



COPTIC ORTHODOX DIOCESE OF THE SOUTHERN UNITED STATES
SUNDAY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

4th Grade





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Introduction

September 11, 2020

“Let everything take second place to our care of our children, our bringing them up to the discipline and instruction of the Lord. If from the beginning we teach them to love true wisdom, they will have greater wealth and glory than riches can provide.”

St John Chrysostom

The book of Proverbs tells us to "train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Prov 22:6) Although our Orthodox faith never changes, the society and challenges our children face are always evolving. In light of this constant change, and in honor of the 100 year anniversary of establishment of Sunday school in 2018, the Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States began working on a new curriculum named "Children of Light" to equip and educate our children in order to live a life pleasing to God in the midst of the world we live in. St Habib Girgis rightly reminds us that "education is the first need for the community after bread." Seeing the importance of educating our children, great effort was put over the past few years into ensuring a curriculum is developed that would feed our children with the proper foundations and tools appropriate to their age. Every grade will equip the child with strong biblical, liturgical, spiritual and morally appropriate lessons allowing them to grow in faith while providing them with tools to navigate the day to day issues they face in society so that they may be the true light of the world they are each called to be.

May this new curriculum be a tool that allows our children to grow in wisdom and in love of God, living up to their calling of being light of the world and true children of Light.

Bishop Youssef

Bishop Basil

Bishop Gregory

Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



Overview and Milestones

Theme of the Year

Growing with Discipline

Rationale: As the children are growing in self-awareness and a desire to compete, along with tendencies to be individualistic with desires to make independent choices, it is fitting to teach them the virtue of Discipline as they grow to make decisions with God.

Psych Analysis



Physical

Girls maturity ahead, may have poor posture, slouching, picking at nails



Intellect

Signs of responsibility, appreciates trust, less egocentric



Social

Interest in clubs/sports, parents seen as fallible, concerned about right/wrong



[Detailed Characteristics](#)

Building Blocks

BB1: We Grow As We Worship God

Prayers: St. George, St. John the Short, St Helena Discovers Cross, One Triune God, Prayer and the Book of Agpeya, The Benefits of Holy Communion, Glorifying the Beautiful World, Overview of The Book of Psalms, Daniel's Prayer, Praises after Crossing the Red Sea, Hannah's Prayer, Jonah's Prayer, Solomon's Prayer, St. Mary's Hymn of Praise for Our Lord, Jesus' Example of Prayer Alone and with His Disciples

BB3: We Grow Through Prayer and Fasting

Introducing the Spirituality of Fasting, The Fasts of Our Church; What does Each Mean?, Our Lord as a Model of Fasting, Giving Purpose to your Fast, Moses' Fast, Esther's Prayer and Fasting, Fasting Builds Patience, Examples of the Apostles Fasting and Praying before Every Mission, Self-control VS. Spirit Control

BB5: We Grow as Orthodox Christians

St. Arsenius, Introduction to the Creed, The Nature of the Early Christian Church L. Sell & Share, Abba Shenouda, The Archimandrite, The Church Is Holy, Different Talents to Serve Our Lord and Each Other, The Wall of Jericho, Be Prepared, Dealing With Sadness, Dealing with Peer Pressure

BB2: We Grow as We Learn God's Word

Holy Bible as Inspired By God, History of the Hebrew People and the Ten Commandments, Obedience and Reading the Bible, Christ, the Apostles, and the First Christians, Books of the NT, Pope Peter Seal of the Martyrs, Jonah Preaches the Word of God

BB4: We Grow as an Orthodox Family

A Gift from God, Grow as Jesus Grew, The Church, Sacrament of Marriage

BB6: The Church Grows in the World

The History of the Coptic Church Around the World, The First Church and the Work of the Apostles, The Apostle Paul's First Missionary Journey, The Theotokos, The Church is Apostolic, Priests Are Stewards and Shepherds, Life of Prayer,

End of Year Milestones & Objectives



Scripture

- + Read bible everyday (not simply to achieve a weekly SS goal)
- + Increase in SS Homework/Bible Study submission/quality
- + Increased understanding of NT content



Spiritual

- + Participate to large portions of church fasts
- + The trinity is One God
- + Increased maturity in prayers (stands still, carefully thought out prayers, etc...)



Social

- + Responds to Disciplinary measure without grumbling
- + Understands how to respond to bullying



Rituals

- + Follows along the slides/liturgy book
- + Understands the basic concepts of the sacrament (True Body & Body, necessary for salvation)



Acknowledgements

The Diocese would like to thank all those who helped in this curriculum. There were collaborators and volunteers from across the globe throughout the US, Canada, and Qatar. We would also like to thank St. Mary and St. Mark of Edmonton for their significant collaboration in this service. May God bless and reward all to those who have labored and prayed for this curriculum.

Providing Feedback

Feedback, suggestions and material may be submitted at any time in the following [form](#).

Disclaimer

Only the content presented on this curriculum has been reviewed and verified. The provided links have also been reviewed. However, the remainder of the content of these websites were out of the scope of the review.



Building Block I: We Grow As We Worship God

Lesson I.IS - (SPECIAL for NAYROUZ): St. George The Prince of Martyrs

Building Block I
We Grow as We Worship God



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Dinner plate, candle, lighter, glass of water with food coloring that does not match the color of the plate, and another glass cup that is empty.

Synaxarion Reference: [Baramouda 23](#)

Activity: One bag of Popcorn, and a broom (to clean up after the game is over).

Video: [Sciboys E14: Nayrouz Feast \(6:59\)](#)

Consider using this experiment as a lesson opening or before doing the craft.



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will gain a better understanding of the Coptic New Year by using the example of St. George to learn to stand firm in their faith.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Faithfulness and Courage.



MEMORY VERSE:

“

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

”

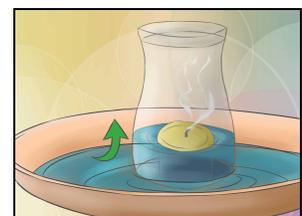
Romans 10:17

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Water Rise Demonstratio:





1. Place a candle in the center of the plate.
2. Add the colored water on the plate, but make sure not to spill any on the candle.
3. Light the candle.
4. Label your empty cup as “Praying to God, Reading the Bible, going to Church, etc. - include anything that would bring one closer to God).
5. Cover the candle with your now labeled cup
6. Observe how the colored water is absorbed inside the cup

Today, the church is celebrating the Feast of Nayrouz. This is the beginning of the Coptic year because it is the beginning of an era of martyrdom that the Coptic people endured under the Roman emperor, Diocletian. This feast reminds us of saints who were so close to God that they were willing to give up their lives for their faith. These saints are an example for us of how we can draw closer to God.

We will learn more about this through the story of one saint, St. George, the Prince of Martyrs.



LESSON BODY:

St. George, The Prince of Martyrs ([Baramouda 23](#)):

Consider asking the children what they already know about St. George. An icon may be shown to the children as a visual aid.

The following text reviews the entire story of St. George. You may wish to only highlight key points with the children, such as the fact that St. George was risen from the dead by the Lord three times, he was not afraid of proclaiming his faith and speaking the truth regarding idol worship.

St. George was a great martyr. When St. George’s father passed away, a man named Lustus was appointed governor of Palestine. Lustus was a good, God-fearing man. St. George lived with him for ten years. St. George became a great leader of 5,000 soldiers.

After Lustus passed away, St. George went to visit a place called Tyre. He saw people bowing to idols and leaving the true God. St. George went to King Dadianos and declared his Christianity. Dadianos saw that George was handsome and had a strong personality and believed he was a young man of nobility. King Dadianos told George to ask for forgiveness from the idols and the gods would give him a royal position and he would become a prince of ten cities. George answered, “Cursed are the defiled images you call gods. They are nothing but devilish idols.”

The king was enraged and so the persecution of St. George began. St. George was tortured with many painful tools and after he had been tortured, he was thrown into prison. The Lord Jesus Christ appeared with a host of angels and said, “Rise, George, my beloved, stand up without any wounds in your body.” The saint rose, healed, with no wounds. Jesus Christ told the saint that he will suffer for seven years and he will die three times. Each time the Lord will raise him up again.

When King Dadianos saw that St. George had no wounds, he believed that St. George was a magician, so he brought the top magician named Athanasius. Athanasius took a cup with poison and gave it to the saint. St. George did the sign of the cross over the cup, but nothing happened to him. When Athanasius saw that St. George was not harmed, he believed in Jesus Christ and received the crown of martyrdom. The king then



ordered that St. George be tortured on a wheel of sharp swords. The saint prayed to God, and he died for the first time, but as God promised, God raised him up from the dead. A prince who was there when he saw George alive, declared his faith in Christ and therefore, the prince and his 3,000 soldiers and 400 men and women were martyred. St. George was killed a second time, but the Lord rose him from the dead once again.

When the king saw that St. George was still alive, he was enraged. He asked St. George to raise the dead who were lying in a tomb nearby. St. George told the soldiers to bring out the bones and the dust inside the tomb. Suddenly, there was a great earthquake. The spirit of the Lord descended upon the bones and dust. Five men, nine women, and a child were raised! After the raising of the dead, King Dadianos ordered the men to beat St. George and then imprison him in the house of a poor widow in town.

The saint had not eaten in six days, so he asked the widow for bread but she was very poor and had no bread, so she went out to look for bread. When the saint was leaning on a wooden pillar, the pillar began to develop roots in the ground and it bloomed. Archangel Micheal descended with a banquet of the best kinds of food. The Lord blessed the widow's house. The widow came back and was in shock seeing all the food. The widow begged him to heal her son who was deaf, unable to speak, blind, and paralyzed. The saint placed him on his lap and prayed. The scabs fell off his eyes and he was able to see. The saint said, "That is enough for the moment. I shall need him to do me some service. Then he will be able to hear me speak and walk with me."

St. George's body was burned. He died for a third time. King Dadianos put the body of the saint on a mountain so the birds could come and eat it. Just as God had promised, the saint rose from the dead. The king tried to persuade him by speaking tenderly to him. The king promised that if he worshiped the idols he would give him up to half his kingdom. St. George, who intended to destroy the idol, agreed and said he would worship the idols in the morning. The king was very pleased and allowed the saint to enter the Queen's chamber. St. George began to preach to the queen about creation, and about paradise. The queen listened and believed in Christ. She was afraid to be tortured, but he reassured her that she would have eternal joy. In the morning they brought the saint to offer incense to Apollo. The widow and her son were present. When she saw him about to bow down she told him, "How will anyone believe in your Christ after seeing you kneel before Apollo!" The saint smiled and said, "Put your son down." The saint told the child to come to him and serve him (remember he was deaf and he could not walk). The child heard the saint and stood up and walked towards the saint.

George said, "Now go to the temple and tell the idol Apollo that George, the servant of Christ, is telling you to come to him." The devilish idol cried out loud and jumped out of his seat and came to St. George. He asked the devil, "Are you the god of the Gentiles?" The devil tried to deceive the people and make up lies about why God banished him from heaven. St. George said "You are a liar. You were rejected from heaven because of your pride when you wished to be like the Creator of heaven and earth. So you and all your angels were thrown out of heaven." The devil was silenced. The saint tapped the ground again and it opened. St. George threw the idol to the ground and it broke. He sent the rest of the idols back down to hell. St. George was arrested and thrown into prison. The queen was also martyred when she proclaimed her faith to the king.

After seven years, and being tortured by 70 kings, Prince George was beheaded on the 23rd of Baramoud.

Consider engaging in the following discussion with the children:

- *What did St. George do when he was asked to worship idols? (He refused, and proudly told the king that he was a Christian.)*
- *How many times did he die and rise again? (Three times).*



- *Was St. George afraid of telling people about Christ? (No, he even proclaimed his faith to the queen.)*
- *How are we similar to great martyrs like St. George? (We are all children of God like them.)*

The Coptic New Year is celebrated to remember those, like St. George, who stood up and confessed their faith. The martyrs gave up their lives so that we may enjoy the faith today; they gave up their lives to keep the faith for us.

Consider asking the children how they can try to be more like the saints and martyrs. Highlight the moral character focus of courage by defining what courage is and how saints like St. George demonstrated it.



VIDEO:

Video: [Sciboys E14: Nayrouz Feast \(6:59\)](#)

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Popcorn Activity:

1. Divide the children equally and have them stand in two lines, facing each other, about 10 feet apart. Each child will need to be facing another child. The children will be tossing a piece of popcorn back and forth to the person across from them.
2. Give all the children in the first row, called "Row A", a piece of popcorn. Instruct the children that on your signal, they will toss the piece of popcorn 10 feet across the aisle to the person directly facing them in "Row B". Instruct the children to use only one hand to toss or to catch the popcorn. Tell the children that the popcorn in this activity represents our relationship with God. Give the signal and have the children toss the popcorn. Many of the tosses will fall short since the children are so far apart. Record the number of successful throws on a chalkboard or whiteboard.
3. Make sure each child in "Row B" has a piece of popcorn. Each child in "Row B" will take one-step towards "Row A." Then on your signal, have the children toss the popcorn again. Once again, record the number of successful throws on a chalkboard or whiteboard. Do this several more times, each time taking one-step closer until the two rows are together. Once together, the children can simply drop the popcorn into the hands of the other child, resulting in no misses.
4. Explain that our relationship with God is like what we just did. The further away from each other, the harder it was to catch the popcorn. Likewise, the further we are from God, the harder it is to have a relationship with God. On the other hand, the closer we are to God, the easier it will be to have a strong relationship with Him. How do we get close to God? We can get closer to God by reading the Bible.

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- What marks the beginning of the Coptic year? (The era of martyrdom that the Copts endured under the Roman emperor Diocletian.)
- What are some of the qualities exhibited by St. George that you admire the most, or wish to emulate? (Answers may include; Courage, selling all his possessions, following the commandments, perseverance, etc.)
- How can St. George's example guide and inspire you to grow in your relationship with God? (Answers may include: Stand firm in the faith, stand for what's right, know our faith, learn the teachings of the Bible by reading it regularly, etc.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

Help the children understand that martyrs and saints were people just like us. They felt hungry and tired sometimes, just as we do! But they did difficult things even when they did not want to because they loved God. We are all called to be saints - saints are people who love Our Lord Jesus Christ and share His love with others. We can all live like the saints while we are here on earth. You may wish to introduce and paraphrase the quote by St. John Chrysostom on the right to reiterate this point.¹ Emphasize that just as St. George was holy, courageous and faithful, so too can they be all of these things as children of God.

"We baptize even infants, though they are not defiled by sins, so they too may be given holiness, righteousness, adoption, inheritance, brotherhood with Christ, and membership in Him."

- St. John Chrysostom

Can you name a time when you were courageous? (Have the class share their stories.) Where do you think this courage came from? (God.)

How can we be more like martyrs?

- Praying my Agpeya.
- Attending services with my family.
- Reading my Bible everyday. Consider reminding the children of the memory verse at this point and explaining that regular Bible reading strengthens and nourishes our faith, as it did for St. George.

¹ St. John Chrysostom. (AD 388). "(Baptismal Catecheses in Augustine, Against Julian 1:6:21 [A.D. 388])." Retrieved from <https://www.churchfathers.org/infant-baptism>



Can you think of one thing you can do today to be witnesses of God?

- Stand up for what is right and be Christ-like at school (e.g. sharing, standing up for the bullied, etc.).
- Praying before meals.
- Obeying and respecting those around me.



Lesson 1.2 - The Power of Obedience: St. John the Short

Building Block 1
We Grow as We Worship God



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Marshmallows and salt.

Synaxarion Reference: [Paope 20](#)

Activity: Spinning wheel.

Video: [Creative Orthodox: Saint John the Short & the tree of obedience \(0:59\)](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will learn to be obedient to God, parents and priests and how to worship Him using all their senses.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Obedience



MEMORY VERSE:



Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him."



John 14:23

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Prior to class, get marshmallows and dip each one in some salt. Do not tell the children that the marshmallow is covered in salt. When the class begins, hand out each child a marshmallow and tell them not to eat it. Tell the class that if they do not eat the marshmallow they will get another one at the end of class (one without salt.)

Does anyone know what the word, obedience means? (When someone does, or is willing to do, something they are told to do by someone of authority.)



LESSON BODY:



The Obedience Tree

Consider showing this image to the children to emphasize the fruits of St. John the Short's obedience.

To introduce the topic of obedience and not giving up, present the story of St. John the Short and the Tree of Obedience as described in the Coptic Synaxarion on his feast day [Paope 20](#):

There is a story of a known monk, who was known for his obedience to his father of confession, even when it did not make any sense at all!

St John the Short was born in a poor, but holy family. His desire for monastic life led him into the wilderness at the age of 18. St. John the Short dedicated his whole life and heart to God.

One day after St. John had become a monk, Abba Pemwah found a piece of dry wood and gave it to Abba John and said to him, "Take this wood, plant and water it." St. John obeyed and went on watering it twice a day, even though the water was about 12 miles (a long, long way) from where they lived. After three years, that piece of wood sprouted and grew into a fruitful tree. Abba Pemwah took some of that fruit and went around to all the elder monks saying, "Take, eat from the fruit of obedience." This tree still exists in its place in his monastery.

Consider emphasizing to the children how in this story, obedience led to a miracle. Remind the children that, often, we may not see the point of being obedient. We may believe that what Abouna or our parents are telling us to do is pointless, or just making our lives difficult. However, like St. John the Short, when we obey we grow closer to God and receive blessings that we never would have expected.

When we love God with all our hearts, we must obey His commandments. Just like when we love our parents, we obey them by following their rules because they benefit us. How can I say I love my parents, but not obey anything they say? Obedience is a way of showing my love, respect and honor to my parents. It is the same in our relationship with God. I must obey His commandments even if they don't make sense to me. It is my duty to obey the people God has entrusted me to like my parents, my servants and my priests!

Examples:

- Obedience to my parents: cleaning my room, finishing my homework, and helping my siblings.
- Obedience to my servant: listening in class and doing my Sunday school homework.
- Obedience to my priest: obeying his advice, do the fasts as he tells me, do my bible reading as he tells me and make peace with my siblings.



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Spin the Wheel Activity:

Spin the wheel and ask the children to guess how they can worship God with the different senses below (the servant can use a pen/pencil to act as the spinning arm):



1. Ears: We hear the word of God in the Gospel and Epistles readings.
2. Voice: We chant the praises of the angels during vespers.
3. Hands: We form the sign of the life-giving Cross and we hold our Bible daily.
4. Nose: We smell the incense as an offering of our prayer rising to heaven.
5. Body: We bow our heads, bend to the ground and kneel to worship God. We discipline our body to worship God.
6. Eyes: We see the light of Christ in every candle and focus our prayers to the windows of Heaven and the icons. We read our Bible.
7. Mouth: We taste the Body and Blood of Christ during Eucharist.



VIDEO:

[Creative Orthodox: Saint John the Short & the tree of obedience \(0:59\)](#)

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Bring the class's attention back to the marshmallows. Discuss with the children how being obedient saved them from eating a bitter snack and that they were rewarded with a better snack. How can I worship God? (Answers may include: using my senses - ask the children to give examples.)

- How did St. John the Short show obedience? (By obeying the instructions given to him by Abba Pemwah and watering a stick 2 times a day until it grew into a tree.)
- There is always a reason why our parents tell us not to do certain things. Although it can be hard in the moment to obey, it will ultimately benefit you in the future. Can anyone share a story or a time when they obeyed and it was truly beneficial for them? (Eg. Your mom told you not to bike to your friend's house. You were frustrated but you listened. Shortly after, a strong thunderstorm came and you are relieved you did not bike to your friend.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

Through today's story on obedience and St. John the Short, we saw the blessings that can occur when we demonstrate obedience. Obedience is something every human needs no matter how young or old they are. There are practical ways we can exercise obedience in our lives. At your next confession with Abouna, make sure to obey what your father of confession tells you to do. Follow the fasts of the church. Use my senses to worship God (attend liturgy, vespers, use my eyes to follow the liturgy books, my mouth to chant with the deacons, my ears to listen to the liturgy closely, etc.). Obey my parents and servants and priests, especially when it comes to my discipline.



Lesson 1.3S - (SPECIAL for THE FEAST OF THE CROSS): St Helena Discovers the Cross

Building Block I
We Grow as We Worship God



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Paper crosses and a timer.

Synaxarium Reference: [Baramhat 10](#)

Activity: Cross and basket.

Song: [Christian Youth Channel: Coptic Melodies E02: Hymn of the feast of the cross \(3:32\)](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will learn about the origins of the Feast of the Cross and understand how the Cross gives them power and strength.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Faithfulness and Thankfulness.



MEMORY VERSE:

“

But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

”

Galatians 6:14

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

To open the lesson, have the children look for a paper cross, just like Queen Helena.

1. All of the children will stand outside the class.
2. The servant will hide a little cross inside the classroom.
3. Each child will enter the class on their own and try to find the cross for a maximum of 30 seconds.
4. The child who finds the cross the fastest wins.
5. Make sure the children do not tell each other where they found the cross.



Our Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself to die on the Cross so that He could save us from our sins. After He died, His body was taken down from the Cross and laid in a tomb. But what happened to the Cross?

Our church celebrates the finding of the Cross of our Lord during the Feast of the Cross.



LESSON BODY:

Baramhat 10:

Empress St. Helen was the mother of Constantine the Great, the righteous Emperor. When her son Constantine became Christian, she decided to go to Jerusalem.

When she arrived in Jerusalem with a multitude of soldiers, she asked about the place of the Cross but no one would tell her. She took one of the Jewish elders and he directed them to the place where they might find the Cross at the hill of Golgotha. In the year 326 A.D., she ordered them to clear out the site of Golgotha where they found three crosses. However, they did not know which cross was the cross upon which Our Lord Christ was crucified. They brought a dead man and they laid upon him one of the crosses, and then another cross, but he did not rise up. But, when they laid the third cross upon him he rose up immediately, so they realized that this was the Cross of Our Lord Christ. The Empress and all the believers knelt down before the Holy Cross. She gave the needed money to build the churches to St. Macarius, and then took the honorable Cross and the nails and returned it to her righteous son Emperor Constantine. He kissed the Cross and placed it in a case made of gold decorated with precious stones and placed some of the nails in his helmet.

This is the first celebration that the Church commemorates the Cross.

Consider having the children discuss in groups why the Cross has power and where that power comes from. Remind them that it is through the Cross that Christ defeated sin, death, and Satan. Through the Cross, Christ made it possible for Christians to not be bound by death, and to have eternal life with Him. The Cross continues to be our weapon against temptation and sin.

The second celebration that the Church commemorates the Cross is on the Tenth day of the month of Baramhat. When the Persians were defeated by the hands of Emperor Heraclius, in 627 A.D, they retreated from Egypt to their country. On their way back they passed through Jerusalem, and a persian prince entered the Church of the Cross which was built by Empress Helena. He saw a great light shining from a piece of wood located on a place decorated with gold. He thrust his hand to it and there came from it fire which burned his fingers. The Christians told him that this is the base of the Holy Cross and they told him how it was discovered and no one was able to touch it except a Christian. He deceived the two deacons who were standing to guard it and gave them money so they would carry this piece and go with it with him to his country. They took it and put it in a box and went with him to his country along with those who were captured from the city of Jerusalem.

Consider asking the children why only Christians could hold the Holy Cross. The Cross carried our Saviour, Jesus Christ, and it was made holy through Him. Only those who are part of His Church can partake in His gifts. Through the sacraments, you are given a special gift that no other type of religion has. Sacraments like confession make it possible for us to unite with Christ in communion, just as the deacons were able to hold His Cross.



When Emperor Heraclius heard that, he went with his army to Persia and fought with them. He traveled about this country searching for this piece of the Holy Cross but he could not find it for the Persian prince had dug a hole in his garden and ordered the two deacons to bury it and then he killed them.

One of the captives of that Persian prince, who was the daughter of one of the priests, was looking out of the window by chance and saw what happened. She went to Heraclius the Emperor and told him what she saw. He went with the bishops, priests and the soldiers to that place. They dug there and found the box. They took the piece of the Holy Cross out, in 628 A.D., wrapped it in magnificent apparel, and Heraclius took it to the city of Constantinople and kept it there.

“What are you to us, estranged from God, a fugitive from heaven and evil servant? You dare do nothing to us. Christ, the Son of God, has authority both over us and over everything. It is against Him that we have sinned, and before Him that we will be justified. And you, destroyer, leave us. Strengthen by His venerable Cross, we trample under foot your serpent’s head.”

- Eastern Orthodox Church Father

Consider concluding the lesson by reminding the children that they do not need to hold the Holy Cross in order to feel its power. Each time they sign themselves with the cross they are calling upon the Lord, and guarding themselves against temptation and sin. Consider reviewing the quote by an Eastern Orthodox Church Father to reinforce this idea prior to giving the lesson.²

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Cross Relay Activity³:

1. Divide the class into 2 teams.
2. Each team will send one player to the line to pick up a cross.
3. Run back to the team and the team will follow that player with the cross to a designated place in the playing area and then back to the team line.
4. The player will quickly run the cross to the beginning line, drop it in the box or basket, and run back to the team.
5. Then the next player will do the same and will also run back to the team with the cross and the team will follow that player to the designated area and back until all the teams have an opportunity to run the Cross Relay!



SONG:

[Christian Youth Channel: Coptic Melodies E02: Hymn of the feast of the cross \(3:32\)](#)

² Serafim. (1996). St. Seraphim of Sarov. Platina, CA: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood.

³ Take Up Your Cross Group Activities. (n.d.). Retrieved August 12, 2020, from https://sermons4children.com/take_up_your_cross_group_activities.htm



Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- Why is the Cross so important to us? (It is our weapon to fight temptations and all of Satan's evil plans and it reminds us of God's love for us.)
- Do you think there is power in doing the sign of the cross? (Yes! It shields you at all times, it protects you from both physical and spiritual harm.)
- In what ways can you use the Cross to protect yourself? (Signing yourself with the cross can fight off bad thoughts, it can remind you to focus on Christ, it can give you comfort when you are scared, and it protects you from temptation, etc.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we learned today?

- Make it a point to do the sign of the cross throughout your day: when you wake up, before meals, when you pray, before your exams, before you sleep, before reading the Bible etc.
- When we do the sign of the cross, we should do so respectfully because of the power of the cross. We should say the words carefully, stand still, and have a heart of maturity and prayer.
- We should never be embarrassed to do the sign of the cross in front of others. It is something we should be proud of doing. We are reminding ourselves of the love that Jesus had for us when he died on the cross for us. The least I can do is do the sign of the cross as a reminder to myself and others that I am a member of the saved body of Christ.



Lesson 1.4 - Introduction to the Holy Trinity

Building Block I
We Grow as We Worship God



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Marker, board (if available in Sunday school classroom) or a paper.

Craft: Trinity template, colored pencils, markers, scissors, glue, and pencils.

Video: [Signing The Cross - Cartoon - Fr. Daoud Lamei \(5:11\)](#)

Song: [Kethara Toon: Our God is Only One](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will begin to recognize that there is only one God who is three persons: Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Humility and Love.



MEMORY VERSE:



But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.



John 14:26

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Consider beginning the lesson by drawing a triangle on a piece of paper or on the board if available, and naming each side ABC (1 side A, one side B and one side is C.) Then continue by asking the children if they have ever seen a triangle. Continue by explaining what a triangle is.

A triangle has three equal sides, each side creating the same angle. Each side is equal with the other sides, yet, each side is necessary. If one of the sides were removed, then there would be no triangle. We can label

each of the sides of the triangle. We might call one side A, another side B, and the other C. There is a difference between each of the sides, but together, they make one triangle. The Trinity is similar to a triangle.

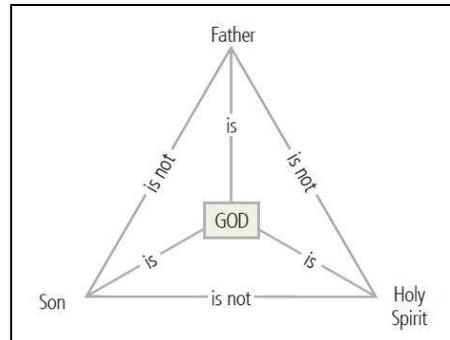


LESSON BODY:

If God is our creator, how can we fully understand how He has been created? There is really no way to fully comprehend God; it is beyond our comprehension, as are God's many attributes such as being all powerful, present everywhere and knowing all things.

The Trinity is the unity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as three persons in one.

Consider clarifying to the children that it is not actual people. It is just a term we use to explain how the Holy Trinity works. Explain to the children that we would typically use the word "hypostases" to explain the Holy Trinity. (Hypostases meaning that a hypostasis is one of the three hypostases of the Holy Trinity.)



"...the Spirit is a Spirit and not a Son, even as the Son is a Son and not a Father; after saying that the Paraclete shall be sent forth, He promises that He will come Himself; showing that the Spirit is not something other than what He is Himself, forasmuch as He is a proper Spirit proceeding from the Father, and is conceived of as the Son [is], and for this cause is also called His Mind."

- St. Cyril of Alexandria

The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. But the Father is not the Son or the Holy Spirit. The Son is not the Father or the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit is not the Father or the Son. If one of the hypostases were not there, then we would not have God. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit exist together in complete unity, with no separation, as one God. Each person is equally powerful and eternal. They are different but have the same essence (same nature), and they never separate from one another.

To effectively reinforce the notion that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are all distinct, yet united, consider reviewing the quote by St. Cyril of Alexandria prior to giving the lesson.⁴

So, if they are three hypostases, as one God, do they do different things? Yes! They function differently meaning they have different jobs. God the Father planned the redemption (salvation) of mankind. Jesus the Son accomplished this redemption through His sacrifice on the Cross. The Holy Spirit applies and affirms that redemption, meaning it reminds us of God's love and sacrifice and is a voice that pushes us to do the right thing.

Each person was revealed in their own time. God is in heaven and sent His Son down as Jesus to be with us and to die on the cross for us. The Holy Spirit came and lives within us. The Holy Spirit works in our hearts and assures us that God is



⁴ St. Cyril, Pusey, P. E., Liddon, H. P., & Randell, T. (2006). The commentary on the Gospel of St John. Maidstone, UK: Oriental Orthodox Library.



always with us and that we are truly a part of His family. The Holy Spirit assures us that God is always with us by reminding us what God has said.

Consider reminding the children that we always acknowledge the Holy Trinity when we make the sign of the cross and when we say “In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit”.

Supplementary

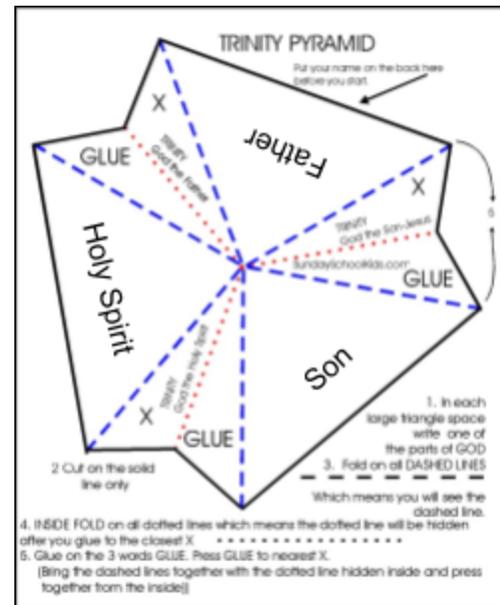


CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Trinity Pyramid⁵:

The servant might find it advantageous to create a class example for the children.

1. Print and handout one trinity pyramid template per child.
2. Have the children write each part of the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) on each side of the pyramid and draw symbols that represent each one.
3. Have the children cut out the template.
4. Have the children fold along the dotted lines and glue on the words “GLUE”.
5. Press the folded edges together to make a pyramid.



VIDEO:

[Signing The Cross - Cartoon - Fr. Daoud Lamei \(5:11\)](#)



SONG:

⁵ Trinity Craft. (n.d.). Retrieved July 21, 2020, from <https://www.sundayschoolchildren.com/activities-trinity-god/0-pyramid-instru.htm>



Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- How many persons are in the trinity? (3 persons, one God.)
- Do they all do the same thing? (They have different responsibilities.)
- How does the Holy Spirit work within us? (The Holy Spirit talks to us to help guide us.)
- Is it bad that we cannot fully comprehend everything about God? (Allow the children to discuss this question. Conclude the discussion by encouraging the children to ask questions when they don't fully comprehend or understand.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

When we make the sign of the cross regularly (in a disciplined manner), let us always focus and remember the trinity! When we pray, we are going to acknowledge God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as three persons in one God. We need to remember to be humble. Our God is so amazing, He created everything that exists! As a result, we must be humble before Him, and remember that we will never truly understand everything about God, but that what we do know for sure is that He loves us infinitely!

- How can we share God's love with others? (We can remember to put the needs of others before our own, as the Son did for us, comfort those who need help, like the Holy Spirit comforts us, and love our neighbor as ourselves, just as the Father loves us.)
- How can we use the Holy Spirit that lives within us? (We can use the Holy Spirit to bring others to Christ, talk about God to our friends and help those who are in need.)

We need to remember to try to listen to the Holy Spirit that lives within us so that we may be guided by it.



Lesson 1.5 - Prayer and the Book of Agpeya

Building Block I
We Grow as We Worship God



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Agpeya books, 7 page tabs/child, prayer ropes to make prayer rope together, prayer checklist (optional).

Scripture Reference: Luke 10: 38-42, Luke 18:1, 1 Samuel 1:11, Jonah 2:9, Luke 1:46-47, Psalm 119:164

Craft: Color papers, string/ yarn, markers, colored pencils, scissors, and hole puncher.

Video: [Christian Youth Channel: Sciboys E06: The Agpeya \(4:04\)](#), [St John & St Verena Coptic Orthodox Church VIC: Sunday School Resources Praying from the Agpeya \(2:06\)](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will develop an understanding of the meaning of prayer, as well as how to pray from the Bible and Agpeya.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Prayerfulness



MEMORY VERSE:



But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.



Matthew 6:6

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Consider beginning the lesson by using the following demonstration based on [this video](#) for the children.

1. Have two oranges, one peeled and one unpeeled.



2. Have a jug filled with colored water.
3. Place all the items on a table in front of the children.
4. Explain to the children that the colored water represents sin and temptation.
5. Explain to the children that the peeled orange represents someone who does not read their Agpeya or uses it when they pray. Drop the peeled orange into the jug of water. (It should sink.) Explain to them the peeled orange sank because it did not have a covering to protect it from temptation, so it fell into temptation because it does not pray or use the Agpeya.
6. Explain to the children that the unpeeled orange represents someone who does read their Agpeya and uses it to pray. Drop the unpeeled orange into the jug of water. (It should float to the top.) Explain to the children that the unpeeled orange did not sink because it did have its covering and was protected because it reads its Agpeya regularly and uses it to pray.

Consider asking the children if they use their Agpeya to pray everyday.



LESSON BODY:

What is prayer?

Prayer is when we stand in the presence of God and we talk to Him. Prayer demonstrates the determination of a person to stand in the presence of God, and it is also the Divine desire from God to invite His people to be seen in front of Him. When a person prays, they should never allow their mind to get distracted from God. So, when we pray, we must dedicate this time for our Lord only. It is okay if you get distracted during prayer. All you need to do is redirect your focus back to God.

During Jesus' visit to Mary and Martha (Luke 10: 38-42), Martha was complimented for she worked hard in the kitchen to serve the Lord and make him food; but Mary, who sat down at Jesus' feet, was praised by Jesus Himself for she chose to stay in front of Jesus listening attentively to everything He was saying. The same should be when we are praying! I shouldn't be praying while busy doing other things, I must dedicate time in my day where I can focus on my prayers and listen to what God has to say to me through the Bible. This takes discipline! I must push away any distraction that comes my way!

Consider pausing to discuss with the children what some distractions they may face in prayer are.

