostration) for You are blessed forever and ever. Amen.

Melkite Greek Catholic Church

The Prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian

O Lord and Master of my life, grant that I may not be infected with the spirit of slothfulness and inquisitiveness, with the spirit of ambition and vain talking (prostration).
Grant instead to me, Your servant, the spirit of purity and humility, the spirit of patience and neighborly love (prostration).
O Lord and King, bestow upon me the grace of being aware of my sins and of not thinking evil of those of my brethren (prostration) for You are blessed forever and ever. Amen.

Romanian Greek Catholic Diocese of Canton

The Prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian

O Lord and Master of my life, keep from me the spirit of indifference and discouragement, lust of power and idle chatter (prostration).
Instead, grant to me, Your servant, the spirit of wholeness of being, humble-mindedness, patience and love (prostration).
O Lord and King, grant me the grace to be aware of my sins and not to judge my brother (prostration) for You are blessed now and ever and forever. Amen.

Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic Metropolitan Province

The Prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian

Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of discouragement and insensitivity, of domineering others and idle talk (prostration).
Give me, Your servant, the spirit of integrity, humility, patience and love (prostration).
Yes, Lord and King, let me see my own sins and refrain from judging my brothers and sisters, (prostration) for You are blessed unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Ukrainian Catholic Diocese of St. Josaphat

The Prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian

O Lord and Master of my life, drive from me the spirit of discouragement, negligence, ambition and idle talk (prostration).
Grant me, Your servant, the spirit of chastity, humility, patience and charity (prostration).
Yes, my Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins and not judge others (prostration) for You are blessed forever and ever. Amen

Ukrainian Catholic Synod

The Great Fast

Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving

Objective: The students will be able to explain how we use prayer, fasting, and almsgiving to help us prepare for Pascha.

For the Catechist

Children in Grade 3 observe the Great Fast in the ways their parents do. They want to please their family so they follow the practices in the home. But this year they might want to consider their own additional prayers, fasting, and almsgiving as they prepare for Pascha.

Praying. Prayer enables us to see God as the Merciful, loving Father. By praying we acknowledge our dependence on God and our need to be with Him. The Great Fast gives us many beautiful prayers and services to grow closer to God. All of us catechists need to take the time to attend these services and to acknowledge the children and parents who are also in church. Lesson 17 teaches the children that praying means talking and listening to God. During the Great Fast we should pray aloud and meditate silently as we wait for Pascha.

Fasting. Fasting helps us see that material things alone are not the source of existence. Life is more than eating and acquiring goods; it is dependence on God. Fasting means that we do not feast; the experience is one of hunger. We hunger for what is true. In fasting our entire being is involved as we humbly stand before God, declaring our own sinfulness. Remind the children of the fasting practices of the Church and encourage them to fast from other foods and from the radio or television. **[Fasting practices for the jurisdictions are included in "Part 2—Liturgical Prayers" (page 55) in this *Teacher Manual*.]**

Almsgiving. We are brothers and sisters in Christ. That means we take care of each other as family. The Great Fast asks us to share food, clothing, and money with those who have less.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: Prayer of St. Ephrem

Introduction: Discussion of promises

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

• *Basic*: The Great Fast

• *Group:* "The Great Fast" Acrostic

• *Craft: "*Prayer of St. Ephrem" Prayer Page

Closing: Prayer of St. Ephrem

[For next week's lesson, ask your priest for the "Prayer for Forgiveness" used for Confession in your church.]

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord: Christ Pantocrator

Teaching Pics:

St. Gregory Palamas (GL6)

Remind the children that they can share what they have, and they can offer kind words and deeds to those who need their help.

Pascha. For Christians the word "Pascha" identifies the yearly commemoration of Christ's glorious resurrection. The term "Pascha" is used throughout this series.

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

Children and Fasting

"Our society teaches constant and unchecked consumption: if you want it, get it now! Children quickly absorb this principle from television, especially from the commercials aimed at them during children's programming. By teaching them to fast we provide a check on the untrammeled spirit of acquisition our culture endorses.

"While we may not want to deprive children of something nutritious such as milk, there are a number of foods from which they would do well to abstain (candy, cookies, artificial breakfast cereals, soft drinks and the like, i.e. junk food). Not only foods but entertainment has been a traditional subject for fasting. Young people could be brought to fast from TV or the stereo and replace them with the bible games and videos mentioned above. Many people regulate these items anyway; certainly fast times are ideal for suggesting such activities to honor the Lord" (*DC* 34).

Christian Prayer: When to Pray

"As did the Jews before them, the early Church taught that believers should pray through the day, because they never stopped living in the heavenly realm. As a rule, Christians might gather once or twice a day for common prayer, but in addition to that personal, private prayer—the communication of each believer with the Lord—was considered indispensable. The usual times for prayer even then were in the morning, before the day's tasks were begun, at the evening at their conclusion, and before retiring" (*DC* 23).

Christian Prayer: How to Pray

"When you have determined a time and place for prayer, you then may wonder how to pray. The Fathers of the Church noted that what we have to say to God usually falls into four basic categories. First of all, we **adore God**: we express our worship of Him, we praise Him, we bless Him, we glorify Him. In other words, we tell Him how great we think He is. Besides this, we **confess our sinfulness** expressing sorrow for having failed His love. We tell Him that we know we are not so great. A third kind of prayer is **thanksgiving**, expressing gratitude for the many good things God has given us. We reflect on our blessings and thank Him for His generosity to us. A fourth style of prayer is **supplication,** asking God's blessings on the world, our loved ones, our community. Every prayer we know or may come across or which may spring spontaneously from our heart will include one or more of these elements. A well rounded prayer life will include them all" (*DC* 24).

Almsgiving

Almsgiving is the logical result of fasting and prayer and a verification of their authenticity (a sign that they 'worked', they took').... As we are emptied of all that is dead in us by fasting and filled with God and His life by prayer, we are to pass Him and it on to others by sharing our very selves (expressed in our time, talent and treasures). We become communion and make things become communion as we share all in God with others" (*LLIII* 46-47).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Last week we learned a prayer for the Great Fast. Does anyone remember the name? (The Prayer of St. Ephrem) What do we do when we say this prayer? (We bow to the floor, a profound bow.) Let's begin by making the sign of the cross. [Distribute the prayer sheets from last week. Have the children say the words and make the profound bow.]

Introduction

Today I want you to think about a promise you made to your mom or dad recently. Let's hear some of them. [Give them a few minutes to share examples such as a promise to clean their rooms, wash dishes, listen in school.] *I made a very special promise to our priest. I promised I would be here to teach you every week. Your parents are keeping their promise to have you here in class every week. But sometimes it is hard to keep promises. We have to be reminded about what we are to do. That is what the Great Fast does for us. It reminds us to keep our promise to love God. Even though we get very busy throughout the year, we know that we should think about God first. The Great Fast helps us keep our promise.*

Let's see—Is anyone doing anything differently now that we are in the Great Fast? Did anyone attend any church services this week? [Take a few seconds to praise the students who did.] *What did you see at church? Do you remember any of the songs you sang? Is anyone making the profound bows at home when you say your prayers? Remember the Great Fast gives us the chance to show God with our whole body we worship Him and we want to be with Him.*

What did we put on the floor last week? (Footprints) Why did we do that? (To remind us of the 40 days of the Great Fast) Today we are going to look at the 40 footprints. [Use the ones from last week's group activity.] *We are traveling together for these 40 days, and we are heading toward what feast? (Pascha)*

Let's look at our steps around the room. [The footprints might have to bend around the room depending on the size. Have the last footprint stop at the icon corner.] *Each week we will walk our path to the Resurrection. Let's count the steps as we walk (or I point to) the footsteps.* [See the group activity for the last lesson. Hold up the guidepost and ask:] *What Sunday of the Great Fast is today? (The Second Sunday)* [Write the Second Sunday on the pointer.] *Let's add this guidepost at the 14th step.*

Let's turn to our books to learn what we should be doing on our journey.



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Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving

The Church gives us the holy season of the Great Fast to help us remember the promise we made to love God. We made that promise at our baptism when we became members of the Church. Through the Mysteries of Baptism and Chrismation, we became united to God. The Church wants us to stay close to God and to love Him always. The Great Fast is very important for us because it gives us the chance to learn to love God more each day.

During these forty days of the Great Fast, the Church asks us to pray, fast, and give alms to the poor. This way we will think about God more often. We will take time to remember all God has done for us. We will grow closer to God and be prepared to worship and praise Him at Pascha.

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Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

... be prepared to worship and praise Him at Pascha.
How do we prepare for Pascha? (Through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving) What did we promise God at our baptism and chrismation? (To love Him) What does the Great Fast remind us to do? (To love God)



Praying is our way of talking and listening to God. Jesus talked and listened to God also. In the Gospel we read that Jesus spent forty days praying in the desert. Now it is our time to spend forty days praying often to God.

We can talk and listen to God in many ways. One way is by saying our prayers and by being silent while thinking about God. Another way is by reading and thinking about the stories in the Bible. Also, we pray through the words and songs of our church services.

Fasting is another way we grow closer to God. We fast to remind ourselves we depend on God for everything. We are willing to give up certain foods and activities during these forty days because we love God, and we need only His love. Fasting helps us stay focused on God.

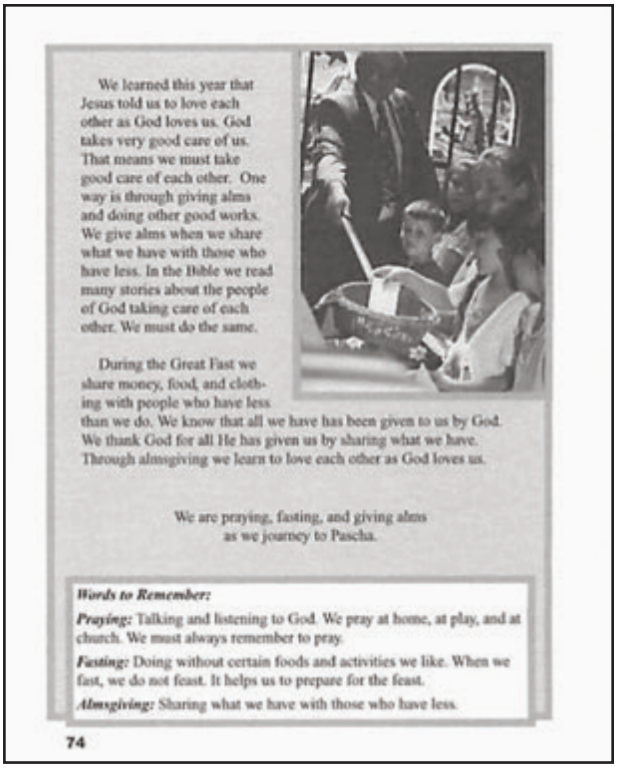
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Also, we pray through the words and songs of our church services.
What do we do when we pray? (We talk and listen to God) What are some ways we pray? (Reading the Bible, praying and singing in church)

Fasting helps us stay focused on God.
What does focused mean? (To think only about God; to depend on God) How does fasting make us think about God? (We aren't busy doing other things.) Fasting helps us get control over our bodies. We want to be good. We don't want to be angry with our bodies. We can use the Great Fast to help us control our anger.

Through almsgiving we learn to love each other as God loves us.
What does almsgiving mean? (To share what we have with those who have less) How does almsgiving help us think about God? (We think about everything God gave us, and we share it.) Everything we have is a gift from God to be shared with others.

Let's review: *What is the Great Fast? (The Great Fast is our 40-day period of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving in preparation for Holy Week and Pascha.) Our Church gave us the Great Fast so we can remember to be with God as often as possible as we prepare for Pascha.*



We learned this year that Jesus told us to love each other as God loves us. God takes very good care of us. That means we must take good care of each other. One way is through giving alms and doing other good works. We give alms when we share what we have with those who have less. In the Bible we read many stories about the people of God taking care of each other. We must do the same.

During the Great Fast we share money, food, and clothing with people who have less than we do. We know that all we have has been given to us by God. We thank God for all He has given us by sharing what we have. Through almsgiving we learn to love each other as God loves us.

We are praying, fasting, and giving alms as we journey to Pascha.

Words to Remember:

Praying: Talking and listening to God. We pray at home, at play, and at church. We must always remember to pray.

Fasting: Doing without certain foods and activities we like. When we fast, we do not feast. It helps us to prepare for the feast.

Almsgiving: Sharing what we have with those who have less.

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Activity Tracks

Basic: The Great Fast

[This worksheet is in the student text.]
During the Great Fast, we are to fast from certain foods and activities. Let's try to find the names of some and add some of our own to the bottom of the page.



The Great Fast

Find the names of foods from which you might fast. Only the first letter and the number of letters in the word are given at the bottom of the page. Complete the words and find them in the scramble.

I	C	E	C	R	E	A	M		I
Z	F	I	E	G	G	S	R		C
Q	E	I	P	V	G	O	P		O
W	C	M	G	O	P	D	M		O
C	A	N	D	Y	K	A	T		K
R	S	T	E	L	M	X	Z		I
H	O	P	I	Z	W	R	N		E
H	A	M	B	U	R	G	E	R	

h o t d o g s
e g g s
m i l k
h a m b u r g e r
c a n d y
i c e c r e a m
s o d a
c o o k i e s

Circle the ones you will fast from this year. Add any other foods or activities from which you might fast.

Group: "The Great Fast" Acrostic

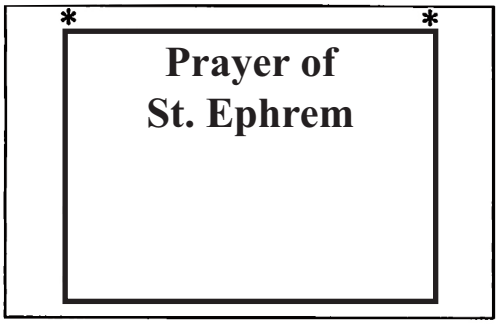
Materials: Poster board, markers, paper

Today we are going to remember all the ways we can make the Great Fast special. We are going to do this with an acrostic. An acrostic has the letters of a word printed down the side of a page. I have Great Fast listed on this poster board. We are going to add phrases and words that start with those letters to help remind us about everything we should think about during the Great Fast. Lets first think of some words before I write them on the poster board.

The following are possibilities for Great Fast:

***G**ive alms;*
***R**ead the Bible;*
***E**at less;*
***A**lways pray;*
***T**ry harder.*
***F**ollow fasting practices*
***A**sk for forgiveness*
***S**in less*
***T**ake time to go to church*

Let's list this on the poster board and hang it in our room. [You can make acrostics from other words: Prayer, Fasting, Repentance.]



Craft: Prayer of St. Ephrem" Prayer Page

Materials: "Prayer of St. Ephrem" prayer pages from Lesson 16 in this Teacher Manual, heavier white paper or construction paper, markers, stickers or stars, hole punch, scissors, and glue

[Have sample ready to show children.] *Today we are going to make another prayer page. What is the name of the prayer we have been saying at the beginning and end of class? (Prayer of St. Ephrem)*

Paste the words on a half sheet of construction paper. You can draw pictures around the words, or you can add the stars or stickers I have here. Punch two holes to match the ones on the prayer cover. Untie the yarn on your prayer book cover and add this new page. Now pull the yarn through the holes and tie.

Closing

Let's Say the Prayer of St. Ephrem

When We Turn Away from God's Love, We Sin

Objective: Students will be able to state that 1) we sin when we turn away from God's love, and 2) on the third Sunday of the Great Fast we venerate the Holy Cross.

For the Catechist

Children have some understanding of wrong-doing. They learned this from their parents who told them it was wrong to hurt others and themselves. This lesson builds on that understanding by showing why those actions are wrong. They are wrong because they do not follow God's plan for us to love. When we turn away from God's love, we sin.

As Christians we have been called by God to live in relationship with God and each other. When we sin, it affects our relationship with God and the community. It is in this tension between knowing how we are to live as God's people and the difficulty of actually living in this way in our day to day existence that we come to an awareness of sin. We know God expects us to be "on target" with our love; and when we "miss the mark," we sin. In the earlier grades, sin has been presented as the hurting of others on purpose. That concept is broadened this year to include the change in the relationship with God as a result of sin. Now the children will realize that sin hurts others and their relationship with God.

This lesson on sin is taught appropriately on the third Sunday of the Great Fast. God loves us so much that He gave us His Son to save us. The Holy Cross reminds us that Jesus died on the cross to give us eternal life. As we venerate the Holy Cross, we thank Jesus for His suffering and death. This Sunday is the half way mark on our journey through the Great Fast.

By now we are noticing the changes in the church during the Great Fast. Dark colors for

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: "Veneration of the Cross" Prayer

Introduction: : Discussion of the forty day journey

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read aloud.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

• *Basic*: Our Church during the Great Fast

• *Group:* Prayer for Confession

• *Craft:* "Veneration of the Cross" Prayer Page

Closing: "Veneration of the Cross" Prayer

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord: The Crucification

Teaching Pics:

Veneration of the Cross (GL7)

the priest's vestments and the altar covers; melodies are slower; people do prostrations in the aisles; and the services are longer. Encourage the children and their families to notice these changes as they attend some of the beautiful services: Presanctified Liturgy, Great Compline, and the Akathist Hymn.

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

God's Plan

" God's plan for us is that we reflect His image and likeness in creation. Unable to do this because of the fall, we look to Christ as the pattern for true humanity in God's image. We achieve union with Him in baptism and attempt to live out that oneness by modelling our lives on His. Only Christ, the image of the Father, is the perfection of God's plan for us because humanity itself is broken, marred by sin" (*STBH* 27).

"The Christian who values his union with God in Christ keeps the commandments, not because they are a law, but because they reflect reality as seen by the One who has given them. Observing the commandments becomes a way of uniting ourselves with the mind and heart of the Lord and becoming one in will with Him" (*STBH* 32).

Sin: Missing the Mark

"People who sin may be compared to an arrow seeking to chart its own course rather than relying on the direction set by the archer. They seek to be their own person, to determine their own truth. Yet this insistence on their individuality is in itself a failure to realize that they are fulfilled, not by setting their own goal and creating their own world, but by living out their true nature in God's image as reflected now in Christ. Sin, then, destroys our humanity in the very act of 'trying to be me' (*STBH* 28-29).

"The Scriptures teach that there is a basic undercurrent of sin in everyone's life, 'for all have sinned, all have fallen short of the glory of God' (Rom 3:23). At the same time, it teaches that there are distinctions in sins. 'All wrongdoing is sin, but not all sin is deadly' (1 Jn 5:17). We can shoot the arrow so far off course that it is lost in the woods behind the target; or it can come to rest near the target where we can easily retrieve it and try again. Nevertheless, in either case we are off the mark" (*STBH* 32-33).

"In any case, it is the action of taking our eye off the target—the model of Christ— which causes us to miss the mark at which our Creator has aimed us: of sharing in His life that we might mirror His holiness to all the world" (*STBH* 41).

The Lesson Plan

Opening
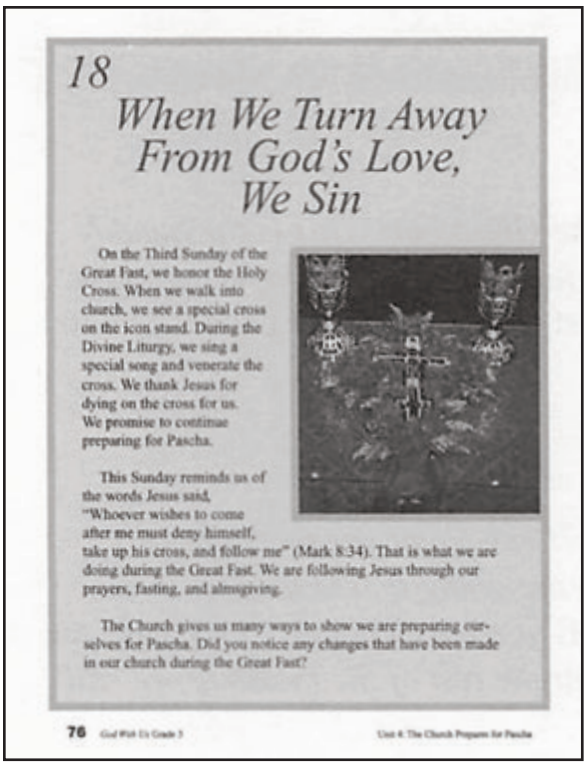
How many days are in the Great Fast? (40) Today is day 21 of the Great Fast. This is the Sunday when we venerate the Holy Cross, and we have a special prayer to say. With this prayer we make the sign of the cross and bow when we say, "We . . . ." [Give the students the prayer page they will use for their prayer books.] *Let's say our prayer three times.*

Introduction

We have been on our journey through the Great Fast for 21 days. Let's count our footsteps to number 21. [As a group count the footsteps to 21.] *This week we are going to add a name to the guidepost by number 21. Our sign says Veneration of the Cross.* [If you have enough room, have the children walk around the room as they count to 21 again.] *Look at the rest of the footsteps we still need to travel on our journey to Pascha.*

Last week we learned three ways we can prepare. What are they? (Praying, fasting, and giving alms) We use the Great Fast to spend more time with God. Does anyone remember why we call Jesus our Savior? (He saved us from eternal death and granted us eternal life.) Jesus had to die on the cross to save us from eternal death. That is why we venerate the Holy Cross today. What does venerate mean? (To honor and worship) [If there is time, go to the church to venerate the Holy Cross on the icon stand.]

Let's turn to today's lesson.



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When We Turn Away From God's Love, We Sin

On the Third Sunday of the Great Fast, we honor the Holy Cross. When we walk into church, we see a special cross on the icon stand. During the Divine Liturgy, we sing a special song and venerate the cross. We thank Jesus for dying on the cross for us. We promise to continue preparing for Pascha.

This Sunday reminds us of the words Jesus said, "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me" (Mark 8:34). That is what we are doing during the Great Fast. We are following Jesus through our prayers, fasting, and almsgiving.

The Church gives us many ways to show we are preparing ourselves for Pascha. Did you notice any changes that have been made in our church during the Great Fast?

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Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

We promise to continue preparing for Pascha.
What do we venerate on this Sunday? (The Cross) [If you could not arrange to go into church during the introduction, have a cross in your classroom. Remind the students to make the sign of the cross, to bow, to kiss the cross, and to make the sign of the cross again.]



The priest's vestments and the altar cloths are dark. Dark colors help us realize we are in a time of repentance.

Incense is used during the special services we attend. As the smoke and fragrance rise, we pray and ask that our prayers rise like incense to God.

We sing our songs with a slower melody. This gives us time to think about wanting to be with God.

We make a profound bow to show God with our whole body we are sorry for our sins, and we want to return completely to Him.

The Great Fast gives us time to think about wanting to be with God always.

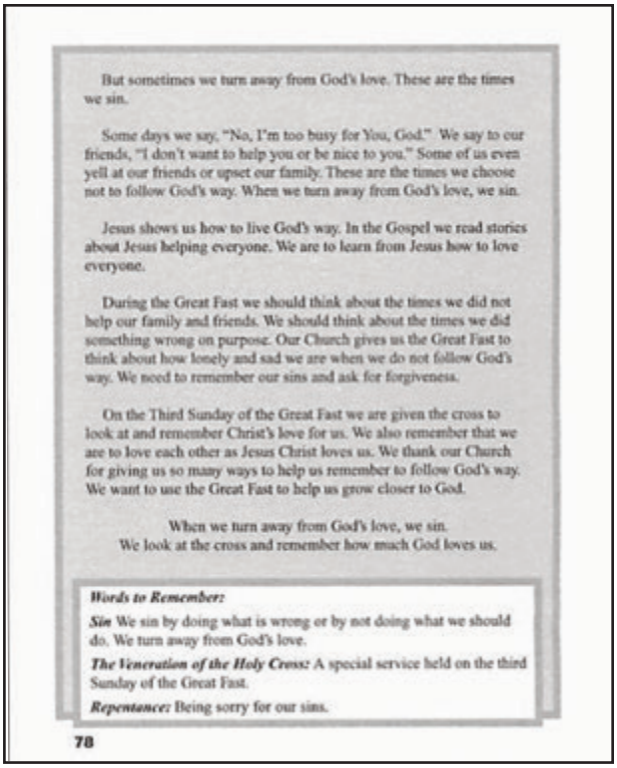
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The Great Fast gives us time to think about wanting to be with God always.
What are some ways our church shows us we are in the Great Fast? (The altar covers are dark; the music is slower; more prayers are said; we make profound bows.) Did you recognize any of these changes?

We want to use the Great Fast to help us grow closer to God.

God wants ns to love Him so much that we want to be with Him always. What do we do when we sin? (We turn away from God's love.) What are some ways we sin? (We do things that are wrong on purpose, and we don't do the good things God asks.) Why should we thank the Church for giving us the Great Fast? (To make us take time to think about the times we sin and to learn how to live in God's love always)

Let's review: *What special service do we have on the third Sunday of the Great Fast? (The Veneration of the Cross) When do we sin? (When we turn away from God's love; when we do not follow God's way)*



But sometimes we turn away from God's love. These are the times we sin.

Some days we say, "No, I'm too busy for You, God." We say to our friends, "I don't want to help you or be nice to you." Some of us even yell at our friends or upset our family. These are the times we choose not to follow God's way. When we turn away from God's love, we sin.

Jesus shows us how to live God's way. In the Gospel we read stories about Jesus helping everyone. We are to learn from Jesus how to love everyone.

During the Great Fast we should think about the times we did not help our family and friends. We should think about the times we did something wrong on purpose. Our Church gives us the Great Fast to think about how lonely and sad we are when we do not follow God's way. We need to remember our sins and ask for forgiveness.

On the Third Sunday of the Great Fast we are given the cross to look at and remember Christ's love for us. We also remember that we are to love each other as Jesus Christ loves us. We thank our Church for giving us so many ways to help us remember to follow God's way. We want to use the Great Fast to help us grow closer to God.

When we turn away from God's love, we sin.
We look at the cross and remember how much God loves us.

Words to Remember:

Sin We sin by doing what is wrong or by not doing what we should do. We turn away from God's love.

The Veneration of the Holy Cross: A special service held on the third Sunday of the Great Fast.

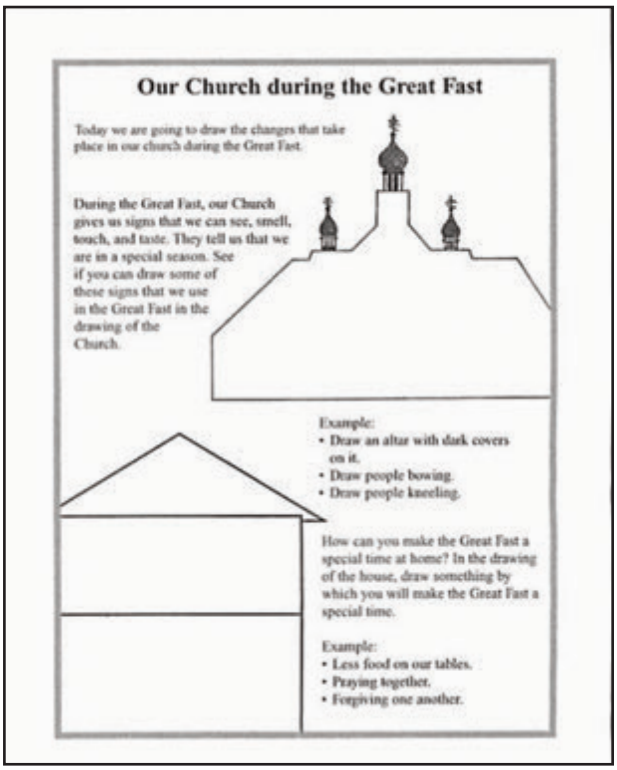
Repentance: Being sorry for our sins.

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Activity Tracks

Basic: Our Church during the Great Fast
[This worksheet is in the student text.]

Today we are going to draw the changes that we have noticed in our church during the Great Fast.
[If possible, arrange to go into the church. Have the students complete the sketch of the changes while they are in church.]



Our Church during the Great Fast

Today we are going to draw the changes that take place in our church during the Great Fast.

During the Great Fast, our Church gives us signs that we can see, smell, touch, and taste. They tell us that we are in a special season. See if you can draw some of these signs that we use in the Great Fast in the drawing of the Church.

Example:
- Draw an altar with dark covers on it.
- Draw people bowing.
- Draw people kneeling.

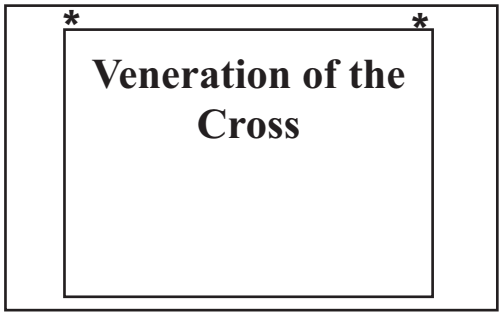
How can you make the Great Fast a special time at home? In the drawing of the house, draw something by which you will make the Great Fast a special time.