In Luke 18, Jesus tells us to pray, even though we may not immediately receive what we hope for. He tells us, *"shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them?"* (Luke 18:7). God does not ignore our prayers and He hears us, even though it may feel like we wait a long time to see the fruits of our prayers. Prayer is an essential part of our lives, as Jesus reminds us that, *"men always ought to pray and not lose heart"* (Luke 18:1).

There are two places we can go to, to learn more about how to pray and the words we can use when we pray:

1. **The Bible:** We often struggle with what to say to God when we pray. God always listens to everything and anything we say but if we want to learn to pray, we need to look in the Bible at how others prayed and become inspired by them. For example:
 - Hannah when she was sad and wanted to have a baby: (1 Samuel 1:11: *"O Lord of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your*



maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head.”)

- Jonah when he was in the belly of the whale and wanted to repent: (Jonah 2:9: *“But I will sacrifice to You with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord.”*)
- St. Mary when she heard the news of being pregnant with Jesus and was rejoicing: (Luke 1:46-47: *“My soul magnifies the Lord, And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.”*)

As you can see, there are already different occasions of prayers! And we know that God accepted all their prayers and requests, even if not immediately. The Bible shows us that we can pray for many reasons, and the words we can use.

Consider asking the children if they know anywhere else they can go to learn what words they can use when they pray. Remind them that they can find what prayers to say by the time of day by looking at their Agpeya!

2. **The Agpeya** (hourly prayers): The word, Agpeya, is a Coptic word meaning “Book of Hours.” It contains prayers for seven different hours to be said throughout the day. The hours are chronologically laid out, each containing a theme reflecting the events in the life of Jesus. These are the daily prayers offered by the Fathers of the Church and they are seven as David said —Seven times a day I praise you, because of your righteous judgment (Psalm 119:164).

Consider asking the children if they have an Agpeya at home and if they know how to use it. It is recommended for a servant to have an Agpeya in their hand as they show the different parts.

Each hour is composed of:

- An introduction which includes the Lord’s Prayer, the Prayer of Thanksgiving, and Psalm 50.
- It is followed by various Psalms, an excerpt from the Holy Gospel, and Litanies.
- Gloria then the Trisagion.
- The Intercession of the Holy Mother.
- The Creed.
- Lord Have Mercy is then chanted 41 times (representing the 39 lashes Christ received before the crucifixion, plus one for the spear in His side, plus one for the crown of thorns).
- Followed by “Holy, Holy, Holy ”and a conclusion.

The hours of the Agpeya

- 6:00 **1st hour** (Prime) Eternity, Incarnation, Resurrection.
- 9:00 **3rd hour** (Terce) Christ’s trial by Pilate, Ascension, Holy Spirit
- 12:00 **6th hour** (Sext) Crucifixion
- 15:00 **9th hour** (None) Death on the cross, acceptance of right thief
- 21:00 **11th hour** (Vespers) Taking down Christ’s body from the cross.
- 21:00 **12th hour** (Compline) Burial of Christ
- 24:00 **Midnight** Second coming

The church has put together the Agpeya to help us pray. Those prayers are customized to the hours of the day to help think about God throughout the entire day. Prayer helps direct us daily and helps protect our thoughts from bad things.

“This is the prayer that is from the heart, in it one feels that he met with God. In it we either ascend to Him or He descends to us. But the main thing is that we meet.”

- Pope Shenouda III

When you are ready to start using your Agpeya, ask your Father of Confession which hours and sections you should start with.

Consider concluding by reminding the children of the importance of praying, even when they do not get what they think they want. Emphasize the idea that prayer helps us become closer to God and protects us from temptation and sin.

Emphasize the importance of having prayers that are guided by love. As Pope Shenouda III wrote in the quote above, our prayers must be from our hearts, that we may truly meet with God.⁶

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Prayer Book Craft⁷:

1. Give the children cardstock paper and have them cut out any shape they would like.
2. Have the children write on the first page “My Prayer Book”.
3. Assist the children in punching holes in their pages.
4. Assist them in looping string into their pages to make a book.
5. Have them write down their prayers on the pages of the book. They may even write their favorite Psalm or prayer from the Agpeya.



Prayer Hand Activity⁸:

Have the children hold out one hand. Each finger for the thumb to the pinky can be used to represent someone in their life.

For example:

- **The thumb:** Pray for someone close to them (a family member).
- **The index finger:** Say a prayer for someone who points them in the right direction (a teacher or babysitter).
- **The middle finger:** Pray for someone who is in a position of leadership.

⁶ H.H. Pope Shenouda III. (1995). *The Spiritual Means*. Sydney, AU: Coptic Orthodox Publication & Translation.

⁷ Hannah Prayed. (1970, January 01). Retrieved August 12, 2020, from <http://growingupnashville.blogspot.com/2015/07/hannah-prayed.html?m=1>

⁸ Ireland, D. (2016, August 02). Opinion | Six fun and spiritual games for teaching your child to pray. Retrieved July 23, 2020, from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2016/08/02/six-fun-and-spiritual-games-for-teaching-your-child-to-pray/>



- **The ring finger:** Say a prayer for someone who is having family problems (mom and dad are experiencing family problems, pray for the healing of their relationship).
- **The pinky finger:** Pray for a friend and for themselves.



VIDEO:

[Christian Youth Channel: Sciboys E06: The Agpeya \(4:04\)](#), [St John & St Verena Coptic Orthodox Church VIC: Sunday School Resources Praying from the Agpeya \(2:06\)](#)

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- What is Prayer? (Prayer is when we stand in the presence of God and we talk to Him.)
- Where are the two places we can go to when we need guidance during our prayers? (We can use our Bible or our Agpeya for guidance during our prayers.)
- How many hours of prayers are found in the Agpeya? (There are 7 hours in the Agpeya.)
- What should our prayers always be guided by? (Allow the children to discuss openly, but remind them that love should always be our motivation when we pray.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

The Agpeya is filled with many prayers and Psalms that we can use daily. We should regularly be reading and using our Agpeya during our prayers and time with Jesus. How can we practically apply this?

- Make sure to have an Agpeya at home. *The servant may wish to purchase them in advance and give them to the children who do not have one.*
- Read and use our Agpeya for prayer everyday.
- Read Scripture regularly to see who and how people from the Bible used prayer.
- When I go to pray, I should stand respectfully and quietly and remove all distractions (e.g. toys, friends, phone, etc.) *Consider recalling the memory verse at this point.*

Consider creating a prayer checklist, like the one below, for the children to follow during the week.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Morning Prayer						



Evening Prayer						
Bible Reading						



Lesson 1.6 - The Benefits of Holy Communion

Building Block 1
We Grow as We Worship God



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Activity: White board or chart paper.

Video: [George Metry: Coptic Orthodox Church Communion for children \(5:56\)](#)

Song: [ST MARY ST ABRAAM TUBE: Night of the last supper \(5:09\)](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON

The children should understand the gift they receive by taking communion and understand the seriousness of partaking in the sacrament.

MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Appreciation and Respect.



MEMORY VERSE:



Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.



John 6:54-55

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Consider introducing the lesson by asking the children how they remember their friends.

Have you ever had a friend who moved away? It is always hard when someone moves away, but the great thing is that friendships can grow, even when we are apart from each other.

What are some things you have done to remember friends who have moved away?



Before Jesus died on the cross, He gave us something to remember Him by. He knew that we would need something like that because people tend to be forgetful even about the most important things. Do you know what it is? The Lord's Last Supper, which we call Holy Communion!



LESSON BODY:

Who Instituted Communion?

We take communion because Christ himself commanded us to do it. Before Jesus was crucified, He gathered His disciples and told them that each time they gather in love and prayer they must share His body and blood. He took bread and gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to them to eat saying "This is my Body." Then He took a cup and mixed in it wine and water and gave them to drink and told them "This is My blood" given for the forgiveness of sins. "Do this in remembrance of me." He ordered them to do that so they would remember Him and could be with Him until He comes back to take us to heaven. When we take communion, we are united with God through the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ that we receive from the priest. We truly believe that the communion consists of the true Body and true Blood of Christ.

When you take Communion, don't rush, push or shove anyone. Wait for your turn politely. Everyone will take equally. Make sure that you do not talk with other children when you are waiting to take communion. Keep your mouth closed after you take the Body and Blood until you are finished and drink water. This way you are sure that nothing fell out of your mouth. Wait in the church, praising God with the deacons, singing Psalm 150, until the priest sprays the water and sends you in peace.

Preparation for Communion

To approach communion, we must be ready.

Consider asking the children why it is important that we are ready to take communion. Emphasize the importance of being prepared to be one with Christ.

How can I be ready?

Spiritually

- Repentance and Confession;
- Attending the liturgy early so you can participate in the prayers;
- Loving others and not bearing any anger or hatred towards anyone; and
- After receiving communion we should remember how we were blessed with a heavenly gift.

Psychologically

- Give yourself quiet time in the evening before the liturgy (attend tasbeha);
- Do not get distracted with social media, and video games; and
- Read a book or listen to a sermon before sleeping.

Physically

- Fast for 9 hours;



- Be attentive and respectful during liturgy by not talking and participating in the prayers;
- Be careful not to spit after having communion; and
- Come to the liturgy as if you are going to a wedding. Wear your best clothes.

In order to communicate the importance of being prepared for communion, consider reviewing the quote by St. Reweis prior to giving the lesson.⁹

“It is befitting for the person who partakes inside him the Body and Blood of the Lord to be pure inside, as the Virgin who carried the Lord’s Body inside her was pure.”

- St. Reweis

What blessings do we receive in Communion?

- Communion with Christ;
- Forgiveness of sins;
- Obtaining eternal life;
- Healing;
- Unity of heart in the congregation; and
- Preaching salvation to others.

To conclude the importance of the liturgy and partaking of the Holy Communion to the children, consider reviewing the quote on eucharist made by St. Justin Martyr.¹⁰

When we receive the Holy Communion, we remember that Jesus gave His life for us on the cross. Jesus shares His life with us each time we eat the bread and drink the wine. By receiving the Holy Communion, we become members of His Body. Just like He said “Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.” Indeed it is a great gift because it allows us to have eternal life with God.

“And this food is called among us Eucharista [the Eucharist], of which no one is allowed to partake but the man who believes that the things which we teach are true, and who has been washed which the washing that is for the remission of sins, and unto regeneration, and who is so living as Christ has rejoined [instructed]. For not as common bread and common drink do we receive these; ...but in like manner as Jesus Christ our Savior, having been made flesh by the Word of God, who had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so likewise have we been taught that the food which is blessed by the prayer of His word, and from which our blood and flesh by transmutation are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who has made flesh. ”

- St. Justin Martyr

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Password Activity:

Use clue words and descriptions to get your partner to say the actual words!

1. Get students into pairs (or threes, if there is an odd number of children). With your partner(s):
2. Partner A will face the words on a white board or chart paper.
 - a. List of words to use:
 - Communion;

⁹ H.H. Pope Shenouda III. (1995). *The Spiritual Means*. Sydney, AU: Coptic Orthodox Publication & Translation.

¹⁰ St. Justin Martyr. (100-165 AD). *First Apology* (ch.65) Retrieved from <https://copticorthodoxanswers.org/deepdive/how-does-the-eucharist-bring-life-is-it-evident-that-the-early-church-approached-it-as-a-mystery/>



- Bread and wine;
 - Holy Body and Blood of Christ;
 - Cross;
 - Priest;
 - Eternal Life; and
 - Growth.
3. Partner B gives their back to the words.
 4. Partner A will have to describe the word or set of words written without saying the actual words. There will be a total of 8. You do not have to follow the exact order the words are written and if your group is stuck, you can move to another word and come back to it later.
 5. The first group to get all the words wins!



VIDEO:

[George Metry: Coptic Orthodox Church Communion for children \(5:56\)](#)



SONG:

[ST MARY ST ABRAAM TUBE: Night of the last supper \(5:09\)](#)

Lyrics¹¹:

1- (Night of the last supper) x2

Jesus took bread and broke, (and said "This is My Body.") x2

Refrain:

Our Master, our Savior, gave us the vine of love.

He is the Bread of life, (coming from heaven above.)

2- (Night when my Lord suffered) x2

He took wine and gave thanks, (and said "This is My Blood".) x2

3- This is the Groom's supper, is given to His bride.

¹¹ Night Of The Last Supper Lyrics - Coptic Lyrics & Free Christian Spiritual Songs Lyrics Archive - St. Teklahimanout Orthodox Website - Egypt. (n.d.). Retrieved August 13, 2020, from <https://st-takla.org/Lyrics-Spiritual-Songs/English-Coptic-Hymns-Texts/6-Christian-n-Gospel-Lyrics-M-N/Night-Of-The-Last-Supper.html>



Promising eternal life, (up in the Lord's kingdom.) x2

4- This is the food of souls, is offered to us all.

And the blood is given, (to help me lest I fall.) x2

5- Jesus You are my hope, forgive my sins O Lord.

Wash me and clean my soul, (put on me a new robe.) x2

6- My heart I give to You, Your will I want to do.

Your love to me I knew, (when You paid all my dues.) x2

7- Jesus fills all my heart, the devil has no part.

And through this sacrament, (He gave me a new start.) x2

8- Jesus to you I pray, to lead me in Your way.

Bless me and help me obey, (all what the Bible says.) x2

9- Christ suffered for my sake, His mercy is so great.

My sins Jesus forgave, (and a new life He gave.) x2

10- My heart is filled with joy, and my spirit rejoices.

With God I have union, (when I take Communion.) x2



Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- What are the Benefits of the Holy Communion? (Abide in Christ, Promise of Eternal life and growth in the Spirit.)
- Who can pray on the bread and wine to be the Body and Blood of Jesus? (A priest or bishop.)
- Can we do it without the priest? Who gives him this authority? And when? (We can't do it without a priest because he was given the authority by a bishop during his ordination.)
- How do we prepare ourselves for Communion? (Examine myself. Confess my sins to a priest. Fast. Attend liturgy from the beginning. Pay attention throughout the liturgy and listen to the words the priest says. Approach communion with humility and joy!)
- Can we live without communion? (Allow the children to discuss. Consider reminding the children that Jesus told us that we cannot have eternal life without abiding in Him, which is only possible in Communion.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

Now we know that the real presence of Christ is in the Holy Communion. When you are receiving the Holy Communion we should have respect and pray thankfully and ask for forgiveness because you are being united with Jesus Christ. During liturgy, I must stay disciplined and avoid distractions like my phone, friends, toys, talking to anyone, etc. and stand still during the prayers. I should also focus by reading along on the screen or my own liturgy book.

Lesson 1.7 - Praising and Worshiping God When We See the Beauty of the World

Building Block 1
We Grow as We Worship God



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Photo of a place in nature.

Scripture Reference: Genesis 1:28

Activity: [Scavenger Hunt printout](#) and pencils.



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This lesson will help the children realize that everything beautiful they see around the world was created by God. By understanding this, they can always give thanks and praise Him in their prayers.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Prayerfulness and Gratitude.



MEMORY VERSE:



O Lord, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all. The earth is full of Your possessions.



Psalm 104:24

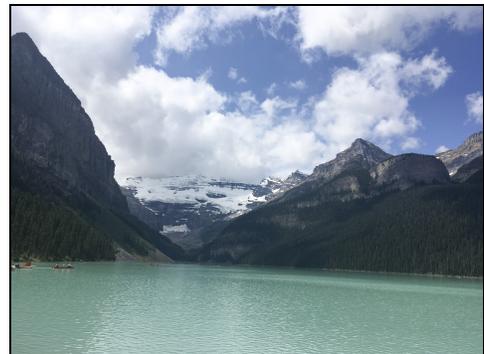
Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Consider beginning the class by showing a picture of a spot in nature that the servant loves or has been to. Ask the children to point out things they notice or like about the picture.

Have the children sit in a circle and allow them to share a place in nature that they love or go to often.





Nature is beautiful, right? Who created everything that we see in nature? (God!) When we see magnificent mountains or beautiful lakes, we should remember that God created them, and thank Him for the beauty around us!



LESSON BODY:

In the beginning, God allowed Adam and Eve to work in the garden to draw nourishment and enjoyment from it. Even from the beginning, God found nature to be important and beautiful. After God created Adam and Eve He told them that they had responsibility over all creation. Even from the beginning, people had the responsibility to take care of God's beautiful creation!

Consider asking the children to discuss ways they can take care of nature as God instructed Adam and Eve.

You may wish to emphasize God's love in giving us responsibility over His creation by drawing from the quote by St. John Chrysostom on the right on Genesis 1:28.¹²

One of the ways we can grow with God is if we have time to go outside to observe and value nature. When we make time to go outside, we get to see all the things that God created. Think about all the beautiful plants and trees, the leaves and the noise they make when the wind blows, how beautiful sunrises and sunsets look, and how big and bright the moon and stars are. Nature reveals to us God's beauty, glory, power, wisdom, presence, creativity, and His loving care.

Part of the way God reveals Himself to us is through creation. We should spend time with His creation and pay careful attention to the things He has made. How can we ever praise Him for something that we do not notice or take for granted?

Consider asking the class how they can show their appreciation for God's creation.

When we take the time to look at the creation around us, we will realize that God put so much effort into its details. All the different types of plants, animals, fish, the way they communicate, hunt, feed their little babies, the different skins and colors they have. When we realize all this, we can only be in awe! It is truly amazing! He did not skip any details! The cycles of the moon, or the order of the planets, the perfect distance between Earth and the Sun that provides heat and light yet without burning us! If God put so much effort in nature, how much more attention did He give to humans! He made us all look different, yet we are humans! We are all connected through Adam and Eve! We all have the same organs, yet each one uses their brain, hand, voice, etc. in a different way! How can we not praise God for this beauty? We take it for granted. How could we dare to think less of ourselves? If God made you, then you are so special and unique and so loved by Him!

"I mean, those words, "increase and multiply and fill the earth," anyone could see are said of the brute beasts and the reptiles alike, whereas "gain dominion and have control" are directed to the man and woman. See the Lord's loving kindness: even before creating them, he makes them share in this control and bestows on them the blessing."

- St. John Chrysostom

¹² Oden, T. C., & Louth, A. (2019). Genesis 1-11. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.

One thing that prevents us from noticing the beauty of the world is our advancement in technology. We are so glued to our phones and iPads that we rarely have time to look up. Instead of playing outside, we are stuck inside playing our PlayStation or watching TV. During car rides, instead of looking out the window to reflect on the beauty God created, we are looking down on our phones and game systems. Even with all the technology, trees still grow, we still eat from the fruits of the fields, and we are still dependent upon the natural world to survive. We cannot let technology distract us from the lessons God can teach us through nature.

Let's look at a story from *The Paradise of the Desert Fathers* to help us understand this better.¹³ Abba Doulas, the disciple of Abba Bessarion said, 'One day when we were walking beside the sea I was thirsty and I said to Abba Bessarion, "Father, I am very thirsty." He said a prayer and said to me, "Drink some of the sea water." The water proved sweet when I drank some. I even poured some into a leather bottle for fear of being thirsty later on. Seeing this, the old man asked me why I was taking some. I said to him, "Forgive me, it is for fear of being thirsty later on." Then the old man said, "God is here, God is everywhere." This story teaches us how God is present and provides for us continually through His creation. How lucky are we!

We can all live with a growing appreciation and gratitude for God's creation through the natural world. We can go nurture some plants or go sit by a river and write about the things you observed while watching the river. Maybe you saw many different types of fish or saw different water bugs jumping around. Instead of watching Netflix or scrolling through Instagram, go outside and take a walk.

So let us be disciplined in our journey to worship God! Let's consistently look for Him everywhere we go. Indoors or outdoors, rain or shine, morning or evening, or even in church, look at the icons around you, every saint teaches us a story, every cross is a reminder of God's love, every hymn is praising God. In every moment, God reveals Himself to us through our surroundings! So, what is God trying to reveal to you now? This exercise of constantly looking for the beauty in the creation requires us to be disciplined. We must dedicate time in our day, in our walk to school, or while having a meal, during our school break, even in a car ride! We will then train our minds to constantly look for God and we will find ourselves often praising Him and worshipping Him and growing closer to Him.

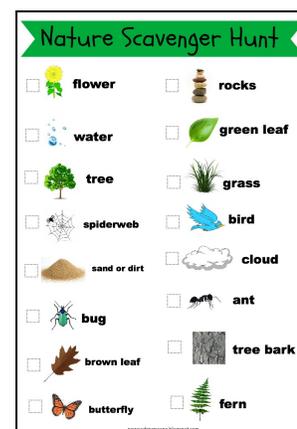
Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Scavenger Hunt- Nature Walk Activity¹⁴:

1. Plan a scavenger hunt in the church's backyard/ parking lot/ park where children can explore nature and hunt for the following (this can be tailored to your area/location).
2. Consider using the [following chart](#) for this activity.



¹³ N, A. (n.d.). *The Paradise of the Desert Fathers*. Retrieved from <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/paradise-of-the-desert-fathers-12508>

¹⁴ Photo Scavenger Hunt for Kids {Free Printables}. (n.d.). Retrieved August 13, 2020, from <https://nowoodenspoons.blogspot.com/2013/07/photo-scavenger-hunt-for-kids-free.html>



Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- What are some things from God's creation we can give thanks for in our prayers? (Answers may include; the beauty of a butterfly, intricate design of its wings, details of our hands, etc.)
- Do we have a responsibility to protect the nature God created? (Allow the children to discuss. Remind the children of what God instructed Adam and Eve to do with His creation.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

We should all take the time to be outside in order to notice everything God has created for us so that we can notice the beauty and praise Him for all that He has done. Here are some things we can do to appreciate and enjoy God's creation when we spend time with nature:

- Keep a nature journal where you write down everything that you observed; dig in the mud, watch an anthill, hold a snail in your hand, or lie on a blanket and watch the clouds float past, etc.
- We should try to discipline our minds to think more about God and appreciate the things He has given us.
- Try to find one thing daily to thank God for in the nature surrounding you.



Lesson 1.8 - An Overview of the Book of Psalms

Building Block 1
We Grow as We Worship God



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Bibles.

Scripture References: Psalms and Agpeya.

Activity: [Worksheet](#), and pencil.

Video: [Coptic Orthodox Answers: Should I use Psalms in prayer? by Fr. Gabriel Wissa](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The child will develop a general knowledge and basic structure of the Book of Psalms. The Psalms teach children how to approach God, how to talk to Him, and how to ask for help – for God is faithful and will always be there for them.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Prayerful



MEMORY VERSE:

“
How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!
”
Psalm 119:103

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Do you know what a Psalm is? Have you ever heard Abouna say “Have mercy upon me. O God, according to Your great mercy; and according to the multitude of Your compassion...” This is the start of a very repeated Psalm. Can you guess which one? Psalm 50! The Psalms are basically an Old Testament song book for temple worship and these songs touch on a lot of different themes, emotions, etc. For example, Psalm 50 is about asking God to have mercy on us and this Psalm is said every time in the Hourly Agpeya Prayers. Do you know any other Psalm?



LESSON BODY:

There are 151 psalms in the Orthodox Bible. Most of the psalms were written by King David. He was known for his love towards God and his life of praise. Samuel, the prophet, referred to David as being a man after God's heart: *"The Lord has sought for Himself a man after His own heart"* (1 Sam. 13:14) We know that God saw David's prayers and praises and he found them to be in line with His heart, teachings, and love.

The Psalms are not like the other books in the Bible that have chapters. Even though the book of psalms has been intentionally ordered, they are not looked upon as being a story. Each psalm is separate; so there are no chapters.

There are two types of psalms: happy psalms and sad psalms

- Happy Psalms (hymns, confidence, thanksgiving, wisdom, praise, etc.)
- Sad Psalms (individual laments[crying, weeping], community lament, etc.)

The Psalms are more about us talking to God, rather than God talking to us. This is an important point to remember as we move forward. Just like songs today have a lot of emotion and meaning in them, psalms carry a lot of emotions as well. Since it carries emotions, when we pray with Psalms, we deepen our relationship with God. Psalms reminds us of how merciful and wise God is.

Consider the following quote from St. John Chrysostom for a better understanding about the importance of knowing the Psalms, in your preparation for the lesson.¹⁵

"Teach [them] to sing those psalms which are so full of love of wisdom; as at once concerning chastity or rather, before all, of not companying with the wicked, immediately with the very beginning of the book; (for therefore also it was that that prophet began on this wise... The Psalms contain things, but the Hymns again have nothing human. When he has been instructed out of the Psalms, he will then know hymns also , as a diviner thing."

- St. John Chrysostom

The Psalms can be helpful to us when we look for guidance or feel fear. It is important to also realize that Psalms are in the bible so we read this book for the purpose of it being used as a tool of prayer and Psalms are also sung in the Church. Furthermore, after the prayers of Good Friday, Abouna tells the congregation to read the entire book of Psalms. This in itself shows how powerful the book is as a tool for us to deepen and enrich our relationship with God.

¹⁵ John Chrysostom. (2015). *Sentences by St. John Chrysostom: Part 1 – Quotes and Translations*. Vladimir Djambov.



Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Break the Code Activity¹⁶:

1. Put the children in groups of two to work together (the activity might be too hard alone)
2. Solve the code
 - a. To solve look at the letter and write the next letter that comes after it in the alphabet
 - b. Ex. ORZKLR would be the code for PSALMS
3. Here is [Answer key](#)



VIDEO:

[Coptic Orthodox Answers: Should I use Psalms in prayer? by Fr. Gabriel Wissa](#)

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- How many psalms are written in the Bible? (151 (Note: This value is based on the Orthodox Bible)).
- Are the psalms telling a story? (No, each psalm is separate and represents a prayer/hymn/praise/request to God.)
- What are some of the types of psalms? (lament, wisdom, thanksgiving, praise, etc).
- Is there a psalm you like very much? (Answers will vary.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

¹⁶ Break the Code - Psalms. (n.d.). Retrieved July 20, 2020, from <https://www.biblewise.com/kids/fun/break-code-psalms.php>



Let us make it a habit of praying the psalms daily in our agepeya! Remember that reading it alone won't serve as much value and we need to pray them. This will allow for our minds and hearts to both be used.

Consider printing a copy of the following table and distribute to the children to append to their agepeya¹⁷.

Reason	Psalm	Reason	Psalm
To know how to come to God each day	5	To know why you should worship God	104
To understand yourself more clearly	8	To understand why you should read the Bible	119
To please God	15	To learn a new prayer	136
To find comfort	23	To give thanks to God	136
To learn about God	24	To feel worthwhile	139
To be forgiven	51	To give praise to God	145
To learn a new song	92	To know that God is in control	146
To feel closer to God	103		

¹⁷ <https://www.scribd.com/document/161967429/Athanasius-to-Marcellinus-Psalms-for-Variou-Occasions>



Lesson 1.9 - Daniel's Prayer

Building Block 1
We Grow as We Worship God



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Bibles.

Scripture Reference: Daniel 9:1-19

Activity: Chair.



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will learn the elements of prayer from Daniel's own prayer, and that our prayers should not be about us only, but that God is the focus.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Prayerfulness/Persistence



MEMORY VERSE:



Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.



Daniel 9:3

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Have the children share different things they ask for in prayer. Take each response and talk about how praying for that request can be focused either on God or focused on ourselves.

Scripture teaches us to pray about everything. The point of today's lesson is not to discourage one from praying for things for themselves. It is to help you see how even a request for toys can be turned into a God-focused prayer. For example: Lord, I really would like to have a new bike. Thank You for the bike I already



have. I know that many boys and girls in this world do not own a bike. If it is Your will for me to have a new bike please provide. If You choose not to, Lord, let me be content with the one I have.

Let's see a biblical example of Christ-centred prayer in the life of Daniel the prophet.



LESSON BODY:

Read Daniel 9:1-19. Consider distributing Bibles and inviting the children to lead portions of the reading.

When the people of Israel turned away from God, God allowed their enemy nation, Babylon, to capture the Jews and take them away from their home to Babylon. The temple and the city walls of Jerusalem were destroyed by the Babylonians. Daniel was one of the people exiled. Babylon was far from his original home.

During this exile, Daniel proved over and over that he would not leave God's teachings even when it almost cost him his life. Remember the story of Daniel in the lions' den? He was thrown in the den with the hungry lions simply because he was praying to God, but God delivered him. Daniel was a very righteous man and during his exile, he recognized his sins and the sins of the people of Israel, and knew he needed to repent! His prayers to God were truly honest and pleasing to God. Today we will look at one of his prayers and try to learn how we can also have a true prayer from the heart.

Read Daniel's prayer (Daniel 9:4-19) from the Bible together. You may wish to break it down, section by section, to explain it to the children, as outlined below.

At the start, Daniel acknowledges God's character:

Consider asking the children what character traits Daniel uses as he describes God.

"O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments." (Daniel 9:4) From Daniel's example, we can learn to start our prayer by acknowledging who God is to us: "Our Father, our Saviour, our King, etc." By doing this, we will learn to focus more on God and less on ourselves. Just like when we refer to our teacher at school, we say "Teacher XY", we usually add the persons' title first; their relationship to us.

After Daniel acknowledges God's character, he confesses his sin: Daniel uses the word 'we' which includes himself, meaning he does not only blame the other Jews who sinned. Although none of Daniel's sins are recorded, Daniel understood from the Scriptures that he was a sinner. He was confessing the sins of his people.

"Daniel did not only think of the people's sins, but also of his sins, being one of the people. Though he did not commit any personal sins, yet he wanted to win God's forgiveness by his humility."

- St. Jerome

You may wish to introduce and paraphrase the commentary by St. Jerome above on this, as provided by Fr. Tadros Malaty's commentary on the Book of Daniel.¹⁸

¹⁸ Fr. Tadros Malaty. (n.d.). "Commentary on the Book of Daniel." Retrieved from <http://www.stminahamilton.ca/groups/servants/bible-commentary-books>, p. 95.



“We have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments. Neither have we heeded Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings and our princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land.” (Daniel 9: 5-13).

When we pray, we have to present our repentance by humbly confessing our sins. We must not be proud of ourselves but remind ourselves of our own mistakes. When we pray “Our Father” we say “forgive us our trespasses” because we know we always sin, just as any other person does.

After this, Daniel remembers God’s past deliverances. As a child of God’s Word, Daniel knew how God rescued His people from slavery in Egypt. The nations heard about God’s mighty power that delivered His people and His name became famous throughout the land.

“And now, O Lord our God, who brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand,” (Daniel 9:15).

As we pray, we should remember God’s deliverances. Whenever He kept His promises and helped us, we must remember these moments to remind ourselves that He is listening and working. Search your memory and try to remember a time when you prayed to God and asked Him for something and He gave it to you; whether it was to pass an exam, fix a problem with a friend, win a game, help a friend, etc. This will also increase our faith in our prayers and in God.

Daniel asks God to forgive sin and act. Daniel knew that his life purpose was not to focus on himself but to bring glory to God. His prayer focused on God’s name and His glory.

“O Lord, listen and act!” (Daniel 9:19)

In our prayers, the last thing is to make a request! We can see here that Daniel’s prayer was not focused on himself, but rather focused on God. Daniel was concerned about God’s reputation and wanted God’s name to be lifted up. He wanted God to be manifested and the glory be given to Him.

You may wish to conclude by mentioning the following point from Fr. Tadros Malaty’s commentary on the Book of Daniel: “Daniel was a man of prayer and he enjoyed the following blessings: The Son of Man appeared to him several times: (7:13, 8:15, 10:5-9), thus Daniel enjoyed the Desire of all the nations. Daniel was the only one who saw heavenly visions, for he said, “And I Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision; but a great terror fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. Therefore, I was left alone when I saw this great vision...” (10:7,8). Daniel enjoyed the company of arch-angel Gabriel, whom the Son of Man asked to interpret to Daniel the mysteries of His first and second coming and His act of salvation. (8:16; 9:21; 11:1). He also strengthened him. (10:9) Daniel was called “greatly beloved” (9:23; 10:11,19), that is, he is the one whom God desires and is pleased with.”¹⁹

Concluding by detailing these blessings experienced by Daniel may serve as a point of encouragement for the children; when we pray and entreat God the way Daniel did, God will also bless and protect us.

¹⁹ Fr. Tadros Malaty. (n.d.). “Commentary on the Book of Daniel.” Retrieved from <http://www.stminahamilton.ca/groups/servants/bible-commentary-books>, p. 94.



Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

In the Lions' Den Activity²⁰: This game teaches that even though we need to have faith in God, it is okay to be afraid and ask for God's support by praying sincerely and with complete belief.

1. Ask the children to make a straight line across the room with all facing the front.
2. Choose one person to be the lion.
3. The lion will go stand in front of the rest of the children in the center of the room facing away from them and closing his/her eyes, as if sleeping.
4. Place a chair right behind the lion.
5. The goal is for a random child from the line to go and get the bean bag without the lion noticing.
6. If the lion thinks there is someone behind him/her trying to get the bean bag, he/she can turn around and try to tag him/her before he/she reaches the line of the rest of the children. If the lion turns around before the child grabs the bean bag, the lion loses and can let the child go back to the line.
7. If he/she tries to tag the person and he/she gets back first to the line, the lion stays again. If the lion tags, he/she switches with the person tagged.
8. The children will be scared when the lion runs after them, just like how we might be scared in many situations in life.

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- Does having God-centred prayer mean that I cannot ask God for things and go to Him when I am afraid? (No! It is possible to go to God for all things, while still prioritizing Him in our prayers and worship.)
- What are the elements of Daniel's prayer that believers should have as they pray? (Confession of sin, acknowledging God's character, remembering God's past works, and God-focused prayer.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS

²⁰ Garner, R. (2019, January 10). Daniel in the Lions' Den Games for Kids. Retrieved July 22, 2020, from <https://ourpastimes.com/daniel-in-the-lions-den-games-for-kids-13583097.html>



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

- Assign time in your day to have a sit down with God and pray. You can follow the points we learned today to learn how to pray.
- This week, try to discipline yourself in remembering the deliverance of God. Have a diary where you simply record the things God did for you! It will be a great help whenever your faith is a little shaken.



Lesson 1.10 - Praises after Crossing the Red Sea

Building Block 1
We Grow as We Worship God



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Bibles.

Scripture References: Exodus 15.

Activity: Blindfold and items to act as obstacles (paper, rock, chair, etc.); Sticky notes and pencil/pens; Container filled with water, jumbo popsicle stick, and a transparent cup.

Song: [HelenIskander: 1st hose EnglishMovie File.wmv \(5:13\)](#), [Lyrics of First of Hoos](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

From this lesson, the children will learn how to trust God, pray and seek Him, and to praise Him for all His work.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Trust and Earnestness.



MEMORY VERSE:

“

I sought the Lord, and He heard me, And delivered me from all my fears.

”

Psalm 34:4



Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Minefield/ Trust Walk²¹:

1. One partner is blindfolded, the other teammate (not blindfolded) will guide them through short obstacles. (Obstacles that could be made in the classroom is a paper on the ground they have to avoid, a paper on the ground that tells them to jump on, an object on the ground that they must grab, etc.) Then follow-up with a discussion. (NOTE: if the discussion after the introduction activity is too time consuming, it would be fine to finish with only an explanation, point five, of the activity below.)
 - Ask the children, "Who are the people you trust with your secrets or trust to be there for you? What kind of person do you find easy to trust? What traits make them trustworthy?" (Children share and discuss)
 - Explain, "We can see that the people we trust are people that we know care for us."
 - Then ask, "Now, I want you to think about this. Have you ever been in a situation where you had to completely trust God?" (Children answer.)
 - "Is it ever difficult to trust God? (Children answer. There will likely be answers of yes and no.) It should not be difficult since we know He loves and cares for us, but sometimes it is and it is understandable."
 - Explanation of the activity: "Just like in the activity we just did, it was difficult to trust our teammate because we cannot see the directions of where we are going. But we know that our teammate had the best of intentions in getting us to the objective. So it is understandable why we may sometimes have a difficult time trusting God. We cannot always see the direction or plans He has for us very clearly. But remember in Proverb 3:5-6, it says: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."