Example:
- Less food on our tables.
- Praying together.
- Forgiving one another.

Group: Prayer for Confession

Materials: Poster board and markers
[Use the prayer that you got from your priest during the week or use the Prayer for Forgiveness for your jurisdiction included in "Part 2- Liturgical Texts" in this *Teacher Manual*.]

We will be going to confession during the Great Fast. Let's make a big poster for our prayer for confession. While doing this, let's practice saying the words.



Craft: Veneration of the Cross

Materials: "Veneration of the Cross" prayer page according to each translations, heavier white paper or construction paper (1/2 sheet per student), hole punch, markers, stickers or stars, scissors, and glue

[Have sample ready to show children.] *We said the prayer at the beginning of our class today. What are the first two words? (We bow) Today we are going to make another page to add to our prayer book.*

Paste the words on a half sheet of construction paper. You can draw pictures around the words, or you can add the stars or stickers I have here. Punch two holes to match the ones on the prayer cover. Untie the yarn on your prayer book cover and add this new page. Now pull the yarn through the holes and tie.

Closing

Let's pray the "Veneration of the Cross" prayer. Let's say our prayer three times as we venerate the cross.

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Veneration of the Cross

We bow in worship

before Your cross, O Master,

and we give praise

to Your holy resurrection.

Melkite Greek Catholic Church

Veneration of the Cross

We worship Your cross,

O Christ,

and we praise and glorify

Thy holy resurrection.

Romanian Greek Catholic Diocese of Canton

Veneration of the Cross

Before Your cross we bow down

in worship, O Master,

and Your holy resurrection

we glorify.

Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic Metro-politan Province

Veneration of the Cross

To Your cross, O Master,

we bow in veneration,

and we glorify

Your holy resurrection.

Ukrainian Catholic Diocese of St. Josaphat

Veneration of the Cross

To Your cross, O Master,

we bow in veneration,

and we glorify Your holy resurrection.

Ukrainian
Catholic
Synod

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We Ask God to Forgive Us

Objective: Students will be able to explain that the Mystery of Repentance is our way to receive God's healing grace when we come to Him for forgiveness of our sins.

For the Catechist

God is always loving us even when we are turning away from His love. Children in Grade 3 are ready to learn about this unconditional love that requires their acceptance and willingness to be in God's love. God wants parents to model this unconditional love. He tells us this by giving us the parable of the prodigal son.

The children have learned that sin results from turning away from God. They also learned sin is making mistakes on purpose. Now they will learn that they are the ones who need to return to God's love. They are the ones who must ask God to forgive them. The Church gives the Mystery of Repentance (Confession) to let us ask God to forgive us our sins.

"Anyone who is aware of serious sin is to receive the sacrament of penance as soon as possible; it is strongly recommended to all the Christian faithful that they receive this sacrament frequently especially during the times of fasts and penance observed in their own Church *sui iuris*" (*The Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*).

Formulas for Confession vary; therefore, no lesson in this *God With Us* series includes a format. Help the children practice the formula used in your jurisdiction. Any prayers that they need to remember can be added to the opening and closing prayers for the next few lessons. A prayer page can be made during the craft activity for this lesson.

The Jesus Prayer. Sometimes we forget to say our prayers, but we can learn to say this short prayer many times throughout the day. The Jesus Prayer's rhythm and sound helps us meditate. By saying this prayer we learn to listen to God.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: The Jesus Prayer

Introduction: Discussion of ways we turn away from God Need: magazine pictures of people doing different activities

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

- *Basic*: God's Message
- *Group:* We Must Follow God's Way
- *Craft:* "The Jesus Prayer" Page

Closing: The Jesus Prayer

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord: Christ The Teacher

Teaching Pics:

St. John of the Ladder (GL8)

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

The Image Restored

"'To restore the Image in fallen Adam' this is how the Fathers described the purpose of Christ's coming. He restores that Image in us when we are grafted onto the Body of Christ in the mysteries of initiation. When, burdened and tried by sin, we need His healing touch. He meets us in two mysteries of restoration: repentance and holy unction.

"We are encouraged to confess our sins whenever we are conscious of having seriously strayed from the Lord's way. Traditionally we approach the mystery of repentance during the fasting seasons of the Church year and many parishes have penitential services during those times. Some priests are available for confession after vespers or before the Liturgy on the Lord's Day or upon request, depending on their other commitments.

"The Byzantine style of confession stresses that we are confessing to Christ through the medium of the Church. The penitent stands in front of a crucifix, an icon of Christ or the holy gospel book and beside the priest. The penitent confesses his sins, after which he receives spiritual instruction from the priest, who is to act more like a physician than a judge. As the priest recites the prayer of absolution, the penitent bows his head so that the priest may cover him with the end of his epitrachelion. This is a symbolic and tangible sign that God's grace has overshadowed the penitent and restored him to a state of friendship with God" *(DC* 90).

The Jesus Prayer

"The words of the Jesus Prayer are simple enough 'Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.' It is by repeating the prayer over and over, both aloud and silently, that it gradually becomes part of us. When that happens (and it only does happen after much use), the prayer has penetrated our consciousness and we find it welling up inside us even when we don't consciously set out to say it.

"Because it is so simple, the Jesus Prayer can be said anywhere: while driving, walking, painting the house, cleaning the bathtub. But a person who wishes to seriously develop the practice of the Jesus Prayer will set aside prayer time to do just that. If you are looking to bring this practice to life in your heart, you would begin by setting a certain amount of time aside just for praying the Jesus Prayer, increasing it each day or each week so that it becomes more and more a part of you. Customarily people start by saying the prayer a specific number of times (say, 100) and increasing that number regularly" (*DC* 26).

How to Say the Jesus Prayer

"Another technique to help make this prayer more and more a part of our lives is to synchronize the recitation of the prayer with our breathing. Many people say 'Lord Jesus Christ' when inhaling, then 'Son of God,' when exhaling, 'have mercy on me' when inhaling and 'a sinner' when exhaling. By tying the prayer to our bodily rhythms in this way, the Fathers sought to bring their entire being—body, soul and spirit—together, centering their entire existence on recalling the name of Jesus" (*DC* 27).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Last week we said a prayer and venerated the cross. Let's pray it today again. "We . . . ." What should we do while we are saying the words? (Cross ourselves and bow) Let's say the prayer and bow three times. [Say the prayer.] *Today we are going to learn another prayer. This one is short so we can say it often. The prayer is called the Jesus Prayer.* [Hold up the prayer from the end of this section.] *Let's say the words. "Lord. . . ." Let's say this prayer three times. What is the name of this prayer? (The Jesus Prayer)*

Introduction

What is the name of the holy season we are in now? (The Great Fast) How many days is it? (40) Let's count our footsteps on the floor and put up our next guidepost. On the fourth Sunday we remember St. John of the Ladder) [Have the students walk on the steps or count them on the wall—wherever you have them pasted.] *Let's stop at each sign and read the name of that Sunday. One, two . . . First Sunday (Sunday of Orthodoxy). What did we do on that Sunday? (Carried icons in church—*[if that is the tradition in your jurisdiction]*) Eight, nine . . . Second Sunday. Fifteen, sixteen . . . Third Sunday (Veneration of the Holy Cross). How do we venerate the Holy Cross? (We bow and kiss it.) Twenty two, twenty three . . . St. John of the Ladder. Let's put up the sign for this Sunday. We are more than halfway there on our journey to Pascha. What are we supposed to do during these 40 days? (Pray, fast, and share with those less fortunate)*

I have some pictures to show you today. Let's see if we can tell who is acting the way God wants. How does God want us to act? (He wants us to help people the way He helps us.) [Use appropriate pictures from magazines or newspapers.] *Do you do any of the things the people are doing on the pictures?*

Last week we learned that we sin when we turn away from God's love. Even when we turn away, God still loves us.

Let's turn to our books to learn how much God wants us to turn to His love.



19

We Ask God to Forgive Us

Η ΠΑΡΑΒΟΛΗ ΤΟΥ ΑΣΩΤΟΥ ΥΙΟΥ

Throughout the Great Fast, we want to stay close to God. We want to be prepared to celebrate Pascha. One way we can be ready is by asking God to forgive us for the many times we turned away from His love. God wants us to know how to recognize the times we sin. He also wants us to know how to be sorry for our sins and to ask for forgiveness.

Whenever we want to learn how to behave the way God wants, we look to Jesus. Jesus shows us how to live God's way. Jesus also teaches us how we should live by telling us parables. Parables are Bible stories that teach a lesson. Today we are going to read about the parable that Jesus told about a young man and his father.

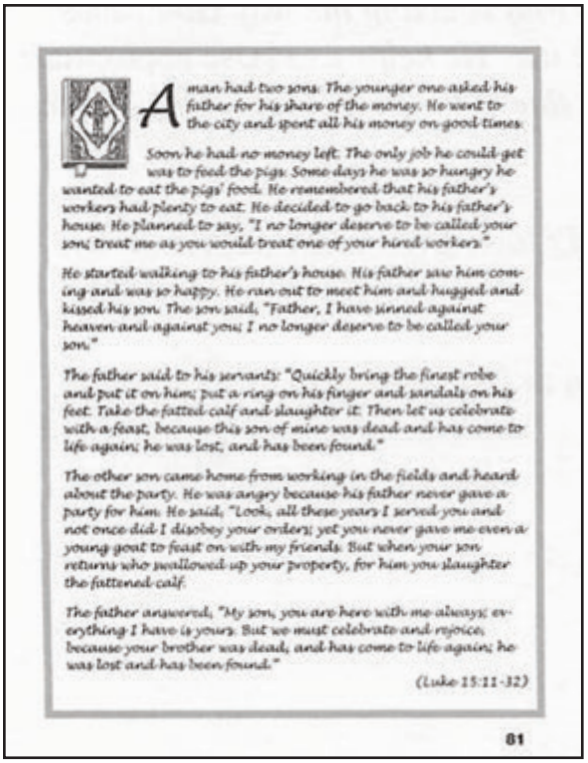
80

Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

How do we know our parents love us always? What are some ways they show us? God shows us He loves us always too. What are some good things God gives us every day? What should we do when we turn away from our parents' love and from God's love? (Ask for forgiveness) Let's look at the picture on the first page of this lesson. What are the father and son doing? Let's read about them.

... that Jesus told about a young man and his father.
What is a parable? (A Bible story that teaches a lesson) What is a sin? (We sin when we turn away from God's love.) This parable tells us about a son who turns away from his father's love.



A man had two sons. The younger one asked his father for his share of the money. He went to the city and spent all his money on good times.

Soon he had no money left. The only job he could get was to feed the pigs. Some days he was so hungry he wanted to eat the pigs' food. He remembered that his father's workers had plenty to eat. He decided to go back to his father's house. He planned to say, "I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as you would treat one of your hired workers."

He started walking to his father's house. His father saw him coming and was so happy. He ran out to meet him and hugged and kissed his son. The son said, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son."

The father said to his servants: "Quickly bring the finest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Take the fatted calf and slaughter it. Then let us celebrate with a feast, because this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found."

The other son came home from working in the fields and heard about the party. He was angry because his father never gave a party for him. He said, "Look, all these years I served you and not once did I disobey your orders; yet you never gave me even a young goat to feast on with my friends. But when your son returns who swallowed up your property, for him you slaughter the fattened calf."

The father answered, "My son, you are here with me always; everything I have is yours. But we must celebrate and rejoice, because your brother was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found."

(Luke 15:11-32)

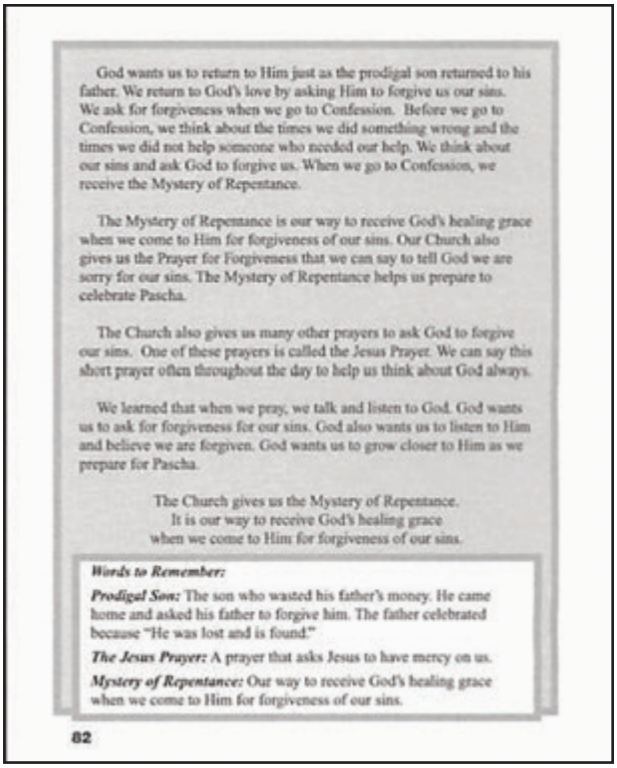
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He was lost and has been found.
Do you think God greets us that nicely every time we turn back to Him? (Yes) Why is the brother angry? Would you be angry? Why shouldn't he be? (He never experienced the hardships of his brother. He was always in his father's love and protection.)

... when we come to Him for forgiveness of our sins.
Why should we go to Confession during the Great Fast? (To ask God to forgive us as we journey toward Pascha) [Check with your priest for the requirements for the yearly confession according to the Church laws.] *Should we try to go to Confession more often? Why? (To ask God to forgive us) What is the name of the Mystery that gives us God's healing grace? (The Mystery of Repentance)*

Why did Jesus tell us the story of the prodigal son? (To see how the father is waiting for the son to return) Is God waiting for us to be with Him always? (Yes)

Let's review: *What is sin? (Turning away from God's love) What is the Mystery of Repentance? (Our way to receive God's healing grace when we come to Him for forgiveness of our sins.)*



God wants us to return to Him just as the prodigal son returned to his father. We return to God's love by asking Him to forgive us our sins. We ask for forgiveness when we go to Confession. Before we go to Confession, we think about the times we did something wrong and the times we did not help someone who needed our help. We think about our sins and ask God to forgive us. When we go to Confession, we receive the Mystery of Repentance.

The Mystery of Repentance is our way to receive God's healing grace when we come to Him for forgiveness of our sins. Our Church also gives us the Prayer for Forgiveness that we can say to tell God we are sorry for our sins. The Mystery of Repentance helps us prepare to celebrate Pascha.

The Church also gives us many other prayers to ask God to forgive our sins. One of these prayers is called the Jesus Prayer. We can say this short prayer often throughout the day to help us think about God always.

We learned that when we pray, we talk and listen to God. God wants us to ask for forgiveness for our sins. God also wants us to listen to Him and believe we are forgiven. God wants us to grow closer to Him as we prepare for Pascha.

The Church gives us the Mystery of Repentance.
It is our way to receive God's healing grace
when we come to Him for forgiveness of our sins.

Words to Remember:

Prodigal Son: The son who wasted his father's money. He came home and asked his father to forgive him. The father celebrated because "He was lost and is found."

The Jesus Prayer: A prayer that asks Jesus to have mercy on us.

Mystery of Repentance: Our way to receive God's healing grace when we come to Him for forgiveness of our sins.

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Activity Tracks

Basic: God's Message
[This worksheet is in the student text.]

We are learning many prayers to ask God for forgiveness. Let's unscramble the letters to read what God tells us about sin.



Our Prayer to God

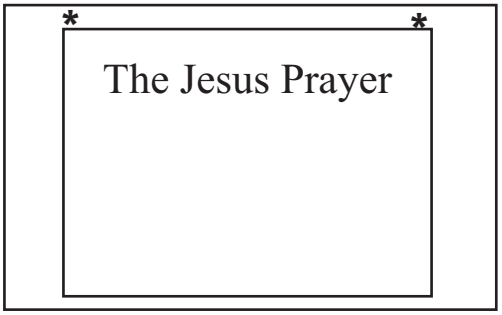
Unscramble the letters of each word to read the message.

WHEN	WE	REFUSE	LOVE,
HWEN	EW	REFSUE	EOLV
WE	TURN	FROM	GOD,
EW	NTRU	FMOR	DGO
THIS	IS	SIN.	IN
HSTI	SI	NSI	NI
BEING	SELFISH	AND	
BGEIN	SLEFSIH	NDA	
WANTING	OUR	OWN	WAY,
WNATNIG	ROU	WNO	YWA
WE	THINK	ONLY	OF
EW	THKNI	OYLN	FO
OURSELVES	AND	REFUSE	
ORUSLEVSE	DNA	RESFUE	
LOVE.	WE	SIN.	
ELVO	EW	NSI	

Group: We Must Follow God's Way

Materials: Pictures from magazines and a ball

We started class by looking at pictures of people doing many different activities. Now we are going to play a game using pictures from magazines. We are going to identify what they are doing. Let's form a circle. Pass the ball whatever way you want. I'm going to ask one of you to have your back turned; and when you say stop, the person who has the ball has to take a picture from the pile and tell us what the person is doing. Then all of us will say the Jesus Prayer. Why should we say the Jesus Prayer? (We are asking God to forgive us and to be with us at all times.) We should say this prayer many times throughout the day because this prayer asks God to be with us to help us follow Him always.



Craft: "The Jesus Prayer" Page

Materials: "The Jesus Prayer" prayer page according to each translations, heavier white paper or construction paper (1/2 sheet per student), hole punch, markers, stickers or stars, scissors, and glue

[Have sample ready to show children.] *We said "The Jesus Prayer" at the beginning of our class today. Today we are going to make another page to add to our prayer book.*

Paste the words on a half sheet of construction paper. You can draw pictures around the words, or you can add the stars or stickers I have here. Punch two holes to match the ones on the prayer cover. Untie the yarn on your prayer book cover and add this new page. Now pull the yarn through the holes and tie.

Closing

Let's say the words. "Lord..." Let's say this prayer three times. What is the name of this prayer? (The Jesus Prayer) We call it that because we are calling on Jesus by name.

The Jesus Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,

Son of God,

have mercy on me,

a sinner.

Melkite Greek Catholic Church

The Jesus Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,

Son of God,

have mercy on me,

a sinner.

Romanian Greek Catholic Diocese of Canton

The Jesus Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,

Son of God,

have mercy on me,

a sinner.

Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic Metro-politan Province

The Jesus Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,

Son of God,

have mercy on me,

a sinner.

Ukrainian Catholic Diocese of St. Josaphat

The Jesus Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,

Son of God,

have mercy on me,

a sinner.

Ukrainian
Catholic
Synod

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Jesus Helps Us Prepare for Pascha

Objective: Students will be able to identify the Great and Holy Week observances that allow us to participate in the many ways Jesus prepares us for Pascha.

For the Catechist

This year the children have learned that they are the Church. This lesson invites them to join the Church family during the most solemn time of the liturgical year. The best way for them to experience the solemnity of Holy Week is by attending as many of the observances as possible. Parents and children need to be encouraged to join the Church family as it prepares to celebrate Pascha.

Lesson 20 and 21 work together to present the final days of Jesus' life on earth. Although the children had lessons on the Great Fast in all the previous grades, this is the first year they are introduced to all the specific observances of Great and Holy Week. They begin by learning about the excitement surrounding Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. The Church remembers this excitement by celebrating Palm Sunday. In some jurisdictions, Palm Sunday is called Willow Sunday or Flowery Sunday. Our palms and pussy willows or olive branches [and in some churches a procession] recall the way Jesus was honored in Jerusalem.

As children become aware of the painful way in which Jesus died, they often ask why He had to suffer. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Christ spoke of His ordeal in terms of "God's will." Does this mean that the Father willed the death of Christ? Christ fulfilled God's will here by not reacting in kind, not fighting back, not calling in legions of angels to defend Him from the sin of the world. He did this, no matter what the cost. Children should be helped to see that a follower of Christ does the right thing, too, no matter what the cost

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: "Let My Prayer Rise"

Introduction: Discussion of the final week of our journey

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

• *Basic*: Great and Holy Week

• *Group:* "Great and Holy Week" Calendar

• *Craft:* "Let My Prayer Rise" Prayer Page

Closing: "Let My Prayer Rise"

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord:
The Raising of Lazarus
The Entry of Christ into Jerusalem

Teaching Pics:

St. Mary of Egypt (GL9)
Lazarus Saturday . . . (GL10)

By the end of Lesson 20, the children are aware of the services our Church gives us to grow closer to Jesus. (The Last Supper is only briefly mentioned because Lesson 15 in this Grade 3 text is the lesson on Holy Communion.) But this lesson about Great and Holy Week is taught during the last week of the Great Fast. The reason is that next week's entire lesson is devoted to Great Friday. Lesson 21, "Jesus Gives Himself Totally for Us," is planned for Great and Holy Week.

This is the first year the children will be asked to think about the Eastern concept of "kenosis," or pouring out (giving fully or self-emptying) one's life as Christ did in the Crucifixion. "The man who loves his life loses it, while the man who hates his life in this world preserves it to life eternal" (John 12:25).

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

Holy Week

"This feast of Pascha was subsequently expanded to a full week called the *Great and Holy Week*. The Sunday before Pascha celebrates the historical entrance of our Lord into the city of Jerusalem to enter into His passion. The previous Saturday recalls His raising of Lazarus from the dead, the event which triggered the first Palm Sunday (cf Jn 12:9). Lazarus Saturday would become an important baptismal day in Constantinople, to allow the neophytes to take part in the celebrations of Great Week. Holy Monday, Holy Tuesday and Holy Wednesday recall the Lord's teachings in the temple and the events that took place during the week before His arrest. Holy Thursday commemorates the giving of the Eucharist and the betrayal and arrest of our Lord. To contrast with this betrayal, it became the day for the reconciliation of those who were doing public penance" (*LLII* 36).

Solemn Observance

"The celebration of the Death and Resurrection of our Lord is at the heart of Christian worship. Each of the sacraments in some way brings us from the death of sin into life in the Trinity through Christ and by the power of the Spirit. We celebrate this pattern of our salvation in the most solemn way during Holy Week and Bright Week (the week after Pascha). At Matins and Vespers we follow the final confrontations of Jesus and His enemies in the Gospel of St. Matthew, and the whole story of Jesus' death according to the four Gospels is told in the Matins and Royal Hours of Great Friday. On Great Friday evening the burial of Jesus is dramatically reenacted by the procession with the burial shroud, a cloth upon which is depicted an icon of the body of our Lord taken from the cross" (*LLI* 54).

Holy Week—Walking in the Footsteps of the Apostles

"Following the example of the Church in Jerusalem, Byzantine Christians observe the Great and Holy Week by walking in the footsteps of the apostles. We liturgically represent the events of the last week of Christ's earthly life and in this way enter into the experience of His death and resurrection.

"Each day of this week special services recall what Christ called His hour: the time set by the Father for His saving work to be accomplished. In many of these services we liturgically reenact these moments, making them present to us once more" (*DC* 69-70).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

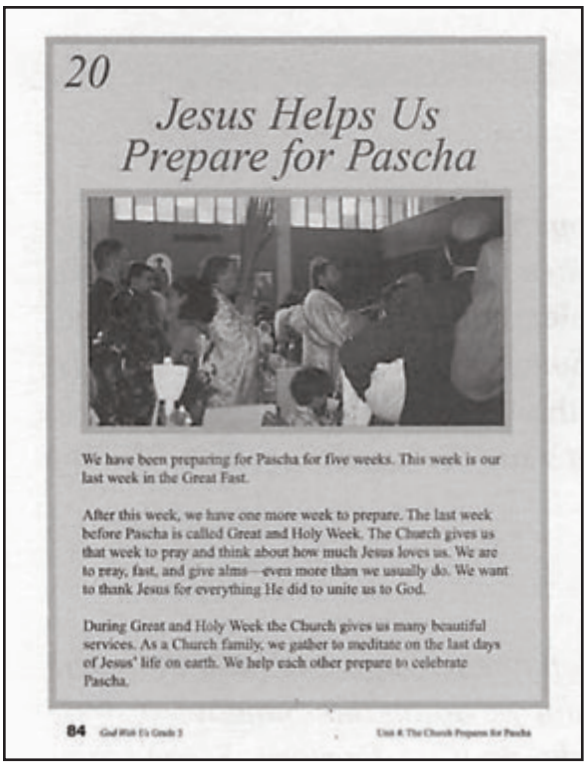
This morning we are going to say The Prayer of St. Ephrem. I hope you have been saying this prayer often during Great Lent. Do you remember what we do when we say this prayer? (We make profound bows.) Let's pray. "O Lord and Master..." [Have the children make a profound bow after each stanza.] *This morning we are going to say another prayer. Some of you might have heard this one during the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts.* [At the end of this lesson are the prayer verses according to the jurisdictions. Make copies for the children.] *Let's say the words together, "Let my prayer..."*

Introduction

Let's start at our first footprint and count to this Sunday. Let's stop at each sign and read the name of that Sunday. One, two . . . seven, Sunday of Orthodoxy. What did we do on that Sunday? (Carried icons in church—[if that is the tradition in your jurisdiction]*) Eight, nine . . .fourteen, Second Sunday. Fifteen, sixteen . . . twenty one, Veneration of the Holy Cross. How do we venerate the Holy Cross? (We bow and kiss it.) Twenty two, twenty three . . .twenty eight, Fourth Sunday. Twenty nine, thirty . . . thirty five, Fifth Sunday. Let's put up the sign for this Sunday. How many weeks do we have left? (One) What are we supposed to be doing during all these days? (Praying, fasting, and giving alms) I hope all of you have been trying to do all three. Which prayers are some of you saying more often?* [Give the children time to share.]

We are beginning our last week of the Great Fast. After this week, we have one more week to prepare for Pascha. That week is called Great and Holy Week.

Let's turn to our books.



20

Jesus Helps Us Prepare for Pascha

We have been preparing for Pascha for five weeks. This week is our last week in the Great Fast.

After this week, we have one more week to prepare. The last week before Pascha is called Great and Holy Week. The Church gives us that week to pray and think about how much Jesus loves us. We are to pray, fast, and give alms—even more than we usually do. We want to thank Jesus for everything He did to unite us to God.

During Great and Holy Week the Church gives us many beautiful services. As a Church family, we gather to meditate on the last days of Jesus' life on earth. We help each other prepare to celebrate Pascha.

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Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

We help each other prepare to celebrate Pascha.
What is the week before Pascha called? (Great and Holy Week) What does meditate mean? (To think) When we meditate, we are silent. We are thinking about Jesus. What should we do during Great and Holy Week? (Pray, fast, and give alms) What does it mean to give alms? (To share what we have with those who have less)

We think about the way Jesus will rise from the dead on Pascha.
Why do we celebrate Lazarus Saturday? (To remember Lazarus being raised from the dead)



Great and Holy Week begins with **Lazarus Saturday**. Lazarus was a friend of Jesus. When Jesus heard he died, He was sad. Jesus went to the tomb where Lazarus was buried for four days. He said, "'Lazarus, come out!' The dead man came out, bound hand and foot with linen strips, his face wrapped in a cloth" (John11: 43–44). We celebrate this miracle. We think about the way Jesus will rise from the dead on Pascha.

Palm Sunday celebrates Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem. When the people heard about Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead, they were excited. They waved palm branches to honor Jesus as He rode on a donkey through the streets of Jerusalem. The people treated Jesus like a king. Some churches have a procession on this day. The people carry palms and pussy willows or olive branches. They are like the people of Jerusalem who greeted Jesus.

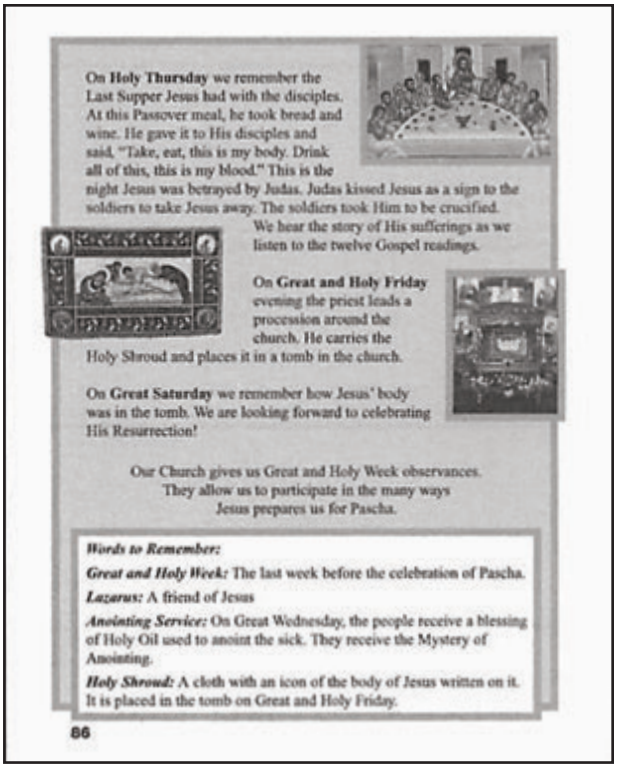
Great Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday honor the last days Jesus teaches in the temple. Our Church celebrates Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts and the Bridegroom Service on these days. Some churches have an anointing service on Great Wednesday. The people receive the Mystery of Healing. They are blessed with holy oil used to anoint the sick.

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They are like the people of Jerusalem who greeted Jesus.
What do we call this Sunday? (Palm, Pussy Willow, or Flowery Sunday) Why were the people honoring Jesus? (Jesus had Lazarus rise from the dead) They treated Jesus like a king.

... Jesus prepares us for Pascha.
[Ask the students to identify the observances of Holy Week.] *Why does our Church have all these observances during Holy Week? Why is it good to attend as many of these observances as possible? (Jesus wants us to be with Him) Jesus shows and tells us in many ways that we can be prepared to celebrate Pascha. Now we must listen and be with Him as much as we can.*

Let's review: *What is the week before Pascha called? (Great and Holy Week)*
What do all the observances do? (Allow us to participate in the many ways Jesus prepares us for Pascha) Great and Holy Week gives us the opportunity to walk with Jesus during His passion. Passion means his suffering and death.


On **Holy Thursday** we remember the Last Supper Jesus had with the disciples. At this Passover meal, he took bread and wine. He gave it to His disciples and said, "Take, eat, this is my body. Drink all of this, this is my blood." This is the night Jesus was betrayed by Judas. Judas kissed Jesus as a sign to the soldiers to take Jesus away. The soldiers took Him to be crucified. We hear the story of His sufferings as we listen to the twelve Gospel readings.

On **Great and Holy Friday** evening the priest leads a procession around the church. He carries the Holy Shroud and places it in a tomb in the church.

On **Great Saturday** we remember how Jesus' body was in the tomb. We are looking forward to celebrating His Resurrection!

Our Church gives us Great and Holy Week observances. They allow us to participate in the many ways Jesus prepares us for Pascha.

Words to Remember:

Great and Holy Week: The last week before the celebration of Pascha.

Lazarus: A friend of Jesus

Anointing Service: On Great Wednesday, the people receive a blessing of Holy Oil used to anoint the sick. They receive the Mystery of Anointing.

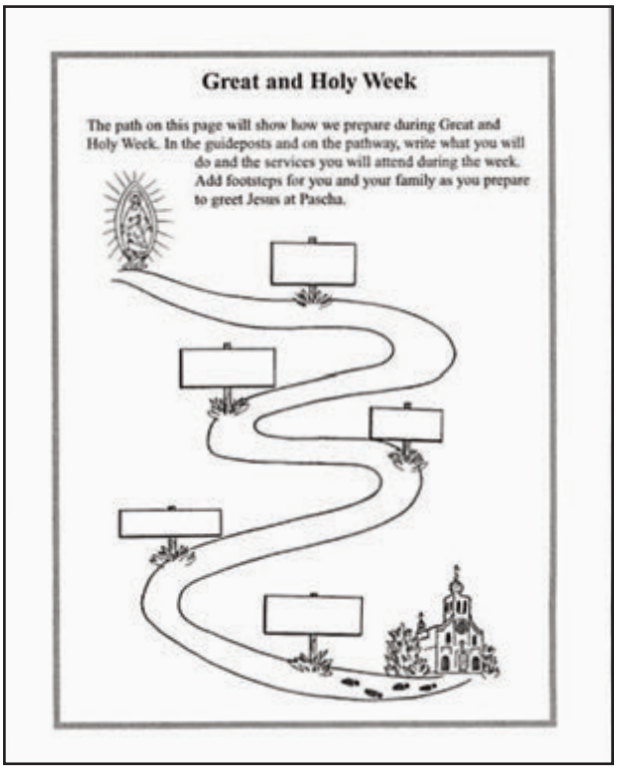
Holy Shroud: A cloth with an icon of the body of Jesus written on it. It is placed in the tomb on Great and Holy Friday.

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Activity Tracks

Basic: Great and Holy Week
[This worksheet is in the student text.]

Today we learned about many observances we have during Great and Holy Week. Write in the guideposts what you will do and the services you will attend each day in this week.


Great and Holy Week

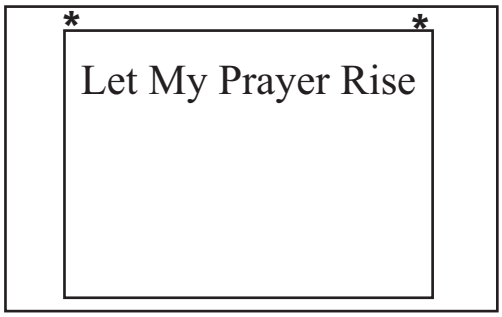
The path on this page will show how we prepare during Great and Holy Week. In the guideposts and on the pathway, write what you will do and the services you will attend during the week. Add footsteps for you and your family as you prepare to greet Jesus at Pascha.



Group: "Great and Holy Week" Calendar

Materials: "Calendar" worksheet, construction paper, markers, icon worksheet

[Have sample ready to show children. Use the student book pages to identify the names of the services.] *Today we are going to make a calendar to put on our icon table. It will name all the ways we can be together as a Church family during Holy Week. The calendar looks like the one we made a few weeks ago, but this time the squares are bigger. That will give us room to write what happens each day. Let's list the church services we have at our church.*



Craft: "Let My Prayer Rise" Prayer Page

Materials: Prayer worksheets according to each translations, heavier white paper or construction paper (1/2 sheet per student), hole punch, markers, stickers or stars, scissors, and glue

[Have sample ready to show children.] *Today we are going to make another page to add to our prayer book.*
When do we hear this prayer? (During the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts)

Paste the words on a half sheet of construction paper. You can draw pictures around the words, or you can add the stars or stickers I have here. Punch two holes to match the ones on the prayer cover. Untie the yarn on your prayer book cover and add this new page. Now pull the yarn through the holes and tie.

Closing

"Let my prayer. .. ."

Let My Prayer Rise

Let my prayer rise like incense
before You,

the lifting up of my hands like an
evening sacrifice.

Melkite
Greek
Catholic
Church

Let My Prayer Rise

Let my prayer rise like incense
before You,

the lifting up of my hands like an
evening sacrifice.

Romanian
Greek
Catholic
Diocese of
Canton

Let My Prayer Rise

Let my prayer ascend to You like incense,

and the lifting up of my hands like an evening sacrifice.

Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic Metro-politan Province

Let My Prayer Rise

Let my prayer arise before You like incense,

the lifting up of my hands like the evening sacrifice.

Ukrainian Catholic Diocese of St. Josaphat

Let My Prayer Rise

Let my prayer rise like incense
before you;

and the lifting up of my hands as an
evening sacrifice.

Ukrainian
Catholic
Synod

Great and Holy Week

Great and Holy Monday	***Great and Holy Tuesday***	***Great and Holy Wednesday***
Great and Holy Thursday	***Great and Holy Friday***	***Great and Holy Saturday***

Jesus Gives Himself Totally for Us

Objective: Students will be able to explain the importance of the cross as a symbol: Jesus died so we could have eternal life.

For the Catechist

For children death means a loss. They can understand the sadness and sorrow a death brings. They can relate to the loss, but they will have difficulty understanding how this loss leads to a celebration. That is why they should be encouraged to attend Great and Holy Friday and Pascha services. They will experience the awe and amazement as to how could the Son of God have gone through all this at the hands of men. The Eastern understanding of Christianity often presents a paradox. Great and Holy Friday is one of those times: we realize the disciples were saddened by the death of Jesus, but we are able to rejoice because we know about the resurrection.

Encourage the children and their families to participate in Great and Holy Friday services. The Church asks us to take time on Great and Holy Friday and Holy Saturday to be with Jesus. Some churches schedule people to watch the tomb. We are to spend those days praying as we wait for Pascha.

Each lesson in Unit 4 started with a discussion about the footsteps leading to Pascha. If possible, have the children go to church for this lesson's introduction. Start at the back of the nave, and have the students walk forward as they count the steps and review the Sundays of the Great Fast. Continue with the discussion on the cross, and have the students look for the crosses in the church before you return to the classroom.

Throughout this unit, the children have prepared for Pascha, but the Pascha lesson is part of "Unit 6—Observances."

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: "Veneration of the Cross" Prayer

Introduction: Discussion about crosses
Need: A cross from your home

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

• *Basic*: Jesus' Message

• *Group:* "The Great Fast" Guessing Game

• *Craft:* "Our Cross" Magnet

Closing: Veneration of the Cross" Prayer and the Prayer of St. Ephrem

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord:
The Entry of Christ into Jerusalem
The Crucifixion

Teaching Pics:

Lazarus Saturday . . . (GL10)
Great and Holy Friday (GL14, GL15)

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

Why Jesus Suffered

"Modern thinkers have tried to outline the psychology of One like us in all things except for sin. The picture they paint is generally close to that offered by St. Peter in his first epistle: 'He did no wrong; no deceit was found in his mouth. When He was insulted, he returned no insult. When He was made to suffer, he did not counter with threats. Instead he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly.' (1 Peter 2:22-23)

"According to Peter, Christ did not react negatively as we do to the unrighteous acts of others... This kind of behavior strikes us as odd, but it is we who are unnatural, who act in accordance with our fallen nature. Christ never did, thereby restoring our nature in fulfillment of God's original creative plan." (*WEF* 32-33)

The Message of the Cross

"The experience and writing of St. Paul gives the passion a new dimension. At first frustrated and discouraged by many failures, St. Paul began to look back over his whole missionary experience from a new light. He saw that suffering and persecution had often accompanied his attempts to plant the seeds of the Gospel. However, the seed had actually grown. Paul clearly recognized in his own experience the central teaching of Isaiah the Prophet, that only in the intense awareness of one's weakness could one be filled with the power of God. St. Paul wrote, 'God forbid that I ever boast of anything but the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ...' (Gal 6:14); I will do no boasting about myself unless it be about my weaknesses...' (2 Cor 12:5); 'The message of the Cross is complete absurdity to those who are headed for ruin, but to us who are experiencing salvation it is the power of God' (I Cor 1: 18). To live in this mystery means to discover the paradox of the way of Christ - wisdom and life come through weakness and death to self" (*LLI* 53).

The Sign of the Cross

"Some of the most basic elements of liturgical Tradition are the simplest, such as the sign of the cross. Such a gesture is attested to since the earliest days of the Church, pointing to the saving power of Christ under whose standard we are enrolled. The ways in which this sign has been made have differed over the years among different Churches, but the reality at the heart of gesture is clearly central to Tradition.

"The same could be said for the Trinitarian emphasis which later associated this gesture with the mention of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as well as the concept of using physical signs in worship which is connected both with acceptance of our own physical humanity and with the Lord's full acceptance of it as shown forth in the incarnation. As with many of the other practices we have mentioned, how we make the sign of the cross is secondary. The sign, as an appropriate profession of faith, is an aspect of Holy Tradition" (*SLW* 91).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

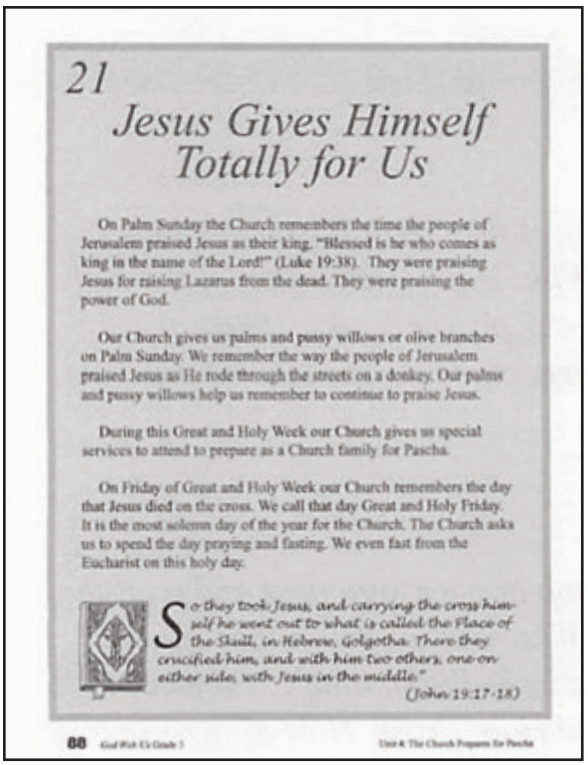
Let's start our prayers with a prayer we said on the Third Sunday of the Great Fast. Let's look at our footsteps and find the service we had on the Third Sunday. What is it? (Veneration of the Holy Cross) Does anyone remember how the prayer began? Let's use our prayer books. (Make the sign of the cross and bow.) Let's say this prayer three times. Don't forget to make the sign of the cross and bow.

Introduction

Let's start at our first footprint and count to this Sunday. Let's stop at each sign post and read the sign for that Sunday. One, two . . . seven, Sunday of Orthodoxy. What did we do on that Sunday? (Carried icons in church—[if that is the tradition in your jurisdiction]*) Eight, nine . . .fourteen, Second Sunday. Fifteen, sixteen . . . twenty one, Veneration of the Holy Cross. How do we venerate the Holy Cross? (We bow and kiss it.) Twenty two, twenty three . . .twenty eight, Sunday of St. John of the Ladder. Twenty nine, thirty . . . thirty five, Fifth Sunday. Thirty six, thirty seven . . . forty. We stop at Saturday. Let's put up the sign for this Sunday. What is it called? (Palm Sunday) Does anyone remember what happened on Palm Sunday? (Jesus was greeted as He rode the donkey and entered Jerusalem. The people waved palms.) Does anyone remember why the people were so happy to be with Jesus? (He raised Lazarus from the dead.) What is the name of the Saturday before Palm Sunday? (Lazarus Saturday) That is why we stop marking our days on the Friday before Lazarus Saturday. We are ready to begin thinking about the last days of Jesus' life on earth. What is the name given to the last week before Pascha? (Great and Holy Week)*

Today I have something special to show you. It is a cross I have in my home. [Show and share any details about a cross that you have.] *Let's think about all the places we see crosses. Let's make a list on the board* [or on a big sheet of paper]. *Let's start with the church. (On the domes, the hand cross, on icons, on the icon screen) How do we show the cross with our hands? (We make the sign of the cross.) Let's do that now—"In the name of the Father . . . ."Are there any crosses in our homes? (Over the door, in the icon corner, on the wall) Do we ever wear a cross? (On a chain) The cross tells people we believe in Jesus. The cross says we believe Jesus suffered and died on the cross to save us from our sins.*

Let's turn to our lesson.



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Jesus Gives Himself Totally for Us

On Palm Sunday the Church remembers the time the people of Jerusalem praised Jesus as their king. "Blessed is he who comes as king in the name of the Lord!" (Luke 19:38). They were praising Jesus for raising Lazarus from the dead. They were praising the power of God.

Our Church gives us palms and pussy willows or olive branches on Palm Sunday. We remember the way the people of Jerusalem praised Jesus as He rode through the streets on a donkey. Our palms and pussy willows help us remember to continue to praise Jesus.

During this Great and Holy Week our Church gives us special services to attend to prepare as a Church family for Pascha.

On Friday of Great and Holy Week our Church remembers the day that Jesus died on the cross. We call that day Great and Holy Friday. It is the most solemn day of the year for the Church. The Church asks us to spend the day praying and fasting. We even fast from the Eucharist on this holy day.

So they took Jesus, and carrying the cross himself he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, in Hebrew, Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus in the middle."
(John 19:17-18)

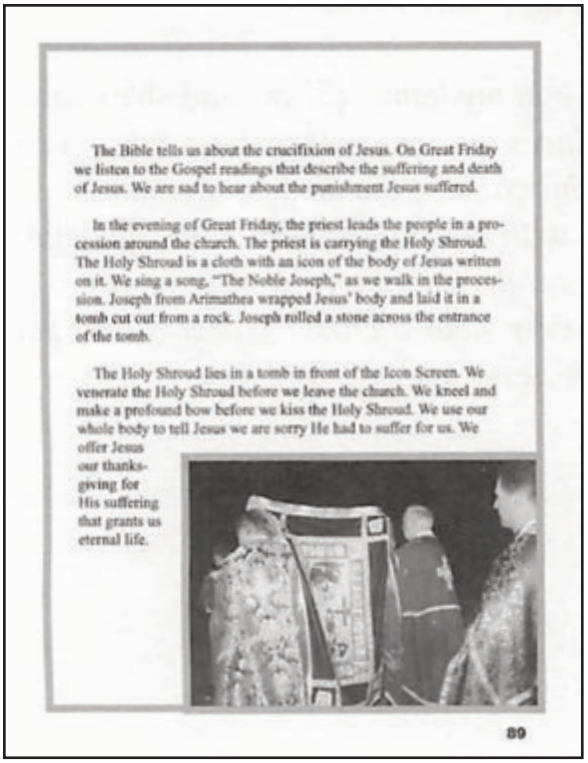
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Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

They were praising the power of God.
What were the people celebrating on Palm Sunday? (The raising of Lazarus)

The Church asks us to spend the day praying and fasting.
What should we do on Great and Holy Friday? (Pray and fast) Are we able to receive Holy Communion on Great and Holy Friday? (No) Why not? (It is a day of special fasting.)



The Bible tells us about the crucifixion of Jesus. On Great Friday we listen to the Gospel readings that describe the suffering and death of Jesus. We are sad to hear about the punishment Jesus suffered.

In the evening of Great Friday, the priest leads the people in a procession around the church. The priest is carrying the Holy Shroud. The Holy Shroud is a cloth with an icon of the body of Jesus written on it. We sing a song, "The Noble Joseph," as we walk in the procession. Joseph from Arimathea wrapped Jesus' body and laid it in a tomb cut out from a rock. Joseph rolled a stone across the entrance of the tomb.

The Holy Shroud lies in a tomb in front of the Icon Screen. We venerate the Holy Shroud before we leave the church. We kneel and make a profound bow before we kiss the Holy Shroud. We use our whole body to tell Jesus we are sorry He had to suffer for us. We offer Jesus our thanksgiving for His suffering that grants us eternal life.

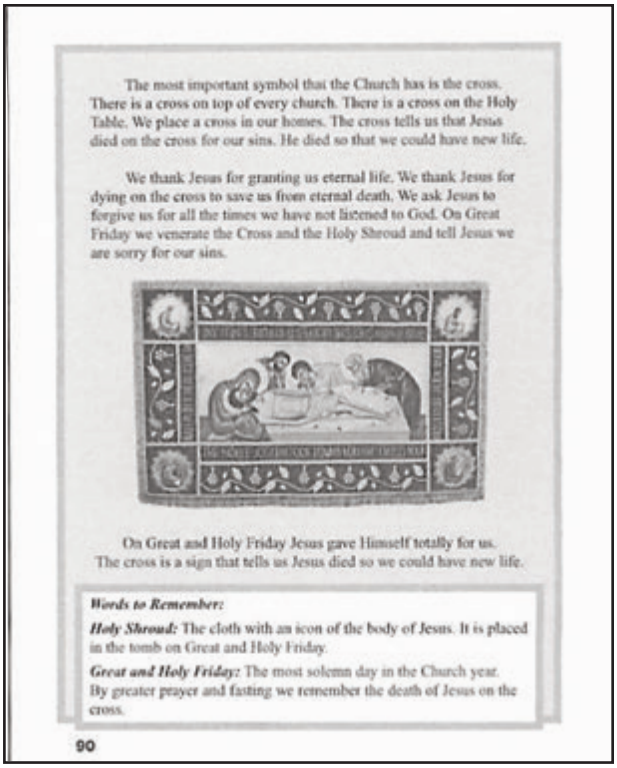
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Joseph rolled a stone across the entrance of the tomb.
Who is Joseph? (The man from Arimathea who buried Jesus.) Where do we learn about the crucifixion of Jesus? (From the Bible—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John write about the crucifixion) What is the Holy Shroud? (An icon of the body of Jesus) How is it used? (It is placed in the tomb on Great and Holy Friday.)

We offer Jesus our thanksgiving for His suffering that grants us eternal life.
How can we let Jesus know we thank Him? (Attend church services; spend time in church praying; fast and pray on Great and Holy Friday

He died so that we could have new life.
Jesus loved us so much that He wanted us to be with God forever. The only way that could happen is if He rises from the grave. That means Jesus had to die first. What does the cross tell us? (Jesus died on the cross so we could have new life.) What do you think people thought when Jesus died? We know in three days Jesus will rise from the grave. Are we still sad on Great and Holy Friday? (Yes) Why are we sad? (Jesus had to suffer so much for us) Are we thankful? (Yes, Jesus saved us from eternal death and granted us eternal life.)

Let's review: *Why did Jesus die on the cross? (To grant us eternal life) What does the cross tell us? (Jesus died so we could have new life.) What is the Holy Shroud? (A cloth with an icon of the body of Jesus.) Where is it placed? (In the tomb on Great and Holy Friday)*



The most important symbol that the Church has is the cross. There is a cross on top of every church. There is a cross on the Holy Table. We place a cross in our homes. The cross tells us that Jesus died on the cross for our sins. He died so that we could have new life.

We thank Jesus for granting us eternal life. We thank Jesus for dying on the cross to save us from eternal death. We ask Jesus to forgive us for all the times we have not listened to God. On Great Friday we venerate the Cross and the Holy Shroud and tell Jesus we are sorry for our sins.

On Great and Holy Friday Jesus gave Himself totally for us. The cross is a sign that tells us Jesus died so we could have new life.

Words to Remember:

Holy Shroud: The cloth with an icon of the body of Jesus. It is placed in the tomb on Great and Holy Friday.

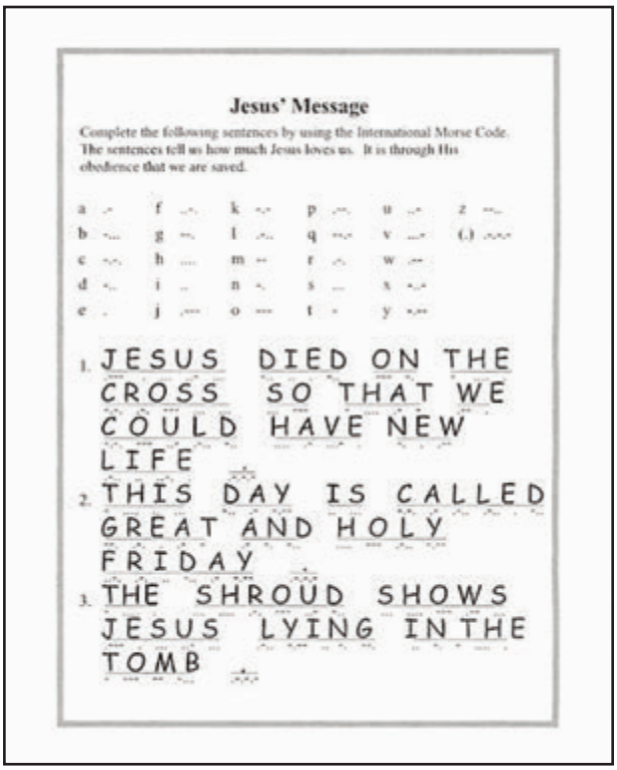
Great and Holy Friday: The most solemn day in the Church year. By greater prayer and fasting we remember the death of Jesus on the cross.

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Activity Tracks

Basic: Jesus' Message
[This worksheet is in the student text.]

Our activity contains a very special message that God wants us to read, but we have to decipher it. Does anyone know what Morse Code is? It is a sound pattern that sends messages. The dots indicate a short sound, and the lines mean a long sound. Follow the instructions and decipher or figure out the message.



Jesus' Message

Complete the following sentences by using the International Morse Code. The sentences tell us how much Jesus loves us. It is through His obedience that we are saved.

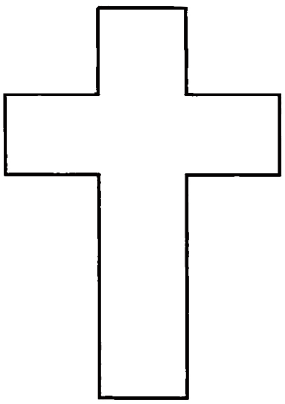
a .-	f ..-.	k -.-	p .--.	u ..-	z --..
b -...	g --.	l .-..	q --.-	v ...-	( ) .-.-.
c -.-.	h	m --	r .-.	w .--	
d -..	i ..	n -.	s ...	x -..-	
e .	j .---	o ---	t -	y -.--	

1. JESUS DIED ON THE CROSS SO THAT WE COULD HAVE NEW LIFE
2. THIS DAY IS CALLED GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY
3. THE SHROUD SHOWS JESUS LYING IN THE TOMB

Group: "The Great Fast" Guessing Game

Materials: "Great Fast" worksheet, "Cross Segment" worksheet

[Have the children guess the letters for the words. When a letter is guessed correctly, add another segment to the cross.] *Today we are going to talk about the words we learned today. But before we talk about them, we will have to guess what they are. I have the words written on these papers. I need someone to volunteer. Pick one word, and on the board write a space for each letter of the word. The rest of us will try to guess the letters in the word. A part of the cross is drawn each time the guess is right. When we have all the letters, the student who is at the board will tell what he or she learned about that word.* [Follow this procedure until all the words are chosen.]



Craft: "Our Cross" Magnet

Materials: Plastic canvas, yellow and purple thin ribbon (48 inches per cross), "Our Cross" worksheet, tape, magnet strips

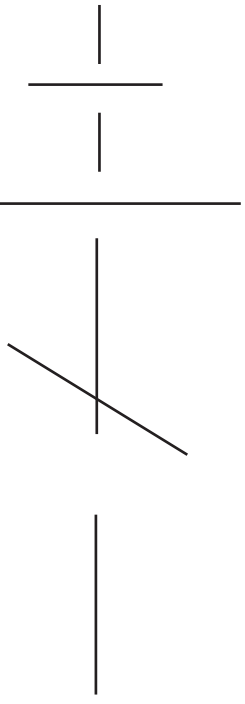
[Have sample ready to show children. Use the pattern to cut out crosses from clear or white plastic canvas] *Today we are going to make a plastic canvas cross. I have the crosses cut out* [or you might have been able to buy them at a craft store], *but I want you to decorate them using the ribbon. You may weave the ribbon in and out to make a pattern* [wrap a small amount of tape at the end of the ribbon to make a sharp point to use to go in and out of the holes], *or you may use the ribbon to make a border around the outside of the cross. Place a magnet on the back, and take it home to display in a special place for Great and Holy Week.*

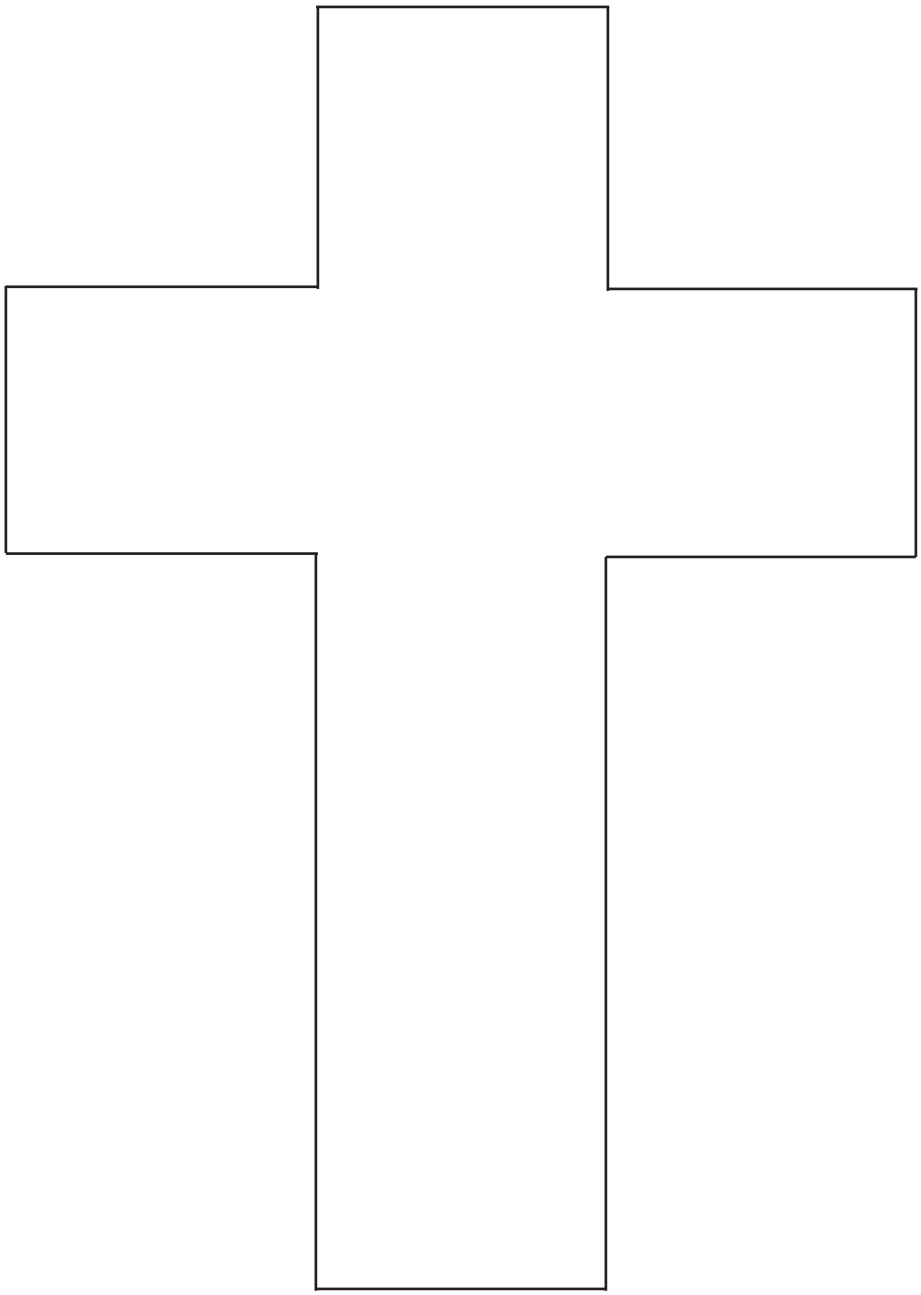
Closing

Today we are also going to pray the "Veneration of the Cross" Prayer and the Prayer of St. Ephrem.