In today's lesson, we are going to learn about how Moses trusted God to protect him and the Israelites from harm.



LESSON BODY:

When God asked Moses to deliver his people from slavery in Egypt and bring them to The Promised Land, Pharaoh was angry, and tried to do anything to stop them. God sent the ten plagues and still Pharaoh was stubborn, and refused to let the Israelites go. Eventually, Moses was able to bring them to the edge of the Red Sea but when Pharaoh heard it, he brought his fastest chariots, strongest warriors, and followed the people of God, but

"Or do you not hear how Moses, although he said nothing but met the Lord with his inexpressible groanings, was heard by the Lord, who said, "Why do you cry to me?" God knows how to hear even the blood of a just man, to which no tongue is attached and of which no voice pierces the air. The presence of good works is a loud voice before God."

- St. Basil the Great

²¹ 'Should I Trust?' Childrens Lesson on Peter Walking on Water • MinistryArk. (2020, February 17). Retrieved July 20, 2020, from <https://ministryark.com/lesson/should-i-trust-childrens-lesson-on-peter-walking-on-water/>



Moses found himself at the edge of the Red Sea when the Egyptian army ran them down.

Consider the following quote from St. Basil the Great for a better understanding of how God heard Moses during his cry to God, in your preparation for the lesson.²²

The Israelites were afraid because they were trapped against the sea and the Egyptians had a well trained army with chariots and horses. Moses told the Israelites *“Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.”*(Exodus 14:13-14)

An angel of the Lord and a pillar of cloud stood between the two groups. The cloud lit up the night; neither camp approached the other. God told Moses to lift his staff and hold it over the sea. While Moses did this, God sent an East wind to blow against the sea. Soon there was dry land for the Israelites to cross over upon, and walls of water on both sides, and the Israelites safely crossed over.

By morning, the Egyptians chose to follow the Israelites. They brought their chariots, but God clogged the wheels so they would not turn. They began to realize that they were not fighting against the Israelites, but against God. God told Moses to stretch out his hand over the sea, that it might return to its normal depth. When he did this, every single Egyptian soldier and all their chariots were destroyed in the sea.

When the Israelites saw that they were saved, they sang praises to God. Miriam, Moses' sister, led the women in praising God, saying, *“Sing to the Lord, For He has triumphed gloriously! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea!”* (Exodus 15:21)

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Trust Wall from Bible Studies for Life Activity²³:

1. In this activity, children will write on their sticky note and place it on the board, trust wall.
2. Write on the board, "God is trustworthy." Give each child a few sticky notes. Explain to the children they will write one way or time God has shown that He is trustworthy to them on the sticky note. And then place it on the board.
3. Encourage the children to share more ways and times God has shown them that He is trustworthy on the other sticky notes. They could take more sticky notes to share if they like. And then the teacher will read some of the children's sticky notes. Remind the children that God is trustworthy.

God's Power Activity:

1. Take a pan of water. Ask the children if they can hold back the water. Let them try with a jumbo popsicle stick, their hands, etc. Then put a transparent glass in the water. Show how the glass forms a wall that holds back the water.

²² LIENHARD, J. T. (Ed.). (2001). *EXODUS, LEVITICUS, NUMBERS, DEUTERONOMY*. Place of publication not identified, IL: INTERVARSITY Press.

²³ Land, J. (2014, May 06). Grades 1-6: It's Not Always Easy: Session 3 - Hard to Trust. Retrieved July 20, 2020, from <https://biblestudiesforlife.com/grades-1-6-its-not-always-easy-session-3-hard-to-trust/>



- Ask the children if people could hold back water without some kind of wall. Of course not. It takes huge concrete devices like the Hoover Dam to hold back water. God was able to push the water into walls with his mighty power.
- 2. Then discuss: Exodus 14:3-4. God's power is demonstrated through our weakness, because when we are weak, and do God's will, it's obvious He is helping us.
 - We do not have to be powerful or knowledgeable or wealthy or popular to accomplish God's work. He will provide all we need. So, when we feel trapped or weak or helpless, who should we turn to? Will He help us?



SONG:

[HelenIskander: 1st hose EnglishMovie File.wmv \(5:13\)](#), [Lyrics of First of Hoos](#)

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- Was Pharaoh willing to let the people of Israel leave? (No).
- How did God save the people of Israel when they were stuck between the army of Pharaoh and the Red Sea? (He sent a pillar of cloud to separate the two camps, then separated the waters of the Red Sea in two so that the Israelites could walk on dry land.)
- How did the Israelites show their gratitude to God for crossing the Red Sea? (They praised God.)
- When Moses told the Israelites not to be afraid, do you think he, himself, was afraid? (No, he trusted that God heard his prayers and that He would give the Israelites what they needed.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

When we find ourselves in a difficult position (either at school, at home, at church, etc.), we should remember that we always have God on our side. Always call on the Lord in times of trouble and He will deliver you. We usually do not think of presenting our problems to God; we try to fix them ourselves, but God teaches us not to worry, but to put our worries on Him and He will deliver us. When He does, we must thank Him and not take His help for granted, we should always give glory to Him.



When I find myself in a difficult position, caused by a friend, teacher at school, siblings and/or parents, we should take the problem and bring it to God during our prayer time at home. When we are disciplined in our prayers daily, this will become a good habit, and we will see the hands of God more often in our lives.

Learn to praise God for all the good He provides: in my prayer corner at home, by attending midnight praises every Saturday night at Church or even pray for them at home. They tell the story of Moses! We can also keep a little diary of all the things we are thankful for to God. It will be a great reminder during times of need.



Lesson 1.11 - Hannah's Prayer

Building Block 1
We Grow as We Worship God



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Hat, scrap pieces of paper, writing utensils (pencils/pens/markers), Bibles.

Scripture References: 1 Samuel 1 and 2.

Activity: Brown paper bag, "God Answers Prayers" label, glue, and snack.



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will learn to always trust in God and remember all His blessings, just as Hannah did in the Bible. They will also learn ways that they can grow in their relationship with God by telling Him their problems and thanking Him when He delivers.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Prayerfulness and Trust.



MEMORY VERSE:



*My heart rejoices in the Lord; my horn is exalted in the Lord. I smile at my enemies,
because I rejoice in Your salvation.*



1 Samuel 2:1



Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Fear in the Hat Activity²⁴:

1. Have the children form a circle.
2. Give a scrap piece of paper to each child and instruct them to write down (anonymously) their personal fears on their piece of paper before placing them into a hat. Remind the children not to share their fears with classmates.
3. Once all of the children have placed their fears in the hat, the servant will read some of the fears aloud to the class and there will be a discussion around the fears. The discussion should focus on if other people have that same fear and what you think being afraid of that particular fear would be like.
4. Ask the children "What do you usually do when you are afraid?"

Today, we will learn about a woman in the Bible who feared that she would never have children, but her fear disappeared when she decided to put her trust in God!



LESSON BODY:

Read 1 Samuel 1 and 2. Consider providing the children with Bibles so that they can follow along and lead some parts of the reading. Summarize with the children.

A long time ago, there was a man named Elkanah who had two wives: Hannah and Peninnah. Hannah had no children, but Peninnah had children and she often used this to provoke Hannah. Despite this, Elkanah loved Hannah very much, but she was very sad. Peninnah was mean to her and teased her year after year, so Hannah became bitter.

One year, when she went to the house of the Lord with her husband to worship, and she stood there in front of the Lord, prayed and cried, and prayed to God: *"O Lord of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head."*(1 Samuel 1:11). It was

"Take note of the woman's reverence: she did not say, "If you give me three, I shall give you two;" or "if two, I shall give you one." Instead, "If you give me one, I shall dedicate the offspring wholly to you." "He will not drink wine or strong drink." She had not yet received the child and was already forming a prophet, talking about his upbringing and making a deal with God. What wonderful confidence on a woman's part!."

- St. John Chrysostom

²⁴ Brinn, J. (2014, February 11). Icebreakers Part 3: Building trust and creating a safe environment. Retrieved July 20, 2020, from https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/icebreakers_part_3_building_trust_and_creating_a_safe_environment



common that when a child is given to the temple, he is sanctified and does not cut his hair.

Consider the quote from St. John Chrysostom for a better understanding about Hannah's promise to God in your preparation for the lesson.²⁵

Eli, the priest, saw her, and saw that her lips were moving but could not hear a sound. Eli thought she was drunk, but Hannah told him that she was in sorrow and was crying to the Lord. Eli told her to go in peace and that God would grant her request. So, Hannah went her way and her face was no longer sad (1 Samuel 1:18).

Consider asking the children why they think Hannah was no longer sad and went her way? Nothing changed and she still had no children! Discuss how simply putting our trust in the Lord and coming to Him in prayer can help give us strength in our hard times, even if the hard time does not go away.

Hannah's heart was changed through prayer. She trusted that the Lord would take care of her. Hannah truly believed this and counted on God. Once we put our problems in front of God during prayer, either at church or at home, we should no longer worry about them!

As time went by, Hannah had a son and named him Samuel, which means "Because I have asked for him from the Lord." When he grew, she fulfilled her promise to God. She offered her only son to God; she took him to Eli the priest to live and serve in the temple.

Hannah had just given up the most precious thing in her life, her miracle son, the baby she prayed for!

Consider asking the children how often do we ask God for something and make a promise, then just forget to fulfil it or feel that it was a very hard promise to keep so we just take it back?

We must always do what we promise, especially if it is a promise to God!

Ask the children what they think Hannah did after fulfilling her promise. Did she go home and cry because she could not be with her baby, or did she go to Eli the priest and ask him to give her back her son?

In 1 Samuel 2:1-2, we see what Hannah did. Let us read it together.

"My heart rejoices in the Lord; my horn is exalted in the Lord. I smile at my enemies, because I rejoice in Your salvation. No one is holy like the Lord, for there is none besides You, nor is there any rock like our God.[..]" (1 Samuel 2:1-2).

This is such a beautiful prayer! Keeping her promise to God made Hannah happy and not sad, and her entire prayer is one of rejoicing. Hannah gave God the glory and the credit, not only for giving her a son, but for everything that happens in the world. She realized that we need Him. Hannah acknowledges that God gives life and takes it away.

Now it is our turn to praise God for all the things He provides us!

²⁵ Franke, J. R., & Oden, T. C. (Eds.). (2005). *Ancient Christian commentary on scripture: Old Testament*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.



Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

“God Answers Prayers” Game:

1. Before class, type and print out a “God Answers Prayers” label as well as “Yes” , “No” , and “Wait” labels. (Ensure that the amount of “Yes” labels is the same as the amount of children to ensure that every child receives a snack). Once all of the labels have been printed out, cut and glue the “God Answers Prayers” label onto the brown paper bag. The rest of the labels can be cut out and placed inside of the paper bag.
*Note: Instead of printing out labels for each child, you can use a white eraser with “Yes” written on one side in sharpie and “No” written on the other side. The children or the servant can toss the eraser to see the answer. A second option would be to use a numerical dice - one and two would be “Yes”, three and four would be “No”, and five and six would be “Wait”.
2. Tell the children that they will be playing a game about trusting God. He hears all of our prayers but He doesn’t always answer them the way we want Him to answer them. Sometimes He says yes, sometimes He says no, and sometimes He says that we have to wait. Explain beforehand that each of them will end up getting a snack (have a bowl full of a certain snack for the children to see), but some of them will have to wait longer than others!
3. Give each child (one at a time) the opportunity to say “May I have a snack?”. Once a child asks the question they can reach into the bag and read the response. If it says “Yes”, the child receives a snack right away. If it says “no”, the child has to wait to try again after every child has had the chance to take a turn. If it says “wait”, the child has to wait until the next child receives a snack before they can get their snack.

Once each child has received a snack, ask them how it relates to the story of Hannah. After the children have shared their thoughts, state that God answers prayers, but sometimes we will need to be patient and put our trust in Him before He answers our prayers. Hannah was patient and placed her trust in God, so He in turn blessed her with a son!

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- Who was Elkanah? (He was Hannah’s husband.)
- Why was Hannah sad? (Because she could not have a baby.)
- What did Hannah do about it? (She went to the temple to pray to God.)
- What did she promise God? (To give Him her son to serve in the altar all his life.)
- Was her problem solved at the moment? How did she feel? (No, but she left happy!)



- If Hannah's problem was not solved right away, why did she leave the temple happy? (She left happy because when she prayed, she put her trust in the Lord.)
- Did God fulfill His promise? (Yes!)
- Did Hannah fulfill her promise to God? (Yes! She gave her son to the temple to serve God.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

Just as Hannah praised God for listening to her prayer, and put her trust in God even before she had a son, we too can and should lean fully on Him.

God is secure, He is our foundation, our solid Rock. We can rely on Him who never changes, to hold us steady in difficult times. Our God is forever faithful. No matter what you are facing today, hope in Him. He will never fail, and He is with you, always. How can we try to do this during this week?

- Develop the habit of bringing your problems to God, and keep bringing it up every time you pray. Do this when you are scared, happy, nervous, etc.
- When God delivers us and helps us, we must give Him thanks!
- Make sure you trust in God! God will not always give us what we *want*, but He always gives us what we need!



Lesson 1.12 - Jonah's Prayer

Building Block 1
We Grow as We Worship God



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Bibles, salt, spoon, cotton swabs, plastic bottle, food coloring, oil, tape, and a bowl of water.

Scripture References: Jonah 2

Craft: Bottle, funnel, mineral oil, water, food dye, little plastic boat, a person (Jonah), whale, other sea creatures/objects(seahorses, seashells, ect.), and marbles/little rocks.

Activity: Ocean noises and ocean smelling air freshener.

Song: [Jonah's Fast Doxology \(2:32\)](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

Pray at all times and in all places. No matter the place or the location, God always listens!



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Trust and Thankfulness.



MEMORY VERSE:



I cried out to the Lord because of my affliction, and He answered me.



Jonah 2:2

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

When we have problems or we feel sad, who do we turn to? Anytime we talk to God, wherever we are, He always listens. God who made heaven and earth cares about me every minute of the day.



Activity:

Set out one or both of the following sensory items for children to explore.

Discuss what it might have been like for Jonah to fall into the sea and be swallowed by a giant fish.

1. Have children help you add a spoonful of salt to a small bowl of water. Let children take turns stirring the saltwater, and then invite them to dip a cotton swab in the salt water and dab it onto their tongues to taste it. For sanitary purposes, do not let children re-dip their cotton swabs. Explain that Jonah probably swallowed some salty water before the fish swallowed him.
2. Create a “slow-motion ocean” for children to play with. Before class, fill a clear quart- or liter-sized plastic bottle half full of water. Add a few drops of blue or green food coloring, and then add oil until the bottle is three-fourths full. Seal the bottle by tapping the cap shut. For extra fun, insert a miniature person or boat figure in the bottle before sealing it. Show children how to tilt the bottle up and down and move it back and forth slowly. Encourage them to watch the waves and imagine what it was like for Jonah to be thrown into the stormy sea. Explain that today they’ll learn that God wants us to obey him and pray to him.



LESSON BODY:

The servant may consider beginning the lesson by asking the children if they know any background information about who Jonah is. Ask the children if they know what a prophet means.

A prophet is God’s servant who takes God’s message to the people. Jonah was a prophet of God and God gave him very specific instructions.

These instructions were for Jonah to go to Nineveh because the Ninevites were living wicked lives and God wanted them to have an opportunity to turn from their sins and repent so that they would not have to be punished for their wickedness. Nothing would stop God’s plan to allow the Ninevites to hear and have the opportunity to repent and turn away from their sins. God asked Jonah to go to Nineveh and teach the people to repent; however, Jonah did not want to go. It was never God’s plan for people to sin and suffer the punishment of sin. Instead, Jonah took a boat to go another place, thinking he could hide from God! Since Jonah was rebelling against His instructions, God could instruct another person to go and preach or He could change Jonah’s heart and continue to use him for the work.

In this circumstance, God chose to work in Jonah’s life and change his heart. God began a good work in Jonah, and he would be faithful to complete it. However, Jonah chose to disobey. God did not allow Jonah’s disobedience to stop Him from doing what He planned to do.

God chose to immediately discipline Jonah for his disobedience.

Consider asking the children why they think Jonah disobeyed God? How did God discipline Jonah for his disobedience?

Read Jonah 2

“I cried out to the Lord because of my affliction, And He answered me. Out of the belly of Sheol I cried, And You heard my voice. For You cast me into the deep, Into the heart of the seas, And the floods surrounded me;



All Your billows and Your waves passed over me. Then I said, 'I have been cast out of Your sight; Yet I will look again toward Your holy temple.' The waters surrounded me, even to my soul; the deep closed around me; Weeds were wrapped around my head. I went down to the moorings of the mountains; the earth with its bars closed behind me forever; Yet You have brought up my life from the pit, O Lord, my God. When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord; and my prayer went up to You, Into Your holy temple. Those who regard worthless idols Forsake their own Mercy. But I will sacrifice to You With the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord."

Consider asking the children the following questions:

- *What are some feelings that Jonah may have had as he was inside the belly of a great fish? What would it look like inside the great fish?*
- *How do you think you would feel if you were Jonah? He was sad ("I cried out") but yet repented (changed his heart).*

The belly of the great fish was like a 'time out' chair for Jonah. God put him there because He wanted Jonah to turn from sin (disobedience) and return to God.

Consider asking the children the following questions:

- *What did Jonah choose to do? (He prayed)*
- *Can you think of what else Jonah could have chosen to do? (He could have become angry with God and spent the time inside the fish feeling sorry for himself).*

Jonah's choice is what we all should do if we are God's children. When we are in a difficult situation, whether it is because we are being disciplined for disobedience or not, we should always turn to God in prayer.

He teaches us two important truths about prayer.

Consider the following quote from Tertullian of Carthage for a better understanding about how God hears all of our prayers, in your preparation for the lesson. ²⁶

- 1) God listens to our prayers
- 2) God answers our prayers.

Consider asking the children to share with the class a time where God answered their prayers. Emphasize to the children God will hear our prayers, no matter where we are and what we are doing!

Jonah cried unto the Lord in his tribulations. *Out of the belly of Sheol I cried, And You heard my voice.* As we said, no matter where we are, when we pray, our Lord will listen to our

"God is not one who heeds the voice; rather, it is the heart which He hears and beholds. Even the speechless He hears, and the silent petition He will answer."

- Tertullian of Carthage

"We should not be obsessed with a certain place but we should think more of the Lord of the place. Jonah was in the whale's belly and God heard his prayer. Pray, wherever you are, pray, do not demand a place to pray in, because your spirit is a temple."

- St. John Chrysostom

²⁶ Tertullian. (1959). *Disciplinary, moral, and ascetical works*. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press.

prayers like He did for Jonah. *This can be supported with the quote from St. John Chrysostom.*

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

The Senses Activity:

Turn off the lights or cover everyone with a blanket and talk about how it would feel to be inside a big fish (what they would hear, see, feel, and smell? How they would be able to find food to eat?), while the teacher can play ocean sounds and spray ocean breeze scented spray. This activity will activate all their senses and ensure they will retain the knowledge.

Ocean in a Bottle Craft²⁷:

1. Fill a clear quart- or liter-sized plastic bottle half full of water.
2. Add a few drops of blue or green food coloring, then add oil until the bottle is three-fourths full.
3. Seal the bottle by tapping the cap shut.
4. For extra fun, insert a miniature person or boat figure in the bottle before sealing it.
5. Show children how to tilt the bottle up and down and move it back and forth slowly.
6. Encourage them to watch the waves and imagine what it was like for Jonah to be thrown into the stormy sea.



You may use [this video](#) to guide you during the craft.



SONG:

[Jonah's Fast Doxology \(2:32\)](#)

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- What does God want all people to do? (Repent/turn away from sins and be saved.)
- How did God discipline Jonah? (He sent a great fish to swallow him.)
- Why did God discipline Jonah? (Because he disobeyed His instructions and wanted him to turn back to Him.)
- What is God faithful to do when believers confess their sins? (Faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.)

²⁷ What Do We Do All Day? (Director). (2016, May 12). Ocean in a Bottle [Video file]. Retrieved August 28, 2020, from <https://youtu.be/49o2V2TZiow>



- What did Jonah do inside the great fish? (Prayed).
- Name the two things we learned about prayer from Jonah's prayer? (God hears all our cries; we should always be thankful.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

Learn to pray to God throughout your day! Not just in the morning, evening, at church or your prayer corner. Pray on your way to school, class, in the car ride, in the middle of recess, in the middle of a fight with a friend, when you feel sad, when you feel happy! Pray at all times and know that God hears you anywhere and anytime.



Lesson 1.13 - Solomon's Prayer

Building Block 1
We Grow as We Worship God



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Two tubes of Pringles, slip of paper with message on it (see below).

Scripture References: 1 Kings 8:22–52 and 2 Chronicles 6:12-42.

Activity: Clay.



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children should learn to ask for the right things in prayers with an attitude of humility. This will be exemplified to them through Solomon's Prayer.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Prayerfulness, Humility and Wisdom.



MEMORY VERSE:



Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil.



1 Kings 3:9



Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Game of Riches²⁸:

1. Before class: write *“Congratulations. God often chooses the youngest or smallest or the one who has the least to be His special wise servant. God will reward you with more wisdom and with riches, too.”* on a piece of paper.
2. Tell the children that each Pringle is worth one million dollars.
3. Hand the jar to the first child at the table. Open the tube and have them take out as many million dollars as they think they want so that they can buy all the stuff they want as king/queen. They cannot eat them yet!
4. Let each child reach in the jar and take as many Pringles as he/she wishes. Remind them not to break any. Any broken Pringles have to be swept away, and cannot be used or eaten! Soon, the tube may be empty before all the children have gotten any. Encourage the children who were first to share with their classmates and not be greedy.
5. If one child has none, ask others what they want to do about it. Let them decide. If some children snatch, discourage it. If some children do not have as many, whisper to them that it will be okay.
6. Invite everyone to count their “money.” Ask the children how many dollars they have and what they want to buy with all that money. Do not let them eat yet.
7. To the child who has the least amount of Pringles, say, “You don’t have as many. You have the least amount. You were close to the end, and you are not the type to grab. Would you like to have the empty tube as your reward?” Then slip the paper in the tube and hand it to the child.
8. Next, tell the child “I think there’s a secret message in there especially for you.” Have the child read the message. You may wish to read this message to the whole class to serve as a transition point to the lesson.
9. Give the child the prize, which is a second, private Pringles can.

Today, we will learn about the prayer of King Solomon to God. Like in this activity, King Solomon received blessings from God after humbling himself and coming to God in prayer, expressing his needs like a young child.



LESSON BODY:

After arriving in the Promised Land, the people of Israel demanded to have a king like all other countries. The first king of Israel was Saul.

²⁸ Kate, M. (2013, February 11). Sunday School Activities for the Lesson "Solomon Asks God for Wisdom". Retrieved July 20, 2020, from <https://www.christianitycove.com/sunday-school-activities-solomon-asks-god-for-wisdom/447/>



The second king was David who was “a man according to God’s heart” (1 Samuel 13:14). He loved God and tried to obey and honor Him. David was king of Israel for 40 years and right before he died, he made his son, Solomon, the next king.

Solomon was young and afraid that he would never be able to rule like his father. So, he did something amazing. He prayed for hours and hours, offered 1000 burnt offerings, standing in front of God and asking for help. Then, he fell asleep and God appeared to him in a dream.

Read 1 Kings 3:5-9. Consider providing Bibles to the children and inviting them to follow along and lead some of the reading.

God was very pleased with Solomon’s prayer because he did not ask for riches or victory, so God said: “Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked long life for yourself, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice, behold, I have done according to your words; see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you. And I have also given you what you have not asked: both riches and honor, so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days. So if you walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days.” (1 Kings 3: 11-14)

Solomon woke up, and what do you think he did? He prayed and offered a burnt offering to thank God and made a feast for all his servants.

This is such a beautiful and humble prayer by Solomon! He exposed his weakness to God and did not think that he was a powerful king and that he did not need anybody, instead, he humbled himself, was honest and knew what he needed. He called himself a “servant”, and a “little child”; he continues to give God glory by praising God’s people as “great people.” Let us learn to recognize our weakness, what we lack, and be humble in our requests in front of God.

Consider concluding by introducing and paraphrasing the quote on the right by St. Isaac the Syrian.²⁹ Emphasize Solomon’s wisdom and the blessings he received from God when he approached God in humble and trusting prayer.

“Do not be foolish in the request you make to God, otherwise you will insult God through your ignorance. Act wisely in prayer so that you may become worthy of glorious things. Ask for things that are honorable from him who will not hold back so that you may receive honor from him as a result of the wise choice your free will has made. Solomon asked for wisdom—and along with it he also received the earthly kingdom, for he knew how to ask wisely of the heavenly King, that is, for things that are important.”

- St. Isaac the Syrian

²⁹ Oden, T. C., & Conti, M. (2019). *1-2 Kings, 1-2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*. Downers Grove, IL, Illinois: IVP Academic.



Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Leader Clay Activity:

Introduce the activity by saying the following: Solomon was a very powerful king. He was in charge of all the leaders in his kingdom, and Solomon encouraged them to worship God. They worshiped at a place called the Tabernacle, where they prepared burnt offerings and dedicated them to God. Let's see what it is like to be a powerful king leading people and telling them what to do.

1. Split the clay into equal balls, and give one to each child. Then have children stand in a U-shaped semi circle. Choose a willing child to lead.
2. Tell the children that the leader in this game will tell you what to do with the clay. As leader, you can choose anything safe and fun. You can tell the children to throw it to each other, flatten it like a pancake, or poke holes in it. Listen to the leader. If you do anything other than what your leader says, you will have to step out of the game.
3. Switch leaders every now and then. Everyone can get back in the game when you switch leaders.
4. As king, Solomon had to tell thousands of people what to do, so he asked God for the wisdom to make good decisions.

Ask the children:

- As leader in our game, how did you decide what to do with the clay?
- What is it like to be a leader?
- Why does a leader need wisdom?
- Tell us about other times we need wisdom to make good choices.

Kings are not the only people who make choices. We all make choices every day, like what is safe, unsafe or what is the right or wrong way to behave and treat others. It is nice to know that God knows what to do in every situation; that is why we ask God for wisdom.

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- How did Solomon pray? (He gave time to God with humility.)
- Why was God pleased with Solomon's prayer? (Because he did not ask for worldly things.)
- What did God give Solomon? (God gave him wisdom and all the things he did not ask for.)



→ What did Solomon do when he woke up? (He prayed, made a sacrifice, and celebrated!)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

- Give time to God, pray with humility, ask for wisdom and spiritual gifts, remember to thank God for his blessings.
- Scenario: We sometimes find ourselves pressured by friends to do something that does not sound right. We have to learn to ask God, just like Solomon, to give us discernment to know what is right and what is wrong. If in doubt, we can always ask a parent, servant and/or priest to guide us! We should not fear looking ignorant, getting cast out of a group, or getting mocked because we chose to do the right thing!



Lesson 1.14S - (SPECIAL for DURING NATIVITY FAST): St. Mary's Hymn of Praise for Our lord

Building Block I
We Grow as We Worship God



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Activity: Print out the ["Gratitude Scavenger Hunt" Handout](#) for each child.

Song: [Christian Youth Channel: Seven Times Everyday I Will Praise Your Name \(8:03\)](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will learn that a type of prayer is praise and learn to praise God for His immeasurable gifts. Mary models for us, in her song of praise, a mind filled with the Scriptures and attitude of thanksgiving.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Praise



MEMORY VERSE:



My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.



Luke 1:46-47

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

What can we Praise God for Brainstorming?

Work together to create a list of things you can praise God for. In the story from today, St. Mary praised God not for her material blessings, but for the fact that God wanted to use her to bring baby Jesus into the world. She was humbled that God wanted to give her the opportunity to be such an important part of His plan.

The class should work together to come up with a list of things that they can praise God for. Once the class has come up with different material things that they are thankful for and have been blessed with (they will likely come up with many), try to guide the conversation towards what God has given us the opportunity to do or to help Him with. Some questions that could be used are:



- What has God given us the ability to do to help others?
- What skills do we have that we can thank God for that He has given us to use? How can we be thankful for the skills He has given us to accomplish what He wants us to do? How can you use the skills God has given you to honor God?

For example, I am a very good listener. I thank God that he gave me great patience and the ability to listen to people when they are hurting or in trouble.

Does anybody know who is the greatest saint in our Church? (Let the children give their guesses and then tell them that it is St. Mary). Today we will find out a little bit about how great she is and learn more about her hymn of praise.



LESSON BODY:

The angel Gabriel revealed to St. Mary that she would become the mother of the Son of God, Jesus Christ. After the angel departed from her, she went to visit her cousin, Elizabeth, who was also going to have a child. When Mary and Elizabeth were visiting each other, an amazing thing happened. When the baby in Elizabeth's womb heard the voice of St. Mary, he *"Leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit."* (Luke 1:41) That baby was St. John the Baptist, and the moment he heard the voice of St. Mary, even though he was still in the womb and not yet born, he recognized that Jesus Christ was in St. Mary's womb and was so happy that the Saviour of the world had come! Elizabeth understood also, so she blessed St. Mary, and confirmed that *"There will be a fulfillment of those things which were told to her from the Lord"* (Luke 1:45) which meant that God was here to save the people of Israel from sin, and Jesus Christ did not forget his people!

Consider the following quote from Ambrose of Milan for a better understanding about St. Mary's rejoicing about being chosen to carry the Son of God, in your preparation for the lesson.³⁰

In response, Mary's soul joins in with rejoicing!

Read Luke 1: 46-59 as a class, have each child read a verse.

"My soul magnifies the Lord, And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.

For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.

For He who is mighty has done great things for me, And holy is His name.

And His mercy is on those who fear Him From generation to generation.

"The soul of Mary therefore magnifies the Lord, and her spirit rejoiced in God, because with soul and spirit devoted to the Father and the Son, she worships with a pious affection the one God from whom are all things. But let every one have the spirit of Mary, so that he may rejoice in the Lord."

-Ambrose of Milan

³⁰ AQUINAS, S. T. (2017). *CATENA AUREA: Commentary on the Four Gospels, Collected Out of the Works of the Fathers (classic reprint)*. New York City, New York: Cosimo.



He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He has put down the mighty from their thrones, And exalted the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, And the rich He has sent away empty.

He has helped His servant Israel, In remembrance of His mercy,

As He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and to his seed forever."

St. Mary's song of praise was one of the few times St. Mary's spoken word is recorded in the Bible. She did not say much and hid all that she saw in her heart. But, this beautiful song of praise has a very deep meaning. St. Mary thanked and praised the name of the Lord. It is because of her humility that the Almighty raised her to the highest position among all people. Therefore, "*All generations will call me blessed.*" (Luke 1:48) St. Mary fully realized that the baby inside her womb was the Savior, the Son of God. She said, "*my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.*" (Luke 1:47). She also declared that the Savior is Mighty, His name is Holy, His mercy is great, He exalts the lowly and He fills the hungry.

The focus is on "the Lord," "God my Savior," "the Mighty One." St. Mary both glorifies and rejoices. The focus of Mary's joy is "God my Savior," that is "*God, who is the one who brings [her] salvation and rescues [her] from every trouble.*"

She humbly reminds herself of her "lowly state" as a "servant" with God's greatness. She does not boast and feel proud that God chose her among all the women of the Earth. She refers to Him as the Mighty One. Let us learn to approach prayer with humility, remembering that God is our Creator and Savior. St. Mary does not ask anything for herself! The whole prayer is about praising God! She also makes sure to point out that God kept His promise to Abraham, which means she remembers the teachings of God. This is why we need to read our Bible every day, so when we speak with God, we can refer to His own words and promises.

There are so many different reasons to praise God, but does anyone know the greatest reason to praise Him? (Jesus). We praise God because of His wonderful son, Jesus Christ, who died on the cross so that we may have everlasting life.

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Gratitude Scavenger Hunt:

Children will identify all of the things that they are grateful for and that praying to and praising God gives us an opportunity to convey our gratefulness toward God for everything that He has given us!

1. Give a copy of the "[Gratitude Scavenger Hunt](#)" [Handout](#) to each child.
2. Instruct them to follow along with the prompts on the page and to provide an answer by drawing the person or thing that they are grateful for, according to the particular prompt. (Children can be given another piece of paper if they want their drawings to be on a larger scale).



Remind children that it is important to express our gratitude/thankfulness to God (as St. Mary had done by praying to and praising God) and to others!



SONG:

[Christian Youth Channel: seven times everyday I will praise your name \(8:03\)](#)

+

Seven times everyday, I will praise Your name,	with all my heart, O God of everyone.
I remembered Your name, and I was comforted,	O King of the ages, and God of all gods.
Jesus Christ our true God, who has come,	for our salvation, was incarnate.
He was incarnate, of the Holy Spirit,	and of Mary, the pure Bride.
And changed our sorrow, and all our troubles,	to joy for our hearts, and total rejoicing.
Let us worship Him, and sing to,	His Mother Mary, the beautiful dove.
And let us all proclaim, with the voice of joy,	saying hail to you Mary, the Mother of Emmanuel.

REVIEW



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- How will future generations remember St. Mary? (They will call her blessed.)
- What is St. Mary's attitude in her prayer? (Humble).
- What has God done for the hungry? (He has filled them with good things.)
- Which of God's promises does Mary recall? (She remembers God's promise to Abraham and to his descendants, of whom she is one.)
- Why should we praise God? (He is the Creator, He is fair and just, He communicates with us, For His mighty power, He is caring, For His love, He is the one and only God, For His protection.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

When you pray at home in your prayer corner, learn to repeat the prayer of St. Mary and learn to ask for the intercessions of the saints. We know St. Mary is now next to God and when we ask her to pray on our behalf, she will! This week, try to make a list of the reasons why YOU should praise God!

Attend tasbeha at your local church to learn many praises! Encourage yourself and your family to attend weekly. If you can't attend in person, actively attend virtually or praise on your own in front of an icon. You can find access to the midnight praises on Coptic Reader.



Lesson 1.15 - Christ Exemplifies: Jesus' Example of Prayer Alone and with His Disciples

Building Block I
We Grow as We Worship God



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Activity: M&M packages (1 for each group) , and [printable M&M prayer prompt](#).

Scripture Reference: Luke 5:16, Matthew 18:20

Video: [Coptic Orthodox Answers: Why should I pray? by Fr. Gabriel Wissa](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will learn that prayer is a time when we can talk with God and work on building up a relationship with Him either alone in our homes or in the church with our brothers and sisters, just as Jesus Christ Himself exemplified.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Prayerfulness, Fellowship and Unity.



MEMORY VERSE:

“
So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.
”
Luke 5:16

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Telephone Game: Play Telephone!

Communication is important. It's much better to hear God's words from Him then only hear about Him through people!



Talking with people is important to us! We make sure that we can call others whenever we want. We also make sure people can reach us wherever we are.

Discuss with the children somethings that may distract us from God and prevent us from communicating with Him in prayer as we should.

So, if talking to people is easy and we do it all the time, why is it so hard to spend time talking with God?



LESSON BODY:

Begin by asking the following questions:

- How do you think Jesus prayed to God?
- Do you speak to your parents and servants the same way you speak to your friends or do you speak to them with respect and obedience?

When Jesus prayed, He did so with respect to God. Prayer is the way we talk to God and it is the way Jesus talked to His Father. Jesus conversed with His father the same way we do with ours, with respect.

Consider the following quote from Cyprian of Carthage for a better understanding about the importance of individual prayers, in your preparation for the lesson.³¹

Jesus Prayed Alone:

In our everyday lives there are so many things around us that distract us. We have phones, games, movies, and things that are constantly taking our attention away from our time with God. Imagine how Jesus felt when He was on Earth! So many people were coming to Him, asking Him to heal the sick, the Pharisees were wanting to have conversations with Him, and more. But

in the Bible, we are told that even with all of these things, Jesus always made time to pray to God. In fact, He did not wait until the crowds left Him and the distractions went away. We often see that Jesus left the crowds and sent His disciples before Him so that He could spend time alone with His Father in heaven.