Almsgiving	**Prayers**
Holy Shroud	**Fasting**
Pascha	**Repentance**

"Cross Segment" Worksheet





Unit 4
The Church Prepares for Pascha

Review

1. What is the Great Fast?
(Lesson 16: The Great Fast is our 40-day period of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving in preparation for Holy Week and Pascha.)

2. What is the Mystery of Repentance?
(Lesson 19: The Mystery of Repentance is our way to receive God's healing grace when we come to Him for forgiveness of our sins.)

3. Name two differences in the Church's Great Fast worship.
(Lesson 18: We make profound bows called prostrations; we see dark vestments and covers for the Holy Table.)

4. What is the Holy Shroud and how is it used?
(Lesson 20: The Holy Shroud is a cloth with an icon of the body of Jesus written on it. It is placed in the tomb on Great and Holy Friday.)

5. What is the most important symbol of the Church?
(Lesson 21: The cross is the most important symbol of the Church.)

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The Saints Are with God

Objective: The students will be able to define Saints as those who have been filled with God's love and are with Him in glory

For the Catechist

For most people a saint has come to mean a Christian who was extremely holy, has died and is in heaven, and has been declared or "canonized" by the Church. We think of saints as living perhaps in a world apart from ours. But they, like us, lived in a world filled with temptations and trials. What singles them out is that they remained open to the Holy Spirit. For this reason they grew in the Christian life, became holy persons, and manifested the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. The work of the Holy Spirit continues in them and us.

On the Sunday after Pentecost the Church honors all the Saints. This is the Sunday of All Saints. Appropriately, this feast comes on the eighth day after the coming of the Holy Spirit. The eighth day is a sign of fulfillment, and the Sunday of All Saints celebrates the fulfillment of the work of the Holy Spirit. It honors all the faithful who shared in Christ's suffering and entered into His life and glory.

Our icons of Saints help us remember that the Saints were filled with God's love and they are now with Him in glory. We venerate these icons, especially on the feast day of the Saint, to honor these Holy Ones. One of the most frequently heard liturgical hymns remembering the saints is the Third Antiphon used at the Divine Liturgy on weekdays. It is used in the opening and closing prayers of this lesson.

Children in third grade like to listen to stories, and each Saint has a story. One way the children can relate to the Saints is by hearing these stories. For that reason a book of the Saints' lives would be good to use for a reference for this lesson.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: O Heavenly King

Introduction: Discuss Saints' lives
Need: Icons of Saints

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read the text. Use questions in the teacher manual to discuss the lesson with the students.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

- *Basic*: The Holy Ones
- *Group:* World Collage
- *Craft:* My Prayer to Jesus

Closing: O Heavenly King

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord: Saint George
Saints Peter and Paul

Teaching Pics:

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

Imitating the Saints

"Often we hear the phrase 'imitating the saints.' Caution must be advised here. We definitely imitate their zeal and dedication. However, we are not to copy their actions in the sense of sitting on a pillar, abandoning our families or even striving to reproduce anything they did. Indeed, each of us is an 'original'—we must become saints according to the way that each of us reflects God uniquely. There will never be another St. Anthony of Egypt, nor St. George, nor St. Catherine; rather we may imitate their zeal in imitating Christ.

"If we look at the panoply of saints in the Menaion, each of us will find several individuals who had the same vocation, life situation, personality (with its strong and weak points), challenges or difficulties as we do. We can see how they dealt with similar situations in their lives: better yet, how they saw such situations, the perspective in which they viewed them, the dynamics involved, and their response. This can help us in living out our own particular life situation. We see that we are not alone in this, and that brothers and sisters before us dealt with similar issues successfully in Christ using the same Scriptures, Mysteries and graces that we have been given.

"Finally, the saints' love for the whole Church, and for all creation, transcends their early life. Now in glory the saints join their prayers to Christ's unceasing intercession for us. The history of the Church also recounts numberless instances of the saints' intervention on our behalf in response to prayer or the veneration of their icons and relics" (*LLIII* 94-95).

The Saints, the Holy Ones

"The Church also celebrates the feasts of its heroes of faith, the saints, based on this understanding of God's glorification of humanity. Through their holiness and their heroism for the sake of the faith, they reveal the ongoing action of the Spirit in the life of the people of God, deifying them and exalting them by riches of faith and love. The saints do not replace Christ as the one mediator between God and humanity (ref 2 Tim 2:5-6). The rule of worship once again determines our faith. We ask the saints to pray and to intercede for us with God. Their ability to help us comes only from their union with God. Just as we ask others to pray for us, we can ask those who have already achieved unity with God to pray for us. We also pray for the saints, that their share in the divine life be continually deepened. Our veneration of the saints is actually a sign of our faith in the resurrection and of the solidarity of all faithful through God. The God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob is the God of the living and not the dead (Lk 20:37-38). Our veneration of the saints is a mark of our trust in God, who always keeps His covenant with us, 'so that in [Christ] we might become the very holiness of God' (2 Cor 5:21)" (*LLII* 46-47).

"Modern Church calendars have at least one saint commemorated each day of the year. One day commemorates all saints, both canonized and unknown. This Feast of All Saints is observed in the Byzantine Churches on the first Sunday after Pentecost as a sign that the gift of holiness is the greatest of the charisms given to the Church through the Holy Spirit" (*LLII* 4S).

Named in Christ

"Christians have long chosen the names of saints from the liturgical calendar to proclaim their link with their spiritual family, the Church ... One's 'Nameday' is an occasion to honor the memory of the saint whose name we bear and to give thanks for his or her daily intercession on our behalf" (*DC* 77-78).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Let's make the sign of the cross and say our prayer, "O Heavenly King." This prayer is one of the first ones we learned this year.

Introduction

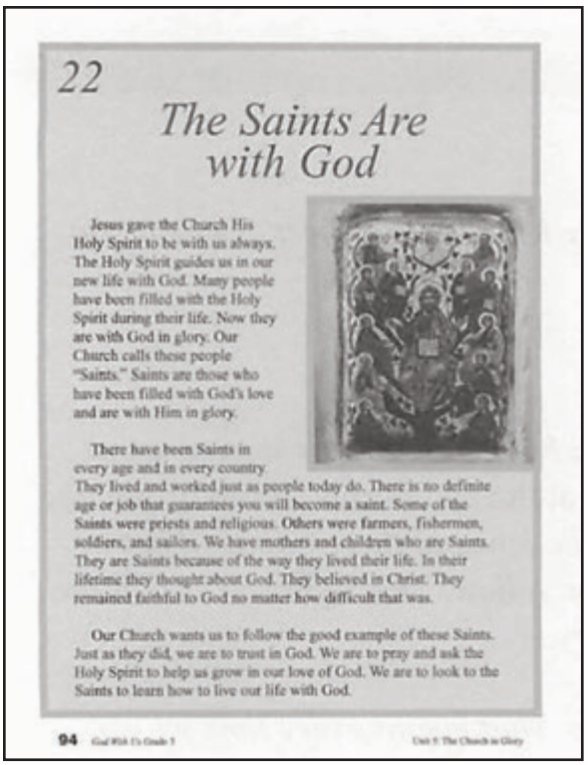
Today we are going to look at a special book I brought in. It is a book that tells us stories about Saints. Do you know any stories about a Saint? [Use the stories at the end of this lesson or use one of your books that include stories of Saints.] *Now let's look at the icons of these Saints. What do you see circling the face of these Saints? (A bright light—gold or yellow) This light shows that the Saints have been filled with God's love and are with Him in glory.*

We are looking at friends of Jesus. The Saints are our friends too. That means every time we are looking at the icons in church or at home we are looking at the friends of Jesus. Do we want to be a friend of Jesus?

Many of you have something in common with at least one Saint. Does anyone know what it is? (Your name) Do you know the name of the Saint for whom you were named? My patron Saint is... [If possible start with your name.]

[If your church is named after a Saint, say the following:] *Our church also has a patron Saint. What is the name of our church s patron Saint? Does anyone know anything about that Saint?* [If possible find information or the life story that you can read.]

Let's turn to our books to read more about Saints.



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The Saints Are with God

Jesus gave the Church His Holy Spirit to be with us always. The Holy Spirit guides us in our new life with God. Many people have been filled with the Holy Spirit during their life. Now they are with God in glory. Our Church calls these people "Saints." Saints are those who have been filled with God's love and are with Him in glory.

There have been Saints in every age and in every country. They lived and worked just as people today do. There is no definite age or job that guarantees you will become a saint. Some of the Saints were priests and religious. Others were farmers, fishermen, soldiers, and sailors. We have mothers and children who are Saints. They are Saints because of the way they lived their life. In their lifetime they thought about God. They believed in Christ. They remained faithful to God no matter how difficult that was.

Our Church wants us to follow the good example of these Saints. Just as they did, we are to trust in God. We are to pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help us grow in our love of God. We are to look to the Saints to learn how to live our life with God.

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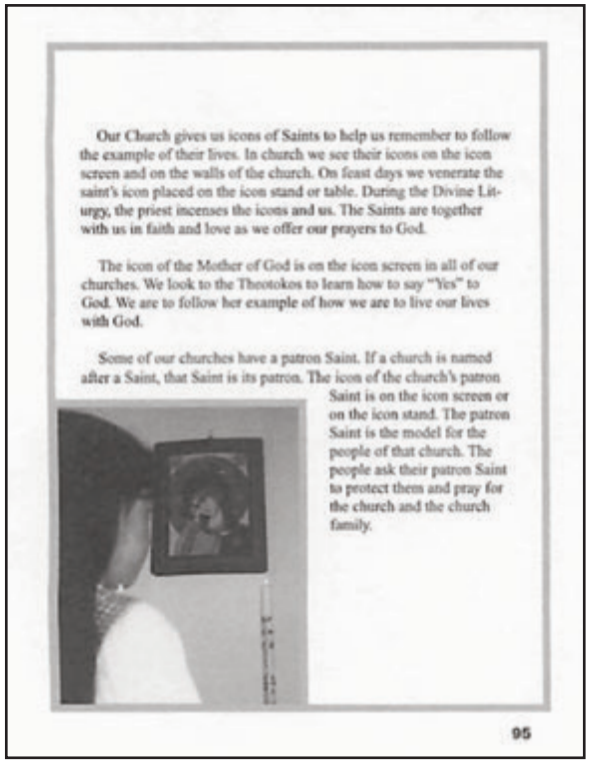
Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

Who are the saints with Jesus in the icon on this page? (the apostles/disciples) Do you remember the name of some of them? Are there icons of the apostles in our church? [In most Byzantine churches this icon is on the icon screen.]

... and are with Him in glory.
Where are the Saints now? (With God in heaven) Who helped them live out their new life with God? (The Holy Spirit) Who is a Saint? (Those who have been filled with God's love and are with Him in glory)

... to learn how to live our life with God.
Why are the Saints good examples for us to follow? (They show us how to live our life with God.)



Our Church gives us icons of Saints to help us remember to follow the example of their lives. In church we see their icons on the icon screen and on the walls of the church. On feast days we venerate the saint's icon placed on the icon stand or table. During the Divine Liturgy, the priest incenses the icons and us. The Saints are together with us in faith and love as we offer our prayers to God.

The icon of the Mother of God is on the icon screen in all of our churches. We look to the Theotokos to learn how to say "Yes" to God. We are to follow her example of how we are to live our lives with God.

Some of our churches have a patron Saint. If a church is named after a Saint, that Saint is its patron. The icon of the church's patron Saint is on the icon screen or on the icon stand. The patron Saint is the model for the people of that church. The people ask their patron Saint to protect them and pray for the church and the church family.

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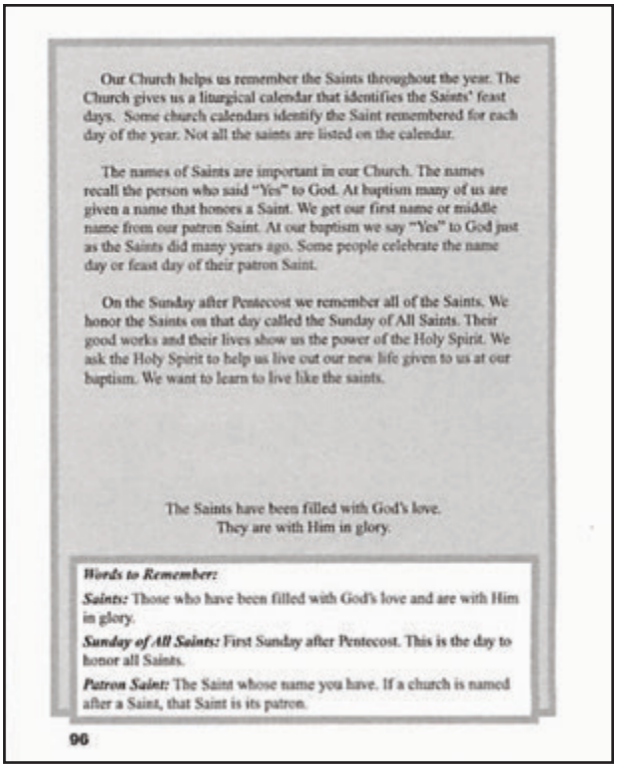
... in faith and love as we offer our prayers to God.
Why do we have icons of Saints? (To help us remember to follow the example of their lives)

... to protect them and pray for the church and the church family.
What do we call the Saint after whom a church is named? (Patron Saint) [If your church is named after a Saint, try to find more details about the Saint to add to this discussion.] *Our church family honors our patron saint on his/her feast day.* [Find the date on the church calendar and tell the children. In the Greek Tradition the icon of patron Saint of the church is on the left side of the Icon Screen. In the Slav Tradition, the icon is on the right. Have the children look for the icon in your church.]

Some people celebrate the name day or feast day of their patron Saint.
When were some of you given the name of a Saint? (At baptism) Do any of you celebrate your name day? Some people have a party. They are celebrating the feast day and the Saint with whom they share a name.

We want to learn to live like the Saints.
What is the name of the Sunday that honors all the Saints? (The Sunday of All Saints) When do we celebrate it? (The Sunday after Pentecost)

Let's review: *Who are the Saints? (Those who have been filled with God s love and are with Him in glory) Why should we try to live the way they did? (So we can be filled with God's love and be with Him in glory)*



Our Church helps us remember the Saints throughout the year. The Church gives us a liturgical calendar that identifies the Saints' feast days. Some church calendars identify the Saint remembered for each day of the year. Not all the saints are listed on the calendar.

The names of Saints are important in our Church. The names recall the person who said "Yes" to God. At baptism many of us are given a name that honors a Saint. We get our first name or middle name from our patron Saint. At our baptism we say "Yes" to God just as the Saints did many years ago. Some people celebrate the name day or feast day of their patron Saint.

On the Sunday after Pentecost we remember all of the Saints. We honor the Saints on that day called the Sunday of All Saints. Their good works and their lives show us the power of the Holy Spirit. We ask the Holy Spirit to help us live out our new life given to us at our baptism. We want to learn to live like the saints.

The Saints have been filled with God's love.
They are with Him in glory.

Words to Remember:

Saints: Those who have been filled with God's love and are with Him in glory.

Sunday of All Saints: First Sunday after Pentecost. This is the day to honor all Saints.

Patron Saint: The Saint whose name you have. If a church is named after a Saint, that Saint is its patron.

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Activity Tracks

Basic: The Holy Ones
[This worksheet is in the student text.]

After you figure out the message on this worksheet, list three ways you can be an example of how to live the way God wants us to live. [Let the children share their answers if there is enough time.]



The Holy Ones

G	O	D'	S		H	O	L	Y		O	N	E	S
1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12

Using the key above, match the numbers and letters to complete the following message:

T	H	E		S	A	I	N	T	S		A	R	E
5		11		12			10		12				11

E	X	A	M	P	L	E	S		F	O	R		U	S
11					7	11	12			9				12

T	O		F	O	L	L	O	W
	6			9	7	7	6	

Now write three ways in which you can be an example to others.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Group: World Collage

Materials: Extra large piece of paper, "Jesus and the World" worksheet, magazines, scissors, yarn or magic marker, an outline taken from a map of the world, glue

Today we learned about the Saints or Holy Ones. Each one lived filled with God's love. Today we are going to show that Saints come from all over the world. I have drawn an outline of the world on this large sheet of paper. [This should be done in advance. You can enlarge the map on the worksheet if you cannot find an outline of the whole world.] *Now we are going to cut out pictures of people and glue them in the different land areas. Then let's outline the world either with the yarn or magic marker. Let's add the icon of Jesus to the top of the page. Why? (Jesus calls everyone to follow Him.)*

Craft: My Prayer to Jesus

Materials: Prayer worksheet, heavier white paper or construction paper, markers, stickers or stars

Today we are going to make another page for our prayer book. We are going to make a page for our prayer to Jesus. Write your own prayer on the sheet of paper. Paste the prayer on a half sheet of construction paper or the heavier white paper. You can draw pictures around the prayer, or you can add the stars or stickers I have here. This is our last prayer to add to our prayer book. Punch two holes to match the ones on the prayer cover. Untie the yarn on our prayer book cover and add this new page. Now pull the yarn through the holes and tie.

Closing: *Let's pray: "O Heavenly King."* [Start with the sign of the cross.]




GREENLAND
BRITISH ISLES
EUROPE
CANADA
NORTH AMERICA
NORTH ATLANTIC OCEAN
AFRICA
UNITED STATES
MEXICO
SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEAN
CENTRAL AMERICA
SOUTH AMERICA
SOUTH PACIFIC OCEAN

My Prayer to Jesus

My Prayer to Jesus

The Theotokos Prays for Us

Objective: The students will be able to identify the way Jesus honors His mother and the way our Church honors the Theotokos through services and feast days.

For the Catechist

The Theotokos, the Mother of God, shows us all the qualities of a good mother. She believes and trusts in God totally. She says "Yes" to God when the Angel Gabriel tells her she is to be the Mother of God. She does not know how all this will be possible, but she listens to God and willingly agrees. We see her taking care of Jesus because God asked her to be His mother.

Our Church honors the Theotokos throughout the year. Prayers and songs are part of the Divine Liturgy and other liturgical services. Feast days that recognize major events in the life of the Mother of God are observed. Some churches have special services to honor the Theotokos. Encourage the children to attend the Akathist to the Mother of God (prayers offered while standing), the Paraclisis (prayers of consolation and intercession), and the Moleben to the Mother of God (Slavic for prayer service).

This lesson builds on the loving relationship Jesus and His mother have. We are to learn to love our mothers and children in the same way. This lessons asks us to love the Theotokos and Jesus the same way they loved each other. Through this love, we grow closer to God.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: O Heavenly King

Introduction: Discussion of a mother's love **Need:** Icon of a Saint, Poster board

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read the text. Use questions in the teacher manual to discuss the lesson with the students.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

- *Basic*: Mother of God, Pray for Us
- *Group:* Poem for Our Heavenly Mother
- *Craft:* Flowers for Mothers

Closing: O Heavenly King

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord:
Icon of the Sign
Nativity of the Mother of God
Dormition

Teaching Pics:

Feasts of the Theotokos (Fl)
Akathist (GL4)

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

The Icon of the Theotokos

"Because we believe in the true incarnation of the Son of God become man in Jesus, we give His Mother the honor we do. One of the most prominent examples of this reverence is the fact that we always place the icon of the Theotokos containing Christ in her womb high on the real wall of the church building. This image, placed between ceiling and floor, recalls that Mary bridges the gap between God and us by carrying the Son of God in her womb" (*DC* 11).

Mary's Role in Salvation

"Byzantine theology is even clearer about Mary's role in the salvation of the human race. On the feast of the Annunciation, Gabriel is described as greeting Mary as the one 'through whom Adam is called back to Paradise, Eve is freed from bondage, and the world is filled with joy.' In her womb, God is united with human flesh 'through the good will of the Father and the operation of the Holy Spirit' (Liti Stichera). On the feast of the Dormition, the Church proclaims, 'Rejoice, O Virgin, for you alone brought heaven and earth together in giving birth to your Son' (Stichera at the Praises), and 'through her holy Dormition the world is given new life' (Liti Stichera). As the one who gave birth to God in the flesh, Mary's choices had cosmic significance; and she is the first to participate in the complete salvation wrought through the incarnation of Christ, including the assumption of her body into the presence of God. Thus she has a unique role as intercessor for all humanity. One of the most ancient prayers of the Church describes her role, 'We hasten to your patronage, O Virgin Mother of God. Despise not our prayers in our necessities, but deliver us from all danger, you who alone are pure and blessed.' Byzantine Church history contains many examples of prayer vigils to the Theotokos in times of civil danger. One such occasion gave rise to the feast of Protection of the Mother of God (October 1)" (*LLI* 93).

The Theotokos

"Scripture honors Mary with most beautiful names: 'highly favored one' (Lk 1:28) 'blessed among women' (1:28,42), and 'mother of the Lord' (1:43). These become the basis for all the titles ascribed to the Holy Virgin. The greatest title given to Mary is that of Theotokos, Greek for 'she who bore God.' It was given to her by the Council of Ephesus (431) which defined that 'Emmanuel is truly God, and therefore the Holy Virgin is the Theotokos, inasmuch as in the flesh [in her womb] she bore the Word of God made flesh' (Canon 1). This Council very clearly rejected all opinions about the personality of Jesus that would in any way separate the divine and human natures united in Him. It refused any implication that the divinity was united to Him after His birth or that Jesus is in any way distinguished from the Word of God. Mary was not simply the mother of Jesus the man, but of Jesus the incarnate Son of God. Both natures were united in His person. Through her relationship to this one person, she is the 'Mother of God.' The Byzantine Churches ordinarily refer to Mary by this title of Theotokos, which signifies that she is truly the 'Mother of God' through her conception, bearing, and giving birth to the person Jesus, true God and true man" (*LLI* 93-94).

The Temple of God

"The Church as Body of Christ and Temple of the Holy Spirit is exemplified by the Holy Virgin, who was the actual physical vessel containing Christ. She whom the Byzantine Churches call the 'living temple of the holy glory of Christ our God,' 'the holy temple of our holy God,' (Stichera at Vespers, Feast of the Entrance into the Temple) is the model or 'type' of the people of God, who have become His dwelling place (1 Cor 3:16-17; 6:19;2 Cor 6:16)" (*LLI* 91).

The Greatest of All Saints, Mary the Theotokos

"The greatest of all saints is, of course, *Mary the Theotokos*, the Mother of God. In every Divine Liturgy, the unbloody sacrifice is offered first 'for our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary.' Her position is unique in salvation. As the one who by her own free will bore the Son of God in her womb, she is the first to be saved through the incarnation ('becoming flesh') of the Word of God. This is especially venerated in the feast of her falling asleep (*Dormition*) on August 15, which also celebrates her being taken into heaven (in Latin, *Assumptio*) as the first of all the human race to participate fully in the resurrection of our Lord. Other events of her life have a saving value for us as models of Christian life and because of her supreme role in the salvation worked through Jesus Christ" (*LLII* 50-51).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Today we will say the prayer we said last week, "O Heavenly King." As we pray, let's think about the Saints and the way they were filled with the Holy Spirit. [Say the prayer.]

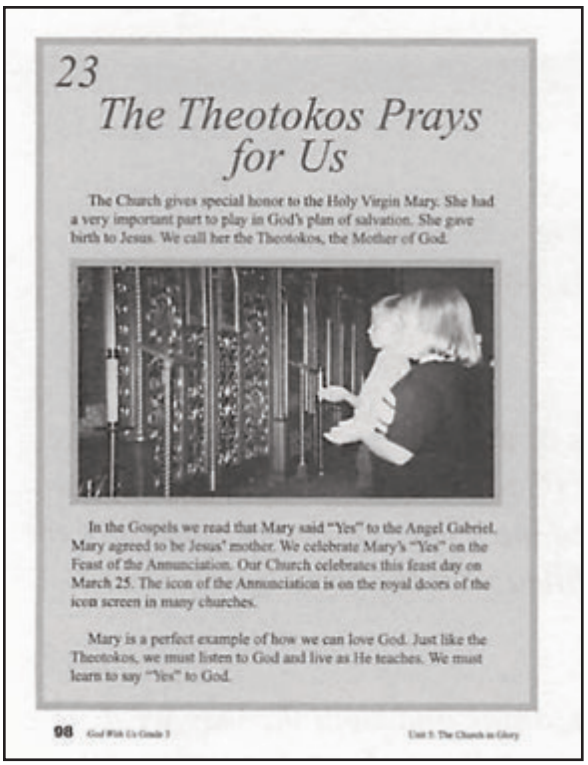
Introduction

What is the name of this Saint? [Hold up an icon of St. Nicholas or any other Saint.] *Last week we learned about the Saints. To whom did the Saints give their life? (God) Who helped them live their life with God? (The Holy Spirit) The Saints were just like you and me. They ate, drank, and lived the way we do. But they also lived their lives differently; they were filled with the Holy Spirit. Everything they did was dedicated to God.*

Today we are going to learn about another Holy Person who ate, drank and slept the way we do. We are going to learn about Mary, the mother of Jesus. Before we start talking about this lesson, let's take some time to think about our mothers. In May we celebrate a special Sunday that honors our mothers. What is that day? (Mother's Day) Do you do anything special to thank your mom on that day? [Let the children share.] *Let's think about some ideas you mentioned. Now let's make a special poem today.* [Hold up a poster board with the letters for mother written down the left side.] *I have the word MOTHER on this board. Let's add words to each of the letters. When we are done, we will have a poem that describes mothers. (Possibilities: Makes me happy; Often busy; Takes care of me; Happy and holy; Every day; Really great!) Very nice.*

Do you think Jesus would have said the same things about His mother? Does anyone remember the name of the angel who asked Mary to be Jesus' mother? (Gabriel) Mary said "Yes" to the angel. She said "Yes" to God. After Jesus was born, Mary took very good care of Jesus. When Mary died, Jesus took her to be with Him in heaven. Jesus thanked His Mother for saying "Yes" and for taking care of Him.

Let's turn to our lesson.



23

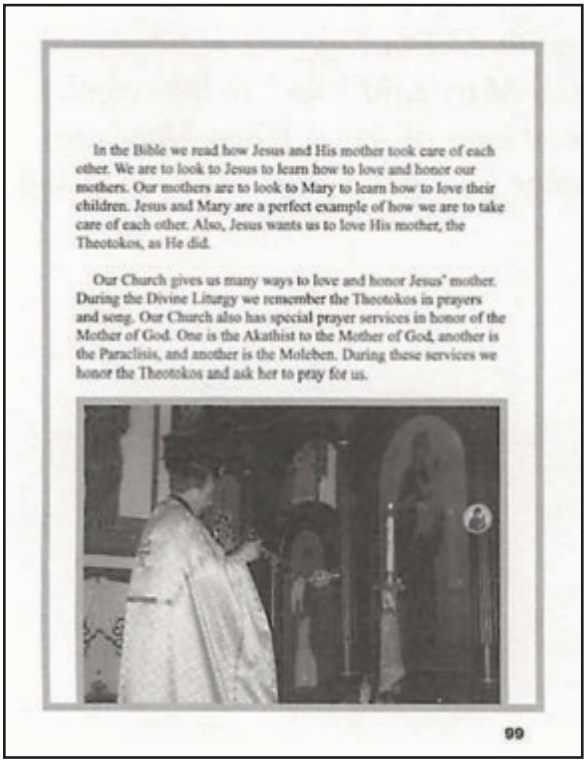
The Theotokos Prays for Us

The Church gives special honor to the Holy Virgin Mary. She had a very important part to play in God's plan of salvation. She gave birth to Jesus. We call her the Theotokos, the Mother of God.

In the Gospels we read that Mary said "Yes" to the Angel Gabriel. Mary agreed to be Jesus' mother. We celebrate Mary's "Yes" on the Feast of the Annunciation. Our Church celebrates this feast day on March 25. The icon of the Annunciation is on the royal doors of the icon screen in many churches.