It is very important that we have our alone time with God; it helps us get to know Him more and more. Praying alone is a time when we can talk with Him and have our own conversation with Him. If we never spend time with God, we can never know Him as our friend or as our heavenly Father. We also need to pray to God in order to receive strength, comfort, and love, which help us make it through each day. God loves to hear your prayers, and He is always ready to listen, no matter where you are or what time it is!

Jesus Prayed with Others:

“Nor was it only in words, but in deeds also, that the Lord taught us to pray, Himself praying frequently and beseeching, and thus showing us, by the testimony of His example, what it behoved us to do, as it is written, “But Himself departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.”

- Cyprian of Carthage

³¹ Cyprian, Novatianus, Felix, M. M., Dionysius, Wallis, R. E., & Perpetua. (1882). *The writings of Cyprian, bishop of Carthage*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.



Jesus not only taught His disciples how to pray individually with God, but He also encouraged them to pray together. Let us see what Matthew 18:20 says: *“For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”*

Now, we know that Jesus is always with us, but something special happens when we all come together to pray. When we are all praying together, the verse tells us that Jesus is right there with us! Even if we cannot see Jesus, we know that He is right there with us because He told us He would be.

At this point, the servant may want to ask the children to count how many people there are in the room; after they have finished counting, let them tell the servant how many people there are. Whatever the number is, increase it by one and explain to the children that there is more because Jesus is with us right now.

God's presence in prayer unites us together. We become aware of the needs of others and can provide comfort for them through prayer. Sometimes life can be hard and we do not always get answers to our questions, and maybe we do not know what to pray or we just cannot pray, but the amazing and awesome thing is when the prayer community takes over and prays for you!

You may wish to introduce and paraphrase the quote on the right by an Eastern Orthodox Church Father to illustrate the way we benefit from praying from one another.³²

“Do not let pass any opportunity to pray for anyone, either at his request or at the request of his relatives, friends, of those who esteem him, or of his acquaintances. The Lord looks favorably upon the prayer of our love, and upon our boldness before him. Besides this, prayer for others is very beneficial to the one himself who prays for others; it purifies the heart, strengthens faith and hope in God, and enkindles our love for God and our neighbor. When praying, say thus: ‘Lord, it is possible for Thee to do this or that to this servant of Thine; do this for him, for Thy name is the Merciful Love of Men and the Almighty.’”

- Eastern Orthodox Church Father

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

M&M Guided Prayer Activity³³:

1. Before class, print out copies of the M&M prayer prompts (see above) for each child.
2. Remind children that prayer was a big part of Jesus' life and that He prayed alone and with others.
3. Tell the children that they will be practicing their prayers alone and with others!
4. Divide the class into groups and hand out the M&M prayer prompts to each child. Also hand out a package of M&Ms to each group (Skittles can be used instead if a child has allergies). Instruct the children to take three M&Ms from the package and to find a place to pray by themselves. Each child will pray for someone based on the color of M&Ms that they receive (outlined in the M&Ms prayer prompt). For example, a blue M&M will prompt the child to pray for Christians in another country.

³² St. John of Kronstadt. (n.d.). “My Life in Christ.” Retrieved from <http://www.orthodoxchurchquotes.com/2014/09/22/st-john-of-kronstadt-do-not-let-pass-any-opportunity-to-pray-for-anyone/>

³³ M&Ms Ice Breaker and Guided Prayer Activities. (2016, September 14). Retrieved July 21, 2020, from <https://thesparrowhome.com/mms-ice-breaker-and-guided-prayer-activities/>



5. Afterwards, once the children have finished praying alone, they can eat their M&Ms and return to their group.
6. Once children have returned to their groups, they will practice praying together! Each child in the group will take turns picking an M&M from the package and the group will pray for the person/people that correspond to the M&M prayer prompt. Each group can eat the rest of their M&Ms once they have all finished praying together.



VIDEO:

[Coptic Orthodox Answers: Why should I pray? by Fr. Gabriel Wissa](#)

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- Why should we pray regularly? (To build a relationship with God.)
- Why should we make time to pray to God alone? (By removing all distractions and spending time alone with Him, our relationship with Him can grow deeper.)
- Why should we pray with others? (God brings all together to pray so that if we do not know how to pray, we have one another to rely on each other. This can unite us in a bond of love that Christ will be present in.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

God desires to have a relationship with each of us, and an important part of any relationship is communication. God has established prayer as a means for us to communicate with Him. Through prayer, we can praise God, ask for forgiveness, thank God for all He has done, and let our requests be made known to Him. Prayer allows us to open our hearts to God and let Him know our innermost thoughts and desires.

Should we pray about everything? Should we be thankful? (Yes and yes, God's gifts are immeasurable!)

What are some ways we can do this during the week?

- We can follow Jesus' example through spending time alone in prayer to God. Schedule time in your day to pray! Keep yourself accountable by creating a tracker/checklist so you can make sure you do not forget a day!



- This week try to make sure you set some time in your day where you go into your room and pray without any distractions!
- This week try to ask at least one friend about what's going on in their lives, and make a point to pray for them as well.



Building Block 2: We Grow as We Learn God’s Word

Lesson 2.1 - Introduction to the Holy Bible as Inspired By God

Building Block 2
We Grow as We Learn God’s Word



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Bibles, Prepare handout of the game (each child should have a paper with the ingredients search and the baking instructions.)

Activity: [The Word of God Word Search](#) and [solution](#).



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will learn that the Bible is the Inspired Word of God and is true.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Trust



MEMORY VERSE:



for prophecy never came by will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.



2 Peter 1:21

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Consider beginning the lesson with the following activity:

This activity will be used to show the children how difficult it would have been for the people who wrote the different books of the Bible to do so from memory with such accuracy. Such that it would have been impossible without the Holy Spirit! Then the servant can go into a discussion of "What is the Bible?" with the children.



- "What is the Bible? Why do we study it?" (*Children answer*)
- All Scripture comes from God, it is the Will of God. The Bible is a collection of books written by different men over a long period of time, the Holy Spirit guided these men to write the books. The Bible is about God's relationship with us, the Old Testament describes God's relationship with humans before Christ came to earth. The New Testament describes Christ's work on earth and its consequences.
- The possible phrases that could be used for the telephone game (or it could be made up):
 - Can you believe that the Bible was written by more than 35 people inspired by the Holy Spirit?
 - The Bible is more than words communicated to us from God. The Bible is the Word of God.
- Have the children sit in a circle or stand in a straight line. They are to be close enough that whispering between two people is possible, but not so close that the other people around them could hear.
- The servant will whisper to the first person in the circle or line the phrase in their ear. Then following the first person is to whisper the phrase to the next person. The phrase is whispered to their neighbor until it reaches the last person in line.
- The last person is to say the phrase they heard out loud for everyone to hear. Such that if it is still the same phrase and how much it has changed from the first whisper.



LESSON BODY:

We know with certainty that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. The prophet Isaiah said that the earth was round "*It is He who sits above the circle of the earth*" (Isaiah 40:22) long before humans believed it to be true. Humans thought the world was flat! About 20 years ago, a young shepherd boy found scrolls that were over 2,000 years old in the Middle East. What was written on the scrolls was almost exactly like what we find today in the book of Isaiah. The Bible is more than just facts and history, it brings us to a saving faith in God through His Son Jesus Christ.

The Bible was written by over 36 different people over the course of 1,500 years, but taken as a whole, it comes from one point of view. All 66 books of the Bible fit together. There are themes that begin in Genesis, and are finally resolved in Revelation, as if one person wrote the whole Bible, and of course there was one person who wrote the whole Bible.

Consider asking the children if they know who this person is. (God).

The writers come from many different backgrounds and professions. There were fishermen (St. Peter), tax collectors (St. Matthew), prophets (Moses, Isaiah), doctors (St. Luke), tentmakers (St. Paul) and even kings (David). It would be impossible for so many different people, over so many years, to write with such harmony and accuracy, if not for the Holy Spirit. God told these people what to write; they were tools in His hands.

Now that we know the Bible is the Word of God, let us look into what the Bible means to us. Today, we discovered that the Bible is our guide, just like an owner's manual is a guide for how to operate machinery. When your family goes on a trip to a strange place, it is important to have some kind of guide to know where to go. What would they use for that? A map! A map is a guide. "*Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.*" (Psalm 119:105) A light on the path helps us see where to go. Just as we need to follow an owner's



manual to operate a machine, or a map to get to our vacation spot, we need to follow the Bible to live a Godly life.

It is important that we read our Bibles daily because it is the Word of God and it helps us become closer to Him, because through the Bible, we get to know who God is. It is important that we trust in the word of God and trust in God.

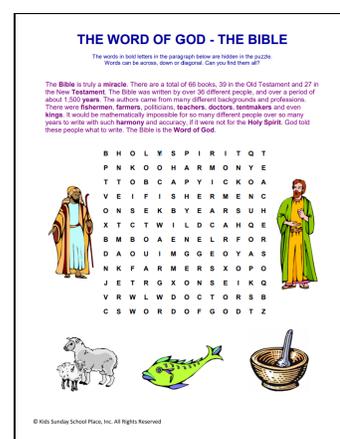
Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Bible Word Search from Kids Sunday School Place Activity³⁴:

1. Hand each child a [The Word of God Word Search](#) (the servant should keep a copy of the [solution](#).)
2. In this activity, the children will read the paragraph at the top of the word search page. They are to find the words bolded in the paragraph.
3. After everyone has finished the word search, the servant can discuss how it is truly a miracle that the different books of the Bible are in great harmony with each other - given the fact that so many different people and backgrounds were involved. It could not have happened without the Holy Spirit working through the authors of the Bible!



Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- Is there only one author in the Bible? (No, there are many different writers.)
- How do we know that these writers are true Christians? (They were inspired by the Holy Spirit, so much so, that it seems as though one person wrote it.)
- How many books are in the Bible? (56).
- How many different people wrote the Bible? (Over 36).
- Who were some prophets in the Bible? (Moses, Isaiah, etc.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE

³⁴ Bible Word Search. (n.d.). Retrieved July 21, 2020, from <https://www.kidssundayschool.com/gradeschool/puzzles/bible-word-search>



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

- Read the Bible and try to understand what God is saying to us, or how God wants us to live.
- How can we live by the word of God? (We can be honest, living peaceably with others, be kind and considerate to others, etc.)
- What should we do to be closer to God? (Attend Sunday School regularly, learn to memorize Bible verses, share the word of God to others, read the Bible regularly and pray using our Agpeya.)
- How can we trust God? (We can trust God by reading His word, trusting that He knows what is best for us, etc.)



Lesson 2.2 - Old Testament: History of the Hebrew People and the Ten Commandments

Building Block 2
We Grow as We Learn God's Word



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Bibles.

Scripture Reference: Exodus 20:3-17.

Activity: Dry erase board or poster board, and sticky notes.



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

An overview of what the Old Testament is with the focus on the Ten Commandments. Children will learn that God saves His people by giving us commands to live by.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Love



MEMORY VERSE:

“
You shall be My people, and I will be your God.
”
Jeremiah 30:22

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Explain to the children what the Old Testament represents. The Old Testament consists of books written before Jesus was born. It is organized by sections that each have a unique writing style in support of God's plan for redemption of mankind (through Jesus).

Start a discussion. Allow the children to discuss what a law is. What happens if we disobey the laws? Explain that the commandments are God's law and they should be taken seriously! Even if you don't get caught in a lie or get caught cheating God sees all and He takes his commandments very seriously.



LESSON BODY:

The Old Testament is broken up into five categories: The Pentateuch, Historical Books, Wisdom & Poetry, Prophetic books, and Deuterocanonical books, each with a specific theme. Here are a few:

Historical (Joshua to Esther): These books cover the life of the Israelites from their possession of the Promised Land down to the two exiles and loss of the land because of their disbelief in God and their disobedience to God.

Wisdom and Poetry (Job to Song of Solomon): The five books from Job to Song of Solomon consist of wise sayings, metaphors, psalms (songs), and poetry. These types of writings show the majesty of God and the power of His spirit in different ways than the previous books. Through His Spirit, we can receive eternal life!

Prophetic Books:

There are two categories: major prophets and minor prophets.

As a spokesman for God, the prophet's primary duty was to speak God's message to God's people. In the process of proclaiming God's message, the prophet would sometimes reveal the future, encouraging the people of God's promises or warning of coming judgment.

- Major Prophets (Isaiah to Daniel): These books are referred to as "major" prophetic books because of their length. They all tell the history of Israel by different prophets and God's message to His people.
- Minor Prophets (Hosea to Malachi): These books are "minor" prophetic books because of their shorter length (and not because their messages are less important). They were also written for the same reasons as the major prophetic books. They all tell the history of Israel by different prophets and God's message to His people.

Deuterocanonical books: These books are not found in the New King James Bible we have at home, they are found separately: Tobit, Judith, Sequel of Esther, Wisdom of Solomon, Wisdom of Joshua (Son of Sirach), Baruch, Sequel of the Book of Daniel, 1 Maccabees, 2 Maccabees, Psalm 151. They are a total of seven books and three sequels (missing chapters from the original books in the Bible).

Consider asking the children which books are part of the Pentateuch. This allows the servant to know what prior knowledge of this topic the children have.

This leaves the Pentateuch books, as our main focus for today's lesson.

The Pentateuch (Genesis to Deuteronomy): These books were all written by Moses the prophet. In these books, we learn about the creation, Adam and Eve, Noah and the flood, the tower of Babel, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and his 12 sons and how they went to Egypt because of the famine. Then they left Egypt with Moses' help to wander for 40 years in the desert before they arrived at The Promised Land. In The Promised Land, they divided the land, built the gates, divided the shares, received the commandments of God, and had the Ark of the Covenant and the tabernacle. God put a lot of rules in place for the Israelites to keep them away from the rest of the world that lived in sin. God established the Jewish nation as His chosen people – the people from whom the Messiah would one day come!



Consider asking the children if they remember what the Ten Commandments are.

Today, we are going to talk about the Ten Commandments.

It had been three months since the Israelites left Egypt (with Moses' help), and they set up camp at the foot of Mount Sinai. God called to Moses from the mountain, and Moses went up to Him. God reminded Moses of how He freed the Israelites from Pharaoh, and how the devastation in Egypt proved His power and might. Then God told Moses that if the people obey Him, their nation would be great and holy in His sight. Then He told Moses to have the people cleanse themselves and be ready, because in three days the Lord would come down on the mountain, and that the people should not attempt to go up or even touch the mountain.

So, on the third day, there was thunder and lightning with a loud trumpet blast. The mountain was covered with a thick cloud of smoke, because the Lord came onto it with fire. The whole mountain trembled, and all the people were afraid. No one was allowed to go to the mountain except Moses. This was when God gave Moses the Ten Commandments.

The servant may consider reading Exodus 20:3-17 (The Ten Commandments).

The Bible tells us that God gave Moses the Ten Commandments, which are the following:

1. You shall have no other gods before Me.
→ Have no other gods but God. (Ex: not your phone, or video games or your TV!).
2. You shall not make for yourself a carved image [..]
→ Do not worship statues, do not create a God for yourself.

The servant may consider the following quote by St. Augustine of Hippo³⁵ for further understanding on the third commandment of not using the Lord's name in vain.

3. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain[..
→ Be careful with God's name, do not swear.
4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy [..
→ Keep the day of the Lord special (Make sure to go to church and Sunday school on Sunday.)
5. Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.
6. You shall not murder.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
→ Keep your marriage promises.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
→ Do not lie. Always tell the truth.

"You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain; for whoever takes the name of the Lord his God in vain will not be purified." The name of the Lord our God Jesus Christ is Truth: he himself said, "I am the truth." So truth purifies; futility defiles. And because whoever speaks the truth speaks from what is God's—for "whoever speaks falsehood speaks from what is his own"—to speak the truth is to speak reasonably, whereas to speak futility is to make a noise rather than to speak. Rightly, because the second commandment means love of the truth, the opposite of that is love of futility."

- St. Augustine of Hippo

³⁵ Lienhard, J. T. (2001). *The ancient Christian commentary on Scripture*. Downers Grove (Ill.): InterVarsity Press.



10. You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's.
→ Do not desire what is not yours.

These commandments were meant to teach the people of Israel to be kind to one another, to love their God more than anything, and to love their brothers and sisters!

Although God gave these commandments to the Israelites thousands of years ago, they are still commands that are applicable today. God gave us these commands to save us because He knows what is best for us.

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Category Game:

1. Write the five categories of the Old Testament books on a dry erase board or poster. This activity will help the children understand the meaning of each of the books in the Old Testament while also helps them learn how to find them. Help the children brainstorm stories from the Old Testament.
2. Give the children sticky notes and have them write down stories from the Old Testament and have them place them in the proper category. Stories may include:
 - a. Moses is hidden in a basket. (Exodus-Pentateuch)
 - b. David is named King. (2 Samuel - Historical books)
 - c. Etc.
3. Remind the children of the categories of books as follows:
 - a. **The Books of Moses or Pentateuch (Genesis to Deuteronomy):** These books describe how the Israelites became the people of God.
 - b. **Historical Books (Joshua to Esther):** The Historical Books describe the history of how Israel became a nation in the promised land and became a kingdom.
 - c. **Wisdom and Poetry (Job to Song of Solomon):** Explain to them the books from Job to Solomon consist of wise sayings, metaphors, psalms (songs), and poetry. These types of writings show the majesty of God and the power of His spirit in different ways than the previous books. And through His Spirit, we can receive eternal life.
 - d. **Major Prophets (Isaiah to Daniel):** Explain that these books are referred to as "major" prophetic books because of their lengths.
 - e. **Minor Prophets (Hosea to Malachi):** Explain that these books are "minor" prophetic books because of their shorter length (and not because their message is less important). They were also written for the same reason as the major prophetic books.



Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- Why do you think, "You shall have no other gods before me" is the first commandment? (God wants us to put Him above all things, before our toys, TV, even before our friends.)
- What does "You shall not misuse the name of the Lord" mean? (The Lord is holy. Using his name in an unholy manner brings judgment to that person.)
- What is an idol? (Anything that keeps you from spending time with God.)
- "Honor your father and mother" must be important because it too is on the list. Why? (Parents want what is best for their children, so they teach and guide them. Children are still learning and really do not know everything yet.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

- Take each commandment, and have the children give an example of what someone might do that would be breaking that commandment. For example: Honor your father and your mother.
- Try to learn the names of Books of the Old testament in order by heart. This will help you a lot when you are searching the Bible by knowing where to look for a specific verse, this will also help when reading our Bible everyday!



Lesson 2.3 - Obedience and Reading the Bible

Building Block 2
We Grow as We Learn God's Word



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: A map (one for each team) and a hidden object.

Activity: Inflatable ball.



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will learn the importance of being obedient in reading the Bible, and, in turn, how the Bible guides us in our lives.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Obedience



MEMORY VERSE:



Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!



Luke 11:28

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Hold up a map and ask the children what a map is used for. Allow the children to answer. Redirect their answers, if necessary. Talk with the children about a map helping us know where to go if we are lost or if we are going on a trip. Explain that the map leads us or guides our path so that we know which way to go.

The servant may also consider creating a map (one for each team) with a hidden object, split the children into teams and see which group can find the object first. Highlight that without the map, they would not have been able to find the hidden object.



LESSON BODY:

Psalms 119:105 says, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”

Consider the following quote from St. Augustine of Hippo for a better understanding about what the word of God means, in your preparation for the lesson.³⁶

The Bible is for all of us, both children and adults, so that we can know more about God. As you read the Bible, it is important to make sure that you understand what you are reading. Be sure to ask questions like: who is telling the story or who is the story about? What happened in the story? Is this story taking place in the New Testament or the Old Testament? How/what can I learn from this story? What is God’s message to us in this story?

The Bible is God’s special book for us, and we should honor Him by taking the time to read what it says!

The servant may consider using this analogy so that the children better understand the lesson. If your friend writes you a letter saying what a great friend you are, would you put it in a drawer somewhere and never open and read it? No, you would read it, otherwise, you would not know what a great friend you are; the same thing applies to our Bible. If we do not read our Bible, it is like never opening the letter from our friend. We will not know what God is telling us about how to live for Him if we do not read what the Bible has to say.

What examples of obedience can you recall from the Bible? There are many examples, but Jesus was truly the supreme example of obedience to God and He is our model for how we should submit to the Word of God. When we submit to the Word of God, we submit to the will of God, because God’s will is found in God’s Word.

Consider asking the children ‘why should we obey the Bible?’

Obedience shows that you believe:

1 Samuel 15:22 reminds us that “to obey is better than sacrifice.” What God is trying to teach the Israelites here is that He wants them to obey far more than He wants them to pay for their sins through sacrifice.

The same is true for us. Obedience is one way that we show God that we believe that He will do what He said He will do. He forgives us when we mess up, but He desires that we strive first to not mess up. That is how we demonstrate true belief. Disobedience reveals the exact opposite; it uncovers our selfish desires to have things our own way rather than God’s. When we disobey God, it is like telling Him that He is not enough or that we are not sure if He will come through for us.

“What is this word, which is thus called a light and a lantern at the same time, save we understand the word which was sent unto the Prophets, or which was preached through the Apostles; not Christ the Word, but the word of Christ, of which it is written, “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”?”

- St. Augustine of Hippo

³⁶ Augustyn. (2012). *Expositions on the Book of Psalms* (A. C. Coxe & P. Schaff, Eds.). Peabody: Hendrickson.



Obedience shows love:

Our choice to obey God demonstrates our love for Him. Jesus told His disciples that if they loved Him, they would obey His commands. (John 14:15) It does not get much clearer than that! A person who really loves Jesus will be constantly striving toward obedience. It is our choice to obey and demonstrate our love for God! God has given so much for us that if we truly love Him, we will not be able to quench our desire to do anything we can do to show love toward Him.

Obedience is a witness to others:

When we obey God, our life shines a light that is so attractive to others that they cannot help but see God. Disobedience to God, parents, and authority is a huge blow on our testimony to other people.

“What kind of witness are you being right now?” It is important to understand that every single choice we make is influential in the life of those around us.

When we disobey God, parents, and authority, we are either influencing a Christian in a negative way or showing a non-Christian that we do not take God very seriously. “You can’t just talk the talk, you’ve got to walk the walk.”

Obedience brings blessings:

When we obey God, there is blessing. The awesome thing is that blessing is not just for us either! The Bible says that God blesses those who obey for thousands of generations.

Remember the blessing of obedience we see in the Bible like with Noah (when God told him to build an ark, he was saved), Abraham (when God tested him and asked him to sacrifice his son, God saved his son and showed Him His plan on saving the whole humanity), and so many more.

When we are disciplined enough to read our Bible and learn God’s will and start to obey, the blessings of obedience will fill our lives!

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

What will I do for God this Week Game³⁷:

1. Have the children form a circle and children will begin rolling a big ball to another team player.
2. When the child who has caught the rolling ball touches the ball, they will stop and quickly and loudly shout out one thing they plan to do for God this week and then roll the ball into the circle again.
3. When the servant wants to change the idea of the game a little bit, then have the children play the game but this time they will shout out a promise from God to us.
 - a. **Examples of something you can for God this week:** Praying, studying the Bible, asking for forgiveness.

³⁷ Promises Fulfilled Group Group Activities. (n.d.). Retrieved July 21, 2020, from https://sermons4kids.com/promises_fulfilled_group_activities.htm



- b. **Examples of promises from God:** God will love you forever. (“Give thanks to the Lord, because He is good. His faithful love continues forever.” Psalms 136:1)

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- Who knows what is the best selling book? (The Bible!)
- Is it true that the Bible is God's way of speaking to us today? (Yes!)
- Is it true that we cannot understand the Bible? (No, we read it and ask questions to understand the Bible.)
- Was the Bible only written by one man? (No!)
- Are all the things in the Bible true? (Yes!)
- Do you think being obedient means that you are weak? (No!)
- What are the four things that obedience brings? (Obedience shows that you believe, obedience shows love, obedience is a witness to others, and obedience brings blessings.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

This week, try to read your Bible everyday, especially when you are tired and do not feel like reading.

Be an example and a light to all those who are around you by obeying the teaching of God this week.

Focus during Bible readings and the sermon in church so that you can understand what God wants you to learn!



Lesson 2.4 - The New Testament: Christ, the Apostles, and the First Christians

Building Block 2
We Grow as We Learn God's Word



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Activity: Pencils, crayons or markers, and printed [Apostles' Word Search](#) (one for each child).



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will learn and understand that the New Testament consists of books that are written about Jesus' life and the establishment of the Church.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Faith



MEMORY VERSE:



Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."



Matthew 4:19

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Blob tag:

1. Ask a child to volunteer to be "The Blob" or pick one
2. Tell the other children to run around and try to avoid the blob while the blob tries to tag them
3. If they get tagged by the blob they become part of the blob by holding hands or linking elbows and they have to try to get more people to joining the blob
4. Try to get everyone in the blob
5. Play two 5 minute rounds

God wants us to link up, bring more people to Him and follow him together.



Today's lesson focuses on what the New Testament tells us about Jesus, the apostles, and Christians and how God reveals His plan for mankind through the arrival of Jesus Christ. We are currently in the New Testament time: the time between Jesus' death and His return.



LESSON BODY:

While the Old Testament gives us the story of life before Christ and how God interacted with His people, it is the New Testament that speaks directly to us about how to live our lives today.

God sent an angel to tell Mary and Joseph that they would be having a son, and that they would call His name Jesus, because He would save His people from their sin. The name Jesus means "the Lord saves."

After Jesus' birth, we learn about bits and pieces of His life as a young child. Once He starts His service, we learn about so much more:

- His interactions: with the people, the poor, the sinners, the sick, the rich, the Pharisees, the Samaritans, etc.
- His habits: He did not have a place to stay, He often retreated for prayers and fasting, His attendance to the temple and preaching.
- His character: Merciful (with the woman who was caught sinning), fair in His judgement, kept His word, knew the Old Testament well and was quoting verses often, loved children, cared for His people (He fed 5, 000 families in one day!)
- His preaching: the Beatitudes, the parables, etc.

Jesus called 12 special men to follow Him. These men, known as the disciples, taught others about Jesus and the wonderful plan of salvation (Matthew 4:18-22).

Consider asking the children if they can name any of the 12 disciples.

The disciples names are: Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew, the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him (he was later replaced by Matthias). After his betrayal, Jesus was crucified and died on the cross but He resurrected on the third day and stayed with His disciples for 40 days to teach them how to start the ministry and then he ascended into the Heavens.

Consider the following quote from St. John Chrysostom for a better understanding about what it means to be fishers of men, in your preparation for the lesson.³⁸

““Fishers of men,” that is, teachers, that with the net of God’s word you may catch men out of this world of storm and danger, in which men do not walk but are rather borne along, the Devil by pleasure drawing them into sin where men devour one another as the stronger fishes do the weaker, withdrawn from hence they may live upon the land, being made members of Christ’s body”

- St. John Chrysostom

³⁸ AQUINAS, S. T. (2013). *CATENA AUREA: Commentary on the four gospels, collected out of the works of the ... fathers*. Place of publication not identified: FORGOTTEN Books.



Jesus promised His disciples that the Holy Spirit would come, and He did! They had received power from the Spirit, they were able to preach powerful words to the crowds of visitors in Jerusalem. The effect of the sermon was so powerful that 3,000 people repented that day and were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

After that day, the disciples traveled all over the world to tell everyone about the good news! Some of these travelers are: Peter, Mark, Paul, Thomas and others! During that time also, the first churches were being established; the deacons, the bishops, the rules of the church, the eucharist, etc.

This gives us an overview of what is written in the New Testament. We learned that it covers the life of Jesus Christ, how the Church started and the first Christians who spread Christianity.

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Apostles Word Search³⁹:

1. Print [Apostles word search](#) (one per child) and the [answer sheet](#) (one for servant).
2. Let the children complete the word search, make sure to discuss with the children why they are doing this word search.

Name: _____

Created with TheTeacherCenter.net Word Search Maker

The Apostles Word Search

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

ANDREW	JAMESTHELESS	MATTHEW
PETER	BARTHOLOMEW	JOHN
MATTIAS	PHILIP	JAMES
JUDAS	SIMON	PAUL
THOMAS	THADDEUS	

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

- How does the New Testament start? (The birth and life of Jesus.)
- What do we learn about Jesus' life in the Gospels? (Miracles, interactions, habits, preaching, etc.)
- Who are the 12 disciples? (Andrew, James, Matthew, Peter, Bartholomew, John, Philip, James, Judas Iscariot, Simon, Paul, Thomas, and later Mattias.)
- What happened after the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus? (The Holy Spirit came unto the disciples and they established the first church and preached all over the world.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

³⁹ (n.d.). Retrieved August 28, 2020, from <https://www.qualint.com/samples/religion.html>



What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

- When you attend the liturgy, you should pay attention to the readings as they are taken from the New Testament.
- When you read the Bible, you now have a better understanding of the context of what you are reading!
- You should learn about the life of Jesus because He came to set an example for us on how to live, to speak, to be good Christians.
- You should also learn from the New Testament how to preach the Gospel to others around you.



Lesson 2.5 - The Books of the New Testament

Building Block 2
We Grow as We Learn God's Word



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Beach ball, washable marker, and Bibles.

Craft: 8 different colors of Cardstock, [books of The Bible Templates](#), glue sticks, markers/crayons and scissors.



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will learn what the books of the New Testament are and how it is organized.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Faith



MEMORY VERSE:



But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God and that believing you may have life in His name.



John 20:31

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

“Beach Ball Toss” Icebreaker:

1. Before class, write these questions on the beach ball with a washable marker:
 - a) What is the Bible?
 - b) Why was the Bible written?
 - c) What are the three main sections of the New Testament?
 - d) How many Gospels are there?
 - e) Who wrote the Gospels?
2. Tell the children that they will be playing a question and response game about the Bible and the New Testament!



3. Instruct the children to form a circle and show them how the game works: The children will toss the beach ball to each other and when the servant says "STOP", the child holding the ball will read the question closest to their left thumb and attempt to answer the question. If the child can not answer the question, they can throw the ball to another child to attempt to answer the question. If the child also cannot answer the question, the servant will share the answer with the class. The children will be paying great attention to what the answer is so that they can remember it next time around!

Answers:

- a) The Bible is God's Word
- b) The Bible was written so that people could know God and have eternal life
- c) The Gospels, The Epistles, and The Book of Revelations
- d) Four Gospels
- e) Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John



LESSON BODY:

Remind the children that the Old Testament consists of five sections: The books of Moses (Pentateuch), historical books, wisdom and poetry books, major prophets and minor prophets.

And remind children that each book and each section points to the gospel of Jesus Christ through God's dealings with His people.

Consider asking the children if they know how many books are in the New Testament.

The New Testament has 27 books.

A way to make them remember the number of books: New = 3 letters, Testament = 9 letters, and $3 \times 9 = 27$ books.

Four Gospels:

Four different men wrote about the life of Christ: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. They each wrote a different version, wrote to different readers, at different times and yet their stories all align perfectly! They all tell the same story but in different accounts.

In the Gospels, we learn about Jesus' birth, upbringing, His parents, His baptism, His fasts and prayers, His service, preaching, His disciples, His miracles, but also His betrayal by Judas Iscariot, His suffering on the Cross and His death followed by His resurrection.

Consider asking the children if they can name the four Gospels. (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.)

The Book of Acts:

Acts was written by Luke. It explains how the Church began and grew and how the Good News of Jesus Christ spread across the world. Acts is a History book.



It recounts the spread of Christianity that began in Jerusalem and ended in Rome, the great capital of the empire. The events described in Acts occurred over a period of about 30 years and focus mainly on the ministries of Peter (Acts 1–12) and Paul (Acts 13–28).

We learn about the growth of the early Church, the conversion of Paul (Acts 9,) and his missions. We also learn about the vision Peter received regarding the acceptance into the Church of Gentiles (non Jews) who had not previously converted to Judaism (Acts 10:9–16, 34–35), and the doctrines taught at Jerusalem.

The book of Acts records the power of the Holy Spirit in the life of the disciples and how It guided them in teaching Christianity to others!

Letters by St. Paul:

Consider telling the children that we sometimes call the Letters, “Epistles”.

These letters were written to different people and churches to explain what it means to be a follower of Jesus. These letters are found in Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and Hebrews.

They each had a purpose and were dealing with different problems that were true back then but also still very true today!

Letters by Others:

Other apostles also wrote letters. These letters are found in the books of James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, and Jude. They also have the same purpose as St. Paul’s letters, to teach others how to live a Christian life.

The Book of Revelation:

Revelation explains what will happen at the end times, it is a Prophetic book..

Revelation is the only New Testament book of prophecy. The true theme of Revelation is hope for believers. As Christians endured suffering and persecution for their faith, the book of Revelation offers a glimpse at the end result, something anyone who is struggling needs. What was revealed was a glorious hope in Christ, an eternal hope in Heaven, and a reason to worship.

Consider asking the children if they know who wrote the book of Revelations. (St. John).

The apostle John recorded the words of Revelation as they were spoken to him by Jesus when he was in captivity on an Island called Patmos.

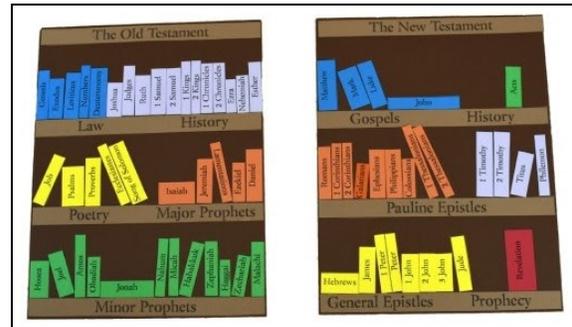
Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Books of the Bible Craft⁴⁰:

1. Before class, print out enough templates for each child to make.
2. Tell the children that they will be making “Books of the Bible” bookshelves so that they can always remember the Books of the Bible and their categories! Ensure each child has the necessary materials before starting the craft, and show them a finished product so that they can see what their bookshelves will look like at the end of the craft.
3. Instruct the children to cut out the shelves on their templates.
4. Once the children have cut out the shelves, they will glue the shelves to a blank piece of cardstock.
5. Next, the children will cut out their books of the Bible and glue the books of the Bible onto the bookshelf.
6. Once the children have completed the craft, they can practice memorizing the Books of the Bible and their categories! They may be able to do this in partners or small groups with their craft and quiz each other.



State that it is necessary to know the Books of the Bible and their categories as they tell us how to live in Christ and make it easier for us to follow Jesus!

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- How many Gospels are there? (Four).
- What are they called/who wrote them? (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John)
- What is the one book of New Testament history? Who wrote it? (Acts/Luke).
- Who wrote most of the New Testament? (St. Paul).
- Were all the letters written by St. Paul? If not, what is one letter that was not written by St. Paul (No. James, 1 Peter, etc.)
- What is the only prophetic book in the New Testament? (Revelation).

⁴⁰ Books of the Bible Craft. (2018, October 9). Retrieved July 22, 2020, from <https://www.thinkingkidsblog.org/books-of-the-bible-craft/>



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

- The New Testament helps us learn about the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. So the next time you are looking for something to help guide the way you live your life, start with the New Testament!
- What are some things we can do to grow in our faith? (We can read the New Testament to learn how to understand what Jesus did for us!)



Lesson 2.6 - Pope Peter, the Seal of the Martyrs

Building Block 2
We Grow as We Learn God's Word



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Synaxarion References: [Hator 29](#).

Activity: [Printed an Icon of St Peter](#) , the seal of martyrs.

Song: [Doxology of Pope Peter the seal of Martyrs](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will learn the role of the spiritual shepherd through the life of Pope Peter.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Love



MEMORY VERSE:



Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends



John 15:13

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Consider asking the children if they know any background about Pope Peter. If they do not know his story, the servant may want to ask the following questions:

- *Can you name a saint? Who is your favorite saint?*
- *What do you think is the most interesting thing about his/her life?*

Explain to the children that today they will learn the story about Pope Peter, and the true love he showed to the Christian people.



LESSON BODY:

Today we will learn about St. Peter, the 17th Pope of Alexandria, and the seal of the martyrs.

When Pope Theonas was a young boy, he was sent to Pope Theonas and Pope Theonas considered him as a son.

Pope Theonas placed Peter in the theological school (to study and learn about God and religion) where he received his education and excelled in preaching and counseling. Pope Theonas then ordained him as a reader, then a deacon, and shortly after as a priest. St. Peter helped the Pope with many of their church duties. Before Pope Theonas' departure, he recommended that the Saint be his successor (to take his place as Pope). When he was enthroned to become Pope, the church was enlightened (learned a lot) by his teachings.

Also in the days of this Pope, Arius the heretic (someone giving wrong teachings about God) appeared and St. Peter advised him several times to turn from his wicked thoughts, but he would not listen. Consequently, St. Peter prevented him from being part of the fellowship of the church.

Arius contacted Emperor Maximianus and reported to him that Peter, the Patriarch of Alexandria, was telling the people not to worship the gods. The Emperor was outraged and sent messengers with orders to cut off the Pope's head. When they arrived in Alexandria, they attacked the people and destroyed most of the cities of Egypt. In total, about 840 thousand people were killed; then they returned to Alexandria and captured the Patriarch and imprisoned him.

When the people heard about their shepherd's arrest, they gathered in front of the prison door and wanted to save him by force. The officer in charge of his slaying was worried that the general peace would be disrupted, so he postponed the execution till the next day. When the saint saw what had happened, he wanted to deliver himself to death for his people, for he feared what might happen to his flock. He wished to depart and be with Christ, without causing any disturbances or troubles. He sent for his people and he comforted them and advised them to adhere to the true faith.

When Arius learned that St. Peter was departing to be with the Lord, leaving him under the band of excommunication, he entreated him, through the high priests, to absolve him. St. Peter refused and told them that the Lord Christ had appeared to him that night in a vision, wearing a torn robe. St. Peter asked Him, "My Lord, who tore Your robe?" The Lord replied, "Arius has torn My robe, because he separated Me from My Father. Beware of accepting him."

After this, St. Peter summoned the Emperor's messenger in secret and advised him to dig a hole in the prison's wall on the side where there were no Christians. The officer was amazed at the bravery of the father and did as he was commanded. He took him out of the prison secretly and brought him outside the city, to the tomb of St. Mark. There, he kneeled down and asked the Lord, "Let the shedding of my blood mark the end of the worship of idols and be the end of the shedding of the blood of Christians." A voice came from heaven and was heard by a saintly virgin who was near that place. It said, "Amen. May it be to you according to your wishes." When he finished his prayer, the swordsman advanced and cut off his holy head.

The body remained in its place until the people went out hurriedly from the city to the place where he was martyred, because they did not know what had happened. They took the pure body and dressed it in the



clothes of the pope and seated him on the seat of St. Mark. Then they placed his body with the bodies of the saints. He occupied the throne of St. Mark for 11 years.

This saint's story shows what it means to lay down one's life for their loved ones. Pope Peter went to his martyrdom so that the people of the Church did not get hurt anymore!

Consider asking the children who they love (friends, family etc.) and how they show their love to them (helping them when they are in need, spending time with them etc.).

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Analyzing St. Peter's icon:

1. [Print an Icon of St Peter](#) ,the seal of martyrs.
2. Ask the children to analyze the icon, ask them to point out things that are in the icon that were talked about in the lesson.
 - a. The boat and the baptism with the children of the mother from the story,
 - b. The swordsman and St. Peter's martyrdom.
 - c. The halo around his head to show that he is a saint.
 - d. etc

End the lesson with glorification of St. Peter, the seal of martyrs: Axios (worthy), Axios, Axios Petros yaro marteros (seal of martyrs)

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- How did Pope Peter's experience shape his life, and influence him? (Growing in the church taught him how to serve, to love his people and protect the faith.)
- What are some of Pope Peter's qualities that you admire the most, or wish to learn from? (He stood firm in his faith against Arius, He loves his people.)
- In general, do you find it easy or difficult to lead a Christian life? (let the children share their thoughts.)
- Name one thing you find difficult about being a Christian in today's society, as well as one easy thing about following Christ. (Let the children share their thoughts,)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

Know your faith (the Creed) so you can defend it when asked! God does not take the faith lightly! If you do not know your faith well, then what do you believe in?

This next week, try to display the same behaviour of true love that Pope Peter displayed.



Building Block 3: We Grow as an Orthodox Family

Lesson 3.IS* - (SPECIAL for JONAH'S FAST): Jonah Preaches the Word of God

Building Block 4
We Grow as an Orthodox Family

*Note this Lesson will need to be moved in order to be given the Sunday prior to Jonah's Fast. For dates, consult the [coptic calendar](#).



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Scripture References: Jonah 3:4-9.

Activity: Slips of paper with a message written on them.

Video: [Christian Youth Channel: Words about Jonah by Pope Shenouda \(2:15\)](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children should learn that by obeying God, we become good ambassadors and can bring the good news to others.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Obedience and Advocacy.



MEMORY VERSE:



Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us.



2 Corinthians 5:20

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):



Consider opening the lesson by asking the children what they think the word ambassador means. See if the children know any examples of ambassadors in the Bible. (Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, etc.)

Explain to the children that In the Old Testament, the prophets were God’s ambassadors (advocates) taking His message to the people. Many times, the prophets’ message from God to the people was to turn from sin and return to God or face the consequences of sin, which was separation from God.

In the New Testament, the disciples of Christ were God’s ambassadors (advocates), teaching the message of the Good News throughout the world. And today, we are those ambassadors!

Today, we will talk about one of God's ambassadors from the Old Testament, Jonah!

LESSON BODY:

Review the story of Jonah: God asked him to preach repentance to the people of Nineveh but Jonah disobeyed God and tried to hide from Him. He was later thrown into the sea and swallowed by a big fish. After three days, God asked the fish to deliver Jonah safely to the shore.

God then came to Jonah a second time, even though Jonah did not listen the first time, God still gave him a second chance.

Consider the following quote from St. Jerome for a better understanding about the second chance that God gave Jonah, in your preparation for the lesson.⁴¹

As soon as Jonah set foot in the city he boldly preached God’s Word, “Forty days, and Nineveh will be overthrown.”(Jonah 3:4)

Jonah had obeyed God and gave the people of Nineveh His message, but now it was up to the people of Nineveh to listen to Jonah or not. Let us read Jonah 3:5 to see how the people responded to God’s message.

The people of Nineveh heard God’s message and believed His Word. They were distressed by the news they received from Jonah; they did not want to be destroyed, so everyone fasted. They put on sack-cloth to show their grief over the news that God was going to destroy Nineveh.

The king of Nineveh himself said, “Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?” (Jonah 3:7-9)

“He did not say to the prophet, “why have you not done what you were ordered to do?.” But the punishment of the shipwreck and his drowning are enough for him to understand the Lord, the liberator, whom he hadn’t known to be ordering. Moreover it is superfluous to see his wounds as those of a false servant of God, once he has been smitten, for such a punishment is less of a correction than a reproof.”

- St. Jerome

⁴¹ Jerome. (n.d.). Chapter 3 - Patristic Bible Commentary. Retrieved August 14, 2020, from <https://sites.google.com/site/aquinasstudybible/home/jonah/st-jerome-on-jonah/chapter-1/chapter-2/chapter-3>



The king of Nineveh heard the news about God’s prophet and His message to Nineveh. As a king, he was in a position of great authority. His reaction to the message he received was important; he could have been prideful and angry with the message and order to have Jonah killed, but the king responded in a completely different way. He responded with humility; he took off his royal clothes, put on sackcloth and sat in the dust.

The king of Nineveh called upon all the people living in his city to cry out to God and turn away from their wickedness. He was pleading and hoping for God to turn away His punishment and show His mercy and kindness to them.

The King of Nineveh acknowledged that his people were wicked and violent, something God already knew. The king knew the only hope he and his people had to be delivered from destruction was to call on God to have mercy. God saw what the king of Nineveh and all the people did and how they turned from their wicked ways. He had compassion on them and did not bring destruction upon the city.

In this story we recognize that there are two great ambassadors (advocates): Jonah and the king.

Jonah: He obeys God, he delivers the message of repentance, he sacrifices Himself for the sake of the people, his obedience to God causes this whole city to be saved!

The king: He listens to God’s warning, he realizes his and his people’s sins, he encourages everyone in the city to fast and ask for repentance, and because of him the people of the city are saved!

Consider asking the children the following question: How can we be ambassadors or advocates of God?

- *Obey God’s words by reading the Bible and applying God’s message in my life.*
- *Realize my own sins and confess them to my priest and I try to do better.*
- *Preach Christianity through my actions: my smile, my service, my care for others, my gentleness, my humility, my respect for elders, my help to others around me!*

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Ambassador Charades:

1. The servant should prepare a few messages (eg. prayer and fasting, forgiveness, repentance, etc.), before class, for the children to deliver.
2. The servant can choose to split the class into two separate teams.
3. Have one child, the ambassador, from each team come up to the front of the class and pick different messages.
4. Each child will have to deliver their message to their team without using any words, only gestures.
5. The teams must guess what the respective message is.
6. The goal is to see which team can figure out the message first.



VIDEO:



Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- What is an ambassador/advocate? (A representative who delivers a message.)
- What does an ambassador for Christ do? (Delivers Christ's message of repentance.)
- What did Jonah do when he was given a second chance? (He obeyed God's instructions and took God's message to the Ninevites.)
- What was God's message to the Ninevites? (Forty days and Nineveh will be overturned.)
- How did the people respond to this message? (They believed God, fasted and put on sackcloth.)
- How did the King of Nineveh respond to the message? (He changed from royal robes and put on sackcloth and sat in ashes. He sent out a decree calling for all people and animals to fast and put on sackcloth. Cry out to God and turn from wickedness.)
- How did God respond to the Ninevites fasting and mourning? (He showed compassion on them and did not punish them as He had planned.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

We are God's ambassadors/advocates. As His ambassadors we have an important job in God's Kingdom. He has given us the position to be His representative on this earth to point people to Him.

How can we be the ambassador/advocates of God everyday?

- Being obedient.
- Being kind to others.
- Loving our enemies, etc.

This week, try to understand what God wants you to learn when you are reading your Bible!



Lesson 3.2 - Children: A Gift from God

Building Block 4
We Grow as an Orthodox Family



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Bibles.

Scripture References: Genesis 1:26-27, Psalms 139:13-14, Psalms 127:3

Activity: Paper, pencils, and crayons/markers.



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

Children will learn that being created in God's image shows His love for us.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Thankfulness



MEMORY VERSE:



For you formed my inward parts; you covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.



Psalm 139:13-14

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Introduce the lesson by starting a discussion with the children. Explain to the children that before we start the lesson, we are going to have a discussion about things we admire in other people. Have the children think of someone they know and tell the class what they admire about that person.

If children are a bit shy at first, the servant may begin the discussion with his/her own example (eg. my mother is very kind or my sister has nice eyes).



After the children have shared what they admire about others, have them say something that they like about themselves. Explain to the children that sometimes we see the good things in others and only see the bad in ourselves. Again, the servant may want to begin with an example for the children (eg. I am kind, I am made in God's image or I have nice eyes, I am made in God's image.) The servant should lead the discussion and allow children to chime in when they feel comfortable.

God cares so much about us that He created us as reflections of Him. Tell them that today they will be learning what it means to be made in God's image.



LESSON BODY:

Explain to the children that every person on Earth, all of us, are created in God's image. Read Genesis 1:26-27 as a class.

An analogy that the servant may want to use to better explain this concept to the children is to give an example of someone that the servant resembles physically, mentally, or spiritually. In the case of a family member, sharing the image of a family member is more than just physical appearances, it also includes our characteristics. The same thing applies when we say that we are created in God's own image.

If everyone is created in God's image, then why are we unique?

→ To fulfill His purposes and represent His power and glory.

Read Psalm 139:13-14, explain to the children that the person who wrote these verses, David, praised God for making him unique.

Consider the following quote from an Eastern Church Father for a better understanding about what it means to be created in the image of God, in your preparation for the lesson.⁴²

The Bible tells us that God made families and that God gives us children, just like God gave Abraham and Sarah a son (Isaac).

The Bible says that "*children are a gift from God!*"

At this point, the servant may want to ask the children if they ever thought of themselves as a gift.

"Since this is so, God created man out of visible and invisible nature with his own hands according to the image and likeness, forming the body from the earth and through his own breathing upon it giving it a rational and intellectual soul, which we call the divine image. That which is "according to the image" is manifest in the intellect and free will. That which is "according to the likeness" is manifest in such likeness in virtue as is possible."

- Eastern Church Father

In Psalm 127:3 it says that children are a heritage from the Lord; we are all gifts from God!

We know God places great value on human life because He created us and, 'all [our] days were written in [his] book before one of them came to be.' God wouldn't take such care in creating us if we weren't incredibly valuable to him." Furthermore, read John 3:16-17 as evidence of God's love for us. If human life wasn't

⁴² Louth, A., & Oden, T. C. (Eds.). (2001). *Genesis 1-11*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

important to God then he wouldn't have sent his perfect son, Jesus, to die for our sins. We are all very special to God, so we can trust that he has a good plan for each of our lives.

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Family Stick Figures Craft:

1. Give each child a piece of paper and have them draw stick figures on their paper like the picture⁴³ to represent the members of their family.
2. After the children are done, have them come up to the front of the class and present their family to the other children.
3. Have the children say each family member's name aloud, then count the members of their family and say a quick fact about their family.
4. As each child finishes, have the class share something they have learned about the child's family.



List five to ten qualities of God on the board and ask for volunteers to comment on which qualities they share with God.

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

- Were we created in God's image? (Yes!)
- If we are all created in God's image, how are we unique? (To fulfill His purposes and represent His power and glory.)
- What does the Bible say about children? (That they are a gift from God.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS

⁴³ Stick Family Window Decal. (n.d.). Retrieved July 20, 2020, from <http://www.clipartbest.com/clipart-xcgn7Aa9i>



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

Since we are all created in God's image, how can we, as Christians, be a reflection of God everyday? (Treating others with respect since we all were created in God's image.)

This week, how can we respect God's creation, our bodies? (Keeping it clean, meaning to try to keep bad thoughts or words away from our bodies).



Lesson 3.3 - Grow as Jesus Grew

Building Block 4
We Grow as an Orthodox Family



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Bibles.

Scripture References: Luke 2:40, Philippians 3:12-14, Colossians 2:6-7, Luke 18:18-27, 2 Timothy 3:16, Daniel 9:1-19

Craft: Poster paper, markers, and pencil crayons.



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

Children will develop an understanding of the need to grow spiritually, just as they grow physically.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Growth, Faith and Discipline.



MEMORY VERSE:



And the child grew, and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon Him.



Luke 2:40

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Have the children sit in a circle. Ask them what their goals are for when they grow up. What do they want to be when they are older? How tall do they want to be when they grow up? What do they want their future family to look like?

The children likely will not mention spiritual goals. Use this as a transition point. You may wish to move straight into the Scripture reading, or press this question further by asking why spiritual goals were not mentioned by the children.



Invite one of the children to read Luke 2:52 out loud.

Luke tells us that as Jesus grew up, He increased in the important areas of spirit, wisdom and grace. This is a reminder that's something every Christian should be doing. We should not only be focused on the growth we can do physically and on this earth. We should also be concerned with our spiritual growth.

Invite one of the children to read Philippians 3:12-14 out loud.

In this verse, St. Paul tells us we should continually be pressing towards our calling to be with Jesus Christ. This means we should have dreams and goals regarding our spiritual life and growth too!

LESSON BODY:

Jesus was born on earth as a baby, and grew up as a child, just like us. So, He understands what it is like to be a child, but He didn't have it all easy. His family had to move because Herod wanted to kill Him. He lived in a foreign country for a while, and then in a town called Nazareth. Nazareth was not the best place to live. The Jews looked down on Nazarenes; they thought they were poor and not "pure" Jews. Jesus' father was a simple carpenter, and His family was not rich.

Consider the following quote from H.H Pope Cyril of Alexandria for a better understanding of Luke 2:40.⁴⁴ You may wish to use this quote as a transition point to emphasize that His growth was not just in His physical limbs and stature, but also in spiritual wisdom.

"To say that the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, being filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him, must be taken as referring to His human nature. And examine, I pray you, closely the profoundness of the dispensation: the Word endures to be born in human fashion, although in His divine nature He has no beginning nor is subject to time: He Who as God is all perfect, submits to bodily growth: the Incorporeal has limbs that advance to the ripeness of manhood: He is filled with wisdom Who is Himself all wisdom."

- St. Cyril of Alexandria

His growth continued. It did not stop with childhood, but right on through boyhood, youth and manhood. Best of all, His growth was balanced. He grew physically, mentally and spiritually, and He had a sound body. He loved the outdoors and nature. Most of his stories were taken from living, growing things. He talked, almost chiefly, about seeds, grain, harvests, trees, birds, and living waters.

We should all strive to grow and be like our Lord who grew inward, outward, and upward. You might ask how you can grow. If we read Colossians 2:6-7, we will find the answer.

This verse teaches us that we must be rooted in Christ to be built up in Him. How can we do this?

Allow the children to brainstorm and discuss before offering the three answers below.

We can grow in Christ by making time for God, reading our Bibles regularly, memorizing scripture, and praying:

1. **Putting God first by making time for Him.**

⁴⁴ Cyril, & Smith, R. P. (1859). *Commentary upon the Gospel according to St. Luke, now first translated into English from an ancient Syriac version*. Oxford, England: Univ. Press.

Direct the children to Luke 18:18-27 in their bibles. Have each child read one verse.

Explain to the children that the rich young ruler put his wealth before God. He did not want to sell everything to follow Christ.

Consider asking the children if there are things in their lives that keep them from growing in Christ and following Him?

Have the children list on a sheet of paper the number one thing that may be taking the number one position in their lives and preventing them from having time for daily Bible reading and prayer time. Help them to understand why that thing(s) is a hindrance to their relationship with God and how they will need His help to overcome it.

2. Reading the Bible daily.

Why should we read our Bibles regularly? (Because the Bible is our guide.)

Read 2 Timothy 3:16: *“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”*

The Bible is useful for all of the things mentioned above. God can use the Bible to speak to us.

We need to know what the Bible says. When we are faced with a decision, we can use scripture to help us decide. We should never choose to do something that the Bible says we should not do.

3. Pray.

Daniel is a great example of someone desiring to grow in Christ (Daniel 9:1-19). He prayed daily and was ready when he faced the lion’s den. Daniel was faithful to his God. He prayed three times a day. His window that opened in the direction of Jerusalem, the Holy City, was always opened when he talked to God. Daniel did not allow fear of death keep him from praying to the One True God.

Now ask them AGAIN what their goals are for when they grow up. What do they want to be when they are older? (in a spiritual way)

Ex: I want to be humble like Christ, wise like Solomon, fearless like Daniel, faithful like Joseph, brave like St. Stephen the first martyr, I want to know the Bible by heart, or learn 100 verses, or know all the psalms by heart!! Give them inspiration!

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Scripture Posters:

1. Children should use pencil crayons and a piece of white paper to illustrate a poster that shows one of their favorite scripture passages. The scripture passage should be written out in big letters with a scripture reference.





2. Children should also include a picture on their poster that relates to the scripture verse. The picture should relate to what the bible verse says or what it means to the child.
3. An example of a Bible poster is provided on the right.⁴⁵

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- Does Jesus know what it is like to be a child? (Yes - He was one, so He understands our problems.)
- How do we become wise and grow spiritually like Jesus? (Study the Bible, listen to our parents, who also were children once.)



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

This next week, remember to set aside some special time when you can pray and read your Bible so that you may grow spiritually, just as Jesus did. Some strategies that can help you with this are:

- Pick a time during the day (e.g. before bed) that is a special time for God. Remove all distractions, and go to a quiet corner of your room with icons and your Bible.
- Pray before reading your Bible.
- Ask questions about what you are reading in your Bible. Record your questions in a journal to show to your parents, Abouna, or your servants.
- Be consistent! Just as you must consistently eat meals each day to grow physically, you must consistently consume your Bible and prayer to grow spiritually as well.

⁴⁵ Diyprojects. (2019, January 08). Illustrator Faith Those Who Are Thirsty Bible Verse Illustrated Watercolor Print. Retrieved July 20, 2020, from <https://www.bestillustrationart.com/illustrator-faith-those-who-are-thirsty-bible-verse-illustrated-watercolor-print/>



Lesson 3.4 - Family of Faith: The Church

Building Block 4
We Grow as an Orthodox Family



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Bibles, [SUSCopts: Moving the Mokattam Mountain](#) (optional).

Scripture References: 1 Timothy 3:15, John 15:3-5

Activity: List of specific items, and two chairs.



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

Children will explore how their family is a part of the Family of Faith, the Church, which has been passed down through the ages and grown through the grace of God and is theirs to grow and cultivate.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Unity, Fellowship and Love.



MEMORY VERSE:



Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.



John 15:4

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Open the lesson by discussing with the children what a family is and what things make a family. Give the children time to answer, accepting all reasonable answers. The servant should look for biological relations, adoption, marriage, etc. Continue prompting with the following types of questions:

- How is a family different from any other group of people? (Commitment to each other and love for one another, common goals and values, similar beliefs, common dwelling, place, etc.)
- What are the roles in a family? (father, mother, sister, brother, etc.)



→ Within a family there are certain roles members have; please describe them. (Household chores, responsibilities, honoring the rest of the family with your actions and talents, etc.)

You may wish to record these answers on a whiteboard or chart paper for the children to visualize.

Looking at the lists we created, what things can we find that connect us all? (We love God, we believe in God, we are Christians, etc.)

Today we will discuss our big family, the Church!



LESSON BODY:

From 1 Timothy 3:15, we know that the church is God’s household. In other words, we are all members of God’s family. In the Lord’s Prayer, we say, “Our Father who art in heaven.” If we all call God “Father,” then what does that make us? We are all brothers and sisters in Christ, created by God in His image and likeness.

Consider the following quote from St. Augustine of Hippo for a better understanding about what it means to be one Church, as one community, in your preparation for the lesson.

⁴⁶

We are welcomed in the family of faith, the Church, when we are baptized. Through this, we become adopted sons and daughters of God by His grace. As our Father, God gives us all that we need to live. The Eucharist is the ultimate meal of His family. We come together in faith to partake of the Body and Blood of Christ. By taking the Holy Communion, we are joined to Christ and to each other. We become “rooted and grounded in (His) love.”

“Therefore, beloved, with assured mind and steadfast heart, let us continue to live under so lofty a Head in so glorious a body, in which we are mutually members. Thus, even if my absence were as far as the most distant lands, we should be together in him, and we should never withdraw from the unity of His body. If we lived in one house, we should certainly be said to be together; how much more are we together when we are together in one body!”

- St. Augustine of Hippo

Common faith and holiness connect us with those who have gone before us, or the Church Triumphant, “our whole family in heaven”. These are saints and martyrs who teach us to live in Christ by faith. Their examples show us, the Church Militant, “our family on earth”, how to live holy lives. We grow together in faith and make up the Church.

If we turn to John 15:3-5 in our Bibles, we will learn more about our roots in the Church.

The servant may consider asking one of the children to read.

After reading, the servant should emphasize that Christ is a vine and we as branches represent the Family of Faith, the Church. The servant may wish to ask some of the following questions:

→ *Who is the true vine and who is the vinedresser (gardener)? (Christ, God)*

⁴⁶ St. Augustine of Hippo. (AD 430). Retrieved from <http://catenabible.com/com/584e28f79ac03ecd4b8e6364>



- *How can the branch bear fruit? (By being connected to the vine and by being faithful to God.)*
- *How can we grow in Christ and bear fruit? (Through good works and charity.)*
- *What does the fruit represent? (Christ's love, shown through our actions.)*

Read 1 Corinthians 12:21-26:

“And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”; nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unrepresentable parts have greater modesty, but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.”

We are each a member of the body! So when my “sister” or “brother” in my Sunday school class, in church is not feeling well, I should ask about them and care! If your leg hurts a lot, you can’t just ignore it and walk on your hands all day! You have to help it.

We are all one Family of Faith. As we grow each day, we will understand who we become with Faith in Christ. This will connect our families to other families in the Church, through the sacraments, service to the Church and the activities we participate in. You and your family are not just a couple of branches, but part of an amazing connection of a biological, adopted and spiritual family, which is the Church, the Family of Faith.

To illustrate the strength of the Family of Faith, the servant may wish to mention and discuss the Miracle of Moving the Mokattam Mountain using the following resource: [SUSCopts: Moving the Mokattam Mountain](#). This miracle required the cooperation of the family of the Church - the priests, deacons, and people chanted together and the mountain moved. The Church is stronger when unified.

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Hot Seat/Password: This game is to demonstrate community and cooperation as a team - just as the Church is a community.

1. Split the class into two different teams (or if it is a larger class of more than 16 children, more groups may be needed)
2. Have all the children facing the board. A chair for each team, along the front of the board. The chairs are to be facing the children (such that the back of the chair is facing the board).
3. Each team will pick one child to start and they will be in the chair at the front, the "hot seat". The servant will have a list of words (e.g. household items, animals, occupations, etc.). The children sitting in the front on the "hot seats" will have to face their classmates at all times, they can not look at the board. The servant will write the word on the board (or show the word on a notebook).
4. When the person correctly guesses the word, the person in the chair will go back to their team and the next person in their team will have to sit in the chair and guess the next word.



5. The team that gets the correct answer first wins the point.
6. The aim of the game is for the children in the team to describe the word using synonyms, antonyms, descriptions, definitions, etc. to their team mate who is in the hot seat. The person in the hot seat will have to correctly guess the word being described.

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- As one of those younger branches, what will you do to bear fruit for Christ? (The first step is to truly be the Family of Faith by being People of Faith, and from there, anything is possible.)
- How can we grow in Christ and bear fruit? (Through good works and charity.)
- What does the fruit represent? (Christ's love, shown through our actions.)
- What does the tree that we are part of as branches represent? (The Church).



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

This week, how can you be a better branch of the tree, that is the Church?

- Come to church early.
- Making sure to keep the Church, our home, clean.
- Participating in communal services (e.g. Liturgy) regularly.

How can we show others that we are part of the Church on a daily basis?

- Being kind to others.
- Standing up for those in the Church who are lonely, bullied, etc.
- Reaching out to my friends who are missing to remind them that I love and care about them as my brother/sister in Christ.



Lesson 3.5 - The Sacrament of Marriage

Building Block 4
We Grow as an Orthodox Family



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Wedding photos.

Craft: Colored A4 or letter size cardstock, scissors, white glue, plastic gems, rhinestones, glitter glue, foam or paper shapes, buttons, markers, and [King](#) and [Queen](#) templates (1 King template and 1 Queen template for each child).

Video: [Fr. Daoud Lamei - The Holy Sacraments - Cartoon \(20:45-24:30\)](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

Children should understand that the sacrament of marriage is one of the seven sacraments in the church, and that marriage is the joining of man and woman in God.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Love, Connection, and Unity.



MEMORY VERSE:

“

But from the beginning of the creation, God made them male and female. For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.

”

Mark 10:6-8

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Discuss the Christian family. Let each of the children tell their families. Do they have a mother and a father? How were the parents joined? (Marriage)

If the other servants are married, invite them to bring a picture of their marriage photo as well as a recent photo of their family, to share with the class. This will be a good visual representation that the family begins when God unites a man and a woman in marriage.

Does anyone remember a wedding that God blessed from the bible? (Cana of Galilee.)

LESSON BODY:

Throughout the Bible we learn about many different families. Some of these families are Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Ruth and Boaz, Zachariah and Elizabeth, and lots more! Marriage is natural and holy and this is why God created male and female at the beginning.

Consider asking the children what liturgical items they see that are used in an Orthodox wedding. *The servant can keep a picture of a marriage up for children to see in case they have not been to an Orthodox wedding.*

- Holy Crowns
- Holy Myroon
- Two white candles
- Rings
- Gospel Book
- Garments

Ask the children what they think each of these items symbolize or mean. The servant can use the visual to highlight the meanings of the symbols with the children. The servant may choose to use the table as an activity where they cut up each square and children match the item, visual and meaning together.

Item	Visual	Meaning
Holy Crowns		Symbolizes the fact that the bride and groom are the kind and queen. He represents Christ and she represents St. Mary.

<p>Holy Myroon</p>		<p>Symbolizes spiritual protection for the bride and groom. They receive wisdom, joy and simplicity</p>
<p>Two White Candles</p>		<p>Symbolize the light of Christ.</p>
<p>Rings</p>		<p>Symbolizes the unity and continuity. They are circular in shape, which means they are never ending. They are placed on the left hand so they are closer to the heart.</p>
<p>The Gospel</p>		<p>Symbolizes the fact that the couple is united by God in His Word. The gospel reads that marriage is like God's relationship with the church.</p>

<p>Garments</p>		<p>The man wears this as a symbol of priesthood, being the head of the house. The bride and groom wear them together to resemble that they have become the royalty of the house.</p>
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At this point, the servant may want to ask the children, if marriage is one of the sacraments in the church, what are the other six that we have.

- Baptism
- Confirmation/Chrismation
- Confession/Repentance
- Eucharist/Communion
- Unction of the Sick
- Matrimony/Marriage
- Priesthood

It is God who joins a man and a woman in a relationship of mutual love. Through this sacrament, a man and a woman are publicly joined as husband and wife. They enter into a new relationship with each other, God, and the Church. According to Orthodox teachings, marriage is not simply a social institution. A husband and a wife are called by the Holy Spirit, not only to live together, but also to share their Christian life together so that each, with the aid of the other, may grow closer to God and become the people they are meant to be.

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

“Glory and Honor Crowns” Craft⁴⁷:

1. Before class, print out the [King](#) and [Queen](#) templates (1 King template and 1 Queen template for each child).
2. Remind the children about the items that they previously learned about which are used in an Orthodox wedding (two white candles, rings, the Gospel Book, and the crowns)



⁴⁷ Paper Crown: Kids' Crafts: Fun Craft Ideas. (n.d.). Retrieved July 21, 2020, from <https://www.firstpalette.com/craft/paper-crown.html>



3. Tell the children that they will be making crowns for their mom and/or dad!
4. Handout the King and Queen templates to the children and instruct them to cut out the pieces with their scissors.
5. Next, instruct the children to connect all three crown sections by gluing along the marked side tabs.
6. Allow the children to decorate their crowns to their own liking by using the materials provided.
7. Once the children have decorated their crowns, glue the ends together and let the glue set.

Remind the children of the importance of marriage (one of the seven sacraments) and the significance of the crowns in signifying the establishment of a new family under God!



VIDEO:

[Fr Daoud Lamei - The Holy Sacraments - Cartoon \(20:45-24:30\)](#)

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- What are the seven sacraments? (Baptism, Confirmation/Chrismation, Confession/Repentance, Eucharist/Communion, Unction of the Sick, Holy Matrimony, and Priesthood.)
- What are some examples of families in the Bible? (Adam and Eve, Zachariah and Elizabeth, Isaac and Rebekah, etc.)
- What Liturgical items do we have in a wedding? (Holy Crowns, Capes, candles, rings, Gospel Book, and Holy oil.)
- What does the Holy Oil symbolize? (Spiritual protection for the bride and groom.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

Today we learned that marriage is one of the holy sacraments in the church. Marriage is the start of an orthodox family. Throughout the marriage sacrament there are many items used that symbolize different meanings. Next time we attend a wedding, let's try and notice these items and remind ourselves of what they symbolize.



Building Block 4: We Grow Through Prayer and Fasting

Lesson 4.1 - Introducing the Spirituality of Fasting

Building Block 3
We Grow Through Prayer and Fasting



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Marshmallows (or any other edible snack).

Activity: [Fill-in-the-Blank scavenger hunt page](#), word answers written on strips of paper, and pencils.

Craft: Colored construction or cardstock paper, white printer paper or envelopes, glue or tape, markers, writing utensils (pens and/or pencils), and slips of paper

Video: [Christian Youth Channel: Are You Ready For Some Fasting \(3:20\)](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will learn that fasting is one of the most powerful spiritual disciplines and that through it, the Holy Spirit can transform our lives and bring us closer to our Heavenly Father.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Self-Control and Humility.



MEMORY VERSE:



I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.



Daniel 10:3

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Consider beginning the lesson by giving each child a marshmallow, tell the children that they can eat this marshmallow right now or they can wait until the end of the lesson to get an extra marshmallow.



The point of this activity is to show the children that they can restrain themselves from things they like to get a reward at the end, just like it is with fasting. It demonstrates the importance of self-control.



LESSON BODY:

Consider asking the children about the spiritual benefits of fasting and how they should behave when they fast.

Fasting is not only about the food you eat, it is about how we behave and think. When we control the type of food we eat, it helps us become more aware of other things we can control (our words, actions). Self-control is a fruit of the Holy Spirit and should be something we work towards through fasting.

What does “abstain” mean? It means to keep yourself from enjoying something. What are some things we enjoy that we can abstain from during fasting? Certain types of food, playing video games, watching TV, saying bad words, etc.

The servant may consider highlighting elements of the quote by St. Ephraim the Syrian, specifically, that although fasting is not an end of itself, it helps us reach a life with God.

Fasting has been observed since the Old Testament days, like the story of Jonah and the Ninevites who showed sorrow for the sin they committed by fasting. Our Lord Jesus taught us by His example of fasting. Jesus spent 40 days and nights in the wilderness fasting and praying before He began His ministry on earth (Matthew 4:1-17; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-14).

A big part of fasting is about humility. We humble ourselves by choosing and accepting to feel hungry, when we would otherwise eat whatever we want.

Consider reviewing the quote by Pope Shenouda III prior to giving the lesson to reinforce the humility associated with fasting.⁴⁸

One of the purposes of fasting is to train yourself and to conquer the passions of the flesh. It is also to liberate yourself from depending on the things of this world in

“Prayer, fasting, vigils, and all other Christian practices, however good they are in themselves, do not constitute the goal of our Christian life, although they serve as a necessary means to its attainment. The true goal of our Christian life consists in the acquisition of the Holy Spirit of God. Fasting, vigils, prayers, alms-giving and all good deeds done for the sake of Christ are but means for the acquisition of the Holy Spirit of God. But note, my son, that only a good deed done for the sake of Christ brings us the fruits of the Holy Spirit. All that is done, if it is not for Christ’s sake, although it may be good, brings us no reward in the life to come, nor does it give us God’s grace in the present life.”

- St. Ephraim the Syrian

“Say to yourself: I do not deserve to eat because of my sins. You become inwardly humble when you are physically fatigued which allows you to pray in humility and help you to relinquish pride, vanity and self-complacency....

In a bodily fast, your body longs for food. You say: No, and you succeed in applying this "No". Make therefore, this willpower include every thought, every wicked desire, every wrong behaviour, and every bodily lust.”

- H.H. Pope Shenouda III

⁴⁸ H.H. Pope Shenouda III. (1990). The Spirituality of Fasting. Cairo, EGY: Dar El Tebaa El Kawmia Press. Retrieved from <http://www.coptic-isneed.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/fasting.pdf>



order to concentrate on the things of the Kingdom of God. It is a time to focus on our spiritual lives, feeding the spirit with prayers and reading the Bible so that we can continue the journey against temptation and sin.