Mary is a perfect example of how we can love God. Just like the Theotokos, we must listen to God and live as He teaches. We must learn to say "Yes" to God.

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In the Bible we read how Jesus and His mother took care of each other. We are to look to Jesus to learn how to love and honor our mothers. Our mothers are to look to Mary to learn how to love their children. Jesus and Mary are a perfect example of how we are to take care of each other. Also, Jesus wants us to love His mother, the Theotokos, as He did.

Our Church gives us many ways to love and honor Jesus' mother. During the Divine Liturgy we remember the Theotokos in prayers and song. Our Church also has special prayer services in honor of the Mother of God. One is the Akathist to the Mother of God, another is the Paraclisis, and another is the Moleben. During these services we honor the Theotokos and ask her to pray for us.

99

Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

Let's look at the picture on the first page of our lesson. Does anyone remember what these doors are called? (Royal doors) What is the name of the icon on these doors? (The Annunciation) Let's begin the reading.

We call her the Theotokos, the Mother of God.
What do we call Mary, the mother of Jesus (Holy Virgin, Theotokos) What does Theotokos mean? (Mother of God)

We must learn to say "Yes" to God.
What feast celebrates Mary saying "Yes" to the Angel Gabriel? (The Annunciation) What was the message from God? (She will be the mother of Jesus.) [If you have this icon on the Royal Doors in your church, tell the students to look for it the next time they are in church.]

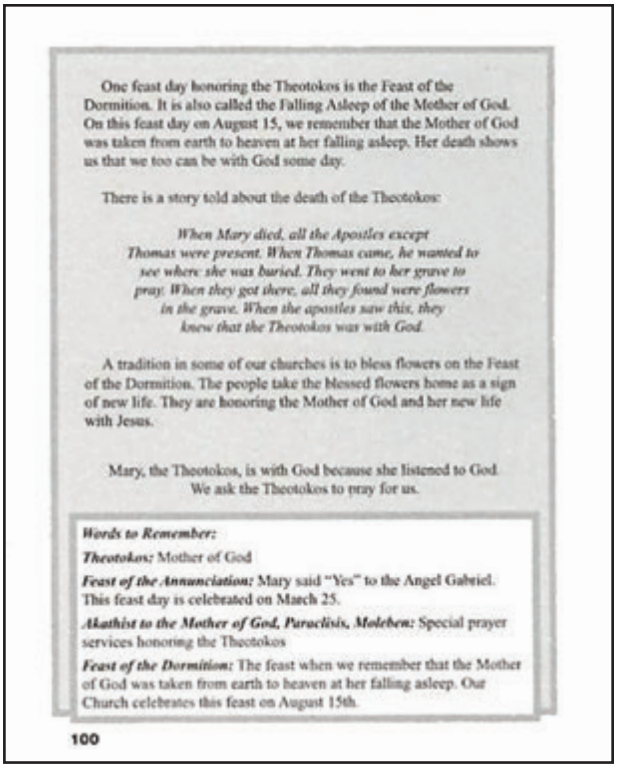
Also, Jesus wants everyone to love His mother, the Theotokos, as He did.
In Bible stories we read how Jesus takes care of His mother and listens to her. In one story they were at a wedding. Mary asked Jesus to help the bride and groom who ran out of wine. Jesus listened and turned water into wine for the guests. When He was dying on the cross, Jesus told His apostle St. John to take care of His mother.

During these services we honor the Theotokos and ask her to pray for us.
How does our Church honor the Theotokos? (With prayers, singing, and special services)

We ask the Theotokos to pray for us.
What is the date of the Feast of the Dormition? (August 15) What do we remember on this feast day? (That the Mother of God was taken from earth to heaven at her falling asleep) Death of any Christian is a repose—a falling asleep. Anyone who is in Christ reposes and awaits the Resurrection.

[Discuss the blessing of flowers if it is a tradition in your church.] *Did you ever pick flowers for your mom? Did she like them? Let's imagine how happy we can make the Theotokos when we bring flowers to church for her. Do we get to take those flowers home? (Yes) They help us remember that the Theotokos loves us and prays for us.*

Let's look at the services listed in our "Words to Remember": Akathist to the Mother of God is a service during which we stand the entire time as we pray. Akathist means "prayer while not sitting." The Paraklisis offers prayers of consolation and intercession. The Moleben is a Slavic word for prayer service. Our Church gives us these beautiful services because it wants us to pray to the Theotokos often.



One feast day honoring the Theotokos is the Feast of the Dormition. It is also called the Falling Asleep of the Mother of God. On this feast day on August 15, we remember that the Mother of God was taken from earth to heaven at her falling asleep. Her death shows us that we too can be with God some day.

There is a story told about the death of the Theotokos:

When Mary died, all the Apostles except Thomas were present. When Thomas came, he wanted to see where she was buried. They went to her grave to pray. When they got there, all they found were flowers in the grave. When the apostles saw this, they knew that the Theotokos was with God.

A tradition in some of our churches is to bless flowers on the Feast of the Dormition. The people take the blessed flowers home as a sign of new life. They are honoring the Mother of God and her new life with Jesus.

Mary, the Theotokos, is with God because she listened to God. We ask the Theotokos to pray for us.

Words to Remember:

Theotokos: Mother of God

Feast of the Annunciation: Mary said "Yes" to the Angel Gabriel. This feast day is celebrated on March 25.

Akathist to the Mother of God, Paraclisis, Moleben: Special prayer services honoring the Theotokos

Feast of the Dormition: The feast when we remember that the Mother of God was taken from earth to heaven at her falling asleep. Our Church celebrates this feast on August 15th.

100

Activity Tracks

Basic: Mother of God, Pray for Us
[This worksheet is in the student text.]

The Theotokos is in heaven with Jesus, her son. We should pray to her often to honor her and to thank her. We can also pray to ask her to help us. Do you ever ask your mother to help you? The Theotokos is our heavenly mother, and she listens to us always. Also, she is praying for us in heaven. She is praying that one day we can be in heaven with her and Jesus too.

Let's do our activity page and find a prayer to the Mother of God.



Mother of God, Pray for Us

Finish numbering the letters of the alphabet. then fill in the blocks with the letter to match the number to find a prayer to the Mother of God.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

			O					
		M	O	S	T			
		H	O	L	Y			
	M	O	T	H	E	R		
	O	F		G	O	D		
		S	A	V	E			
			U	S				

What is the prayer?

O Most Holy Mother of God, Save Us.

Group: Poem about the Mother of God

Materials: Six sheets of white construction paper, markers, hole punch, and white yarn

Earlier today we wrote a poem about our mothers. This time let's write a poem about Jesus' mother. Let's think of some words for each letter. [Possibilities: **M**ary, **O**ur mother, **T**heotokos, **H**eavenly mother, **E**verlasting love, **R**eady to hear our prayers.]

Now let's write each letter of the word Mother in big and dark print on each sheet of construction paper and write the other words in smaller letters on the paper. [If possible have dark red and blue markers or crayons for the letters: These are the colors in the icons of Mary.] *You may draw flowers around the rest of the paper.* [Punch a hole in the center of top each paper. String white yarn through the hole to make a banner to hang the poem to the Theotokos.]



Craft: Flowers for Mothers

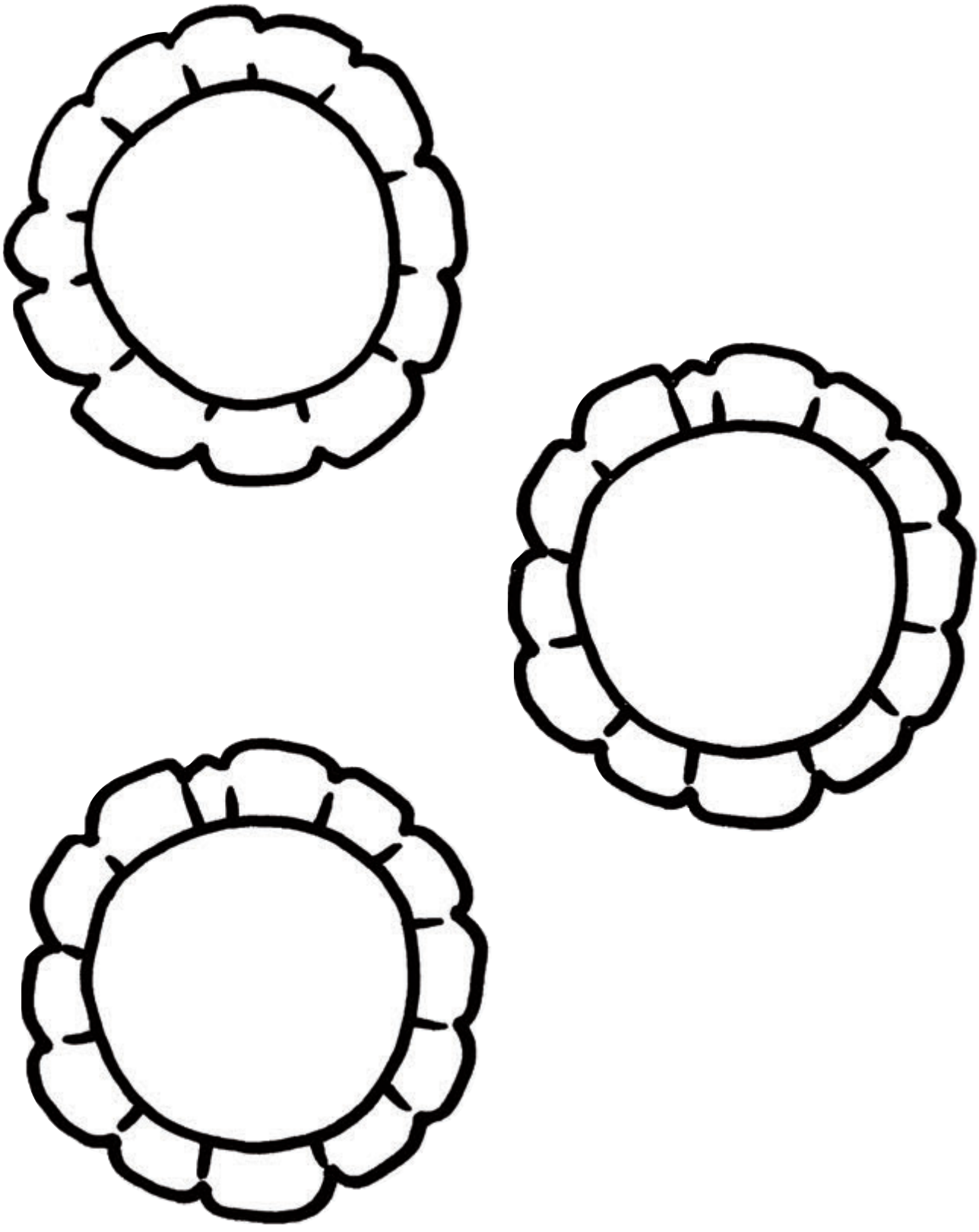
Materials: "Pattern for Flowers" worksheet, construction paper, pipe cleaners, ribbon

Today we are going to make flowers for our mothers. [Follow the instructions on the flower worksheet.] *Let's add some words to the petals on the flower. Let's use these petals to tell our mothers how much we love them.* [Let the children take home their flower bouquets to give to their mothers for Mother's Day]

Closing

Let's pray to the Holy Spirit, "O Heavenly King."

Write "I Love You" in the center of each flower. Color the flowers, cut them out, and paste them on construction paper. Draw stems and a ribbon or cut them from colored construction paper.



Unit 5
The Church in Glory

Review

1. Who are the Saints?
(Lesson 22: Saints are those who have been filled with God's love and are with Him in glory.)

2. Who is the Theotokos?
(Lesson 23: The Theotokos is the Mother of God.)

3. What do we remember on the Feast of the Dormition?
(Lesson 23: We remember that the Mother of God was taken from earth to heaven at her falling asleep.)

4. What is a Christian?
(Lesson 5: A Christian is a follower of Jesus Christ who believes in Him and has been baptized.)

5. What is the Church?
(Lesson 5: The Church is the people of God who follow Jesus as their Lord.)

The Nativity of Jesus Christ

Objective: The students will be able to identify three ways our Church proclaims our belief that God is with us at the celebration of the birth of Jesus: 1) through the icon of the Nativity of Jesus Christ, 2) through our songs, and 3) through our greeting, "Christ is born! Glorify Him!"

For the Catechist

In the Feast of the Nativity of Jesus Christ, our attention focuses on what God has done: God became man. In Jesus the union of God and humanity is fully accomplished. Through Jesus' birth, the Church is both human and divine, visible and invisible. Jesus' birth announces God is with us.

In Lesson 10 the children learned they have to prepare to celebrate the Nativity. They have been preparing since November 15, the beginning of the Nativity Fast or Philip's Fast. Through fasting, praying, and almsgiving, they have grown closer to God so that they are ready for the birth of His Son, Jesus Christ. You might want to review parts of Lesson 10 before you begin this lesson. Help the children realize their preparation leads them to a more joyous celebration as they share their happiness that God is with us.

Most of us celebrate the Nativity of Jesus Christ on December 25 according to the Gregorian Calendar, but some people celebrate the Nativity on January 7 according to the Julian Calendar. The Julian Calendar was adopted in Rome in 45 BC and was followed until Pope Gregory XIII replaced it with the Gregorian Calendar, which is the one followed for civil purposes. Some Eastern Churches continue to follow the Julian Calendar, which means fixed dates occur thirteen days after the date on the Gregorian Calendar. That is the reason the Nativity is celebrated on January 7. Some Eastern Churches use a mixed calendar. That means fixed feasts are computed on the Gregorian Calendar and Pascha is dated according to the Julian Calendar.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: The Creed

Introduction: A present for the class
Need: Icon of the Nativity wrapped in a box

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read the text. Use questions in the teacher manual to discuss the lesson.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

- *Basic*: The Nativity of Jesus
- *Group:* Sing Along
- *Craft:* Nativity Banner

Closing: The Creed

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord:
Nativity of Christ

Teaching Pics:

Nativity of Christ (F3)

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

Icon The icon of the Nativity is one of the most complex. Several events are pictured, as well as scenes that have theological meaning rather than historical relevance.

"The black mouth of the cave, then symbolically, is precisely this fallen world in which the 'Sun of Righteousness' has dawned, this wilderness which the 'Light of Wisdom' has illumined. The Virgin Mother is shown half-sitting, supported by a hammock-type bed used by the early Jews in their travels. Striking is the absence of the usual sufferings of childbirth which is iconographically seen to be an indication of the virgin-birth of Christ. As in the Gospel, all mankind is called to this event. The Wise Men represent the learned and astute, and the shepherds represent the humble of this world. A multitude of Angels give glory to God and announce this good news to mankind. In the icon, several episodes are grouped together and shone simultaneously. In the bottom left corner, Joseph sits in painful thought, while the Devil, under the guise of an old and bent shepherd, suggest new doubts and suspicions to him. In the opposite corner, two women are seen bathing the new-born Infant, to show the real humanity of Jesus" (*CBL*).

The Date of the Nativity

"While many in the early Church sought to determine the date of our Lord's birth or His baptism in the Jordan, our observances of these feasts are connected more with annual calendar events than with historical dates. Their dates fall around the winter solstice, when the days begin to lengthen. All the pagan religions kept a feast around this time as a rebirth of hope in the return of the sun and warmth. Christians could not take part in the pagan festivities of false worship. Instead, they celebrated the beginning of the life of the true Son of God, the Light of Life. Thus the feast of Theophany was most likely introduced in Alexandria, Egypt to counteract a gnostic feast on the same day. Gnosticism (an early heresy) denied the humanity of Jesus and taught that the Son of God only entered Jesus at His baptism. Instead, Orthodox Christians celebrated the glorification of the Lord at His baptism as a manifestation of the Trinity.

"While the Eastern Churches emphasized the manifestation of the Lord at the Jordan, The Western Church was to develop the feast of Christ's birth by the Virgin Mary. The Feast of Christmas originated in Rome. Since the pagan feast celebrated the lengthening of the day as a 're-birth' of the sun, the Christians chose to commemorate the beginning of Christ's life on that occasion. They celebrated the coming of the true light into the world and the birth of the Son of God. The feast existed as early as the third century.

"In time most Eastern Churches would add the feast of Christmas on December 25, but retained the feast of Theophany as the celebration of the Lord's baptism in expression of the profound theology connected with it. The West was later to accept the feast of Theophany but changed it to commemorate the 'manifestation' (*epiphany*) of Jesus to the Gentile nations through the Persian wise men" (*LLII* 43-44).

Jesus Christ: The Union of God and Man

"As Christians we believe that the fullness of the revelation of God is in our Lord Jesus Christ, whom we confess as 'begotten of the Father before all ages, light of light, true God of true God, begotten not made, of one essence with the Father, through whom all things were made.' Thus Jesus Himself is the only adequate image of God. Whoever has seen Him has seen the Father (cf Jn 14:9), for 'He is the image of the invisible God' (Col 1: 15)" (*LLI* 15-16).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

For our opening prayer, we'll use the greeting for the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord. We say "Christ is born!" and reply "Glorify Him!" [Use the traditional greeting for your jurisdiction.] *When do we say this greeting? (In church) We should also say this greeting in our homes. This week when you walk into your house, say "Christ is born!" to your parents. We are happy Jesus is with us. This morning we will also pray the Creed. We have been learning this prayer during the Nativity Fast. One part of this prayer tells the Nativity story. Let's begin.*

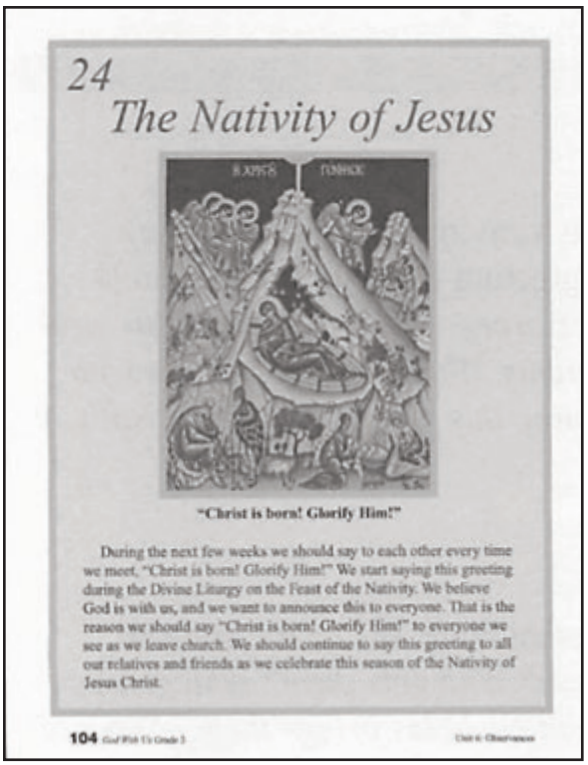
Introduction

Did anyone notice what I have on my desk? [Have a wrapped present there. Inside the colorful paper have an icon of the Nativity.] *Are presents part of this season? Who gets them? Who gives them? (We give them to each other; Santa Claus brings them; Saint Nicholas brings them.) Some of us have been very busy getting all of our presents ready. But remember, we learned in lesson 10 that we have to get ourselves ready for the Nativity of Jesus. What three things did we have to do to get ready? (Pray, fast, and give alms) We had to prepare for the Nativity of Jesus Christ. We can say we give a special gift to Jesus. We give ourselves and our prayers and everything good we have done. We offer Jesus everything we are. Now we are going to open the present we have here.* [Have the children help.] *What is this? (The icon of the Nativity) This icon is very special. It shows us many important events that happened with the birth of Jesus. Let's put it in a special place.* [Put the Nativity icon in your icon corner.] *We should have this icon in a special place in our house; if we have an icon corner, that is the best place in our home for this icon.*

We just opened our beautiful present, and it is on display. Do you have any of your presents on display at home? [If there is time, share some stories.]

Why do we show our presents? (To show what we got) Our most important present is the gift of Jesus Christ. One way we can show our gift of Jesus is by being happy and kind.

Let's turn to our books to learn other ways we can tell everyone we are happy with our gift of Jesus.



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The Nativity of Jesus

"Christ is born! Glorify Him!"

During the next few weeks we should say to each other every time we meet, "Christ is born! Glorify Him!" We start saying this greeting during the Divine Liturgy on the Feast of the Nativity. We believe God is with us, and we want to announce this to everyone. That is the reason we should say "Christ is born! Glorify Him!" to everyone we see as we leave church. We should continue to say this greeting to all our relatives and friends as we celebrate this season of the Nativity of Jesus Christ.

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Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

as we celebrate this season of the Nativity of Jesus Christ.

What greeting should we say to each other to let everyone know we are celebrating the birth of Jesus? (Christ is born! Glorify Him!) What does glorify mean? (To give honor and to worship) We need to remind people to glorify Jesus because through Jesus Christ God is with us.



Our Church gives us a beautiful icon for the Feast of the Nativity. This icon shows us the story we hear in the Gospel.

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole world should be enrolled. This was the first enrollment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. So all went to be enrolled, each to his own town. And Joseph too went up from Galilee from the town of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of David that is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there, the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Now there were shepherds in that region living in the fields and keeping the night watch over their flock. The angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone around them and they were struck with great fear. The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying:

"Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

(Luke 2:1-14)

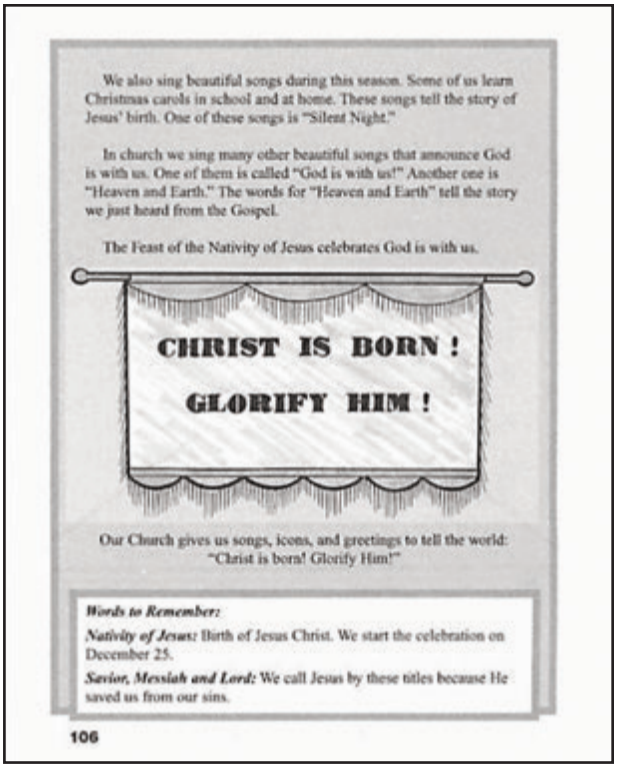
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... the story we hear in the Gospel.

[Have the children look at the icon in their book and ask them to find the scenes described.]

Another Bible passage describes the scene with the kings. That passage is not in our books so I will read it to you: "When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, 'Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage.' . . . .After their audience with the king they set out. And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was. They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gold, frankincense, and myrrh " (Matthew 2:1-11).

Our Church gives us songs, icons, and greetings to tell the world: "Christ is born! Glorify Him!"
What are we to tell everyone? (Jesus Christ is born! Glorify Him!) Even Jesus' name means "God saves His people." Right from His birth Jesus wanted everyone to know He would save us. What are some signs to tell the people Jesus was sent from God? (The star, the angels told the shepherds) That is why everyone is so happy. God sent His son to live with us and save us. We need to celebrate God is with us. Should we celebrate before the Nativity? (No) We need to wait until the day of the Nativity to start our celebrations. What are some ways you can show everyone you are celebrating the birth of Jesus? (Have the Nativity icon on display in our houses, sing our songs at family and church get-togethers, and greet each other with "Christ is born! Glorify Him!")


We also sing beautiful songs during this season. Some of us learn Christmas carols in school and at home. These songs tell the story of Jesus' birth. One of these songs is "Silent Night."

In church we sing many other beautiful songs that announce God is with us. One of them is called "God is with us!" Another one is "Heaven and Earth." The words for "Heaven and Earth" tell the story we just heard from the Gospel.

The Feast of the Nativity of Jesus celebrates God is with us.

Our Church gives us songs, icons, and greetings to tell the world: "Christ is born! Glorify Him!"

Words to Remember:

Nativity of Jesus: Birth of Jesus Christ. We start the celebration on December 25.

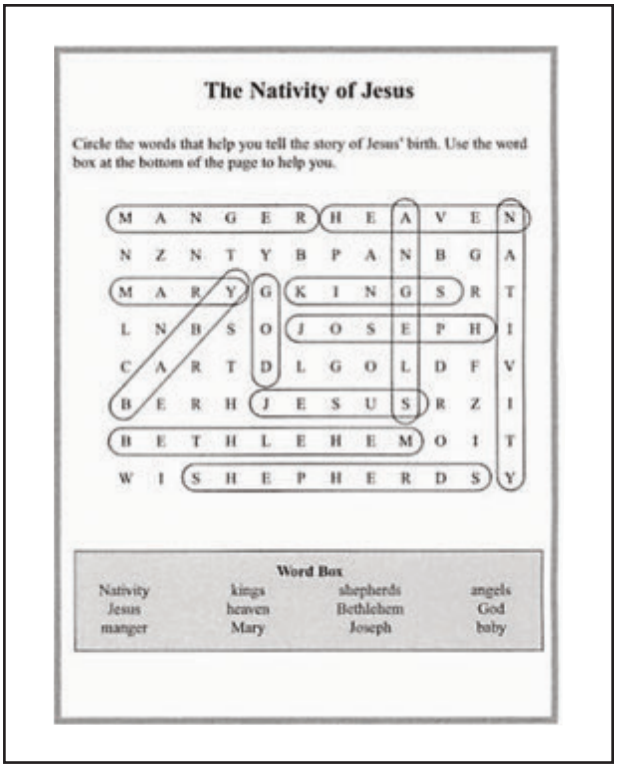
Savior, Messiah and Lord: We call Jesus by these titles because He saved us from our sins.

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Activity Tracks

Basic: The Nativity of Jesus Christ
[This worksheet is in the student text.]

We read the story of the birth of Jesus. We have been hearing that story every year in our classes because it is so very important. Why is it important? (Because God sent His son; God is with us) Today we are going to search for words that tell us the story. Use the words from the word box. You might have to look on an angle for some of them. Also, there is one word that is not in the box. See if you can find it. [The word gold is in the scramble but not in the box.] *Did anyone find the extra word? Does anyone know the names of the other gifts the Wise Men brought? (Frankincense and myrrh)* [If there is time, have the students tell the story of the Nativity by using the words they found.]

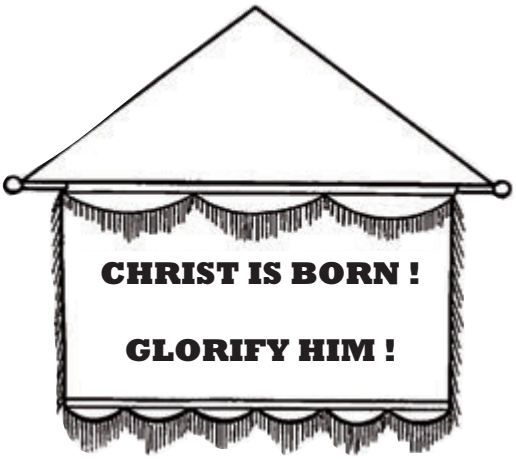

The Nativity of Jesus

Circle the words that help you tell the story of Jesus' birth. Use the word box at the bottom of the page to help you.

M	A	N	G	E	R	H	E	A	V	E	N
N	Z	N	T	Y	B	P	A	N	B	G	A
M	A	R	Y	G	K	I	N	G	S	R	T
L	N	B	S	O	J	O	S	E	P	H	I
C	A	R	T	D	L	G	O	L	D	F	V
B	E	R	H	J	E	S	U	S	R	Z	I
B	E	T	H	L	E	H	E	M	O	I	T
W	I	S	H	E	P	H	E	R	D	S	Y

Word Box

Nativity	kings	shepherds	angels
Jesus	heaven	Bethlehem	God
manger	Mary	Joseph	baby



Group: Sing Along

Materials: Song sheets of Christmas hymns and carols for your jurisdiction

When people are happy, they sing. Christmas time is the perfect time for singing because everyone should be happy. Why? (Jesus Christ was born.) Do any of you get together with family or friends and sing Christmas carols. Today we are going to do that. [Sing a few carols that the children know.]

Craft: Nativity Banner

Materials: "Nativity Banner" worksheet (duplicated on heavier paper or glued onto construction paper), markers, and red yarn (14 inches per student), hole punch

[Have sample ready to show children.] *Do you give presents to your family members? Today we are going to make an ornament that you can give your family to announce Christ is born! Let's color the worksheet and cut out the banner. We'll punch one hole at the top of each side and put the yarn through. Tie a knot at the end of each side of the yarn so it holds. This banner could be placed on your Christmas tree or it can be placed on a door knob.*

Closing:

For our closing prayer, we'll use the greeting for the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord or Christmas. We say "Christ is born!" and reply "Glorify Him!" We will also pray the Creed.