Consider reminding the children that the central purpose of fasting is to teach us self-control in all aspects of our life. Consider reviewing the quote by Pope Shenouda III, and emphasizing to the children that we should be using fasting as a means to train our willpower to resist sin, by the grace of God.⁴⁹

Fasting is a method that helps us defeat the devil. Our Savior Jesus Christ Himself, although He did not need to fast, did so to teach us that fasting will help us defeat the devil. Fasting does not mean abstaining from food only, but it also means refraining from lies, evil talk, anger and all other sins. We have to do our best and seek the Lord's help in order to overcome falling in sin. We should start to practice fasting from a young age with guidance from our father of confession. During this time of fasting, we should pay special attention to the wrong things we may be doing. Ask yourself – am I listening to my parents? Am I treating others how I would want to be treated? Am I committing other sins through my words or actions? Pray for God to give you strength during the fasting period to defeat the devil when he brings us different thoughts. When we fast, we discipline our body by not doing or eating the things we enjoy.

The main reason we should fast is because we love God.⁵⁰ When we fast we should not be focused on what our next meal will be, but on building our relationship with God.

The following story is adopted from the book, “The Desert Fathers and Mothers”⁵¹

Let us listen to a story of how one of the hermits did this, her name was Amma Sara. Amma Sara was born to wealthy Christian Parents in Upper Egypt. They taught her to read and write and raised her in a Christian manner. It is said that Amma Sarah [i.e. Mother Sarah] fought against an evil thought for thirteen years. She never prayed that the warfare should cease but she said, ‘O God, give me strength.’

It is said that she waged warfare against the demon of fornication. The servant may choose to just convey that as “an evil thought” to suit the development of grade 4 children.

One of the tactics that Amma Sara used to fight against these thoughts was fasting. Blessed Theodora once asked Blessed Sarah: What am I to do? Many thoughts attack me. – The holy one answered: Do not battle with all of them, but just one; because all bad thoughts have only one as their head. Fight against this chief one and all other thoughts will surrender. The battle against this main thought consists of: stillness, **fasting**, ... and humility. This is the battle, and these are the weapons that we must use against the head of evil thoughts. With this you will vanquish the thought by the grace of Christ. There is no other way to conquer them!

Once the same devil who kept attacking her with the same thought attacked her more repetitively. But she gave herself up God and to her tactics of prayer and fasting. Then this devil appeared in body to her and said, ‘Sarah, you have overcome me.’ But she said, ‘It is not I who have overcome you, but my master, Christ.’

Through her fasting and prayers, by the grace of God, Amma Sarah was able to overcome these thoughts.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Amma Sarah. (2020). Retrieved 18 August 2020, from <https://ammasarah.wordpress.com/>

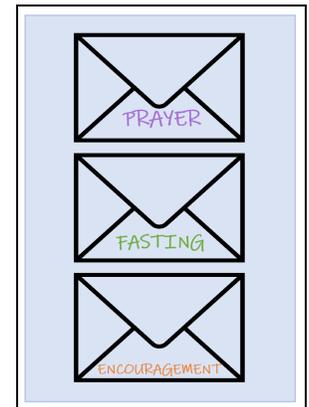
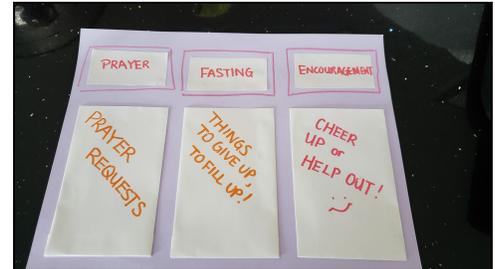
Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Prayer, Fasting and Encouragement Envelope Craft:

1. Give each child 1 construction/cardstock paper and 3 pieces of paper the size of about 11cm by 14cm.
2. For each of the 11cm by 14 cm paper, fold about 1 centimeter in on both of the long side of the paper and on one side of the shorter side of the paper. These are pockets)
3. Then glue or tape the 1 centimeter folded parts of the papers and put them so they are side-by-side each other on the construction/cardstock paper. (OR if using envelopes glue the no flap side to the construction/cardstock paper)
4. Write "PRAYER", "FASTING", and "ENCOURAGEMENT" respectively above each or on the 3 pockets.
5. Write on slips of paper at least one for prayer, fasting, and encouragement. For encouragement, write one for someone else.
 - In the prayer, write prayer requests (e.g. for themselves during fasting, prayers for friends and family, etc.).
 - In the fasting pocket, write things to give up for fasting (e.g. watching TV, shopping for clothes and toys, bad words, etc.).
 - In the encouragement pocket, write encouraging things for other people or ways we can support others (e.g. you can do it!, you are wonderful!, I can donate to the food bank, I can help my brother with his homework, etc.



Give Up, Fill Up, Fill-in-the-Blank Scavenger Hunt:

1. Have the words listed on the handout printed off onto strips and hidden around the classroom.
2. Give each child a [Fill-in-the-Blank scavenger hunt page](#).
3. Have the children fill it out.



VIDEO:

[Christian Youth Channel: Are You Ready For Some Fasting \(3:20\)](#)



SONG:

A part of the Melody of the Great Lent may be sung to talk about fasting (The tune sounds like [this video](#)):

*Blessed are those who have mercy,
Who give to the poor and fast and pray,*



*The Holy Spirit will fill their hearts,
The Son will show them mercy on Judgment Day.*

Fasting is steadfastness to the soul,
He who fasts shall not fall,
He will be saved from all attacks,
The heavenly kingdom he will not lack.

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- When we fast, is it only about not eating certain foods? (No, fasting is also about trying to correct our ways, and move past the sins we constantly repeat.)
- Why should I fast? (To learn self control, humility, and develop the tools to overcome the sins I struggle with.)
- What are some examples from the Bible of those who fasted? (Jonah and Jesus Himself.)
- Did Amma Sara defeat the devil by herself? (No it was the victory of Christ through her.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

True spiritual fasting focuses on God more and our desires less. Fasting is not just denying yourself food.

What are some things we can do to grow spiritually through fasting? (Disciplining our thoughts not to think badly of others or judge others, helping someone in need to think less about ourselves and appreciate what we have, disciplining our body to eat certain foods, disciplining our time to make sure we are reading the Bible and praying everyday and asking God to help us fast).

What are some things we can try to limit or stop doing when we are fasting? (Playing video games, watching TV, saying mean things to my brother or sister, not listening to my parents, complaining).

Let's practice before the fast by learning to say no to one thing a day (ex: no sweets, not playing our favorite game). Encourage your friends to fast and pray.



Lesson 4.2 - The Fasts of Our Church; What does Each Mean?

Building Block III
We Grow Through Prayer and Fasting



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Poster with table printed on it, images for each fast, and velcro tape.

Craft: Paper, marker, ruler, pin, and paperclip.

Song: [Coptic Hymns in English: Weekday Lenten Doxology](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

Learn about the teaching of our Church on fasting, the different fasts of the Church, and learn that the purpose of fasting is to focus more on God and less on our wants or desires.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Asceticism and Vigilance.



MEMORY VERSE:

“

So we fasted and entreated our God for this, and He answered our prayer

”

Ezra 8:23

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Consider beginning the lesson by naming all the fasts of our church and asking the children if they know what we fast for.

Fasting in our church is very important because it teaches us self-control and helps us to be more focused on Jesus. Even Jesus fasted before He was crucified! He fasted for forty days!

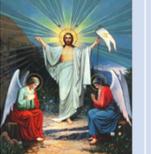
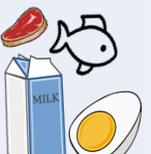
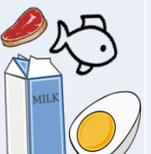
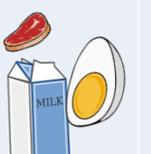
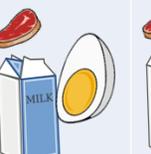
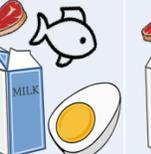
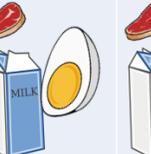
Consider asking the children if they have a favorite fast or if they have a favorite part of the fasting seasons. Allow the children to have a discussion amongst themselves about the topic of fasting.

Today we are going to learn about all the fasts that our church partakes in and why it is so important for us to fast.



LESSON BODY:

Consider using the table below as a poster to act as a visual aid for the lesson. You can attach the images using velcro tape throughout the lesson as each fast is described.

Fast	Wednesday & Friday Fasts	Great Lent	Nativity Fast	Apostles' Fast	Fast of Nineveh	Fast of the Holy Virgin St. Mary	Fasting on the eve of Christmas and Epiphany
What does this fast prepare us for or remind us of?	 Judas' betrayal and Christ's Crucifixion	 Jesus' Resurrection	 Jesus' Birth	 Sharing our faith as the Apostles' did	 Repentance during Lent	 The Assumption of St. Mary	 The Feasts of Christmas and Epiphany
What do we abstain from?	 All Meat & Dairy	 All Meat & Dairy	 Most Meats & All Dairy	 Most Meats & All Dairy	 All Meat & Dairy	 Most Meats & All Dairy	 All Meat & Dairy

The servant may want to begin by introducing the concept of Church fasting by reminding the children that one of the central roles of fasting is to **prepare** us to receive God's blessings. Emphasize the idea that fasts prepare us to receive the blessings of feasts by drawing us closer to God and distancing ourselves from sin. You can also review the quote by Pope Shenouda III prior to giving the lesson.⁵²

"Enjoying God's love and fellowship should be our manner throughout our lives. However, it should not be forgotten, that it is during our times of fasting that we deepen and strengthen our training and preparation for this enjoyment of God for other times of our life."

- H.H. Pope Shenouda III

First: The Weekly fast:

Just as the church practices worship weekly, it also practices general fasting weekly. The Church has always been aware of the value of fasting and designated Wednesdays and Fridays as days for fasting. The Wednesday fast is to commemorate when Judas betrayed Christ, and the Friday fast is to commemorate the Crucifixion of Christ. Both days should be observed with no fish.

Fasting is not observed on Wednesdays and Fridays during Pentecost - the fifty days from Resurrection to Pentecost - because during those days we relive the joy of Christ's Resurrection and feast. The fifty days of

⁵² H.H. Pope Shenouda III. (1990). The Spirituality of Fasting. Cairo, EGY: Dar El Tebaa El Kawmia Press. Retrieved from <http://www.coptic-isneed.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/fasting.pdf>



Pentecost are like one long Sunday or fifty Sundays, and we are never supposed to fast abstinely on a Sunday.

Second: The Great Lent:

The Great lent is the period of time in the Church when the fast is the strictest. It was originally known as the forty-day fast which came after the feast of the Theophany (Baptism of Christ) in the first three centuries (in imitation of Christ) but St Athanasius the Apostolic, our 20th Pope, moved it prior to the Holy Week fast in the fourth century.

During this fast, which is one of the oldest fasts recognized by the Church, we focus on repentance and “spring cleaning”. This is also why it is considered a first-degree fast, with abstinence until 6 pm and no seafood.

St. Athanasius the Apostolic moved this fast so as to help increase our preparation for the feast of the Resurrection. By fasting and sharing in the sufferings and struggles of Christ we can be prepared to die with Him that we might be raised in Him on the glorious feast of the Resurrection.

Another week was also added in the seventh century which we now use as a preliminary week for the Lent.

Third: Advent Fast:

The word advent means coming and it is the fast which prepares for the Nativity of Christ in the womb of the Virgin Mary. Originally this fast was simply for the month of Kiahk, but was extended to be forty days much like the Lenten fast. It reminds people today of the forty days that Moses fasted before receiving the word of God written on the stone tablets, like we now do or the Word of God Himself written on the tablet of flesh in Mary the Virgin.

This is a second-degree fast meaning that abstinent fasting only lasts till 3 pm and that seafood is permitted.

Fourth: The Fast of the Apostles:

This begins on the day following Pentecost and continues until the feast of the Martyrdom of the Apostles Peter and Paul. Pentecost comes 50 days after the Resurrection Feast and 10 days after Ascension. The aim of this fasting period is to share more about our faith as the apostles did after receiving the Holy Spirit as tongues of fire. This fast is second-degree with abstinent fasting until 3 pm and seafood permitted.

Fifth: The Fast of Nineveh:

Pope Shenouda III explained that, “The fast of Jonah or Nineveh occurs two weeks before Lent and has the same rite and tunes. It heralds the coming of Lent and prepares the congregation to repentance which is the essence of the fast of Nineveh.”⁵³

This fast lasts for three days, the same amount of time Jonah was in the whale’s belly. It starts on the Monday two weeks before Lent. This is the fast of the people of Nineveh who sought God’s mercy in sackcloth and ashes when Jonah told them that God was going to destroy their city.

⁵³ Ibid.



Much like the Lenten fast this is a first-degree fast with abstinent fasting lasting till 6 pm and no seafood permitted. We entreat God’s mercy in this fast much like the Ninevites so that we might be made repentant like them.

Sixth: The Fast of the Holy Virgin Mary:

This takes place fifteen days before the feast of the Virgin Mary’s assumption into heaven. (It lasts from the seventh to the twenty second of August (16th of Misra)). This is also a second-degree fast with abstinent fasting lasting till about 3 pm and seafood permitted.

Seventh: Fasting on the eve (Paramount) of the Nativity and on the eve of the Theophany

This fast is observed immediately before these feasts for up to three days (added onto the original forty for the Advent), and it is taken with great self-control. If this occurs on a Saturday or Sunday, then fasting starts on Friday to allow complete abstention until sunset since no abstinent fasting can happen on a Sunday - since it is joyous as the Day of the Lord and of His Resurrection, and on the Saturday, because it is the Sabbath day of rest.

Consider concluding the lesson by reminding the children that the importance of fasting throughout the year is not to keep us from eating the foods we enjoy, but to take time to focus on God, rather than ourselves, in order to prepare to celebrate the feasts of His Church. By preparing we are in a better position to receive the blessings of the feasts.

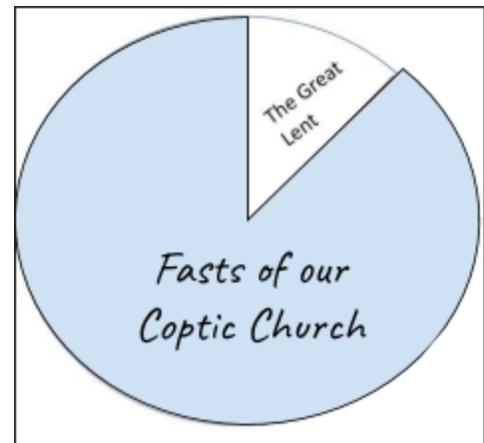
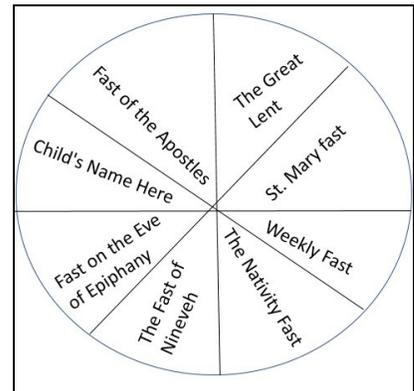
Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Fasting Cycle Craft:

1. Cut both pieces of paper into a shape of a circle and make sure they’re the same size.
2. Draw lines on Paper A so it is divided into even 8 parts.
3. Label each part with a name of a fast and its story very briefly (there should be 1 fast per part in the Circle.) and save one for the child’s name.
4. Cover Paper A with the second piece of blank Paper “B” and cut out a piece of Paper B that would show only one Fast from paper A.
5. You should now be able to see one fast only while paper B is on Paper A and the rest should be covered.
6. Now to attach both papers use a pin and put it through the middle of both papers (Paper B should be on top of A).
7. Label paper B with a title “Fasts of our Coptic Orthodox Church” with each child’s or group name.



SONG:



Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- Why do we fast so often? *(Can refer to the previous lesson. We choose to fast because it is one way we can express our love for God. It also teaches us self control.)*
- Prepare a calendar with all the dates of our church fasting on it and let them review the dates and the name and the kind of fasting. Emphasize that fasting is more than not eating food. For example, besides controlling what goes into our mouths, we must control what comes out of our mouths as well *(this could be gossiping, judging others, talking back to our siblings or parents).*
- The other members of the body also need to fast: our eyes from seeing evil, our ears from hearing evil, and our limbs from participating in anything that is not of God. Most important of all, we need to control our thoughts, for thoughts are the source of our actions, whether good or evil.
- Why do you think Lent in specific, does not allow us to eat fish? *(Allow the children to discuss. The Holy Lent is a much stricter fast as it prepares us to celebrate the Glorious Resurrection. Therefore, we focus even less on what we eat in order to focus even more on Christ.)*



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

- The days of fasting are days of repentance and seeking to return back to God. At the same time, they are periods of joy and cheer as believers experience victory and power in their innermost self. Fasting does not imply fatigue, restraint, or irritation, but rather it inspires joy and inward gladness with the Lord reigning within the heart; this is the experience of the Coptic Church.
- What should we do next time we are fasting? *(Next time we are fasting we should schedule a confession with Abouna, spend time with Jesus in prayer, read the Bible, and learn to have self-control.)*



Lesson 4.3 - Our Lord as a Model of Fasting

Building Block 3
We Grow Through Prayer and Fasting



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Bibles, rope, and ribbon.

Scripture References: Matthew 4:1-11 and Luke 4: 1-13.

Activity: A ball.

Video: [St Mark's Coptic Orthodox Church, Sydney: The Grace of Fasting \(3:22\)](#)

Song: [Jesus Christ Fasted for us Hymn](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To help the children understand the importance of fasting through the example of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, who fasted for us forty days.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Spirituality and Prayerfulness.



MEMORY VERSE:



It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'



Matthew 4:4

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Consider beginning the lesson by playing a game of tug of war.

1. Divide the class into two teams
2. Tie a ribbon in the middle of the rope



3. Have both team try to move the ribbon fully onto their side

After the game consider talking about how it feels to be pulled in two directions.

That is how temptation is. God, who dwells in you, is guiding you in the right direction. Satan is trying to pull you into another direction that is opposite to the life-giving commandments of God. In today's story we are going to learn about how Satan even tempted our Lord Jesus Christ to do wrong, but He was without sin.



LESSON BODY:

If the servant chooses, they may read the story of Christ's temptation to the class from Matthew 4:1-11 or Luke 4:1-13.

Consider asking the children if they remember what the first sin ever committed was. Remind them, if necessary, that the first sin committed was eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.

When Adam and Eve committed the first sin, they essentially violated a fast that God had asked them to abide by. The first sin of humanity involved focusing on the needs of the body. The enemy, in his war, starts attacking us through lust - a desire to satisfy one's need - as he did with Adam and Eve. The Devil tries to trick our senses so that they would now act against us. God designed our senses, that they may help us in our life with Him.

When our Lord Jesus came, before starting His ministry, He fasted for forty days.

Emphasize the idea that one of the first things Jesus did was fast in order to sanctify our fast, so that through His victory we could also conquer the Devil in Him. By fasting, Jesus shows strength where Adam and Eve showed weakness. Consider reviewing the quote by Pope Shenouda III prior to giving the lesson.⁵⁴ By fasting, we can overcome the passions in abstaining from certain behaviours and foods, and direct our hunger towards union with God.

"Then the Lord Jesus Christ came to restore man to his initial status. Since man had erred into the sin of eating the forbidden fruit by obeying his body, Christ's first triumph over temptation addressed this particular point, to overcome the desire for food in general and over that which was legitimate."

- H.H. Pope Shenouda III

After Jesus was baptized, He went into the desert and did not eat anything for forty days. That is a long, long time!

After those forty days, when Jesus was very hungry and tired, He endured temptation from Satan. The devil tried to tempt our Lord Jesus with food similar to how he tempted Adam and Eve. However, unlike Adam and Eve, our Lord Jesus Christ used Scripture to overcome those temptations and remained victorious over sin.

After Jesus' fast, the devil left Him and *"angels came and attended Him"* (Matthew 4:11). Through His fasting, our Lord Jesus Christ set the example for us. Jesus showed us that fasting should be used as a way of drawing ourselves closer to God, forgetting the needs of our bodies, and strengthening our souls.

⁵⁴ H.H. Pope Shenouda III. (1990). *The Spirituality of Fasting*. Cairo, EGY: Dar El Tebaa El Kawmia Press. Retrieved from <http://www.coptic-isneed.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/fasting.pdf>



Consider asking the children to discuss what they think the purpose of fasting is, now that they have learned about how our Lord Jesus fasted. Do they still think it is just about what they eat? Allow the children to discuss.

Jesus Christ fasted for forty days and nights. Christ instructed that fasting should be done properly in a manner acceptable to God. He wants us to know that fasting is meant to draw us closer to God. So, it is very important that we use our time of fasting to draw closer to God by spending time with Him through prayer and reading our Bible. When our thoughts go towards sins, whether it may be the desire to cheat on a test, or a desire to push someone who I do not really like, let us learn to resist them as our Lord Jesus did, using Bible verses.

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Toss Across game:

1. Bring a ball to class.
2. Toss or roll a ball to one child. Have him/her say the first word of the memory verse before tossing or rolling the ball to someone else, who then says the next word, and so on.
3. Continue until you complete the memory verse. If the ball is dropped or if someone says the wrong word, start over again.



VIDEO:

[St Mark's Coptic Orthodox Church, Sydney: The Grace of Fasting \(3:22\)](#)



SONG:

The Hymn, 'Jesus Christ Fasted for Us' (Psalm 150 for the Great Lent) may be sung based [on this tune \(minute 6 onwards\)](#)⁵⁵:

Refrain- Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia
Jesus Christ fasted for us
Forty days and forty nights.

1- Praise the Lord in all His Saints
Alleluia, Alleluia: Jesus Christ fasted for us
Forty days and forty nights.

⁵⁵ Jesus Christ Fasted For Us Lyrics - Coptic Lyrics & Free Christian Spiritual Songs Lyrics Archive - St. Teklahimanout Orthodox Website - Egypt. (n.d.). Retrieved August 13, 2020, from <https://st-takla.org/Lyrics-Spiritual-Songs/English-Coptic-Hymns-Texts/4-Christian-n-Gospel-Lyrics-H-I-J/Jesus-Christ-Fasted-For-Us.html>



2- Praise the Lord in His sanctuary,
Alleluia, Alleluia: Jesus Christ fasted for us
Forty days and forty nights.

3- Praise His strength in heaven
Alleluia, Alleluia: Jesus Christ fasted for us
Forty days and forty nights.

4- Praise Him for his power,
Alleluia, Alleluia: Jesus Christ fasted for us
Forty days and forty nights.

5- Praise Him for His mighty acts
Alleluia, Alleluia: Jesus Christ fasted for us
Forty days and forty nights.

6- Praise Him for His greatness,
Alleluia, Alleluia: Jesus Christ fasted for us
Forty days and forty nights.

7- Praise Him with trumpets,
Alleluia, Alleluia: Jesus Christ fasted for us
Forty days and forty nights.

8- Praise Him with psaltery and harps,
Alleluia, Alleluia: Jesus Christ fasted for us
Forty days and forty nights.

9- Praise Him with timbrel and chorus,
Alleluia, Alleluia: Jesus Christ fasted for us
Forty days and forty nights.

10- Praise Him with strings and organs
Alleluia, Alleluia: Jesus Christ fasted for us
Forty days and forty nights.



Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- How many times did the devil tempt Jesus? (The devil tempted Jesus three times.)
- What did Jesus do when He was tempted by the devil? (He defended Himself by using scripture.)
- How long did Jesus fast? (Jesus fasted for forty days!)
- Why do you think it was important that the first thing Jesus did in His ministry was fasting? (Allow the children to discuss. Remind them that Jesus gave us a model for how humans should live, so one of the first things He did was demonstrate how to triumph over the first sin committed by Adam and Eve.)



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

Fasting is a spiritual tool that we can and should use to strengthen our relationship with God. Just as Jesus fasted to prepare for and ultimately win His spiritual battle with Satan, we can also draw near to God, acknowledge that victory comes by His power rather than our own, and learn to better overcome sin in our lives.

Why is it important that we fast? (Jesus showed us that fasting draws us closer to God and gives us the power to defeat temptation.)

What should we do when we are fasting? (We should spend time with the Lord by reading the Bible and praying because it is a time for us to get closer to Him.)



Lesson 4.4S - (SPECIAL for GREAT FAST): Discipline in the Great Fast: Giving Purpose to your Fast

Building Block 3
We Grow Through Prayer and Fasting



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Poster with table printed out, images for each Sunday, and velcro tape.

Craft: Cardstock paper (for [printable templates](#)), scissors, markers, pencil crayons, and stickers.

Song: [Asaph Tunes:Coptic Hymns in English - Weeks of Lent \(Feat: Stephen Meawad\) \(4:37\)](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children should know the importance of the Great Lent and prepare themselves in order to experience the joy associated with it.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Humility and Thankfulness.



MEMORY VERSE:



Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.



Jeremiah 29:12

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Consider beginning the lesson with the following activity:

“What Can I Give Up?” Icebreaker⁵⁶:

1. Tell the children to pick a partner and to line up with their backs towards each other.

⁵⁶ Classroom Protocols in Action: Back-to-Back and Face-to-Face. (n.d.). Retrieved July 21, 2020, from <https://eleducation.org/resources/classroom-protocols-in-action-back-to-back-and-face-to-face>



2. Ask the question “What would you be willing to give up during the Great Lent and why?” to the children. Give them some time to think about the question before they turn around and share their thoughts with their partner. Model the activity with a child first if some of the children do not understand.
3. Once the children have shared with their partners, encourage them to share with the rest of the class.

State that Great Lent is a time of fasting where we focus on God. There are some things that we should desire to give up during this time (food, video games, etc) so that we can stay focused on God. We should not become too attached to the world and our place in it, but remember to love God before all, and to love one another. So for example, we can make a decision to spend one hour a day going on a walk and thanking God for His creation instead of playing video games.



LESSON BODY:

Consider asking the children why the Great Lent is called “Great”. Why is no other fast considered “Great”?

The Great Lent is labelled “Great” for two reasons; it is the longest fast, lasting fifty-five days, and it is greatest in its holiness as it is based on Christ’s fast and leads to the celebration of His Resurrection.⁵⁷

Consider asking the children if the Great Lent is such an important fast, how they think they should behave during that time.

The Great Lent is a time of repentance, fasting, and preparation for the Resurrection Feast. It is a time of self-examination and reflection.

Consider printing off the following table on a poster and attaching the related images as each Sunday is described.

⁵⁷ H.H. Pope Shenouda III. (1990). The Spirituality of Fasting. Cairo, EGY: Dar El Tebaa El Kawmia Press. Retrieved from <http://www.coptic-isneed.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/fasting.pdf>

Sundays of the Great Lent	Preparatory Sunday	First Sunday of Lent	Second Sunday of Lent	Third Sunday of Lent	Fourth Sunday of Lent	Fifth Sunday of Lent	Sixth Sunday of Lent	Palm Sunday
What is the theme of this Sunday?	 Preparing for the Joyous Journey of Lent	 Focusing on the Kingdom of God	 Victory Over Temptation	 The Joy of Repentance	 The Joy of those who have been rejected	 The Joy of Healing	 The Joy of Illumination	 The Joy of Receiving Christ as our King
What do we read in Church?	 Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6:1-18)	 Do Not Worry (Matthew 6:19-33)	 Christ's Temptation (Matthew 4:1-13)	 Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32)	 The Samaritan Woman (John 4:10-42)	 Healing of the Paralytic (John 5:1-18)	 Healing of the Man Born Blind (John 9:1-41)	 Jesus' Triumphant Arrival in Jerusalem (John 12:12-19)

Preparatory Sunday - Preparing for the Joyous Journey:

The gospel reading of the Preparatory Sunday is from the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6:1-18,) which revolves around the joyful worship. Jesus reminds us that our worship, whether through prayer, fasting, or giving is directed towards God and not to impress people, as hypocrites do. God is our Heavenly Father, Who sees what is done in secret and rewards us openly.

First Sunday - Focusing on the Kingdom of God

The gospel reading of the first Sunday of Lent, Matthew 6:19-33, defines the direction of the journey. Our Lord Jesus Christ tells us, *“But seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you”* (Matthew 6:33).

So, at the beginning of the Lent journey our souls should not be concerned with earthly things like, food, drink, clothes, etc. The only focus we should have during the beginning of Lent is meeting with the Lord through prayer, reading the Bible, and attending Church.

Consider explaining to the children what “earthly things” mean. (It means to be worried about things in our daily lives that people and ourselves usually worry about like food, school, friends, etc.)

Second Sunday - The Temptation:

The gospel reading of the second Sunday of Lent, Matthew 4:1-13, talks about temptation, and how Jesus was tempted by the devil three times when he was in the wilderness. We are taught to always remember how deceiving the devil can be, and also that he is the father of lies. Many things that the devil promises are lies. We are taught to ignore the devil, for he is always trying to lead us away from God. The Church reminds us that the journey has many temptations, but our Lord has already defeated our enemy, and we have power through His life-giving cross.

Consider having the children identify examples of temptations they may face, such as breaking fasting or not praying due to laziness.



Third Sunday - The Prodigal Son:

The Lenten journey is actually one of purification and correction of our lives for it is a journey of repentance. Despite our sins, our Lord sees a beauty in us.

The gospel reading in the third Sunday of Lent is about the Prodigal Son, Luke 15:11-32. It reminds us of the joy in heaven when one sinner repents. Even if we wander away from our Heavenly Father.

Consider reminding the children of the importance of engaging in confession during the Great Lent, in order to stay focussed on God.

Fourth Sunday - The Samaritan Woman:

The gospel reading of the fourth Sunday of Holy Lent taught about the Samaritan woman who was getting water from the well. We can find this story in John 4:1-42. From this story, we are taught that Jesus has come for everyone in the World. Jesus did not prevent Himself from interacting with the Samaritan Woman, whom the Jewish people would consider bad, and allowed her to see that He is the Christ.

Fifth Sunday - The Paralyzed Man:

A person is humbled by illness, for they feel their weakness. The gospel of the fifth Sunday recounts the story of the paralytic at Bethesda, John 5:1-18. This man was paralyzed for 38 years and suffered from loneliness. Our Lord changed this man's sorrow to joy.

Consider reminding the children that we experience that same joy of healing when we confess our sins!

Sixth Sunday - The Man Born Blind:

The soul that has been purified by repentance and lived away from sin needs illumination through knowing God. Our spiritual life is not only about abstaining from sin but is growth in the knowledge of God and coming closer to Him. The gospel reading of the sixth week of Lent, John 9:1-41, gives to us the story of a man whom Christ testified that *"Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him,"* John. 9:3. Christ through this miracle explains the meaning of true blindness.

Palm Sunday - The Joy in Christ Our King:

With the gospel reading of Palm Sunday, John 12:12-19, we rejoice with the multitudes, because Christ the King enters into our heart to rule over it. We carry the branches of the palm tree and go out to meet Him chanting, *"Hosanna! Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord"*, (John 12:13). The journey of Great Lent is a journey to encounter our Lord Jesus Christ and grow in His knowledge. When Christ reigns over our hearts, He guides our life and directs it in accordance to His commandments.

Consider concluding the lesson by reminding the children that they must engage in this journey of Lent seriously, in order to experience the joys that it brings. They may discuss in pairs what they will give up during the Great Lent in order to focus more closely on God.

Remind the children that Lent is not simply a season. A change in season, like going from summer to winter involves a simple change of clothes from shorts to winter coats. Lent, on the other hand should not just be a

change of diet, but it is a journey leading up to Holy week, where Christ was crucified on the cross for our sake.

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Lent Foldable Booklet Craft⁵⁸:

1. Print out (double sided) the [templates](#) using cardstock paper before class.
2. Tell the children that they will be making Lent booklets that they can keep for themselves or to share with others!
3. Pass the Lent templates to the children. Instruct the children to lay their templates horizontally with the information side face up.
4. Instruct the children to fold each side to the center line.
5. Next, tell the children to make 2 cuts with their scissors. One cut will be between the “L and the “N” on the front cover of the booklet. The other cut will be between the “E” and the “T” (See craft visual for visual reference).
6. Once all of the children have formed their booklets, have them fill in the space under each letter as follows:
 - a. L - What things do I **love** that I will sacrifice during the Great Lent?
 - b. E - How can I focus less on what I **eat** when I fast?
 - c. N - How can I have a **new beginning** spiritually during the Great Lent?
 - d. T - What **teachings** will I study to grow closer to God?



SONG: [Asaph Tunes:Coptic Hymns in English - Weeks of Lent \(Feat: Stephen Meawad\) \(4:37\)](#)

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- Why is the Great Lent called the Great Lent? (It is called the Great Lent because it is the longest fast in our church and leads us to His holy passions and the Feast of Resurrection.)
- What is so important that we do during the Great Lent? (It is important for us to be on our best behavior, we should also pray and read our Bible regularly.)

⁵⁸ Lent Notes Foldable. (2014, March 11). Retrieved July 21, 2020, from <https://www.looktohimandberadiant.com/2014/03/lent-notes-foldable.html>



→ Is the Great Lent a time for us to be watching TV all day and hanging out with friends? (Allow the children to discuss. No, it is a time where we should reflect on God and all things He has done for us. It is a time to be spent with our Lord Jesus.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

We need to learn to control all our habits, our actions and our thoughts and place our whole being under the power of Christ. We fast not only from food, but from our anger, hatred, pride and arrogance.

During the Great Lent we should be focused on God and spend more time with Him through prayer, reading our Bible and reading our Agpeya.

How should we behave during the Great Lent? (During the Great Lent we should be on our best behavior, we should obey God, our parents, servants, Abouna, etc.)



Lesson 4.5 -Outcome of Fasting: Moses' Fast

Building Block 3
We Grow Through Prayer and Fasting



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Bean bags, and sport balls.

Craft: Cardstock paper, the [template](#), pencil crayons, scissors, and fasteners.



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children should understand the importance of fasting and prayer as a means to submit ourselves to God, by learning about the story of Moses' forty day fast.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Prayerfulness



MEMORY VERSE:



So, he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he neither ate bread nor drank water.



Exodus 34:28

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Consider beginning the lesson by playing the following game:

The No Instructions Game⁵⁹:

⁵⁹ Bible Skills & Games Workshop - Lessons and Ideas for the Ten Commandments (n.d). Retrieved July 21, 2020, from <https://www.rotation.org/topic/game-workshop-lessons-and-ideas-for-the-ten-commandments-1>



1. Divide the children into groups of four.
2. Once the groups have been made, give each team a bean bag or a ball. Tell the children that when you say “Go” the game will begin. (Transition from this statement to the next one quickly, not giving the children to ask what the rules of the game are.)
3. Say “Go” and watch the confused children not know what to do, how to begin, or even what the game is. They will most likely ask what the rules of the game are, which will be a lead-in to The 10 Commandments (the life-giving commandments that God gave us)!
4. Tell the children that God gave us these *life-giving commandments*, The 10 Commandments!



LESSON BODY:

Consider asking the children if they remember the story of Moses and how God delivered Israel from the Egyptians.

The Israelites had just seen proof of the power of God and His infinite love for them when He not only led them out of Egypt, but allowed them to safely cross the Red Sea.

However, at times the journey was long and hard, and the people were complaining. They missed the plentiful food they enjoyed in Egypt, and forgot about how God delivered them. They said, “*Oh, that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat and when we ate bread to the full! For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.*” (Exodus 16:3)

Their commitment to the needs of their body distanced them from God, leading them to long for the same life of oppression they had escaped in Egypt.

However, unlike many of the Israelites, Moses knew that, “... *man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.*” (Deuteronomy 8:3). As Moses received the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai, he fasted and prayed for forty days in the presence of God. Without any food, Moses received the Law of God, while the people of Israel were not focused on God and decided to make a gold statue to worship instead. After their longing for food was satisfied, they were led to other sins like worshipping false gods.⁶⁰

“The Covenant goes hand in hand with fasting: “He was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he neither ate bread nor drank water” (Exod. 34.28). Having been with the Lord, he was not in need of bread or water; The Lord was his satisfaction. We saw previously that the figure 40 refers to life in the world, as though man, to enjoy the commandment and the fellowship with the Word of God, is committed to spend his whole time on earth away from luxurious life.”

- Father Tadros Malaty

Consider asking the children if they know what happened to the Ten Commandments written on the tablets when Moses saw what the people did. Remind them that he broke the tablets.

⁶⁰ Father Tadros Malaty. (n.d.) Patristic Commentary: The Book of Exodus. Retrieved on August 14, 2020 from <http://www.orthodoxebooks.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Exodus%20-%20Father%20Tadros%20Yacoub%20Malaty.pdf>

Therefore, when Moses received the Ten Commandments a second time, he did not eat or drink for forty days and nights before God. In order to move beyond the sin of the people that began with their focus on their bodily needs, Moses satisfied his soul through the word of God.

Consider reinforcing the idea that Moses demonstrates that fasting is a means through which, by God's grace, one may be able to experience God more intimately and benefit from His words. Consider reviewing the quote by Father Tadros Malaty prior to giving the lesson.⁶¹

Consider concluding the lesson by discussing the importance of living by the word of God, not the needs of our bodies like food. Remind them that when we focus on God, like Moses, we can start living with God, and as God fills our hearts, He pushes away from it all evil.

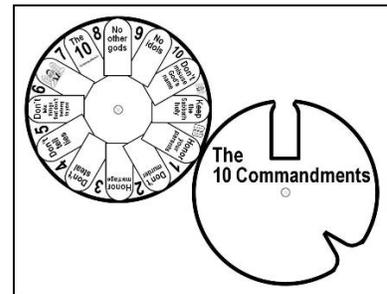
Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

10 Commandments Wheel Craft⁶²:

1. Hand out the [template](#) to the children and instruct them to color it in and cut out.
2. Once children have colored their wheels and cut them out with scissors, hand out a fastener to each child and instruct them to place their 10 Commandment wheels together.
3. Once placed together, the children will take their fasteners and put a hole through the two wheels before fastening them together.



Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- Why was God upset with the people of Israel? (Because they were ungrateful for the blessings God gave them.)
- How long did Moses fast and talk to God? (He fasted and prayed for 40 days.)
- Why was it important for Moses to fast when he talked to God? (Allow the children to discuss. Remind them of the sins of the people of Israel caused by their long ungratefulness and longing for

⁶¹ Father Tadros Malaty. (n.d.) Patristic Commentary: The Book of Exodus. Retrieved on August 14, 2020 from <http://www.orthodoxebooks.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Exodus%20-%20Father%20Tadros%20Yacoub%20Malaty.pdf>

⁶² 10 Commandments Brad Wheel. (n.d.). Retrieved July 20, 2020, from <https://biblecraftsbyjenney.weebly.com/10-commandments-wheel.html>



the food of Egypt. By focusing on God, rather than the needs of his body, Moses was able to receive God's Law and truly be with Him.)



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

It is important that we repent and ask God for forgiveness when we fall into sin. It is important because we should want to live a most spiritual life as best we can.

Prayer and fasting is important for our spiritual lives, just as we saw with Moses. Through prayer and fasting, God helped and blessed him in many ways.

How are we going to practice praying and fasting this week? (We should partake in our weekly fasts on Wednesday and Friday, and the seasonal fasts, and we should pray using our Bible and Agpeya. We should always ask Abouna for guidance during our time fasting and prayer.)



Lesson 4.6 - Esther's Prayer and Fasting

Building Block 3
We Grow Through Prayer and Fasting



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Crowns

Scripture References: Esther 4:1-17

Craft: Mason Jars, christian wood pendants, liquid watercolor, paintbrush & cups, tacky glue or hot glue, [burlap ribbon](#), acrylic paint, elmer's glue, mod podge, glitter, sticky gems, craft trim, variegated hemp roll, paper, [markers](#), and jumbo craft sticks.



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children should follow the example of Esther by praying with humility, acknowledge our weakness and fear and remember God's promises.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Prayerfulness and Courage



MEMORY VERSE:

“

Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?

”

Esther 4:14

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

If the servant finds the following activity appropriate for their class, then they may consider beginning the lesson by giving each child a crown to wear for the remainder of the lesson.

Consider asking the children what they think about when they see a crown. (Answers may vary; The Royals, jewels, etc.)



Consider also asking if they think there is a sense of courage and responsibility that one must have when they have a crown. (Allow the children to discuss.)

Each person has a crown, so we all have a responsibility to each other. Sometimes this responsibility is difficult for us to hold. In today's lesson, we will be listening to a story about a person who demonstrated the difficulty of responsibility and how we can turn to God about it.



LESSON BODY:

Ahasuerus was the king of Persia, one day he decided he wanted to get married after his previous queen, Vashti, disobeyed him. Among all the choices he had, he made a peculiar choice to marry a girl named Esther who was a Jewish girl. A man named Haman was his chief advisor. Another man named Mordecai was Esther's cousin. Mordecai learned that Haman convinced the king to order death over all the Jews in Persia. Although Esther was not allowed to see her husband (the king) unless he asked for her, she still felt compelled to go talk to him about his order of the death of all the Jews. Mordecai was so sad that this was going to happen that he started crying very loudly in the streets and ripping his clothing.

Esther was nervous to talk to the king, but she prayed and fasted and prepared herself. Because Esther, and all the Jews, were so sad about what was going to happen, she removed her royal clothes and put on clothes of mourning and instead of perfume, she covered herself with ashes and dust. She wanted to be humble in front of God.

When Esther prayed, she told God that she was alone and had no help but Him. She told Him she never cared about all the royal appearances, she remembered God promises to help His people. She confessed that they had sinned and asked for forgiveness. She asked for courage and wisdom and God granted it to her.

The servant may discuss the great courage that Esther is showing. She is risking her whole life for the sake of God's people by going to see the king without being invited. St. Clement of Rome teaches us that by her fasting, she was able to humble herself so God may help her.⁶³ We should try to emulate Esther's courage when we are striving to do God's will.

"Many women, fortified by the grace of God, have accomplished many heroic actions... no less danger did Esther, who was perfect in faith, expose herself, in order to save the twelve tribes of Israel that were to be destroyed. For by fasting and humiliation she begged the all-seeing Master of the ages, and he, seeing the meekness of her soul, rescued the people for whose sake she had faced danger."

- St. Clement of Rome

When she went to meet the king, the Bible tells us she was glowing in perfection because she was so beautiful. At first, the king looked at her and he seemed angry, and she almost fainted since she was so nervous, but God changed his spirit to gentleness, and he ran to her and touched her with his gold scepter which was him giving her permission to be there, and promised he would give anything she asked for, even

⁶³ Clement of Rome, St. (2019). 4:5–17 Gather All the Jews and Fast. In T. C. Oden & M. Conti (Authors), *1-2 Kings, 1-2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther* (p. 362). Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.

half his kingdom. After that, she eventually told the king about Haman’s plot. Haman was put to death, Mordecai was honored and the Jewish people were saved!

As the Queen of Persia, Esther had a great responsibility to protect and save her people. When she felt burdened, she turned to God.

Consider asking the children how it felt to have a crown on this entire time. (Allow time for discussion.)

Because of Esther’s dedication to prayer and fasting, she was able to save the Jews of Persia and have her cousin honored.

When we are in trouble, we should always turn to God through prayer and fasting. Because God loves us so much, he hears our prayers and delivers us from our troubles and any dangers we may face. When we feel like we have a lot on our plate, we should pray and ask God to relieve some of our stresses. God will bless any situation we are in, just like he did with Esther when she humbled herself and allowed God to work through her by prayer and fasting.

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Prayer Jars⁶⁴:

1. Pour Elmer’s glue into a paint cup. Add a few drops of liquid watercolor (choose from red, yellow, blue, green, orange and violet). Mix it in with the glue. Add more watercolor if you want a darker color.
2. Have the children decorate their jar however they would like, they can add craft trim around the top of the jar, sticky gems, and some fabric scraps from an old tie-dye shirt. You can wrap them with some burlap ribbon around the jar and use tacky glue to hold them in place.
3. Add some wood pendants. First, decorate them, use the colorful hemp roll to tie a lark’s head knot (find the middle of the string, make a loop, then pull it through).
4. Write the letters P-R-A-Y in marker. Now your Prayer Jar is done and ready to use.
5. Give the children jumbo craft sticks to write down their prayers on.



Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- Who was Mordecai? (Mordecai was Esther’s cousin.)
- Who hated the Jews and made a plan to have them destroyed? (Esther’s husband, King Ahasuerus.)

⁶⁴ 7, K., 7, S., 25, B., 6, T., 21, M., 23, S., . . . 8, F. (2019, October 10). How to Make Prayer Jars - Religious Craft Activity & Lesson. Retrieved July 20, 2020, from <http://www.ssw.com/blog/how-to-make-prayer-jars-religious-craft-activity-lesson/>



- Why was Mordecai crying in the streets? (Because he was sad that the king was going to kill the jews.)
- How can God use you in your circumstances to be a positive influence? (God can turn any bad situation into a miracle through the power of prayer!)



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

When you find yourself faced with one of those tough choices, do what Esther did. Pray. Ask others to pray with you. Ask God for the courage to make the right choice. Be brave enough to make the right choice.

Esther's story and prayer teach us that God can give us courage to make the right choice, even when it's hard.

We should always pray during our difficult times and ask God to help us and relieve some of our stresses. We should spend time in prayer by using our Bibles and our Agpeya. Another, very important thing we can do is write prayers on a piece of paper, and then put them on the altar during liturgy. This is a very powerful way to pray since the altar is living and carries the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.



Lesson 4.7 - Fasting Builds Patience

Building Block 3
We Grow Through Prayer and Fasting



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Activity: Banana or Candy Game

Materials for Candy Game: Pop-up tent or fun-looking container, at least three pieces of candy per kid (see activity for more prep instructions)

Scripture Reference: Galatians 5:22-23



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

Children will know patience is a gift of the Holy Spirit given as a seed in chrismation and to be watered and cultivated with perseverance through prayer and fasting.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Patience



MEMORY VERSE:

“

Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him.

”

Psalm 37:7

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Consider asking the children if they remember what the Fruit of the Spirit is.

God grants us the Fruit of the Spirit and we receive this gift as seeds that are implanted in us through Baptism and Chrismation. We must nurture and grow these seeds continually by reading the bible, keeping God's Commandments and continually clinging to Him. There are nine virtues encompassed by the Fruit of the Spirit. If you lose one Fruit you slowly start to lose others. They are named “fruit” not “fruits” because they work together and are a single unit. Today we are going to talk about patience in particular.



The servant can ask the children if there was a time they prayed for something and waited a long time for it to happen. (Allow for discussion.)



LESSON BODY:

The Bible tells us in Galatians 5:22-23 that patience is a fruit of the Spirit. When we are chrismated, the Holy Spirit lives inside us and we can become like Christ Himself! This does not mean that we will always live up to that calling! But as we come to know God more and more, we change! Patience becomes part of the kind of person we are. With the Spirit living inside of us, He gives us the power to be patient!

Each day we will face situations that test our patience. These can be small things, like someone taking their time when you are in a hurry for very big things, like waiting on God to heal a family member. As we learn to be patient in the small things, God will prepare us to go through the bigger things.

Saint Monica was a very patient saint and she had a son named Augustine. As Augustine was growing up, he was not in the church and he was very far away from God. St. Monica was very sad about Augustine because he was not going to church and he was not living a good life. He was living in sin and he did not know God. She prayed for him all the time, she would even cry in her prayers, she also tried helping him and talking to him to try to let him change his mind and stop the way he was living. Saint Monica prayed for her son for 18 years.

Pause and ask the children if they think they would be able to pray for the same thing for 18 years.

Finally, after her long life of prayer for her son and not losing hope that God would hear her prayer and help her son, Augustine became a Christian and gave his life to God. And not only that, but he became a great saint in the church and wrote many works that our church still uses today.

Although it took eighteen years for the Lord to change Augustine's heart and turn to Him, through the power of prayer and Saint Monica's patience, God helped Augustine change his heart and give his life to Christ.

Even though God may take time to answer our prayers, He will always answer our prayers. As the children of God, we can learn to have patience and to wait for Him and His perfect timing. We gain patience when we are connected with Him in prayer and we are filled with His Spirit within us – this is what makes it possible for us to grow in patience. Sometimes we even need patience to accept God's answers to our prayers as they might not always be what we expect from Him.

Ask the children if there is another way which can help us become patient? Wait for them until they answer. Fasting is another way.

That's right! How do you think we can become more patient through fasting? Is it because God will be more pleased with us and grant us more patience? Is it perhaps that we become stronger through our own will? Fasting helps us become more patient because instead of depending on the food and the transient things of this world to sustain us we depend on God as the eternal Bread of Life. Then, when we don't get things our way immediately, we can begin to seek Him and trust in His providential care for us, resting assured He has a better plan. We will grow in patience because we will know that we have a Father in heaven who works all things for our good.



Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Pass the Banana Activity⁶⁵:

1. Tell the children that they will be playing a game that requires a lot of patience...and a banana!
2. Divide the class in half and have the 2 groups stand in a straight line.
3. State that the goal of the game is to pass a banana up and back down the line without using your hands. The banana must be held with your chin. If someone drops the banana, the group must start from the beginning! (If the children are having a hard time, modify the rules so that the children can restart the game with the same child who dropped the banana)
4. Once teams are completed or the time limit for the game is up, gather them around in a circle.

Candy Activity:

1. Put up a pop-up tent or any fun-looking container near the entrance of the room so the kids can walk up to it and check it out.
2. Put enough candy so that each kid gets one piece.
3. When the kids go in the room, wait until they show interest in the tent before mentioning anything. Let them look inside the tent.
4. If the kids ask for a piece of candy at the beginning of the lesson, tell them they can either have one piece only, or they can wait for something better.
5. Midway through the lesson, ask those who waited if they want two pieces of candy or if they want to wait for something better. To those who want candy and wait until this point, give them two pieces.
6. At the end of the lesson, give whatever is left of the candy to those who waited all the way until the end.

Consider asking the children questions such as “was this game easy or difficult for you? How did you feel when someone dropped the banana or when the kids had candy before you?” “What fruit of the spirit would you need for this game? How is the candy game similar to fasting?”

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

- St. Monica cried and prayed for her son St. Augustine for 18 years; what does this reveal about her? (She was patient on the Lord.)
- How can we become patient? (We become patient by praying and being close to the Lord, and fasting.)
- What happened to St. Augustine after St. Monica prayed for him for 18 years? (The Lord changed his heart and helped him return back to God.)

⁶⁵ Children's Ministry Magazine .(2020, March 03). Elementary and Preteen Patience Game: Going Bananas. Retrieved July 20, 2020, from <https://childrensministry.com/paitence-game-bananas/>



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

We should always be patient in our prayers because although sometimes God will take time to answer our prayers, he always answers them according to His perfect timing; we just need to be patient.

We will take the fast as an opportunity to grow in our relationship with God and to practice self-control and patience with the problems in our own life or the things we think we want but God has better things in store.

How can we be like St. Monica? (Pray for others, be patient and wait for the Lord to answer our prayers in His perfect timing.)

Why is it important that we have patience? (It is important for us to have patience because we cannot have one fruit of the spirit if we do not have all of them. We also want to be like Jesus as much as we can.)



Lesson 4.8 - Examples of the Apostles Fasting and Praying before Every Mission

Building Block 3
We Grow Through Prayer and Fasting



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Scripture References: Acts 12:1-19 and Acts 13:1-3.

Activity: [Dice prayer template](#) and tape.



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children should learn from the examples of the early Church and the Apostles to understand that prayer and fasting are important for their spiritual lives.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Prayerfulness



MEMORY VERSE:



Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.



Acts 13:3

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Consider beginning the lesson by playing the following activity.

Catch His Vision⁶⁶:

1. Have children pair up (it could only be pairs, so if there is an odd number of children, the teacher will be paired with a child). Then the children are to form two lines, with one partner directly across from

⁶⁶ Hennessey, E. (n.d.) An Introduction to Prayer and Fasting for Children. Retrieved from <http://storage.cloversites.com/capitalcommunitychurch2/documents/Kids%20Prayer%20%20Fasting%20Curriculum.pdf>



the other, standing approximately 10-15 ft (3-4.5 m). *If this is in the classroom, have the children stand in front of opposite walls.*

2. Have the children toss the ball (Some may catch it, some may not).
3. Instruct one line of children to take 1 big step closer towards their partner. Then have them toss the ball again. Then instruct the same line of children to take 2 big steps closer to their partners and toss the ball. Lastly, instruct the same line of children to take 3 big steps closer to their partners.
4. Ask the children, "What did you notice as you got closer? How was it different from catching the ball when you were farther apart?" (Children answer - It was easier to catch the ball when we are closer).

Consider telling the children that if we took even more steps it would be even easier to catch the ball! In that same way when we take steps to become closer to God, it will be easier for us to "catch", understand, His vision and purpose for us.

Consider asking the children what are some steps we can take to become closer to God. (Children could share their answers).

Fasting and prayer are two steps we can take to become closer to God; they help us to open ourselves up to God's grace. God hears us when we pray to Him. He wants us to talk to Him and to spend time with Him; which is why prayer is so important, it is a way for us to get to know God more.

Today we are going to learn about the power of prayer and how prayer helped the disciples when they were in trouble while spreading the word of God across the world.



LESSON BODY:

The Power of Prayer: Acts 12:1-19

Peter was in jail because King Herod wanted to destroy the Church. That night, the members of the Church gathered in a house where no one could see them. They prayed for Peter constantly and asked God to help him. As they were crying and praying to God for Peter an Angel came to Peter in Jail and the room was bright with light. The Angel woke Peter up and the chains on his wrists fell off. He got up quietly because there were guards sleeping on either side of him. He followed the angel out; the doors were unlocked for them; and Peter tiptoed by one set of sleeping guards, and then by two sets of sleeping guards. They walked right out of the Gate of the Jail and down the street. Then the angel disappeared. Peter went to the house where the members of the Church were and knocked on the door. Rhoda, a servant girl, recognized Peter's voice and ran to tell the others that were praying for Peter. She was so excited she forgot to let Peter inside. Peter's friends didn't believe her. Peter had to knock again. When they opened the door to let Peter inside, they were amazed.

Consider emphasizing the idea that the Church came together in prayer through their great love for Peter and

"Feeling that Herod had a serious intention to kill him, the heart of the Church flared, not for fear of Peter's death, but for the completion of his mission. Feeling that the battle was not between the king and St. Peter, as much as it was between the kingdom of Christ and that of the forces of darkness, the Church fervently prayed to God. [Prayer] is the strong weapon of the Church [...] it bears the fragrance of love for God and for one another."

- Father Tadros Malaty



the mission that God had assigned them. Even though the situation seemed too difficult to solve, they prayed with all their hearts, and God heard them.

Remind the children that at all times, their prayers should be guided by their love for God and their neighbor. Consider reviewing the quote by Father Tadros Malaty prior to giving the lesson.⁶⁷

The Apostles also fasted when making important decisions: Acts 13:1-3

“Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, “Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.”

The will of God through the Holy Spirit was made clear to the Apostles after they had fasted and prayed. Before Saul and Barnabas could truly begin their work in the Church, they needed to fast in order to be focused enough to hear the Holy Spirit.

Consider reinforcing the idea that fasting has been an essential part of the Church since the time of the Apostles. Fasting allowed the Apostles to be focused on the fruits of the heavenly banquet, rather than the needs of the earthly body. Consider reviewing the quote by Father Tadros Malaty prior to giving the lesson.⁶⁸

“The anointment was consummated while they were fasting. Fasting has occupied a special position in the life of the early church, being a living sign that refers to the preoccupation of the church with the heavenly banquet and that she practices her daily life, of eating, drinking and sleeping, for the necessity, not for any physical lust or enjoyment.”

- Father Tadros Malaty

Since the time of the Apostles, fasting and prayer have been our two main tools to guide us when we are afraid, and lead us to good decisions. These two tools bring us closer to God and help us focus on Him, rather than on ourselves.

⁶⁷ Malaty, Fr. Tadros. Acts of the Apostles Part I. <http://www.orthodoxebooks.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Acts%20-%20Father%20Tadros%20Yacoub%20Malaty.pdf>

⁶⁸ Ibid.

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Prayer Dice Activity⁶⁹:

The children could pray in groups. They will take turns tossing the dice. The face that lands upwards is the prayer prompt they will do. They will read off the prayer prompt and finish the prayer prompt out loud, if desired. (Some children may not be comfortable sharing their prayers out loud).



1. Pre-print and pre-assemble the [dice prayer template](#).
2. Pre-write the following on the sides of the dice. (I praise You for... Thank You for... Please bless... Jesus, forgive me. Please help me with... Hallelujah!)
3. Ask the children, how do you pray in those ways?
4. "I praise You for..." is very similar to thank you, but the thanks/praises are directed to God's work. The focus is on God, not on a person or thing. E.g. "God you are so creative, you made each animal on the planet unique!"
5. "Thank You for..." giving thanks to God for a person(s) or thing(s). E.g. "Thank you God for my friend, Maria!"
6. "Please bless..." is also very similar to thank you, but involves blessing the person, situation, or thing. E.g. "God bless Maria, she is a great friend!"
7. "Jesus, forgive me." Confess out loud, pause and silently confess, or just move one. It is a good practice to seek forgiveness.
8. "Please help me with..." is asking God for help with or for something or someone. E.g. "Lord, my little brother was feeling sick this morning, please help him feel better and get better soon."
9. "Hallelujah!" Praise the Lord! Have the children shout "Hallelujah!" with as much energy as they can.

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- How did the Church respond when Peter was in jail? (They prayed constantly. Their prayer demonstrated how much they loved God and their friend Peter.)
- Why was it important for the Apostles to pray and fast prior to sending Saul and Barnabas on their mission? (Give the children some time to discuss. Prayer allowed them to focus on the decision they needed to make, and fasting kept their minds focused on God, making it possible for them to hear the will of the Holy Spirit.)

⁶⁹ S., & S. (2019, October 29). Dice Prayer Game. Retrieved July 22, 2020, from <https://www.raisingprayerfulkids.com/post/dice-prayer-game>



→ Are we truly fasting if we do not pray? (Have the children discuss. No, these tools work together to bring us closer to God.)



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

Prayer is so important because it is how we talk to God, it is a way for us to get to know Him more.

Fasting and prayer is a powerful tool for our spiritual lives to help us grow closer to God and to receive His blessings.

What can we do to grow closer to God? (We can fast, pray, read our Bible and read our Agpeya.)



Lesson 4.9 - Self-control VS. Spirit Control

Building Block 3
We Grow Through Prayer and Fasting



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Craft: Marker, pencil crayons, and these [printed comic book sheets](#).



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children should learn about the importance of controlling our words.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Self-control



MEMORY VERSE:

“

If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man.

”

James 3:2

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Consider beginning the lesson by acting out the following dialogue (these dialogues could be printed and handed out so that the kids can participate in the acting or role playing):

Dialogue 1:

A: Hey friends, look! My parents finally bought me this toy!

B: Awesome, I have had it for 1 month and it's so much fun! I'm sure you will like it too!

C: That is so old... I have had it for like 2 months, it is already boring.

Dialogue 2:

A: Hey, yesterday I met this person who said very bad words to me! I cried all the way home!



B: Oh no, maybe he didn't mean it. Or maybe he had a very tough day. I'm glad you are feeling better now! And remember, we learn from our Lord Jesus to forgive everyone just like God forgives us!

C: What a terrible person he is! I never liked him, did you answer back or not?

Consider asking the children who they would rather be like A, B or C. And consider also asking them who spoke nicer words to A.

Today we are going to learn about the importance of thinking before we speak.



LESSON BODY:

We should remember that the tongue expresses what is inside the heart! *"A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks."* (Luke 6:45). When you love someone, you say loving words to him/her. So, we must learn to control our tongue.

The servant may consider using the following analogy to explain this idea to the children: The tongue is similar to the steering wheel of a ship. If the pilot or the captain left the steering wheel and did not control it, the ship would sink.

Similarly, we must learn to think and speak of good things. Every time we are in any situation or chatting with anyone, before we talk, we should always ask ourselves two questions:

1. Is what I am about to say going to build up the other person? If it is not, then I should not say it.

The same tongue that we use to praise God, to sing hymns, to pray, and to read the Scriptures cannot also be used to say bad words or rude comments.

2. Is what I am about to say needed, will it help anybody or is it just useless? If not, then I also should not say it.

If we constantly talk, we might make a mistake in what we say. It is very hard to control our tongues all the time when all we do is talk. The Holy Bible says *"if anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man."* (James 3:2). Sometimes, it may be hard to control everything we say all the time, but, we can do it through the power of God. We should always ask ourselves these two questions before we say anything. By doing so, the chances of us making a mistake and hurting someone else are lessened. When someone talks to us, we should be sure to listen carefully so that we actually understand what they mean. We must always control our tongue, not rush to speak! So always ask yourself these two questions, listen carefully, and always pray that God protects your tongue so that you do not say bad words by mistake.

The servant may share with the children that it is a sign of strength to hold back one's words, not weakness. For example, if someone says a bad word to me, it may feel like it is a sign of power to say another bad word to him, but it is actually the opposite. While everyone can just say another bad word, only a very few can hold their tongue and not say anything rude. That is strength.

To link the lesson to a story, the servant may choose to expand by narrating the following story:



Some brothers from Scetis wanted to visit Antony, and set out in a ship to go there. On board they met an old man who also wanted to go to Antony, but he did not belong to their party. During the voyage they talked about the sayings of the fathers, and the Scriptures, and then the manual work that they did, but the old man said nothing at all. When they came to the landing-place, they realized that the old man also was going to see Antony. When they arrived, Antony said to them, 'You found good company on your journey in this old man.' He said to the old man, 'You found good companions in these brothers.' The old man said, 'Yes, they are good, but their house has no door. Anyone who wants to could go into the stable and steal the donkey.' He said this because they had said the first thing that came into their heads.⁷⁰

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Make a Comic⁷¹:

Using these [printed comic book sheets](#) the children can create a comic to show one of the scenarios in the lesson introduction and how they would use positive language that would build people up in that scenario.

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- When do our words hurt others? (When we say mean things to others.)
- What types of words should we speak unto others? (We should only speak nice things to others.)
- Should we gossip about others? (No! It is not good to gossip and talk about others.)



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

As we use our tongue to speak to God who is Holy, we must not use the same tongue to say bad things.

We must only speak when it is necessary to speak, be careful about what to say!

We should always think before we speak because our words are very powerful. If we are not going to say something nice we should not say anything at all.

⁷⁰ Desert Fathers: SELF-CONTROL. (2020). Retrieved 19 August 2020, from <https://erenow.net/common/the-desert-fathers/5.php>

⁷¹ Submitted, R., Tessa, Mumpande, I., & Asrehp. (2010, June 21). Fruit of the Spirit Game & Lesson Activity. Retrieved July 27, 2020, from <https://ministry-to-children.com/fruit-basket-upset-game/>



Some of us may be struggling with gossiping or we know someone who is, let's pray for each other so that God can help us overcome it.

As we learned, 'out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.' So, let us focus on reading our Bibles, that we may be filled with a fervent Spirit.



Building Block 5: We Grow as Orthodox Christians

Lesson 5.1 - Introduction to the Creed

Building Block 5
We Grow as Orthodox Christians



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Activity: Printer, paper, scissors, envelopes, and small prizes (optional).

Video: [The Creed: TheCopticMedia](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

In this lesson, the children will be introduced to the Creed, the foundation of our Church.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Faithfulness



MEMORY VERSE:



Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.



John 6:47

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Consider beginning the lesson by asking the children what the first two words of the Creed are. (The words are “I believe”.)

Talk with them about why these words are important to the rest of the creed. Without the “I believe” at the beginning, it would be like getting a car without the keys to the car. It may look nice in the driveway, but it would be of no practical value. In a similar way, the teachings of the faith without our “I believe” at the beginning are of no real value.



The word “Creed” comes from the Latin “credo” which means “I believe”.



LESSON BODY:

The first words of the Creed are “I believe.” These words are of great importance to the Creed and to us because we consider the essential teachings of the faith. In reading the writings of the apostles and prophets, we do not find the important teachings of the faith simply listed out as statements. Rather, they are presented as living truths to be held by the living faith of God's people. And so, in the Creed, “I believe” makes this more than a mere list of statements. It becomes a confession of what we believe is true.

History:

Some of the earliest Christian creeds are found in the Bible. For example, the words of faith expressed by St. John in his Gospel, “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life*” (John 3:16). Another very early Christian creed that we find in the Scriptures is the declaration, “*Jesus Christ is Lord*” (1Corinthians 12:3; Philippians 2:11). The Creed is the essence of our Christian faith.

The servant may consider the following quote by St. Cyril of Alexandria⁷² for further understanding on why Jesus said the verse of John 3:16.

“He desireth to shew openly herein, that He is God by Nature, since one must needs deem that He Who came forth from God the Father, is surely God also, not having the honour from without, as we have, but being in truth what He is believed to be. With exceeding skill does He say this, having joined therewith the love of God the Father to us, well and opportunely coming to discourse thereon.”

- St. Cyril of Alexandria

The great heresies in early church history prompted the writing of the Creed. The “Nicene Creed” is the one formulated by St. Athanasius (the 20th Pope of Alexandria), the hero of the first Ecumenical Council of Nicaea in the 4th century (324 A.D.). This council of 318 bishops approved this Creed under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to refute the false teaching of Arius and his followers, who denied the divinity of Christ. This Creed was completed in the second Ecumenical Council of Constantinople (381 A.D.) which was convened by 150 bishops against Macedonius’ heresy against the divinity of the Holy Spirit. The third Ecumenical Council at Ephesus (431 A.D.), convened by 200 bishops against Nestor’s heresy, added the introduction to the Creed. This Creed is shared by all the orthodox churches all over the world.

The Nicene Creed is expressing the faith of the Universal Church. It is the summary of our beliefs, based on the Biblical facts, without any contradiction with the Holy Scripture.

The servant should read the Creed with the children and explain any hard words or hard concepts.

The Creed:

⁷² Alexandria, C. (n.d.). Retrieved August 19, 2020, from http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/cyрил_on_john_04_book4.htm



We believe in one God, God the Father, the Pantocrator who created heaven and earth, and all things seen and unseen.

We believe 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, 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 became Man. And He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, suffered and was buried. And on the third day He rose from the dead, according to the scriptures, ascended to the heavens; He sits at the right hand of his Father, and He is coming again in His glory to judge the living and the dead, Whose kingdom shall have no end.

Yes, we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Life-Giver, **Who proceeds from the Father**, Who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.

And in one holy, catholic and apostolic church. We confess one baptism for the remission of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the coming age. Amen.

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Creed puzzle⁷³:

1. Make copies of the Creed as needed.
2. Cut the Creeds into strips and place in envelopes, one Creed per envelope.
3. Invite teams of children to solve the Creed puzzles by putting the strips of paper in the correct order.



VIDEO:

[TheCopticMedia: The Creed \(1:34\)](#)

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- How many bishops were at the Nicean council? (318)
- Who led the council? (St. Athanasius)
- Who was he defending it against? (Arius)

⁷³ Grade 4 Activities: Faith First. (n.d.). Retrieved July 21, 2020, from <http://www.faithfirst.com/teachers/grade-4-activities>



- What did St. Athanasius do that was so great at the Nicean council? (He defended the faith without hesitation against Arius.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

- Since the Creed is the basis of our faith, we must all try to memorize it!
- Next time you hear the Creed, try to remember how the Creed came to be.
- Like St. Athanasius, remember to always fight for your faith no matter what situation you are in!



Lesson 5.2 - The Nature of the Early Christian Church

Building Block 5
We Grow as Orthodox Christians



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Bibles, and a ball of string.

Scripture References: Acts 2:42-47, Acts 1 and 2:1-13, 2:38-47, John 17: 17- 23, and Ephesians 4:1-5.

Video: [Christian Youth Channel: History of the church: The first century. \(10:13\)](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will discover and understand specific ways in which the early church worked together in unity. They will learn to adopt this behaviour in their daily lives.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Unity



MEMORY VERSE:



...that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us.



John 17:21

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Consider beginning the lesson by playing the following game:

Ball of String Activity⁷⁴:

1. Children should sit in a circle with the servant.

⁷⁴ Kensapp. (2016, November 11). Connected. Retrieved July 21, 2020, from <http://www.creativeyouthideas.com/resources/icebreakers/connected/>



2. The servant should throw the string to one child. That child catches the string and then holds onto a piece of it and tosses it to someone else.
3. Keep doing this until every child is holding a piece of the string.
4. Once all of the children are holding a piece of the string, the servant should tug on the string so that it makes ripples that the children can feel. Ask the children if they notice or feel the ripples.
5. Children may want to try to create some ripples by tugging on string. They should be allowed to do this if the servant thinks it is reasonable.
6. When we work together and cooperate like it is described in the Bible passage, others are affected by our actions. This is just like the ripples that are created when the servant tugs on the ropes.
7. Encourage the children to think about how their actions affect others.



LESSON BODY:

The servant may consider reading Acts 1 and 2:1-13, 2:38-47 with the children.

These chapters tell the story of the Church's foundation on Pentecost. Have each child read a verse, while they are reading, highlight the unity that the Apostles displayed.

- They wanted to learn about God.
- They ate together.
- They prayed together.
- They shared with others.
- They were glad and sincere.
- They praised God.
- They grew in number.

Consider reading John 17:17-23 with the children.

Consider asking the children what our Lord prayed for in this passage. (He prayed for the unity of the Church and of her holiness.)

What makes up this unity?

Consider reading Ephesians 4:1-5 with the children.

- One Body: The Eucharist
- One Spirit: The Holy Spirit
- One Hope: Hope of Eternal life
- One Lord: Jesus Christ represented by one bishop
- One Faith: The Creed
- One Baptism: The Holy Baptism
- One God and one Father: The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ

Consider asking the children if they know what hurts the unity of the Church. (Heresies and schisms.)

Consider asking them if they know what a heresy and a schism is.



Heresy: Many people in history taught wrong teachings about the Holy Trinity and the Church and had followers starting new "churches".

Schisms: Some church leaders in the past went into conflicts with each other without wrong teachings and divided the Church (Council of Chalcedon).

It is important that our church stays united, that we all teach one teaching, which is the teachings of Jesus.

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Group Line Up⁷⁵:

1. All the children need to stand up and should arrange themselves by the date of their birthday. January should be at one end and December should be at the other end of a line when they are done. This should be done without any of the children using their voice!
2. Children should arrange themselves in a line from shortest to tallest, this sounds easy, but they need to do it without talking.
3. Children should arrange themselves in a line by shoe size. The child with the biggest shoe size should be on one end and the child with the smallest shoe should be on the other end. This should be done silently.

This activity took the ability to work together and cooperate- just like Christians in the early church now have to cooperate and work together. It is important to work together as the body of Christ and not tear each other down because of our differences. Part of the joy of being in the body of Christ is being able to help each other with our challenges in life, just like we helped each other in this game.



VIDEO:

[Christian Youth Channel: History of the church: The first century. \(10:13\)](#)

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- What are the four characteristics of the church? (One Holy Catholic Apostolic.)
- What did our Lord pray for on Holy Thursday? (He prayed for the unity and the holiness of His Church.)