CHRIST IS BORN!
GLORIFY HIM!

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Pascha

Objective: The students will be able to state that Pascha celebrates Jesus Christ's Resurrection that granted us eternal life. Our Church gives us many ways to recall the importance of the Resurrection.

For the Catechist

The six lessons in Unit 4 have been about the Great Fast and Holy Week to help the children realize the preparation for Pascha is very important. Through praying, fasting, and giving alms, they have grown closer to God. That is the reason the celebration of Pascha is so happy. We asked God to forgive us and He did! For the past seven weeks we have prepared ourselves to be united to God. On Pascha we celebrate our union with God. Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection saved us from eternal death and gained for us eternal life.

The icon of the Myrrh-Bearers is considered an icon of the Resurrection although less familiar than the icon of the Descent into Hades. We recall the journey of the Myrrh-bearers in the procession of Resurrection matins.

The women came back after the Sabbath to anoint the body as was the custom. It is upon their return that they learn that Jesus has risen from the dead. Although Jesus chose 12 men to be His apostles, the joyful message of the resurrection was first heard by three women, who then transmitted it to the apostles.

The four Gospel writers offer different expressions of the Resurrection story. No one saw the resurrection of Jesus Christ. What they saw and what all the accounts record is the empty tomb. That is the reason the Resurrection is the greatest mystery. Our Church gives us many beautiful ways to celebrate this mystery. This lesson helps the children see and experience our Church's joy on Pascha.

We have many traditions that help us celebrate Pascha. Some people bless the foods from which they fasted since the beginning of the Great Fast. The pascha, a round bread decorated with a cross, is included in the foods to be blessed. Some people make pysankies, decorated eggs that include symbols recalling the mystery of the Resurrection. Have the children discuss their traditions that have made Pascha a memorable celebration for their family and for their church.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: Hirmos of Pascha and Troparion of Pascha

Introduction: Discussion of the light of Jesus Christ

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read the text. Use questions in the teacher manual to discuss the lesson.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

• *Basic*: The Resurrection

• *Group:* Our Pascha Basket

• *Craft:*"Hirmos of Pascha" and "Troparion of Pascha" Prayer Pages

Closing: Hirmos of Pascha and Troparion of Pascha

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord:
The Descent into Hades
The Myrrh-bearing Women

Teaching Pics:

Pascha (GL17, GL18, GL19)

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

Resurrection Icons

"The Icon of the Resurrection is either the 'Descent Into Hades' or the 'Myrrh-bearing Women.' The Icon of the Descent into Hades shows Christ as the Life-giver.... Our Lord's entrance into Hades, into the depths of the earth, transforms it. Through death He entered the realm of Hades which in the icon is shown by the black gaping abyss. His presence in Hades showed that He took upon Himself every humility and degradation of mankind. His appearance in Hades is not as its captive, but as its conqueror. He is shown with a radiant halo, the symbol of glory. His garments are no longer those in which He was seen on earth, but they are brilliant and the illumine the darkness of Hades. He fills the darkness with the light of His divine presence. He stands upon the broken gate of the kingdom of Death, thus indicating His victory over Death by His own death and resurrection. Through His humiliation and death He raised all creation to participate in Divine Life. Bolts, broken chains, and keys are scattered about to signify the freeing of those held captive and the breaking of Death's hold over men. By Christ's descent, Hades is destroyed and its gates trampled" (*CBL* 22).

"Having broken the bonds of Death's power, Christ is seen raising Adam and Eve from the grave. In freeing our first parents, Christ also frees those who put their faith in His coming. This truth is seen in the presence of Kings, David and Solomon, vested in royal robes and crowns. They stand together with John the Baptist at Christ's right. Moses and the Prophets of the Old Covenant stand at His left. With them, all of humanity is raised" (*CBL* 23).

Pascha: The Center of the Movable Cycle of Feasts

"The celebration of Pascha is the center of the movable cycle of feasts, that sequence by which we experience the meaning of Christ's gift of salvation. Periods of repentance, emptying us to feel our need for God's love, alternate with joyful celebrations of His wondrous deeds in our behalf giving us life. Immediately after Pascha, a period of fifty days—traditionally without fasting or kneeling—re-creates the time from the resurrection to the descent of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:1-12) (*LLII* 37).

A Celebration of Resurrection and Baptism

"The feast of the Pascha still retains this twofold character of a celebration of resurrection and baptism. A troparion of the Paschal Canon connects the ideas of Christ's resurrection in baptism: 'Yesterday I was buried with You, O Christ [in baptism at the Vigil Liturgy on Holy Saturday]; but today I rise resurrected with You. Yesterday I crucified myself with You, O Savior. Now glorify me with You in Your Kingdom'" (*LLII* 36).

New Week or Bright Week

"The joyful observance of the resurrection is extended through the week after the Sunday of Pascha. Because the newly-baptized Christians wore their white baptismal robes during these seven days, it is called the *New Week or Bright Week*. Given St Paul's imagery of baptism as a joining of ourselves to the death and resurrection of Christ (cf. Rom 6:3-4), it is not surprising that the annual celebration of Christ's death and resurrection became the privileged time for celebrating mysteries of Christian initiation. Even today the Vesper-Liturgy of Holy Saturday remains the most appropriate time for baptism in the Byzantine liturgical cycle" (*LLII* 36-37).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Today we are going to learn special prayers that are said during the Divine Liturgy from Pascha until Pentecost. Let's say the words together: [Give the children a copy of the prayers for your jurisdiction.] *"The Angel . . ." and "Christ is risen . . ."*

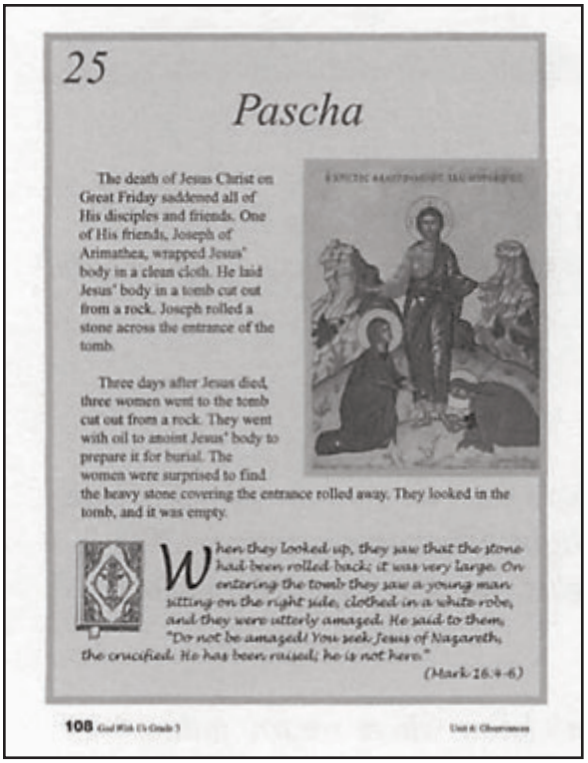
Introduction

Let's close our eyes for a few seconds. We are now in darkness. Now let's turn on the lights. [Have the children open their eyes.] *Describe what happens when it is light. (We can see things.) Why is it good with the lights on? (We know where we are.) Without the lights, we are alone. We are lost. When we turn on the lights, we see where we are.*

That is the way we feel when we are not listening to God. We don't know where we are going. We can't see what God wants us to do. What do we call that when we don't listen to God? (We sin.) God always loves us, but at times we turn away from God's love. Jesus wants us to be in God's love always.

What happened on Great Friday? (Jesus was crucified.) He suffered and died. Then in 3 days He rose from the grave. What did Jesus' resurrection show us? (We would not be in the grave forever.) We would be with God even after we died. Jesus Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection united us to God forever.

Let's turn to our books and learn more about Pascha.



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Pascha

The death of Jesus Christ on Great Friday saddened all of His disciples and friends. One of His friends, Joseph of Arimathea, wrapped Jesus' body in a clean cloth. He laid Jesus' body in a tomb cut out from a rock. Joseph rolled a stone across the entrance of the tomb.

Three days after Jesus died, three women went to the tomb cut out from a rock. They went with oil to anoint Jesus' body to prepare it for burial. The women were surprised to find the heavy stone covering the entrance rolled away. They looked in the tomb, and it was empty.

When they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back; it was very large. On entering the tomb they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a white robe, and they were utterly amazed. He said to them, "Do not be amazed! You seek Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified. He has been raised; he is not here."

(Mark 16:4-6)

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We start our celebration of the Good News that Christ is risen on Holy Saturday night. At the Resurrection Matins, most churches have a procession. The people carry lit candles and walk around the church. This procession recalls the way the women went to the tomb. The people stop in front of the church doors and listen to the priest announce "Christ is risen!" The church bells ring, and the priest and the people sing,

"Christ is risen..."

The doors are opened, and the church is filled with light. The Holy Shroud is on the Holy Table as a sign that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead. The people walk into church singing, "Christ is risen."

We notice many changes in the church. The doors on the icon screen are open. They will remain open from Pascha until after the Divine Liturgy on Bright Saturday. For one week the doors are open to remind us that Jesus Christ rose from the dead and saved us from eternal death. He opened the gates of Heaven for us and granted us eternal life.

The priest's vestments and the Holy Table covers are bright. Many candles and lights make the church shine. We are celebrating Jesus' Resurrection and victory over death. Our Church is shining with the Light of Christ.

We use our bodies to show our happiness. We stand throughout the Divine Liturgy. We stand for all our prayers. On Pascha we start standing to show we are celebrating our union with God. We do not kneel at any church services until Pentecost Sunday.

On Pascha the priest blesses the kinds of foods which we did not eat during the Great Fast. He also blesses the special feast day bread called Artos. The priest says, "Christ is risen" and we respond, "Indeed, He is risen." We do all these things to show that we believe in the resurrection of Christ on Holy Saturday night.

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Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

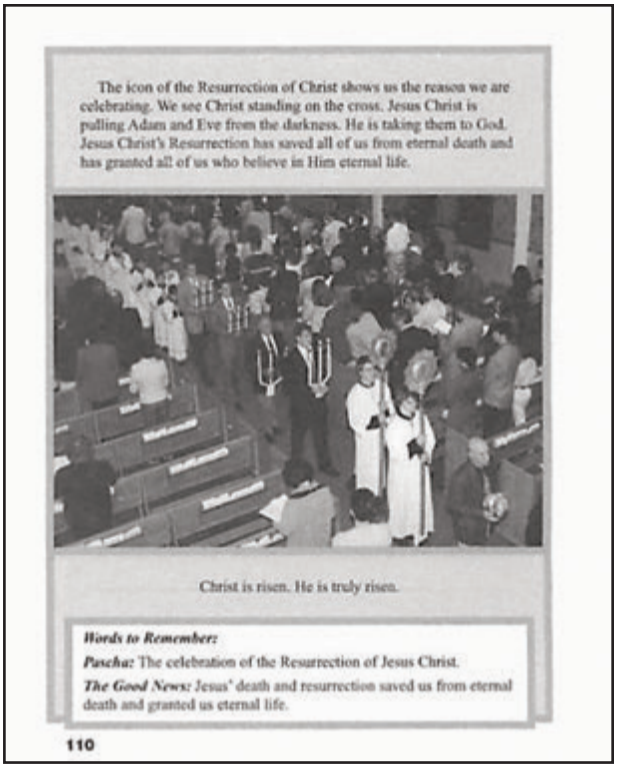
"He has been raised; He is not here." (Mk. 16:4-6).
Why were the women going to the tomb? (To anoint Jesus body) After Jesus' body was taken down from the cross, there was not enough time to anoint it because the Sabbath was beginning. The Sabbath is like our Sunday. It was a day of rest, and no one was allowed to do any work — even anoint a dead body. What would you have done if you found the grave empty? What did the women do? (They listened to the angels and went to tell the others.)

Our Church is shining with the Light of Christ.
What are some ways we show that we believe Jesus rose from the dead? (The Holy Shroud is on the altar, not in the tomb; our candles are lit because Jesus' death took us from eternal darkness; the royal doors are open to show the gates of heaven are open; we sing and say, "Christ is risen . . . .")

... on Holy Saturday night.
What is the greeting we offer during the Paschal season? ("Christ is risen ") Do you say that to anyone on Pascha? Who says it to you? We should be saying this greeting to everyone we meet. We want everyone to know the Good News. What foods do we bless at Pascha? (Eggs, cheese, meat)

... who believe in Him eternal life.
Some people put an icon of the Resurrection in their basket. What do we see on the icon of Pascha? (Jesus in the center; He is standing on a cross; He is pulling Adam and Eve from the grave.) Why does our church give us many traditions for the Pascha season? (To remember we are in a season of joy. Jesus gained for us eternal life.)

Let's review: *What do we celebrate on Pascha? (Jesus rose from the grave and granted us eternal life with God)*



The icon of the Resurrection of Christ shows us the reason we are celebrating. We see Christ standing on the cross. Jesus Christ is pulling Adam and Eve from the darkness. He is taking them to God. Jesus Christ's Resurrection has saved all of us from eternal death and has granted all of us who believe in Him eternal life.

Christ is risen. He is truly risen.

Words to Remember:

Pascha: The celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

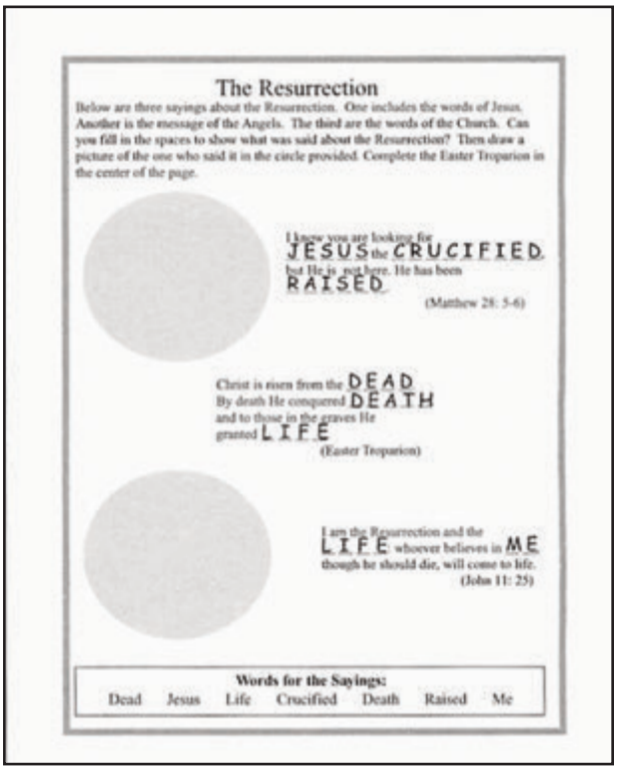
The Good News: Jesus' death and resurrection saved us from eternal death and granted us eternal life.

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Activity Tracks

Basic: The Resurrection
[This worksheet is in the student text.]

Today's worksheet has three Bible passages included. Use the words from the word box to complete the passages. Then draw the picture of the passage in the circle.



The Resurrection

Below are three sayings about the Resurrection. One includes the words of Jesus. Another is the message of the Angels. The third are the words of the Church. Can you fill in the spaces to show what was said about the Resurrection? Then draw a picture of the one who said it in the circle provided. Complete the Easter Troparion in the center of the page.

I know you are looking for JESUS the CRUCIFIED, but He is not here. He has been RAISED.
(Matthew 28: 5-6)

Christ is risen from the DEAD
By death He conquered DEATH
and to those in the graves He
granted LIFE
(Easter Troparion)

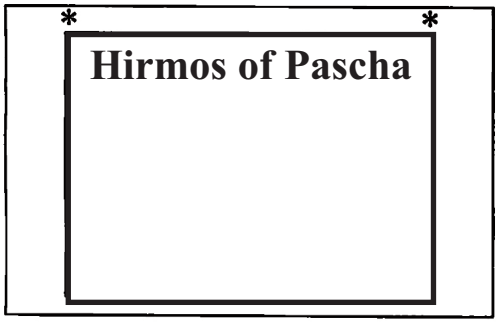
I am the Resurrection and the LIFE whoever believes in ME though he should die, will come to life.
(John 11: 25)

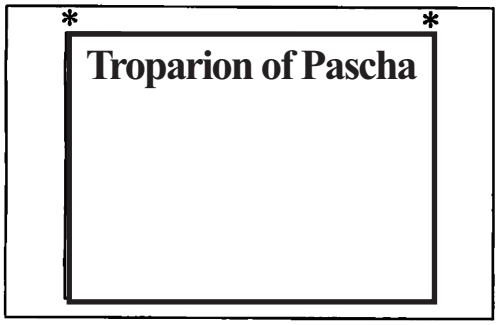
Words for the Sayings:
Dead Jesus Life Crucified Death Raised Me

Group: Our Pascha Basket

Materials: "Our Pascha Basket" worksheet, white construction paper, pencils, markers, scissors, and glue

During the Great Fast, we were not eating certain foods to remind us to think about Jesus. On Pascha we get many of these foods blessed by the priest before we eat them. We thank Jesus for uniting us with God. Today we are going to draw and color pictures of the foods and paste them in the basket.





Craft: "Hirmos of Pascha" and "Troparion of Pascha" Prayer Pages

Materials: Prayer worksheet, heavier white paper or construction paper, markers, stickers or stars

[Have sample ready to show children.]
Today we are going to make two pages for our prayer book. We started saying these prayers during the Divine Liturgy on Pascha. They are call the Hirmos of Pascha and the Troparion of Pascha. Let's look at the words; do you remember hearing them during the Divine Liturgy?

Paste the prayers on half sheets of construction paper or the heavier white paper. You can draw pictures around the prayer, or you can add the stars or stickers I have here. Punch two holes to match the ones on the prayer cover. Untie the yarn on our prayer book cover and add this new page. Now pull the yarn through the holes and tie.

Closing*: Today we learned special prayers that we started saying during the Divine Liturgy on Pascha.*

Hirmos of Pascha

The angel cried out to the One who is full of grace: Hail, O immaculate Virgin! Hail again, for your Son has risen from the tomb on the third day.

Shine, shine, O new Jerusalem, for the glory of the Lord has shone upon you. Rejoice and be glad, O Sion; and you, O pure one, O Mother of God, exult in the resurrection of your Son

Melkite Greek Catholic Church

Troparion of Pascha

Christ is risen from the dead and by His death

He has trampled upon Death;

and has given life to those who were in the tomb.

Melkite Greek Catholic Church

Hirmos of Pascha

The angel declared unto her who is full of grace: Rejoice, O pure Virgin! And again I say, Rejoice! for thy Son has risen on the third day from the grave and has raised the dead. O you peoples, rejoice!

Shine, shine, O new Jerusalem, for the glory of the Lord has dawned over thee. Leap for joy and be glad, O Sion; and thou, O pure Mother of God, rejoice in the resurrection of thy Son.

Romanian Greek Catholic Diocese of Canton

Troparion of Pascha

Christ has risen from the dead

trampling down Death with death

and granting life to those in the graves.

Romanian Greek Catholic Diocese of Canton

Hirmos of Pascha

The angel exclaimed to her, full of grace:
Rejoice, O pure Virgin! Again I say
rejoice! Your Son has risen from the grave
on the third day.

Shine in splendor, O new Jerusalem, for the
glory of the Lord is risen upon you, O Sion.
Sing with joy and rejoice. And you, pure
Mother of God, rejoice in the resurrection of
your Son.

Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic Metro-politan Province

Troparion of Pascha

Christ is risen from the dead,

trampling down Death by death,

and upon those in the tombs

bestowing life.

Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic Metro-politan Province

Hirmos of Pascha

The angel exclaimed to the Lady full of grace: Rejoice, O pure Virgin! And again I say, Rejoice! Your Son is risen from the grave on the third day. With Himself He has raised all the dead. All you peoples, rejoice!

Shine, O shine, new Jerusalem, for the glory of the Lord has shone on you. Sing now and exult with joy, O Sion; and you, O pure Mother of God, adorn yourself in the splendor of your Son's resurrection.

Ukrainian Catholic Diocese of St. Josaphat

Troparion of Pascha

Christ is risen from the dead.

By death He conquered Death,

and to those in the grave He granted life.

Ukrainian Catholic Diocese of St. Josaphat

Hirmos of Pascha

The angel cried out to the One full of grace:
O chaste Virgin, rejoice! And again I say,
Rejoice! Your Son is risen from the tomb on
the third day and raised the dead. Let all
people rejoice!

Shine, shine, O Jerusalem, for the glory of
the Lord has risen upon you. Exalt now and
be glad, O Sion; and you, O chaste Mother
of God, take delight in the resurrection of
your Son.

Ukrainian
Catholic
Synod

Troparion of Pascha

Christ is risen from the dead,

trampling Death by death

and to those in the tombs giving life.

Ukrainian
Catholic
Synod



The Ascension

Objective: The students will be able to state that the Feast of the Ascension is celebrated forty days after Pascha.

For the Catechist

In the scriptures we read ". . .he was lifted up, and a cloud took him from their sight" (Acts 1:9). Also, the Ascension of Jesus is expressed in the Creed: "He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father." The Feast of the Ascension celebrates Jesus returning to His Father and Jesus' Lordship in heaven. This feast reveals the final destiny of man and of all things. Jesus leads us to the Father. Through Jesus all humanity is united to God.

In the *God With Us series*, this lesson is the first presentation of the Feast of the Ascension. The children are told of the two aspects of this event: the return of Jesus to the Father and Jesus' glorification from the Father. To help the children understand the meaning of glorification, the introduction asks the children to think about the honor and praise we give to sports figures and television stars. This lesson goes on to explain the honor and glory given to Jesus for His humility and obedience. The contrast between the earthly and heavenly glories are obvious, and the children need to realize and accept that the heavenly glories are so much more important. The student lesson places the emphasis on following Jesus who was obedient to God and glorified in heaven.

The Icon of the Ascension. The icon gives us a visual representation of this event. Jesus is seen as ascending in glory while He is seated on a throne surrounded by angels. In the foreground is the Mother of God with the apostles. They represent Jesus' inheritance, the Church physically left behind on earth awaiting the promised descent of the Holy Spirit. The risen and glorified Lord Jesus will send His Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: Troparion of Pascha

Introduction: Discussion about heavenly and earthly glory.

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read the text. Use questions in the teacher manual to discuss the lesson.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

• *Basic*: Ascension

• *Group:* "Honor and Glory" Poster

• *Craft:* "Jesus Is Our Light" Etching

Closing: Troparion of Pascha

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord:
The Ascension

Teaching Pics:

Ascension (F7)

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

The Feast of Ascension

"The Feast of Ascension commemorates the return of Jesus to the glory of His Father, the present mystery in which Christ now sits at the right hand of the Father as High Priest and Savior. At the Ascension, we see the humanity of Jesus enthroned with the Father, just as we saw the divinity of Jesus revealed through His body at the Transfiguration. The fifty days close with the solemnity of Pentecost, proclaiming the coming of the Holy Spirit, whom our Lord promised would be our Paraclete (comforter and advocate) forever." (*LLI* 54-55).

The Fifty-day Period after Pascha

"This Pascha-Pentecost period was celebrated as early as the first half of the second century. It included the feast of the Ascension which celebrates the return of our Lord to the right hand of the Father in glory and falls on the fortieth day after Pascha (always Thursday), according to Luke's chronology (Act 1:3). This feast became part of the liturgical cycle after Pentecost, dating from about the fourth century.

"Another ancient feast of the fifty day period after Pascha is *Mid-Pentecost* celebrated on the twenty-fifth day. It is a theological feast that celebrates the giving of life by God through the resurrection of Christ and the sending of the Holy Spirit. The readings emphasize nourishment with spiritual gifts. The Gospel for the final day of Mid-Pentecost (the following Wednesday) recounts the story of the multiplication of the loaves (Jn 6:5-14). Indeed, the whole Pentecostarion commemorates God's gift of Himself to us filling us with life: Resurrection (Pascha); faith in Christ (Thomas Sunday); His presence in the Eucharist (Mid-Pentecost); deification (Ascension); and the gift of the Spirit (Pentecost)" (*LLII* 38).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Let's say [or sing] *"Christ is risen!" three times for our opening prayer.* [Modify the text according to jurisdiction.]

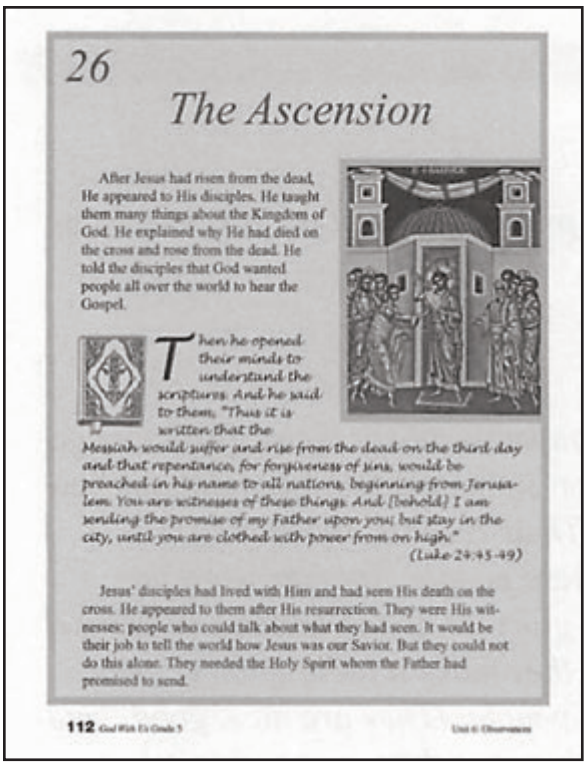
Introduction

Today I have some pictures of people you might recognize. Do you know any of them? [From magazines or the newspaper, cut out pictures of sport figures, television stars, and familiar religious people—the Pope, Mother Teresa.] *Why do we know these people? (Their records, the money they make, their good deeds). The newspapers and television praise these people. Another word for praise could be exalt. When we honor these people we give them glory. Is giving honor and glory a good thing? (Yes) Do you think we should honor people because they make a lot of money? (No) Let's think of some reasons we think we should honor and praise people. (They are nice, good, kind) Let's look at our pictures again and find which people we honor because they are good to other people. (The Pope)*

That is what the Church thinks too. The Church praises and honors the people who have followed Jesus and obeyed God. In our Church we sing songs and say prayers that include the words honor and glory. We sing praises to God, the Theotokos, Jesus and the Saints.

Today we are going to read about the way Jesus is honored and exalted in heaven because he acted with humility and obedience to God. What does humility mean? (To think you are just like everyone else, to know you are not better that anyone.) What does obedience mean? (It means to listen and follow.)

Let's read our lesson.



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The Ascension

After Jesus had risen from the dead, He appeared to His disciples. He taught them many things about the Kingdom of God. He explained why He had died on the cross and rose from the dead. He told the disciples that God wanted people all over the world to hear the Gospel.

Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures. And he said to them, "Thus it is written that the Messiah would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day and that repentance, for forgiveness of sins, would be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And [behold] I am sending the promise of my Father upon you; but stay in the city, until you are clothed with power from on high."
(Luke 24:45-49)

Jesus' disciples had lived with Him and had seen His death on the cross. He appeared to them after His resurrection. They were His witnesses; people who could talk about what they had seen. It would be their job to tell the world how Jesus was our Savior. But they could not do this alone. They needed the Holy Spirit whom the Father had promised to send.

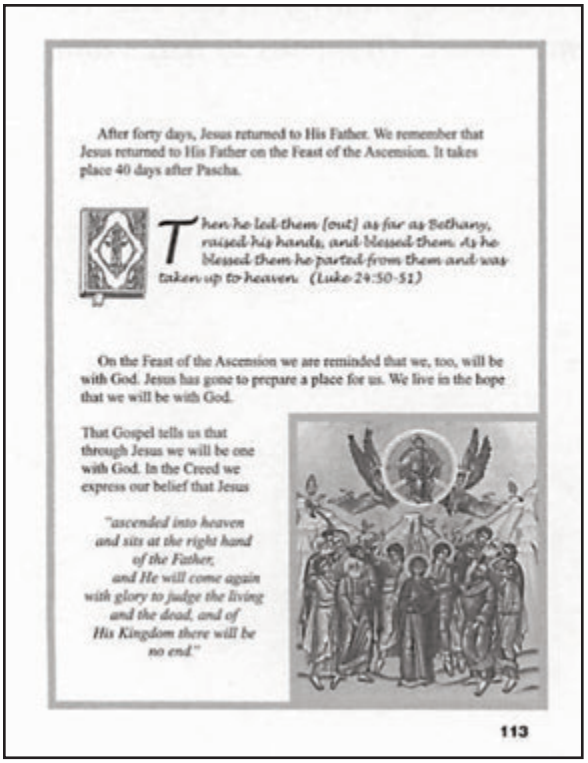
112 God With Us Grade 5 Unit 6: Observances

Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

... the Holy Spirit whom the Father has promised to send.

What did Jesus tell the disciples when He appeared to them? (Many things about the Kingdom of God) The disciples were His witnesses. What does that mean? (They saw and talked to Jesus. Now they can talk about what they saw.) Why did Jesus promise to send the Holy Spirit? (To help the disciples tell people all over the world about God)



After forty days, Jesus returned to His Father. We remember that Jesus returned to His Father on the Feast of the Ascension. It takes place 40 days after Pascha.

Then he led them [out] as far as Bethany, raised his hands, and blessed them. As he blessed them he parted from them and was taken up to heaven. (Luke 24:50-51)

On the Feast of the Ascension we are reminded that we, too, will be with God. Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us. We live in the hope that we will be with God.

That Gospel tells us that through Jesus we will be one with God. In the Creed we express our belief that Jesus

"ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father, and He will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, and of His Kingdom there will be no end."

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It takes place 40 days after Pascha.

What is the name of Feast that takes place 40 days after Pascha? (The Ascension)

... was taken up to heaven.

What do you think the apostles thought as they watched Jesus "taken up to heaven "?

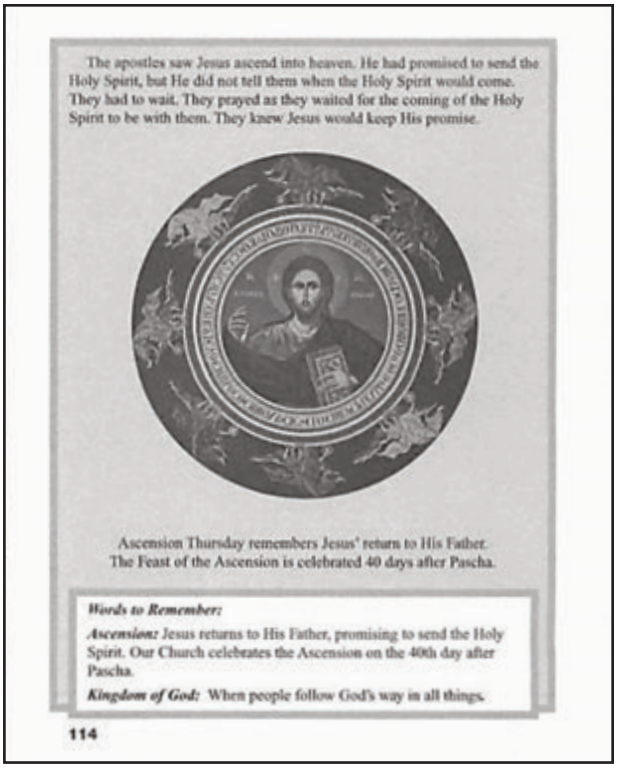
[Let the children share their ideas about the amazement at what has just happened according to the Gospel passage.]

In the Creed we express our belief that Jesus .. .

What does the Ascension tell us? (We can be one with God.) Where is Jesus sitting in heaven? (At the right hand of the Father) In what prayer do we say those words? (The Creed)

They knew Jesus would keep His promise.
What do you think glorify means? (Honor; respect). Why is Jesus glorified in heaven? (He obeyed God.) We thank Jesus for helping us see more clearly what God is like. What are some ways we can thank Jesus? (Praying, singing praise to Him, wanting to be like Him in everything we do) What did Jesus promise? (To send the Holy Spirit)

***Let's Review**: What do you remember on the Feast of the Ascension? (Jesus ascended into heaven forty days after Pascha.) What does glorify mean? (To honor, praise, exalt) Why is Jesus glorified in heaven? (Because He obeyed God and granted us eternal life)*



The apostles saw Jesus ascend into heaven. He had promised to send the Holy Spirit, but He did not tell them when the Holy Spirit would come. They had to wait. They prayed as they waited for the coming of the Holy Spirit to be with them. They knew Jesus would keep His promise.

Ascension Thursday remembers Jesus' return to His Father. The Feast of the Ascension is celebrated 40 days after Pascha.

Words to Remember:

Ascension: Jesus returns to His Father, promising to send the Holy Spirit. Our Church celebrates the Ascension on the 40th day after Pascha.

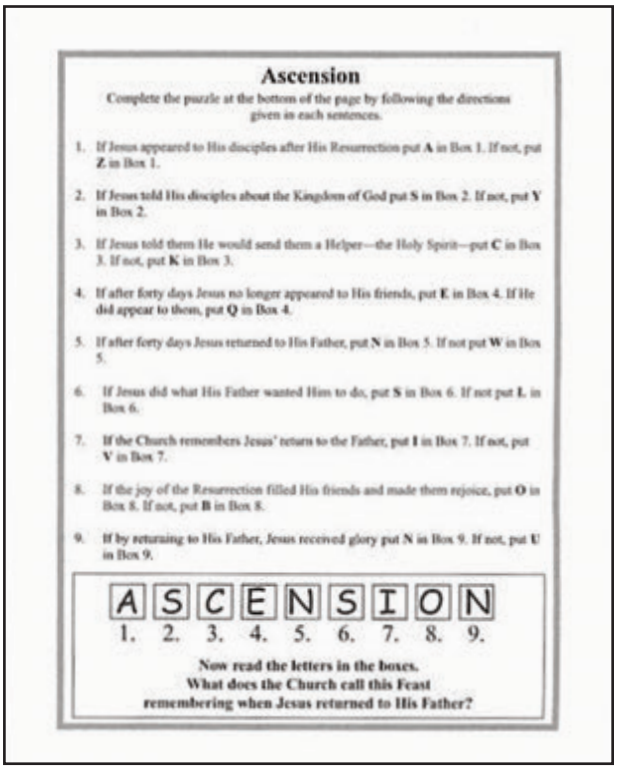
Kingdom of God: When people follow God's way in all things.

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Activity Tracks

Basic: Ascension
[This worksheet is in the student text.]

Today we learned that Jesus is glorified in heaven. Let's review what we know about Jesus as we read the sentences and follow the directions.



Ascension

Complete the puzzle at the bottom of the page by following the directions given in each sentences.

1. If Jesus appeared to His disciples after His Resurrection put **A** in Box 1. If not, put **Z** in Box 1.
2. If Jesus told His disciples about the Kingdom of God put **S** in Box 2. If not, put **Y** in Box 2.
3. If Jesus told them He would send them a Helper—the Holy Spirit—put **C** in Box 3. If not, put **K** in Box 3.
4. If after forty days Jesus no longer appeared to His friends, put **E** in Box 4. If He did appear to them, put **Q** in Box 4.
5. If after forty days Jesus returned to His Father, put **N** in Box 5. If not put **W** in Box 5.
6. If Jesus did what His Father wanted Him to do, put **S** in Box 6. If not put **L** in Box 6.
7. If the Church remembers Jesus' return to the Father, put **I** in Box 7. If not, put **V** in Box 7.
8. If the joy of the Resurrection filled His friends and made them rejoice, put **O** in Box 8. If not, put **B** in Box 8.
9. If by returning to His Father, Jesus received glory put **N** in Box 9. If not, put **U** in Box 9.

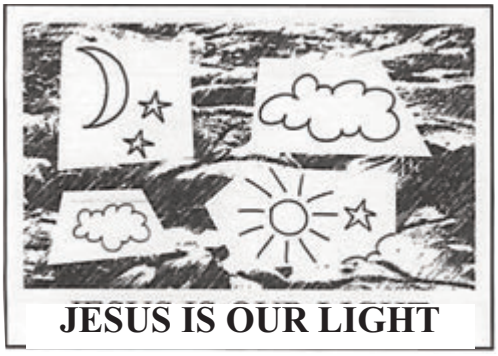
A	S	C	E	N	S	I	O	N
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.

Now read the letters in the boxes.
What does the Church call this Feast remembering when Jesus returned to His Father?

Group: "Honor and Glory" Poster

Materials: Magazines, poster board, markers, glue, scissors

We learned that Jesus was glorified in heaven because He obeyed God. Today let's look for pictures that show people obeying God. What are some ways to obey God? (Helping other people, praying, going to church, etc.) Let's make a poster today to show all the ways we can honor and give glory to God. [Have the students cut out pictures of any scenes and paste them on the poster board. Have someone print neatly HONOR AND GLORY TO GOD at the top of the poster board.]



Craft: "Jesus Is Our Light" Etching

Materials: Crayons, plain white paper and scissors

[Have sample ready to show children.] *Today we learned that Jesus was glorified in heaven. Why was He glorified? (He united us with God) Another way to think about this idea is by remembering that Jesus brought light into the world. The Ascension of Jesus Christ shows us that we can live in this light forever. Today we are going to make an etching that shows the dark does not completely overcome the light. The stars, moon, and sun give us light. We are going to call our etching "Jesus Is Our Light." Why is that a good title?* [Hold up example.] *(Jesus gives us light just like the stars, moon and sun.) Let's start our etchings. Print the title at the bottom of the page like the example. Use bright-colored crayons to cover the rest of the paper in any way you want. Next, color over the paper with black crayons. Be sure you do not color over the title. Now, use the sharp edge of your scissors to etch symbols of light such as the sun, moon, stars, etc.*

Closing: *Let's say* [or sing] *"Christ is risen!" three times for our closing prayer.* [Modify the text according to jurisdiction.]

Pentecost

Objective: The students will be able to explain that 1) on Pentecost we recall the coming of the Holy Spirit, and 2) we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit at our Chrismation.

For the Catechist

The Feast of Pentecost is the climax of God's plan for our salvation, the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Church. We mention the Holy Spirit in our prayers and Liturgies, but we are not always aware of the Holy Spirit's constant indwelling. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we believe in God, we are moved to prayer, and we love one another and reach out in service. The Holy Spirit is the gift of the Father through Christ to the Church. The Holy Spirit is the life of the Church.

At this time of year the children are noticing and enjoying the new life in nature. They see the plants and flowers are starting to bloom, and they want to be outside playing in the green grass. Use their interest in nature and new growth to highlight the new life given to us by the Holy Spirit. This new life is shown through the flowers and greenery used throughout the church during this season. Through the Holy Spirit we continue to grow in our love of God. In our prayers we ask the Holy Spirit to fill us with His love.

Flowers and Greenery. To express the new life that we are given, some Eastern Churches use newly-budding branches to decorate churches and homes. These branches needed warmth, water and light to make new leaves, signs of surging life that is taking place in nature. The Holy Spirit surges in us and calls us to express this presence of light and life. Our good works are the visible signs of the Holy Spirit in us. The branches on our churches and houses are signs of our new life growing in Christ.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: "Heavenly King"

Introduction: Discussion of new life.
Need: flowers or branches with buds, vase for them

Read Text Aloud: Have students read aloud. Use the questions in the teacher book to discuss the lesson.

Activity Tracks:
Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

• *Basic*: Pentecost

• *Group:* The Seal of the Gift of the Holy Spirit

• *Craft:* Prayer Book

Closing: "Heavenly King"

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord:
The Descent of the Holy Spirit

Teaching Pics:

Pentecost (F8)

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

The Icon of Pentecost

"The icon of Pentecost clearly shows the twelve apostles are seated in a semicircle with a place reserved for Christ who may be invisibly present in the center or represented in the Theotokos, who bore Him. This icon of the descent of the Holy Spirit reveals to us the mystery of unity and diversity in the Church, born on Pentecost, much as the Trinity icon opens the mystery of unity and diversity within the Godhead.

"The Apostles are gathered together in a deep inner unity in stark contrast to sin's division and confusion that reigned throughout all humanity. Pentecost is a reversal of the confusion of tongues deriving from the tower of Babel. There sin divided and scattered the people. Now humanity is united by the power of the Holy Spirit.

"Each apostle retains his uniqueness and diversity (the tongues of fire separate to alight on each unique person); yet he is bound to the others in a single new body, the Church. Once again, God reaches out to each apostle as an individual, but never in an isolated manner. Only when they gathered together in a single room, did they receive the Holy Spirit" (*LLII* 39).

Decorating houses and churches

"The Jewish custom on this harvest feast was to decorate their homes and synagogues with greens, flowers, plants, etc. to recognize God's bounty. Early Christians adopted this custom to acknowledge His special generosity in giving us His Holy Spirit, that living water which has made the Church to blossom for our salvation.

"While this custom was once common among the Latins and Greeks as well as in the Middle East (St. John Chrysostom mentioned it in a homily), it is chiefly preserved today among the Slav Byzantines who decorate their homes and churches with greenery on this feast. The domestic church can celebrate Pentecost by decorating the house with plants or flowers for the occasion. Alternatively, you can offer them to the church to enhance the public celebration or present them to someone who would especially appreciate such a gift. In any case, be sure that the entire family is aware that these plants and flowers represent for us the life which comes from the Holy Spirit dwelling in the Church" (*DC* 74).

Kingdom of Heaven

"The Gospel points to the reality that Christ Himself is the kingdom. Now, in the age of the Church, we may make the equally valid point that the Kingdom is equally the Spirit as it is Christ. St. Simeon the New Theologian identifies the Kingdom with the Spirit:

The 'kingdom of heaven' consists in partaking of the Holy Spirit, for this is what the saying 'The kingdom of heaven is within you' (Lk 17:21) means. So we must endeavor to receive the Holy Spirit within ourselves and to keep Him.

"The Spirit mediates the presence of God in the present age, the era of the Church. He actively leads and guides the Church and individual believers. By His power, Christ comes among us in the holy mysteries. Through the Holy Spirit, we become a priestly people, able to offer the 'sacrifice of praise' and to be formed into the living temple of God. 'The proof that you are sons is the fact that God has sent forth into our hearts the spirit of His Son which cries out, 'Abba!' ('Father!')' (Gal 4:6)" (*LLI* 58).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Today we are going to pray to the Holy Spirit. We learned this prayer at the beginning of the year. Let's get out our prayer books. [Modify text according to your jurisdiction.] *"Heavenly King..."*

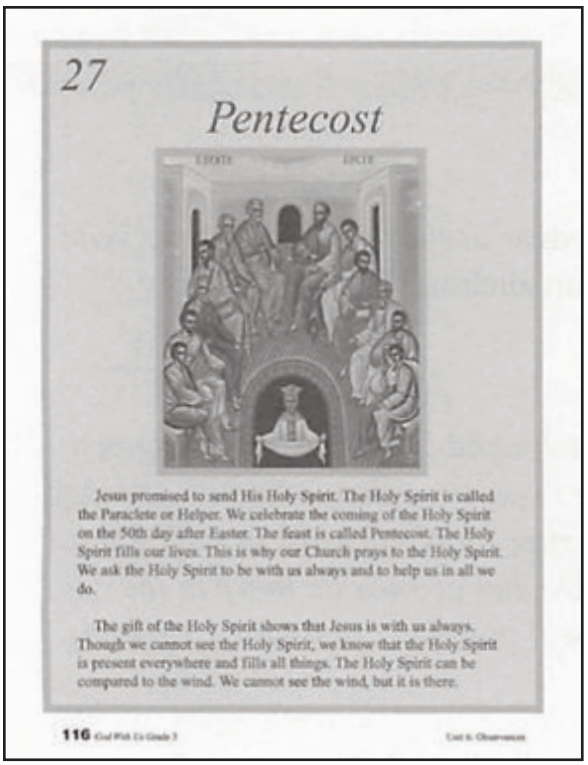
Introduction

[Have a flower, forsythia branch, or any branch with buds for each child.] *Today I am giving you something I got from the garden. Does anyone have any of these in your garden at home? Are they blooming? What makes flowers bloom? (Sun and rain) Every spring I look forward to seeing these buds bloom. How do you feel when you see the flowers bloom? Do you go outside more in the spring? Let's put these branches in this vase I brought in, and we'll put the vase on the icon table. What is the name of the feast in this icon? (Pentecost)*

Do we have any flowers or greens around our church for Pentecost? Where? (The priest's vestments, the Holy Table covers, some churches have branches attached to the front of the church) The Church uses flowers and greens on Pentecost Sunday as a sign of new life the Holy Spirit brought to us. On Pentecost the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples and gave them this New Life and gave the Church new life. Pentecost is the birthday of the Church! It is the day the Church began.

Last week we learned about the day Jesus went to heaven to live with God the Father. What is the name of that feast day? (Ascension) Before Jesus left the apostles, He promised to send the Holy Spirit. Pentecost is the celebration of the Holy Spirit coming to us. Pentecost is 10 days after Ascension Thursday. Does that sound long to wait? The apostles believed Jesus and waited. They were sent the Holy Spirit on Pentecost.

Let's turn to our books.



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Pentecost

Jesus promised to send His Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is called the Paraclete or Helper. We celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit on the 50th day after Easter. The feast is called Pentecost. The Holy Spirit fills our lives. This is why our Church prays to the Holy Spirit. We ask the Holy Spirit to be with us always and to help us in all we do.

The gift of the Holy Spirit shows that Jesus is with us always. Though we cannot see the Holy Spirit, we know that the Holy Spirit is present everywhere and fills all things. The Holy Spirit can be compared to the wind. We cannot see the wind, but it is there.

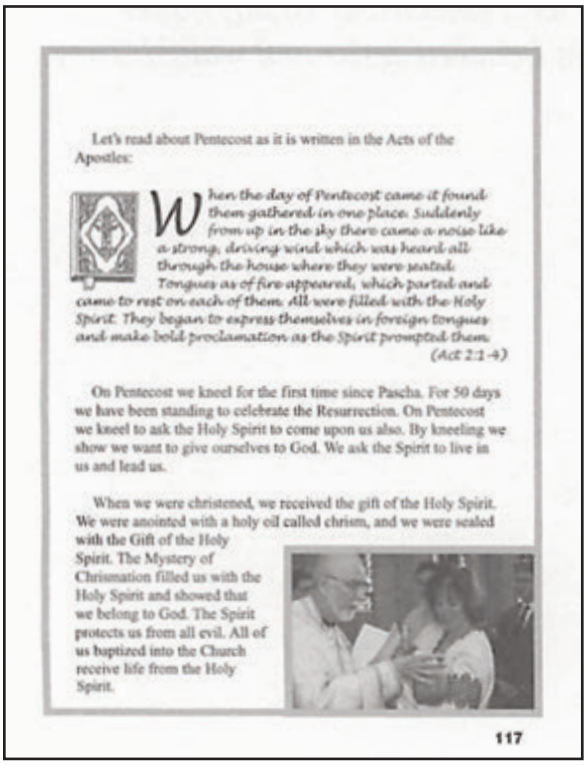
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Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

We ask the Holy Spirit to be with us always and to help us in all we do.

What did Jesus promise before He ascended into heaven? (To send the Holy Spirit) What is the feast day that celebrates the arrival of the Holy Spirit? (Pentecost) How many days were the apostles waiting after the Ascension? (10) How many days after Pascha is this? (50)



Let's read about Pentecost as it is written in the Acts of the Apostles:

When the day of Pentecost came it found them gathered in one place. Suddenly from up in the sky there came a noise like a strong, driving wind which was heard all through the house where they were seated. Tongues as of fire appeared, which parted and came to rest on each of them. All were filled with the Holy Spirit. They began to express themselves in foreign tongues and make bold proclamation as the Spirit prompted them.

(Act 2:1-4)

On Pentecost we kneel for the first time since Pascha. For 50 days we have been standing to celebrate the Resurrection. On Pentecost we kneel to ask the Holy Spirit to come upon us also. By kneeling we show we want to give ourselves to God. We ask the Spirit to live in us and lead us.

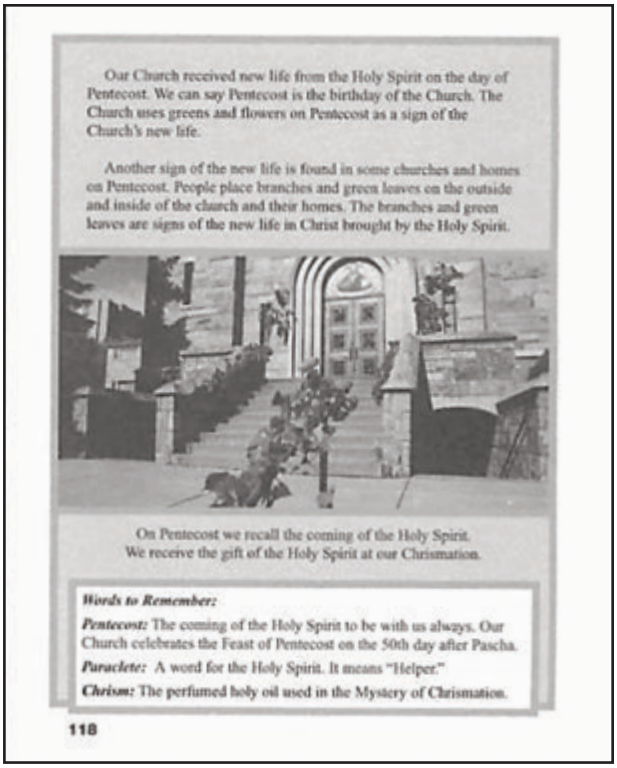
When we were christened, we received the gift of the Holy Spirit. We were anointed with a holy oil called chrism, and we were sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit. The Mystery of Chrismation filled us with the Holy Spirit and showed that we belong to God. The Spirit protects us from all evil. All of us baptized into the Church receive life from the Holy Spirit.

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All of us baptized into the Church receive life from the Holy Spirit.

What is the name of the Mystery through which we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit?
(Chrismation) What is the name of the oil that is used? (Chrism)

...greens and flowers on Pentecost as a sign of the Church's new life.
Pentecost is called the birthday for the Church. This is the day the Holy Spirit came to be with us and help us be the "body of Christ" on earth. Why do we celebrate this day? (The Holy Spirit came to be with us.) What do we display to remember our new life through the Holy Spirit? (Flowers and greens)



Our Church received new life from the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. We can say Pentecost is the birthday of the Church. The Church uses greens and flowers on Pentecost as a sign of the Church's new life.

Another sign of the new life is found in some churches and homes on Pentecost. People place branches and green leaves on the outside and inside of the church and their homes. The branches and green leaves are signs of the new life in Christ brought by the Holy Spirit.

On Pentecost we recall the coming of the Holy Spirit.
We receive the gift of the Holy Spirit at our Chrismation.

Words to Remember:
Pentecost: The coming of the Holy Spirit to be with us always. Our Church celebrates the Feast of Pentecost on the 50th day after Pascha.
Paraclete: A word for the Holy Spirit. It means "Helper."
Chrism: The perfumed holy oil used in the Mystery of Chrismation.

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Let's review: *What do we recall on Pentecost? (The coming of the Holy Spirit) When do we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit? (At our Chrismation)*

Activity Tracks

Basic: Pentecost
[This worksheet is in the student text.]

Use the code to figure out the words on the worksheet.
[Read the sentences aloud to help students who have problems with reading.]



Pentecost

Finish numbering the letters of the alphabet. Write the correct letters above each number on the lines provided. Then read the message about some events in the life of Jesus.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

1. ON (15-14) HOLY (8-15-12-25) THURSDAY (20-8-21-18-19-4-1-25) JESUS (10-5-19-21-19)
   GAVE (7-1-22-5) US (21-19) THE (20-8-5) EUCHARIST (5-21-3-8-1-18-9-19-20.)
2. JESUS (10-5-19-21-19) DIED (4-9-5-4) ON (15-14) GOOD (7-15-15-4) FRIDAY (6-18-9-4-1-25)
   TO (20-15) SAVE (19-1-22-5) US (21-19) FROM (6-18-15-13) SIN (19-9-14.)
3. GOD (7-15-4) THE (20-8-5) FATHER (6-1-20-8-5-18) RAISED (18-1-9-19-5-4)
   JESUS (10-5-19-21-19) FROM (6-18-15-13) THE (20-8-5) DEAD (4-5-1-4)
   ON (15-14) EASTER (5-1-19-20-5-18.)
4. JESUS (10-5-19-21-19) RETURNED (18-5-20-18-14-5-4) TO (20-15) THE (20-8-5)
   FATHER (6-1-20-8-5-18) ON (15-14) ASCENSION (1-19-3-5-14-19-9-15-14.)

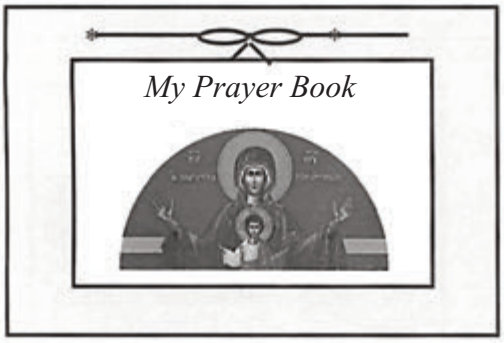
Group: The Seal of the Gift of the Holy Spirit

Materials: Piece of a brown paper bag, small amount of salad oil, paper towel or tissue, ball point pen

Today we are going to write and seal our names together as a sign of the whole Church living together in the Holy Spirit.

[Spread newspaper over the working area.] *Let's write our names with a ball point pen on the brown paper bag. We will pour a small amount of salad oil on the brown bag over the names. With a paper towel or tissue, absorb the excess oil. Look at our names—they are sealed by the oil. By sealing our names together, we are showing that the whole Church received the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

This New Life, the life of the Church, is a call to holiness. The Holy Spirit lives in us and help us to grow. We must be open to the Holy Spirit to help all of us grow as the Church.



Craft: Prayer Book

Materials: paper, clear contact paper or laminating sheets (you can buy these at a craft store), pens, stickers

[Have sample ready to show children. Place front cover on clear contact paper; place another piece of clear contact paper on top; smooth surface and cut close to the edges. Follow the same procedure for the back cover. (Follow the instructions included with the laminating sheets if you bought them.) Punch the two holes through the contact paper. Reassemble pages between the covers and insert the yarn.] *Today we are going to reinforce our prayer books that we made throughout the year. We are going to laminate the covers. Before we do that, you may decorate the front and back covers as you want. I hope you keep these prayer books in a special place to help you pray every day*

Closing:

Today we are going to pray to the Holy Spirit for our closing prayer. [Modify text according to your jurisdiction.] *"Heavenly King . . . ."*

Unit 7

Our Church Year

The last unit in the students' textbook offers brief introductions to the major observances in our Church year. These pages are provided for use at the beginning or end of a regular lesson, preferably the week before the observance. Read the icon description while the children look at the icon. Ask the questions noted. In this way the children will stay in touch with the movements of the liturgical year. There are several observances that occur during the summer. You may wish to spend the last class learning about these.

Nativity of the Theotokos .....September 8
Exaltation of the Holy Cross .....September 14
Entrance of the Theotokos.....November 21
St. Nicholas.....December 6
The Maternity of St. Anna .....December 9 (8)
Nativity of Our Lord.....December 25
Holy Theophany of Christ .....January 6
Three Holy Hierarchs.....January 30
The Meeting of Our Lord.....February 2
The Annunciation .....March 25
The Entrance into Jerusalem.....The Sunday before Pascha
Great and Holy Week.....The week before Pascha
Pascha
Ascension.....Forty days after Pascha
Pentecost .....Fifty days after Pascha
Birth of St. John the Baptist .....June 24
Saints Peter and Paul.....June 29
Prophet Elias .....July 20
The Transfiguration of Christ.....August 6
The Dormition of the Theotokos.....August 15
Beheading of St. John the Baptist.....August 29

September 8

NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS

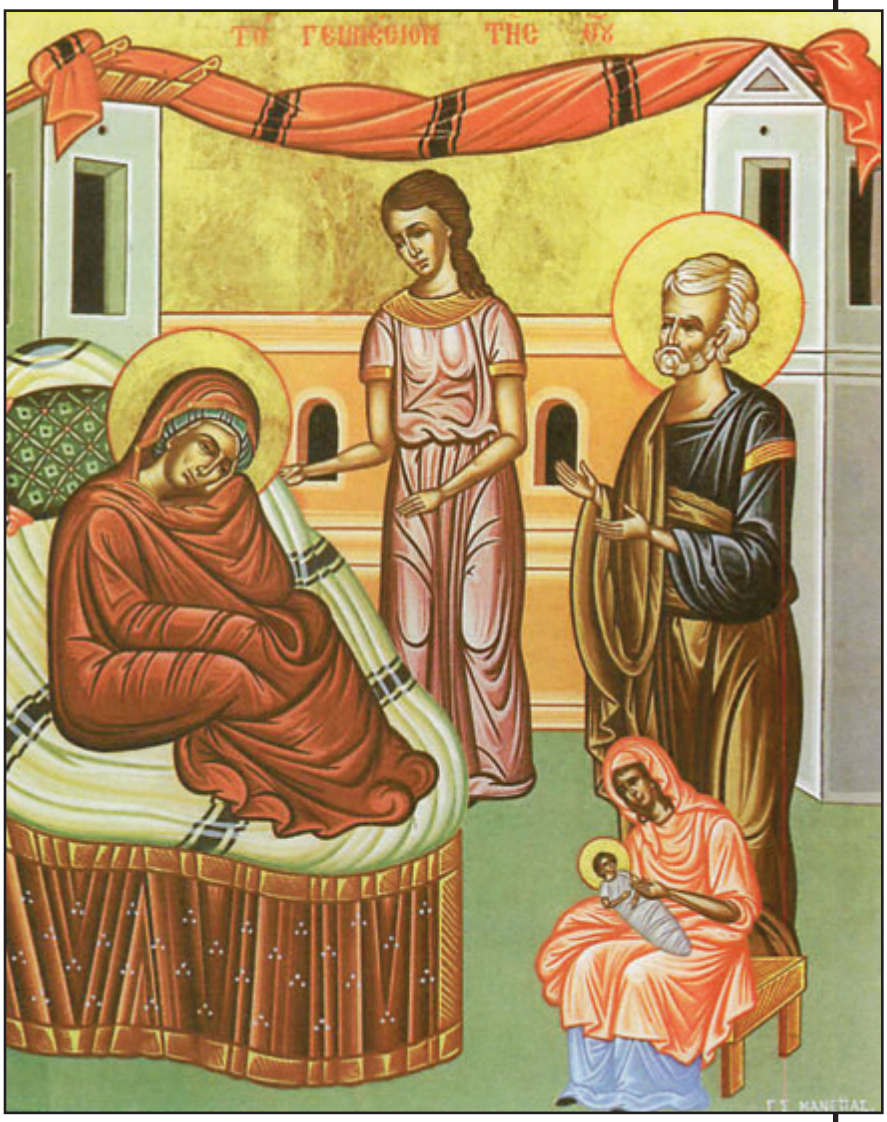
THE BIRTH OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

For a long time St. Joachim and St. Anna prayed to have a child. God finally answered their prayers with a daughter, Mary. Mary became the Mother of God. In the icon St. Anna is lying down. St. Joachim is speaking with her. A servant is holding the infant Mary.

This day recalls the day the Virgin Mary was born to her parents, St. Joachim and St. Anna. God wanted Jesus' mother to be the most special woman in the world. He gave her to parents who would love her and also teach her God's ways.

This feast reminds us how much God loves us. He loves us so much that He sent His Son to us. He gives Jesus a holy Mother so that she would be ready to bring Him into the world.

How does our Church celebrate this feast
We venerate the icon of the feast. In some churches bread, wheat, wine and oil are blessed.



EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

THE GREAT SEARCH

A long time ago, St. Helena went looking for the cross that Christ died on. When she found it, the Bishop of Jerusalem, named Macarius, held it up for the people to see. St. Helena is wearing a crown because she is the mother of the Emperor Constantine.

This day recalls the time St. Helena found the true cross and St. Macarius held it up for all the people to see. This feast reminds us of how much God loves us. He sent His Son who died on the cross to save us for eternal life.



How does our Church celebrate this feast?
Many churches place flowers or basil plants around the cross. Some have a procession with the cross on this day.

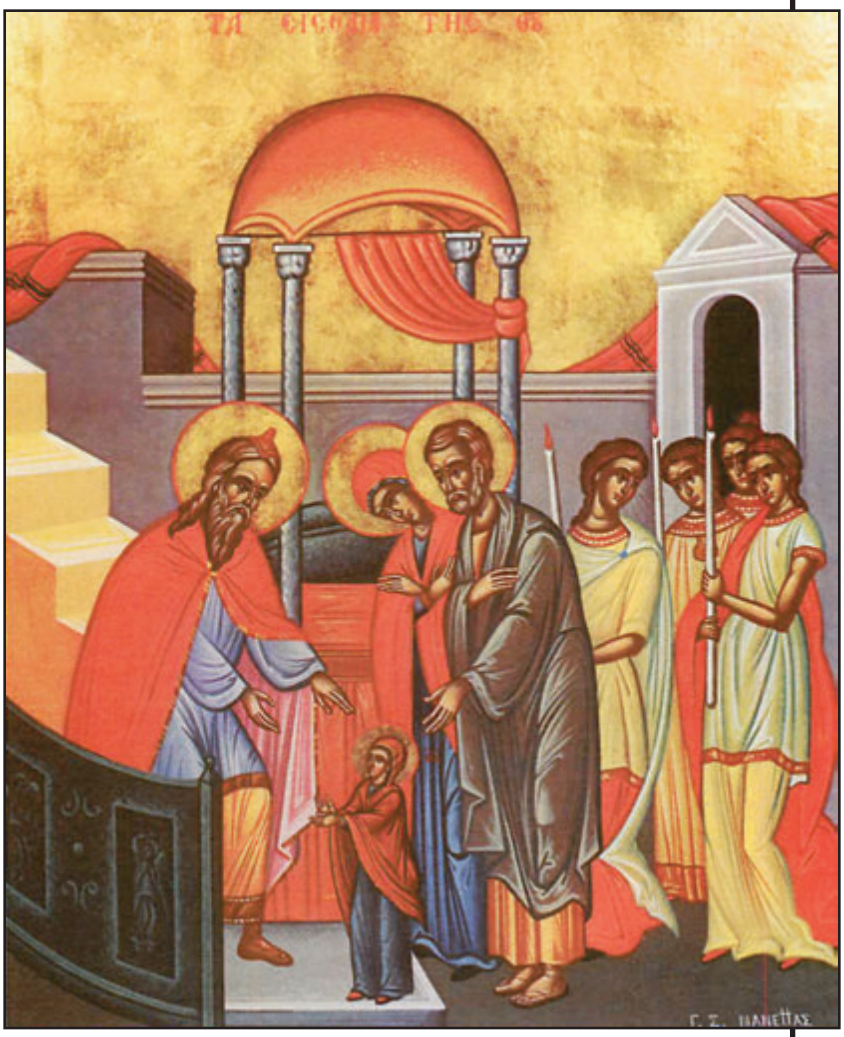
November 21

ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS

A TIME TO PREPARE

God knew that He wanted Mary to become the mother of His Son Jesus. He planned it. Mary had to be prepared. She was brought to the Temple to learn about God. In the icon Mary s parents, St. Anna and St. Joachim, are bringing her to the high priest.

This day recalls the day St. Joachim and St. Anna brought the Virgin Mary, the Theotokos, to the Temple to begin learning about God. This feast reminds us that God wanted to prepare Jesus' mother to be ready to bring Him into the world.



How does our Church celebrate this feast?
In some parishes young girls are given a special blessing on this day.

December 6

ST. NICHOLAS

ST. NICHOLAS
THE BISHOP

St. Nicholas was a bishop a long time ago. He was a very good man. He helped the poor and anyone who was in danger, especially sailors.

Before he was chosen to be a bishop, he had a vision. In the vision he saw Christ handing him the Book of Gospels and the Mother of God placing the special bishop s vestment on his shoulders. In the icon the vestment has crosses. It is called an omophorion.

This day honors St. Nicholas, a bishop who helped many people, especially children. This feast reminds us that God wants us to care for one another.



How does our Church celebrate this feast?
Many parishes have a party or celebration today. St. Nicholas, dressed as a bishop, visits. In some churches he gives token gifts to the children.

December 9

THE MATERNITY OF ST. ANNA

**THE THEOTOKOS,
THE MOTHER OF GOD,
COMES INTO THE WORLD**

Children come into the world when God blesses the love their parents have for one another. A child is conceived and begins to grow inside the mother. It usually takes nine months for the baby to grow strong enough to live outside its mother's body. This is when the baby is born. This feast reminds us that the Theotokos, the ever- Virgin Mary, was conceived with God s special blessing on her parents' love. In the icon we see Mary's father, St. Joachim, and her mother, St. Anna. They are shown in their room embracing as a sign of their love for one another.

This day recalls when God blessed St. Joachim and St. Anna with the child, Mary. She was born nine months later. St. Joachim and St. Anna didn't think they would have children because they were older. They had prayed to God so that they could have a child. This feast reminds us that all things are possible with God.

How does our Church celebrate this feast?

We venerate the icon of the feast. In some churches bread, wheat, wine and oil are blessed.



December 25

NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST

God sent His Son Jesus to lead us back to Him. Like a light in the darkness, Jesus shows us the way to the Father. In the icon, Jesus is shown against the dark cave where He was born. He is light against darkness. The Theotokos, the Mother of God, is lying down. St. Joseph is sitting down below her.

This day recalls the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. This feast reminds us how much God loves us. He loves us so much that He sent His Son to us. Jesus Christ shows us the way to the Father.



How does our Church celebrate this feast?
At matins before the Divine Liturgy, we proclaim the birth of Jesus. We exchange the Christmas greeting, "Christ is born! Glorify Him!"

January 6

HOLY THEOPHANY OF CHRIST

GOD IS THREE PERSONS

Before Jesus began to teach us about God, He wanted to be baptized. He went to His cousin, St. John the Baptist. St. John baptized Jesus in the Jordan River. The heavens opened and the voice of the Father said, "This is My beloved Son." A dove appeared above Jesus. The Holy Spirit was in the form of the dove. We know that God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

This day recalls the day Jesus was baptized by St. John the Baptist in the Jordan River. The Holy Spirit was present in the form of a dove, and the Father s voice said, "This is My beloved Son." The feast reminds us that God is the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

How does our Church celebrate this feast?

The Church blesses water on this day. Afterwards the priest sprinkles the church and the people with this water. In some parishes the priest blesses the parish-ioners' homes also.



January 30

THREE HOLY HIERARCHS



THREE IMPORTANT BISHOPS

On this feast day we remember three bishops or hierarchs. On the left is St. Basil, in the middle is St. John Chrysostom, and on the right is St. Gregory the Theologian. Each is wearing on their shoulders the special bishop vestment called the "omophorion." Have you heard any of their names before? St. John Chrysostom's Divine Liturgy is the one we celebrate on most Sundays. On Sundays during the Great Fast we celebrate St. Basil's Divine Liturgy. St. Gregory the Theologian was a writer. He helped us understand more about how Jesus was both God and man.

This day honors three bishops or hierarchs: St. Basil,St. John Chrysostom, and St. Gregory the Theologian. This feast reminds us that God will provide the Church with good leaders.

How does our Church celebrate this feast?
We venerate the icon of the feast. In some churches bread, wheat, wine and oil are blessed.

February 2

THE MEETING OF OUR LORD

JESUS IS RECEIVED AT THE TEMPLE

St. Simeon and St. Anna helped care for the Temple. Jesus was brought to the Temple as an infant. When St. Simeon held Jesus, he knew Jesus was the Savior for which the Jewish people had been waiting. He said, "Now my eyes have seen the light." He knew that Jesus was the Light of the world and the Savior of all humanity. In the icon St. Simeon holds Jesus. St. Anna is behind St. Joseph, who holds two birds as an offering.

This day recalls the day Jesus was offered to God in the Temple when He was 40 days old. St. Simeon and St. Anna received Him there. They had been waiting for a savior. This feast reminds us that God fulfilled His promise and sent them Jesus to be our Savior.

How does our Church celebrate this feast?
In some Churches candles are blessed in honor of Christ, the Light of the world.



March 25

THE ANNUNCIATION

JESUS COMES INTO THE WORLD

It was time for Jesus to come into the world. The Archangel Gabriel came to tell Mary that she would be His mother. The angel said, "Rejoice, O highly favored daughter! The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women. Do not fear, Mary. You have found favor with God. You shall conceive and bear a Son and give Him the name Jesus." In the icon Mary is surprised by the angel and his message. Her hand is up as if to ask, "How can this be? " Then she says, "I am the servant of the Lord. Let it be done to me as you say."

This day recalls the Archangel Gabriel's announcement to Mary that God wished her to bear His Son. Mary said "Yes " to God. The feast reminds us that God wants us to say "Yes" to Him.

How does our Church celebrate this feast?
This feast always occurs during the Great Fast. Many parishes chant the Akathist Hymn to the Mother of God on the Fridays during the Fast to prepare for the celebration of the Annunciation.



THE ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM

JESUS HAILED AS KING

Jesus had just raised Lazarus from the dead. It was now time for Him to go into Jerusalem. He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. People hailed Him saying, "Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" Saying "Hosanna" was their way to say "Welcome." They wanted Jesus to be the King of Israel. They waved palm branches to give Him glory.

This day recalls when Jesus rode on a donkey into Jerusalem. The people cheered for Him and wanted to make Him a king. This feast reminds us that God wants us to honor His Son.



How does our Church celebrate this feast?
We have a procession with blessed palms, pussy willows or olive branches to remember how the people escorted Jesus to Jerusalem

GREAT AND HOLY WEEK

HOLY THURSDAY

Jesus took bread and wine and said, "This is my body. This is my blood." It was the first Holy Communion. This day recalls the Last Supper when Jesus took bread and wine and said, "This is my body. This is my blood." This feast reminds us that God wants us to live united to Him.

How does our Church celebrate this feast?
We celebrate the Vesper-Liturgy of the Lord's Supper.





HOLY FRIDAY

Jesus was crucified at Golgotha. A soldier pierced His side with a spear to make sure He was dead.

Then Jesus was taken from the cross by Joseph of Arimathea. He was wrapped in a linen shroud and placed in a tomb. This day recalls when Jesus was crucified. This feast reminds us of how much God loves us. He sent His only Son who suffered and died to open the gates of heaven to us.

How does our Church celebrate this feast?
We pray Matins and the Great Hours before the cross and listen to the story of Jesus' death. At Vespers we take down Jesus' body for burial. At the Burial Service we carry the shroud representing His body and bury it.

PASCHA

JESUS IS RAISED FROM THE DEAD

Pascha is the most important day of the year. It is the day when we celebrate that Jesus rose from the dead. Jesus opened the gates of heaven for us. In the icon Christ is standing on the cross—a symbol of death. Christ won the victory over death on the cross. He is raising Adam and Eve to take them to heaven with Him.

This day commemorates Jesus' rising from the dead. This feast reminds us that God wants us to live forever with Him.



How does our Church celebrate this feast?

We have a procession outside the church. At the front doors we sing, "Christ is risen..." The priest opens the doors and leads us into the brightly lit church. We also proclaim Jesus' resurrection to the whole world by reading the Gospel in many languages.

HOLY ASCENSION OF CHRIST

JESUS
RETURNS TO HEAVEN

Forty days after Pascha, Christ rose or ascended to heaven to be with His Father. He promised that we would not be alone because He would send the Holy Spirit. In the icon Mary, the Theotokos, is at the center, surrounded by the apostles. Jesus is seated on a throne as He ascends into heaven. Jesus is the ruler of all.

This day recalls when, forty days after His resurrection, Jesus returned to His Father in heaven. Before He ascended, Jesus said to the apostles, "I will be with you always, even unto the end of the world." This feast reminds us that God will be with us always.

How does our Church celebrate this feast?
We venerate the icon of the feast. In some churches bread, wheat, wine and oil are blessed.



PENTECOST

THE HOLY SPIRIT MAKES THE DISCIPLES BRAVE

Fifty days after Jesus rose from the dead, the disciples and the Mother of God were gathered together. Suddenly they heard a noise like a strong wind. Tongues of fire came down upon them. They began speaking in many languages. They told everyone about Jesus. They were not afraid anymore. The icon shows the disciples together. The small man in the middle represents the world. After Pentecost, the disciples told the whole world about Jesus Christ.

This day reminds us that the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples and the Mother of God. Jesus had told the disciples to wait for a helper. The Holy Spirit helped the disciples be brave. The Holy Spirit helps us to be brave. This feast reminds us that God will always help us.

How does our Church celebrate this feast?
Some churches are specially decorated with greens and flowers. We pray kneeling and sing the hymn "O Heavenly King."



BIRTH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST IS BORN

St. John the Baptist was the cousin of Jesus. Before St. John was born, God sent an angel to John s father, St. Zechariah, to tell him he would have a son. St. Zechariah and his wife St. Elizabeth were too old to have children, so St. Zechariah doubted God. The angel said, "You will be speechless until the day these things happen because you did not believe me." When his son was born, the people wanted to know what to name the child. St. Zechariah wrote "John " on a tablet. On the icon we see the baby John in front. His mother is resting on a couch. His father is on the right side of the icon. He is writing on a tablet "John is his name."

This feast honors the birth of St. John the Baptist. St. John was a cousin of Jesus. St. John's father, St. Zechariah, and his mother, St. Elizabeth, were older. St. Zechariah doubted the angel who told him he would soon have a son. St. Zechariah did indeed have a son, St. John. This feast reminds us that God wants us to believe His word.

How does our Church celebrate this feast?
We venerate the icon of the feast. In some churches bread, wheat, wine and oil are blessed.



June 29

SAINTS PETER AND PAUL

TWO PILLARS OF THE CHURCH

When Jesus was still on earth, Peter told Jesus, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus blessed him and said, "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven." In the icon St. Peter is shown holding keys. After the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, St. Peter led the apostles and helped them form the early Church. He traveled and preached to people in many countries. St. Paul also traveled and baptized many people. He wrote many letters to the people he baptized. These letters are the epistles that we hear in church. In the letters St. Paul teaches the new Christians how to live like Christ and tells them to be strong in their faith. The epistles are part of the Scriptures or Bible. In the icon St. Paul is shown holding a scroll of the Scriptures. We honor both saints on the same day because they were the pillars on which the early Church was built.

This day honors two great saints who were leaders in the early Church. This feast reminds us that God has always blessed us with good leaders.

How does our Church celebrate this feast?
We venerate the icon of the feast. In some churches bread, wheat, wine and oil are blessed.



July 20

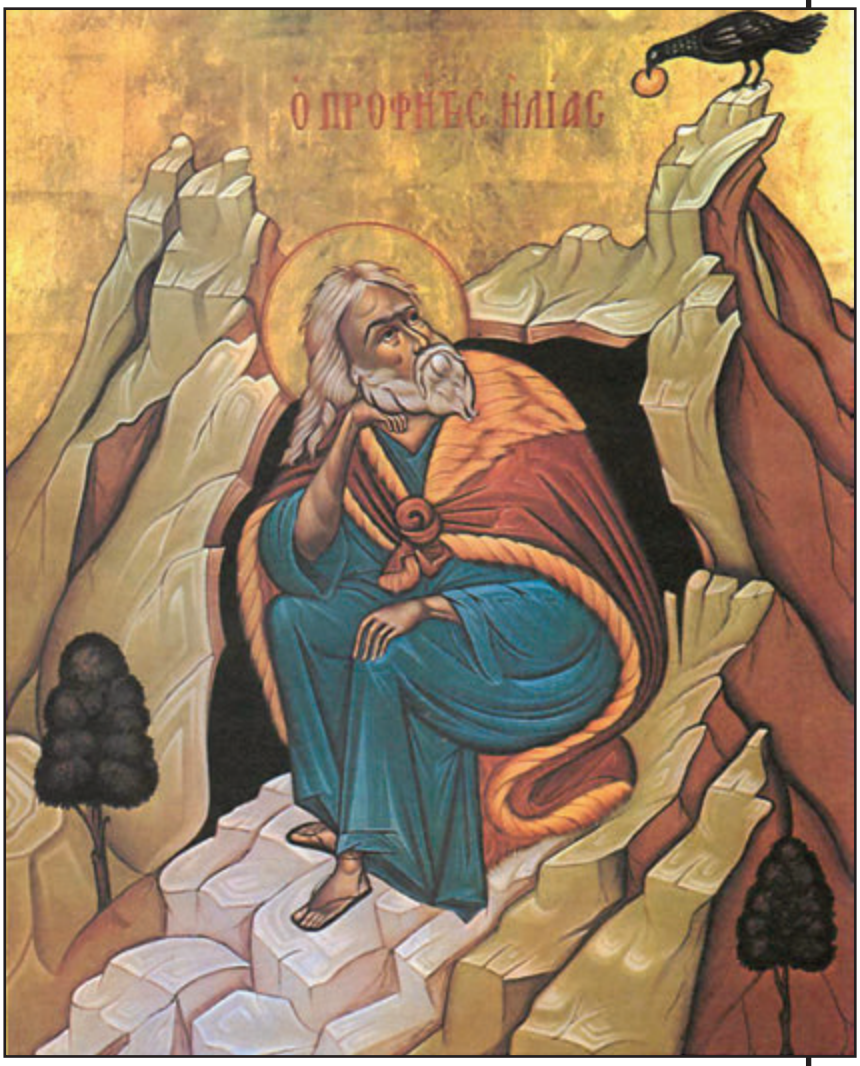
PROPHET ELIAS

"THE LORD IS MY GOD"

A long time before Jesus was born, God's people began to worship other gods. God sent prophets to bring these people back to Him. The greatest of these was Elias, who is also called Elijah. His name means "the Lord is my God." His story is found in the Old Testament in the book of 1 Kings. He lived on a mountain in the wilderness. In the icon he is shown in a hairy garment because he did not care about things of the world. Like St. John the Baptist, Elijah only wanted to live close to God and to do God's will. He did not worry about food or water. God sent ravens to bring Elijah food. Elijah did not die! He was carried away in a fiery chariot.

This day commemorates the Prophet Elias. A long time before Jesus was born, God's people began to worship other gods. The prophet Elias brought people back to God. This feast day reminds us that God will always call us back to Him.

How does our Church celebrate this feast?
In some parishes cars are blessed for safe traveling on this day.



August 6

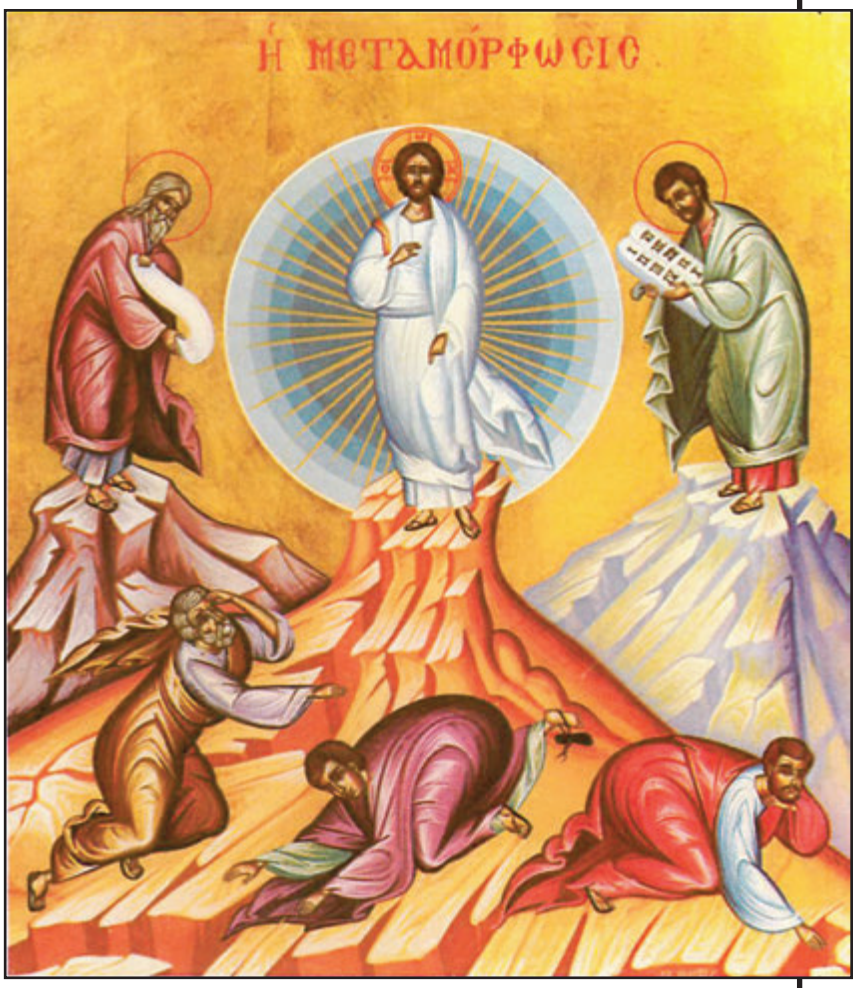
TRANSFIGURATION OF CHRIST

JESUS IS RADIANT WITH LIGHT

Peter, James, and John did not know what they were in for when Jesus asked them to come with Him one day. Up to a mountain they went. When they arrived, Jesus was surrounded by light. His face was dazzling as the sun; His clothes were radiant with light. The Father s voice said, "This is My beloved Son." On the icon we see Jesus, Moses to His left, and Prophet Elias on His right. Peter, John, and James are below Jesus.

This day recalls when Jesus took Peter, James, and John to the top of a mountain. Jesus was surrounded by light. His face was dazzling as the sun. This event helped the disciples realize that Jesus is God. It gave them strength during Jesus' arrest and crucifixion. This feast day reminds us that Jesus is truly God.

How does our Church celebrate this feast?
In some churches grapes or other fruit are blessed, another hint of the transfiguration.



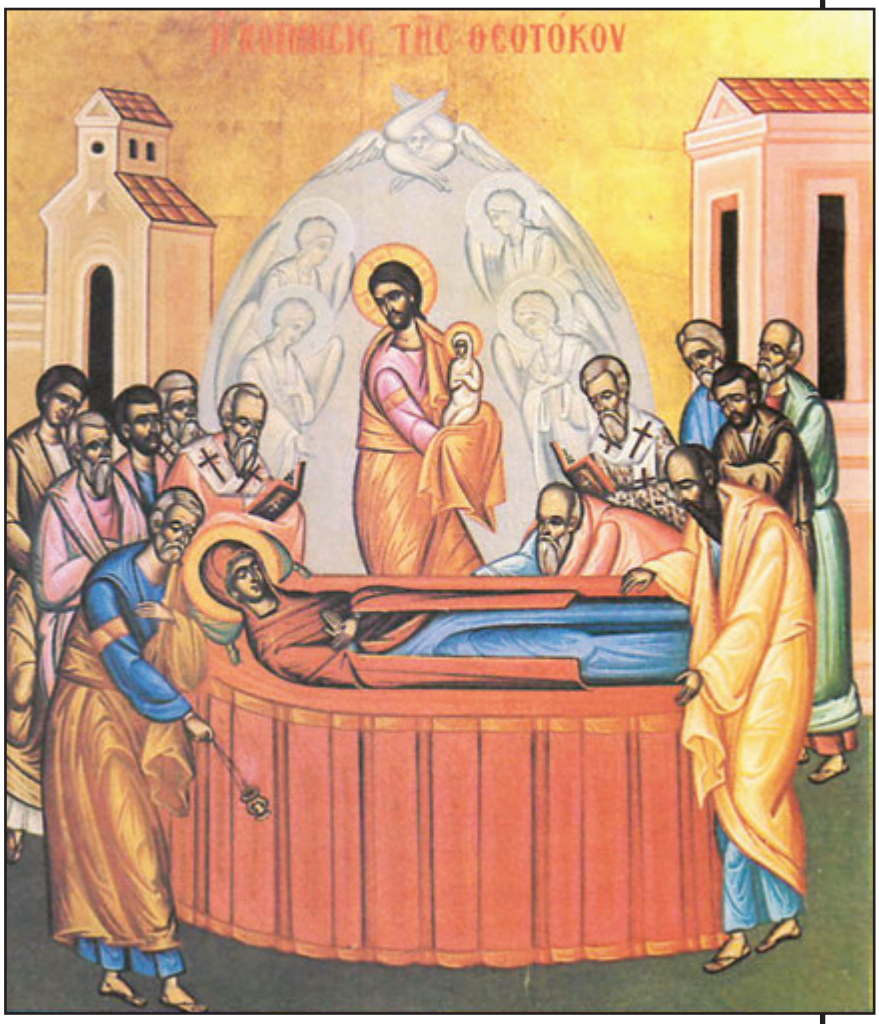
August 15

DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS

THE MOTHER OF GOD IS TAKEN TO HEAVEN

After Jesus died, the Mother of God, the Theotokos, was beloved by the Apostles. When it finally came time for her life on earth to end, they surrounded her. On the icon you also see Jesus. He is holding a little child. The child represents the soul of His Mother. Jesus has taken her to be with Him in heaven.

This day recalls when the Mother of God died and was taken into heaven. Jesus honored His mother and revealed how much He loved her. This feast day reminds us that God wants us all to live forever with Him.



How does our Church celebrate this feast?
In some churches herbs and flowers are blessed on this day. Some parishes have a burial service for the Mother of God.

BEHEADING OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST DIES

God wanted someone to prepare the way for Jesus. He chose St. John the Baptist. St. John did not care about the things of this world. He lived in the desert and wore animal skins for clothing. He ate locusts and honey. St. John lived at the same time as Jesus. He knew he was to prepare the way for Jesus by telling the people to change their lives. He preached, "Reform your lives! The reign of God is at hand." Those are the words on the scroll he holds on the icon. Because he had this special message from God, he was a messenger. He is shown with angel wings because angels are messengers. He was killed because he made the wife of the king angry. His head was cut off. On the icon his head is in a dish to remind us that he was beheaded.

This day recalls the death of St. John the Baptist. St. John worked with God to prepare the way for Jesus. He made Herod's wife angry because he reminded her of her sins. She ordered him killed. He was beheaded. This feast day reminds us that God wants us to be faithful to His way no matter what.

How does our Church celebrate this feast?
We traditionally keep this day as a fast day to remember the sad event of St. John s death.