⁷⁵ Erts, N., Written By Norberts Erts Co-founder of CakeHR.. (2020, April 07). Top 50 Team-Building Games that Your Employees Would Love to Play - CakeHR Blog. Retrieved July 21, 2020, from <https://blog.cake.hr/top-50-team-building-games-employees-love-play/>



- What are the seven items of the church unity? (One Body, One Spirit, One Hope, One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One God.)
- Where do you find these items? (Ephesians 4:1-5.)
- What is the One Body? (The body of Christ that we partake in at communion.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

- How can we always be united with the church? (Come to Church every week, reflect on Abouna's sermon, focus on the readings, learn more about God every week.)
- How can we be more like the Disciples? (Support each other, encouraging one another to come to church and grow in faith with Jesus.)
- What are the three things that make up our unity in the Church? (One Body/Eucharist, One Lord/Jesus Christ represented by one bishop, One faith/The Creed.)



Lesson 5.3 - Abba Shenouda, The Archimandrite

Building Block 5
We Grow as Orthodox Christians



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Synaxarion Reference: [Abib 7](#)

Activity: Slips of paper, pen, bucket or bowl, list of charades words, a variety of props in a black garbage bag (at least one item per child).

Song: [St Shenouda Press: Orthodox Kid's Book | St Shenouda the Shepherd Boy \(1:06\)](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will learn about the life of Abba Shenouda the Archimandrite in order to understand the importance of living a holy life that is dedicated to God.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Holiness



MEMORY VERSE:



Therefore, we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us...



Hebrews 12:1

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Consider beginning the lesson with a discussion. Ask the children the following questions:⁷⁶

- How do you feel when you mess up or make a mistake?
- Do you often feel like you have to be perfect?

⁷⁶ Forkel, B. (2020, February 06). YOUTH GROUP LESSON ON HOLINESS. Retrieved July 23, 2020, from <https://ministrytoyouth.com/youth-group-lessons-on-holiness/>



1. Explain to the children that when they make a decision to follow Jesus, they often struggle with what to do when they mess up and make mistakes.
2. They might have the idea that perfection is the goal but that just leads to frustration and discouragement.

This lesson should encourage the children that they can live a holy life with the help of the Holy Spirit. It's okay if they still mess up and make mistakes along the way, but He's the one that gives them the power and the strength needed.



LESSON BODY:

Abba Shenouda was born in Akhmim; his father was a farmer who owned many flocks of sheep.

When Abba Shenouda grew up, his father entrusted him with the care of the sheep. He tended to the sheep and spent his day fasting. His father took him to his uncle, Anba Bgoul (Bigal), to bless him. Anba Bgoul laid the boy's hands on his own head and said, "You bless me, my child, for you will be a father for many peoples." His father left him with his uncle and returned home. One day he heard a voice from heaven saying, "Shenouda has become the Archimandrite." Archimandrite is a title of honour, one level lower than bishop. Since that time, he exerted himself with many worships and was very disciplined.

When his uncle departed, Abba Shenouda replaced him. He then required that monks sign a pledge before joining a monastery.

The number of monks during his days reached 1800 monks. Again, Anba Shenouda built another monastery, and the number of the monks there reached 2200. This monastery is still standing, and is known as the monastery of Anba Shenouda.

Anba Shenouda became a shining light to all the world with his sermons, discourses, and canons that he put for the good of the monks, hierarchies, and men and women. He attended the Council of the two hundred that gathered at Ephesus with the holy father Anba Kyrillos (24th), and he admonished Nestorius, the heretic. Before his departure, he asked his disciples to support him so that he might worship his creator. He worshiped God and then commanded them to follow his footsteps and told them, "I commit you to God" then he departed in peace.

Consider concluding the lesson by reminding the children that St. Shenouda used the blessing given to him by God, such as becoming an Archimandrite, to help improve monasteries and the Church overall. He used his gifts to serve God.



Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Virtue Charades⁷⁷:

Prior to lesson:

1. Before the class starts, gather a variety of items from around your church building or bring them from your home.
2. Items can be anything you can think of - clothing, food, random objects, etc.
3. Take all of the items and place them in a black garbage bag that you will have on hand throughout the game.
4. Take the list of charades words and write each individual word/phrase on a slip of paper.
5. Fold the slips of paper in half and place them in the bowl or bucket.

During the lesson:

1. Divide the children into two teams of equal size and have each team huddle together.
2. The servant will keep score for the teams throughout the game.
3. Tell the children that in today's activity they'll be playing charades based on the idea that imitation is essential in our walk with Christ.
4. Explain the game:
 - a. Each person will get a turn.
 - b. Give each person a charade word/phrase to imitate from the group.
 - c. Teams will alternate having a person stand in front of the group to act out the word/phrase for their team.
 - d. Not only will they have to act out the charades word/phrase, but when it's their turn they will choose a prop from the garbage bag. They will have to include the prop in how they act out their charades word/phrase.
 - e. Each turn will only last a minute.
 - f. If the team gets the answer within one minute, that team will get the point.
 - g. If the team can't figure it out, there is no opportunity for the other team to guess - either the team answers correctly, or no point is awarded for that round.
 - h. Whichever team has the most points once everyone has had a turn - wins the game!

After playing the game, explain to the children that charades is a fun game because it allows us to imitate something. The game of charades reminds us of how important imitation can be, especially if we are imitating Christ. This goes with our moral character focus for today, holiness.

Consider asking the children what they think when they hear the word holiness. Ask them to try and define holiness in their own words.

⁷⁷ Forkel, B. (2020, February 06). YOUTH GROUP LESSON ON HOLINESS. Retrieved July 22, 2020, from <https://ministrytoyouth.com/youth-group-lessons-on-holiness/>



SONG:

Song: [St Shenouda Press: Orthodox Kid's Book | St Shenouda the Shepherd Boy \(1:06\)](#)

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- What are some accomplishments of Abba Shenouda? (He wrote many sermons, discourses and canons, etc.)
- How did Abba Shenouda practice his holiness? (He prayed and fasted all day, his uncle knew that he was holy and said to Abba Shenouda "You bless me, my child, for you will be a father for many peoples.")
- Which council did Abba Shenouda attend? (Council of Ephesus).
- What are the names of the monasteries he built? (Anba Bishoy, and Anba Shenouda).



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

- What values did you learn from his life? What is one thing from these values you can apply this week to your life? (Holiness, steadfast in the faith, etc.)
- How can his example guide and inspire you to grow in your relationship with God? (Steadfast in your faith, rely on God's guidance, etc.).
- How can we be more like Anba Shenouda in our day-to-day lives? (We can more like him by growing our relationship with Christ, reading our Bible everyday, praying everyday using our Agpeya, tell others about Christ, etc.)



Lesson 5.4 - The Church Is Holy

Building Block 5
We Grow as Orthodox Christians



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Bibles, materials for an ice cream milkshake, cup, something dirty (e.g. dirt, etc.).

Scripture References: Exodus 19:10-14, 2 Chronicles 7, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Activity: Large number of items such as buttons varying in number of holes and/or size or marbles varying in color/size.



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will develop an understanding of the terms purity and holiness and who the source of our holiness is. The children will also be able to understand that actions can disrupt our purity.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Purity and Holiness.



MEMORY VERSE:



Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.



Colossians 3:12

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Set up a table at the front of the room. Start making an elaborate ice cream milkshake. The servant can choose to use printed pictures of a milkshake or a variety or at home material that depicts a milkshake. Decorate it with whipped cream, cherries, sprinkles, etc. Ask the children: Who wants this milkshake? Many will likely scream, "me, please!" Say, "Okay, I just have to add one final touch to this milkshake." Add a small piece of something dirty (e.g. dirt, etc.) to the cup. Now, ask the children again, "Okay, who wants it now?"



The children will likely scream “ew” and say they don’t want it anymore. Ask them why not? The children will explain that this small piece of something gross spoiled the whole thing, and it is no longer appetizing.

We are the same. God created us as these beautiful, unique, blessed individuals - even more special than this milkshake! We were designed to be holy. But sometimes, we add “dirty” things to our lives that make us impure, soiling who we were meant to be. Even though we sometimes think these impurities are small, this demonstration shows us that even a small bit of something impure affects the purity of the whole thing.

Let’s learn a bit more about purity and holiness together!



LESSON BODY:

What is the meaning of holiness? To be ‘holy’ means to be set apart for God. Another way of understanding holiness is to be pure and clean in order for God to fill us.

Ask the children if they know any stories from the Old or New Testament that show God granting and demanding purity and holiness from his people. For example, in the Old Testament, Exodus 19:10-14: God told Moses to ask the Israelites to be clean and ready to meet God on the mountain. In the New Testament, Jesus washed the feet of His disciples before giving them communion. He also talked to them about love, especially loving one another. This washing made the disciples clean and pure.

We can learn more about holiness in God’s house, the Church, from the story of the consecration of the temple in 2 Chronicles 7.

Read 2 Chronicles 7 with the children. Consider inviting one of the children to lead the reading.

What makes the Church holy? As a Church, we are cleansed by Christ and the Holy Spirit in the Mysteries. In the Mysteries, Christ, our Lord, gives us purity so that we may be filled more and more with the Holy Spirit. Like the Israelites in the mountain, we need to be clean in body, soul and heart as we come to communion. Just like the Apostles, we also need to hear Christ's words and examine our hearts before coming to take His Body and Blood. When we take communion, we become filled with the Holy Spirit.

Consider asking the children the following questions:

- *How did we become holy? (Through baptism and chrismation.)*
- *How do we maintain our holiness? (By coming to church, confessing our sins and repenting.)*

Consider having the children come up with a list of items that defile the heart, such as hate, jealousy, resentment, gossiping, and lust. If the children do not identify lust, introduce and define it for the next portion of this lesson.

Lust is a very strong wanting of something, it can be a game or a toy, or it can be for food. Lust is an example of one of the “dirty” things that can soil our ice cream milkshake, just like we saw in the opening activity.

The Bible speaks to us about two types of lust: lust of the eye, and lust of the body. This refers to what we see, what we touch, and what we taste, smell, or hear.



Keeping Our Body Holy:

Let the children come up with a list of items that defile the body.

1. **Lips:** Ways that our lips are defiled are by lying, swearing, mentioning the name of God without reverence.
2. **Eye:** Sometimes we defile our eyes by looking at things that are not appropriate or things that we do not need to look at.
3. **Ear:** Listening to bad songs, gossip, and inappropriate language defiles our ears.
4. **Hands:** Stealing, hitting, and fighting are all ways that our hands become defiled.
5. **Feet:** If we go to places where Christ would not walk with us, this is defilement of our feet.
6. **Mind:** Sometimes we think bad thoughts about others, or have bad thoughts. We can keep the mind holy by reading the Word of God, and applying it in our lives.

We must keep the heart holy by maintaining our love towards God, and we can do this through prayer, fasting, acts of service towards our neighbors, and fighting lust. We keep our bodies holy by taking Communion, confessing and repenting. In fact, in the Liturgy, before Abouna gives us communion, he says “The Holies for the Holy.” This means that we are provided communion, which is holy, to maintain and nourish our holy identities that we were given by Christ.

Christ lives in all of you. You may ask yourselves why He wants to live there, and He does because He loves you! Our goal should always be to not allow a hint of impurity in our lives to show our love and respect for our holy bodies that God has given us.

“Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

At this point, the servant may want to ask the children what this verse means to see their understanding. Emphasize that God made us and dwells in us; therefore, we must keep ourselves pure for Him and ourselves.

Consider the following quote from St. John Chrysostom for a better understanding about what 1 Corinthians 6:20 means, in your preparation for the lesson.⁷⁸

“What is Paul trying to prove when he says that we are not our own? He wants to secure us against sin and against following the improper desires of the mind. We have many improper desires, but we must constrain them, and we can do so. If we could not, there would be no point in exhorting us like this. Paul does not say that we are under compulsion but that we have been bought— and bought with a great price, reminding us of the way in which our salvation was obtained.”

- St. John Chrysostom

⁷⁸ Bray, G. L. (Ed.). (1999). *1-2 Corinthians*. Downers Grove (Illinois), IL: InterVarsity Press.



Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Categorize:

1. Have a large number of items such as buttons varying in number of holes and/or size or marbles varying in color/size.
2. As children arrive, ask them to sit in a circle around the items and pick one child at a time to sort through the items and separate one item based on a certain characteristic. For example, have the children separate out all the buttons that have only two holes or are a certain size.
 - a. Use this game to help children understand that sanctification is being set apart for God's purposes.
 - b. Ask the children to stand in a line. Stand on the opposite side of the room and call out categories such as "wearing red" or "ten years old".
 - c. Every time the servant calls out a category that describes a group of children, they will be set apart. If a child fits the category, they run to the servant as fast as they can, tag them, and shout, "set apart!" If they do not fit the category, they stay where they are and crouch down on the floor.
 - d. (Play several times with these categories: clothing colors, clothing styles such as jeans, shorts, or dresses, ages, birthday months, school grade, number of siblings, letter in name.) After the game, gather children for discussion.
 - e. Explain that whenever a characteristic was called out, they were set apart and a truth is God calls us the church to be set apart for Him, so that for example if the characteristic of holiness is called, we can run right to Him.

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- What is the meaning of Holy? (To be set apart by God.)
- How does the Church become holy? (Through the mysteries of the Church, Christ sanctifies every member through the work of the Holy Spirit.)
- What are things that make our temple/body dirty? (Answers may vary.)
- How do we keep our holiness? (By keeping the purity of our body, mind and heart, confessing whatever we failed to do, and taking communion regularly.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

Today we learned about purity and holiness and the source of our holiness. It is important that we practice how to remain pure and holy. We talked about ways that our lips, eyes, ears, hands, feet and mind can be defiled. This week let's all focus on one action per body part that will help us become more pure and holy. Here are some potential practical applications:

- Lips: compliment a friend, thank the Lord aloud.
- Eyes: watch a christian TV show or movie.
- Ears: listen to hymns or church songs.
- Hands: help others like the elderly
- Feet: go to Holy places like church, monastery. Being a leader of kindness or following those who are kind and not bullies
- Minds: remaining positive and seeing the good in all situations.



Lesson 5.5 - Different Talents to Serve Our Lord and Each Other

Building Block 5
We Grow as Orthodox Christians



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Bibles.

Scripture References: Matthew 25:14-30.

Craft: 9" x 12" light blue construction paper, 3" x 12" green, orange, and turquoise construction paper, crayons, markers, glue, tape, and scissors.

Activity: [This activity page.](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will understand that God gave each one of us different talents to complete one another and work together, in unity, to serve His Holy Name.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Gratefulness



MEMORY VERSE:



For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.



Ephesians 2:10

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Consider beginning the class by giving the children something they can relate to.

Explain to them that we give gifts to each other because we care for each other. Our family members specifically pick out our gifts with us in mind, because they want us to like it.



When we are born, we are all given gifts that are especially picked for each one of us; these gifts are given to us by God. We sometimes call them talents. The talents God has given us can be whatever we are good at. Sometimes it is a sport, musical talent, maybe some of us are good at science and others are more artistic and can draw well. Whatever the case is, God made each one of us good at something for a reason. He wants you to serve Him with your talents.

Consider starting a discussion with these questions:

- *What are your talents? (Can be artistic, musical etc. or it can be something less obvious like kindness, patience etc.)*
- *How can we serve God with our talents? (Ex. if they are musically talented they can spread the word of God through song; i.e. singing or writing music.)*



LESSON BODY:

Consider either summarizing the story of the Parable of the Talents or reading verse by verse with the children.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like a man who was traveling away. The man called his servants and gave 5 talents to one, 2 talents to another and 1 talent to the other. The man gave the servants talents according to each servant's abilities.

When the man returned, he settled accounts with his servants. The first that received five talents had traded and received five more talents. The second servant with two talents also gained two more talents. The man told them both *"Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord."*

However, the third man with the one talent was afraid and hid the talent in the ground. The servant was being wicked and lazy, the man told him that he could have at least given the talent to the bankers and received interest on the talent. So he took the talent from him and gave it to the servant with 10 talents.

"For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matthew 25:29-30).

Together, as a class, read Matthew 25:14-30. Have each child read a verse, and then discuss the following questions with the children:

- Did the master expect these results from each man? (No.)
- Did the master expect them each to have the same number of talents when he returned? (No.)
- Did each man gain something with what he was given? (No.)
- Why did the master give different amounts of talents to each servant? (He gave based on their abilities.)
- Why did the master take the 1 talent to give to a more fruitful servant? (Whoever has more will be given abundance.)

Consider the following quote from St. John Chrysostom to help you understand the answer to why the master took away the 1 talent from the servant, in your preparation for the lesson.⁷⁹

- How do your talents differ from your friends' talents? Your family members' talents? (Answers will vary.)
- Why does our Heavenly Father give different gifts to each of us? (Because the Church is a body of multiple parts, and we are all those different parts.)
- How can we show our gratitude to our Heavenly Father for the particular gifts He has given to us? (We can pray and thank Him for our talents, and also use our talents for good.)

Discuss with children the different resources God gives us to do his work. Talk about how everyone has different resources.

We should always be grateful for the gifts that God has given us. Even if it does not seem as much as someone else, we should not be afraid to use our gifts.

“Since he did nothing with his one talent, even that one is to be taken from him and given to the more productive partner. For to every one who has will more be given, and he will have abundance, but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away.” What does this mean for us? One who is given a gift of preaching or teaching is given it so others may profit from it. If one does not use this gift, he will lose it. But one who uses the gift diligently will gain even more of the gift in abundance, even as the inactive recipient will lose what he received. The penalty is not, however, limited to this. The punishment in addition is intolerable, and the sentence is filled with heavy accusation.”

- St. John Chrysostom

At this point, the servant may want to chart, on a large paper or chalkboard, different roles in the church and the resources God provides to fill those roles. Then ask the children what resources God has provided them and how they can use those resources to do God's work.

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Character Cards⁸⁰:

1. Print the [paper for this activity](#) (page 12-17) and cut out the cards before the children come to class.
2. Read a problem to the children. They will have to look carefully at their card to see if the gift they have can help the person in the problem.
3. What kind of gift will help solve this problem? Who has the gift in front of them? (Continue going through all the problem cards until you have matched each one of them up with a gift.)



⁷⁹ Simonetti, M., & Oden, T. C. (Eds.). (2002). Matthew 14-28. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.

⁸⁰Writer Xtreme. (n.d.). Lesson 6. Retrieved from

<http://static1.squarespace.com/static/5205bde4e4b03ad27ab212f1/t/56bfa65f9f72667c958f2b91/1456020322907/Clarity+Kids-Elementary-Winter+Extreme+Kids-Lesson+6-February+14,+2016.pdf>

4. Ask the children to match the cards, have them discuss why they think that action goes with the problem.

Parable of the Talents Craft⁸¹:

1. Hand out light blue paper.
2. Fold the top edge down two inches.
3. Unfold
4. Trace the folded line with a crayon
5. Write "Parable of the Talents" and "Matthew 25:14" in the the top area
6. Hand out green, orange, and dark turquoise papers. These are the bags.
7. Fold green, orange, and turquoise papers in half.
8. With the folded side up, draw one 'bag' on each color.
9. Cut out three bags; one of each color.
10. Place bags evenly spaced on light blue paper under the line.
11. Draw two lines between bags.
12. Glue one bag in each area, so the top folds.
13. Draw a string on each bag (just make a little sideways '8' with two lines pointed down).
14. Write "five talents" on the first bag.
15. Write "two talents" on the second bag.
16. Write "one talent" on the last bag.
17. Fold tops of bags up, making a crease in the 'string' area.
18. Inside each bag, glue ONLY from the folded edge to the string area (Do not glue the bag completely shut).
19. Inside the first bag, write "Well Done!" on the top of the bag and "ten talents!" on the bottom of the bag.
20. Inside the second bag write "Well Done!" on the top of the bag and "five talents!" on the bottom of the bag.
21. Inside the third bag, write "Wicked and Lazy!" on the top of the bag and "one talent!" on the bottom of the bag.
22. Close bags.
23. Under the first bag and the second bag, write "Enter into the JOY of your lord."
24. Under the third bag, write "Cast him into outer darkness."



Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

⁸¹ Wooten, R. (1970, January 01). Parable Of The Talents. Retrieved July 20, 2020, from <http://childrensbiblelessons.blogspot.com/2015/04/lesson-parable-of-talents.html?m=1>



- Who does the master represent? (God).
- Who do the servants represent? (Us).
- What should we do with the resources God gives us? (Cherish them!)
- Name two resources God has given you. (The Bible, The Church.)
- What will happen if we do not use our resources for God's work? (We will lose our way to God.)
- How can we use our talents? (Answers will vary.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

Ask the children to discuss different talents/abilities that they have seen in others. Do they know what theirs is? Encourage them to talk to their parents and find out what their gifts are and how they can use them.

We should all be grateful for the gifts the God has given us and not be afraid to use them.

How can you use your talents for the Church everyday?

- Join the choir
- Draw a painting for the Church
- Write a poem about how wonderful our Church is
- Sing hymns and praises, play the cymbals, triangle, and other instruments to praise the Lord.
- Etc.

This week, remember to use your talents in everything you do, and when you feel like your talents are not important, remember that God gave each one of us a unique talent for a specific reason.)



Lesson 5.6 - The Wall of Jericho

Building Block 5
We Grow as Orthodox Christians



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Bibles, and two decks of cards.

Scripture References: Joshua 5 and 6.



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will demonstrate an understanding of the power of God, His authority over the universe, and the fact that He listens and responds to the prayers of His children.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Trust



MEMORY VERSE:



By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they had been encircled for seven days.



Hebrews 11:30

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Consider opening the lesson with this activity:

To open the lesson, split the children into two groups and give each group a stack of playing cards. Have each group try to build the biggest house of cards, without it falling down. Explain to the children that the wall of Jericho was much higher than the house of cards they built, but even though the wall of Jericho was much higher, it fell down just as easily as the house of cards did.



LESSON BODY:

The Canaanites heard that the people of God, under the leadership of Joshua, were coming to take Canaan into their possession, so they were frightened because they thought that God's people would force them to leave their land. The king of Jericho gave an order that the gates of Jericho were to be closed so that nobody could enter the city. Joshua looked and saw that the walls of Jericho were high; the gates of Jericho were kept shut and guarded to keep the Israelites out.

When Joshua was near Jericho, he saw a man standing in front of him, so Joshua asked him, "Are you one of our soldiers or an enemy?" The man answered, saying that he was neither an enemy or a soldier; he told Joshua that he was there as a commander of the Lord's army. Immediately, when he heard this, Joshua threw himself on the ground, in worship saying, "*What does my Lord say to His servant?*" (Joshua 5:14). The commander of the Lord's army told Joshua to take off his sandals because he was standing on holy ground.

Consider asking the children the following questions:

- *Who can think of a person who heard words like these? (Moses and the Fiery bush.)*
- *When in church do we take off our shoes? (When we take communion or go near the altar.)*

Joshua knew that because the Lord was with him, all things were possible. Then the Lord said to Joshua, "*See I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor. You shall march around the city, and all you men of war; you shall go around the city once. This you shall do six days. And seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark. But the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times and the priests shall blow the trumpets.*" (Joshua 6:2-4)

"It shall come to pass, when they make a long blast with the rams' horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, that all the people shall shout with a great shout; then the wall of the city will fall down flat. And the people shall go up every man straight before him." (Joshua 6:5). As Joshua commanded the people, the seven priests who had the seven trumpets went forward with the Ark of the Covenant behind them. Then the armed men followed. They went about the city once, and then went back to the camp for the night.

Consider asking the children the following questions:

- *How many times did they go around the walls of Jericho?(Once each day for six days and seven times on the seventh day.)*
- *Who blew the trumpets? (Priests).*
- *What did the people do on the first day? (March around Jericho once.)*

On the second day, the priests, soldiers, and people did the same thing as the first day. They went around the city walls with the trumpets for six consecutive days. The march was long and tiring, but still, nobody complained.

On the seventh day, the people following Joshua got up early; the priests blew the trumpets, while the people looked at the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, which was a symbol of the presence of God among them. Then they shouted, and the miracle took place; the walls of Jericho fell down, the gates of the city opened, and the people entered. The Lord gave them the city as He promised.



Consider the following quote from St. Augustine of Hippo for a better understanding about how the Walls of Jericho fell, in your preparation for the lesson.⁸²

Consider asking the children the following questions:

- *What did the people do on the seventh day? (March around Jericho seven times, the priests blew the horns and the people shouted loud.)*
- *What happened? (The walls fell down.)*

The people went around the walls of Jericho for six days; they marched around the city once each day. On the seventh day they marched around the city seven times and the walls of the city fell down. We also go around the inside of the Church on the Resurrection Day. Three times inside the Sanctuary around the Altar, then three times outside the Sanctuary, and the seventh time inside the Sanctuary. This indicates that through the death of Christ and His Resurrection, the kingdom of Satan fell down, was destroyed, and all of its walls fell down.

“So the walls of that city, called Jericho, which in the Hebrew tongue is said to mean moon, fell when they had been encircled seven times by the ark of the covenant. What, then, does the announcement of the kingdom of heaven portend—signified by the encircling of the ark—except that all the battlements of mortal life, that is, all the hope of this world, which is opposed to the hope of the world to come, will be destroyed by the sevenfold gift of the Holy Spirit, working through the free will? For, those walls fell of their own accord, not by any violent push of the ark in its circuit.”

- St. Augustine of Hippo

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Activity:

1. Have the children come up with a way to reenact the story.
2. Depending on how many children you have in the group, the servant may want to split them into smaller groups.
3. Encourage the children to only use the objects lying around the classroom.

⁸² Franke, J. R., & Oden, T. C. (Eds.). (2005). *Ancient Christian commentary on scripture: Old Testament*. Downers Grove, IL, IL: InterVarsity Press.



Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- Joshua and His people were able to take Jericho because they followed closely what God told them to do. What should we do when God asks us to do things? (If we follow what God asks us to do we will get many blessings and good things from Him.)
- How many days did the Israelites walk around the wall before the wall fell? (Six and it fell on the seventh day)
- Who blew the trumpets? (The priests)
- What did God tell Joshua to do for the walls to fall? (He told Joshua to march around the city for six days, and that seven priests should blow trumpets, but that on the seventh day, the city wall would fall down.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

Like Joshua, when God instructs us (through the Holy Spirit) to do something, we need to trust and obey God!

This week, remember that God can do everything for He is the king of kings, so whenever you are in a tough situation, trust that God is there with you at all times.

How can you strengthen your trust in God everyday?

- Go to Church.
- Reflecting on God's Word.
- Trusting God in hard times.
- etc.



Lesson 5.7 - The Parable of the Ten Virgins: Be Prepared

Building Block 5
We Grow as Orthodox Christians



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Box filled with essentials for travelling.

Scripture References: Matthew 25:1-15.

Activity: White board (this can also be done on paper), and two different colors of white board markers (red is preferred); [crossword puzzle](#), and pencils.

Video: [ST MARY ST ABRAAM TUBE: THE PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS \(3:26\)](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

In this lesson, the children will demonstrate an understanding of the symbolism and importance of the parable of the ten virgins and being prepared for Christ's second coming



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Preparedness



MEMORY VERSE:



Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.



Matthew 25:13

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Intro Activity⁸³:

⁸³ Parable of Ten Bridesmaids. (2020, January 02). Retrieved July 21, 2020, from <https://missionbibleclass.org/new-testament/part1/parables-teachings-of-jesus/ten-bridesmaids/>



1. Before class, prepare a suitcase (if a suitcase is not available, a box will work) to bring to class along with items you might use if going on vacation. Ask the children where they have been for vacations or what kind of trips they have been on.
2. Discuss the fact that before they left they had to pack some things to prepare for the trip. Show the children some of the items that they might pack to get ready for the trip (everyone can help packing the bag together). You might have warm clothes or an umbrella to prepare for the weather.
3. Consider saying to the children, "Before we could go on a trip we need to be prepared. Jesus once told a parable about some virgins who were supposed to be prepared for something. Let us read the Parable of the Ten Virgins."
4. Explain to the children that on the last Tuesday before His death, Jesus told His disciples a parable, to answer their questions about the kingdom of heaven. A parable is a story that reflects a deeper meaning that Christ wanted to communicate to His people.



LESSON BODY:

One day as the Lord was sitting on the Mount of Olives, His disciples asked Him what the sign of His coming was, and of the end of the ages. Jesus answered them through a parable.

Jesus said that the kingdom of heaven was like ten virgins who went out to meet the bridegroom. Five virgins were wise and the other five were foolish. The foolish virgins took their lamps, but took no oil with them. Those who were wise took oil with their vessels. The bridegroom was delayed, and all of the virgins slumbered and slept.

At midnight, there was a cry, "*Behold, the bridegroom is coming, go out to meet him.*" (Matthew 25:6) So, all of the virgins rose, and trimmed their lamps, but the foolish, who had no oil, said to the wise, "*Give us some of your oil for our lamps are going out.*" (Matthew 25:8) The wise virgins answered saying that there might not be enough for all of them. They told the foolish to go and buy from vendors who sold oil.

However, when the five foolish virgins went to buy the oil, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready, the five wise virgins, went in with him, and the doors were shut. Later, the other virgins came saying, "*Lord, Lord, open to us*" (Matthew 25:11) but he answered and said, "*Assuredly I say to you, I do not know you. Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.*" (Matthew 25:12-13).

Consider the quote by Hilary of Poitiers about the preparedness of the virgins.⁸⁴

At this point, after discussing the parable, the servant may want to analyze what each part of the story symbolizes.

This parable gives us a lot of insight about the kingdom of heaven,

The bridegroom symbolizes the Lord Jesus on His second coming at the end of the days.

"The wise virgins are those who embracing the time available to them, were prepared at the first onset of the coming of the Lord. But the foolish were those who were lax and unmindful. They troubled themselves only over present matter and forgetting what God said, did not direct their efforts toward hope for resurrection."

- St. Hilary of Poitiers

⁸⁴ St, Hilary of Poitiers. (AD 368). Retrieved from <https://catenabile.com/com/585b63219ac03ecd4b8e7150>



The **virgins** are symbolic of all the Christians.

The **Wedding Ceremony** symbolizes the kingdom of heaven.

The **oil** is symbolic of virtues, spiritual struggle, and the work of the Holy Spirit

Sleeping symbolizes death.

The **Cry** is parallel to the voice of the angel, announcing the second coming of Christ.

Supplementary



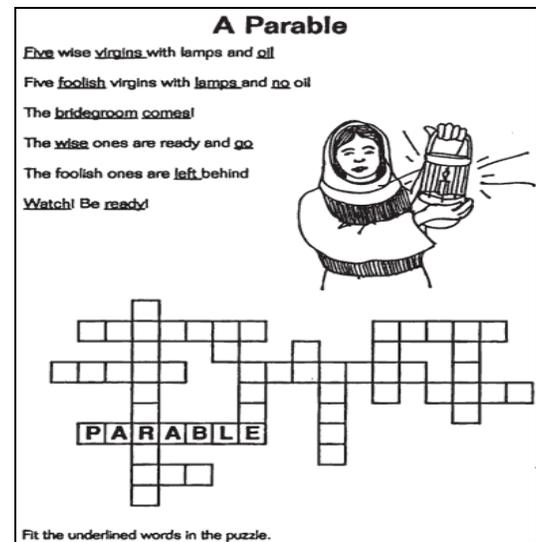
CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Activity⁸⁵:

1. Draw simple pictures of lamps on the chalk/whiteboard.
2. Write behaviours/attitudes on the lamps.
3. Make sure some are good and some are bad.
4. Examples might be: help other people, go to church, hate someone, swear, etc.
5. If possible, provide red chalk or a red whiteboard marker for the children to use to draw the flames.
6. Let the children take turns going up to the board and draw a flame on the kinds of behaviours that show we are ready when Christ comes back for us.
7. This activity can also be done on paper using crayons or markers if a chalkboard or whiteboard is not accessible.

Crossword puzzle⁸⁶:

1. Print the following [crossword puzzle](#).
2. Help the children complete this crossword puzzle.
3. [Answer key](#) for the crossword puzzle.



VIDEO:

[ST MARY ST ABRAAM TUBE: THE PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS \(3:26\)](#)

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

⁸⁵ Parable of Ten Bridesmaids. (2020, January 02). Retrieved July 21, 2020, from <https://missionbibleclass.org/new-testament/part1/parables-teachings-of-jesus/ten-bridesmaids/>

⁸⁶ Ten Virgins. (n.d.). Retrieved July 23, 2020, from <https://www.biblewise.com/kids/fun/the-ten-virgins.php>



Questions:

- What does the parable tell us about the second coming?
 - It is unexpected, and nobody knows the exact time
 - The real meaning of the kingdom of heaven is being with Christ, Himself, the true Bridegroom who will take us to the wedding of His true glory.
 - Death, the sleeping of the virgins, is our last chance to collect any spiritual virtues, the oil. We cannot go back to Earth and do more spiritual work, it is already too late.
 - At the end of times, whatever oil we have, we will use, we cannot borrow from the saints.
 - Our way to live with Christ eternally is to build a relationship with Him on Earth. Otherwise, He will tell us, like the foolish virgins, that He does not know us.
- How should we be prepared with the oil? (Build our relationship with the Bridegroom (God), and to fill our vessels using the following things: prayer, fasting, Holy Communion, Bible, and good deeds.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

How can you prepare your vessel of oil this week? (Praying, fasting, etc.)

This week, how can you be more prepared for Jesus' second coming?

- Reading the Bible
- Confessing your sins
- Helping those in need
- Etc.



Lesson 5.8 - Dealing With Sadness

Building Block 5
We Grow as Orthodox Christians



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Balance scale or two bags with weighted items, Bibles.

Scripture References: Psalm 13, Matthew 7:7-11

Song: [CYC - To Whom Shall I Go](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

Through the example of David the Psalmist, the children will begin to understand how to deal with sad situations and that God hears our cries of sadness.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Faith and Joy.



MEMORY VERSE:



I waited patiently for the Lord; And He is inclined to me, and heard my cry



Psalm 40:1

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

The servant will need a child volunteer, two bags, and items with weight (rocks, tennis or gold balls, etc.). This demonstration can also be done using a balance scale if the servant has one.

Ask the children to think of things that make them feel sad. It is important to note that it is normal to feel sad. The children might say things like: being made fun of, being left out, losing a game, getting in trouble, etc. Every time a child says something that makes them sad, add an item in one of the bags or to one side of the scale. The scale or the volunteer should start to be unbalanced.



Once there is a noticeable unbalance, ask the children, what are things that make you happy? Children might suggest: playing video games, playing with friends, having candy, playing sports, etc. Allow them to come up with as many happy things to make the scale balance or weigh heavier to the happy side.

Take a moment and tell children that despite it being normal to feel sad it is important to know that God blesses us with many things that make us happy as well. We should turn to him to find these happinesses when we do feel sad.



LESSON BODY:

When we experience the feelings of sadness and disappointment in our lives, we may wonder: Does God hear our cries of sadness?

The Bible is a source for comfort. It is always reminding us that no matter what, God is there to lift us up. Sadness is a real burden, but it is not a burden we should carry alone. We can turn to the Bible as a source of spiritual support.

Let us take David the Prophet as an example: David's story is one of the most dramatic in the Bible. He did not have an easy life, and he often made terrible decisions.

Consider asking the children this question:

→ *Can anyone give examples from David's life that might have made him sad? (Allow the children to discuss. Remind them of David's childhood and his mistake with Bathesheba.)*

Still, despite all of this, David is named "a man after God's own heart." He experienced deep sadness, but was still able to find comfort in God and deal with these situations.

There are many times in the Psalms that David wrote in which he declares his great sadness. In Psalm 13, David describes the steps he took from sadness to prayer to victory.

Invite one of the children to read Psalm 13. Consider interjecting between the verses with the commentary provided below.

*"How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever?
How long will You hide Your face from me?
How long shall I take counsel in my soul,
Having sorrow in my heart daily?
How long will my enemy be exalted over me?
Consider and hear me, O Lord my God;
Enlighten my eyes,
Lest I sleep the sleep of death;
Lest my enemy say,
"I have prevailed against him";
Lest those who trouble me rejoice when I am moved.
But I have trusted in Your mercy;
My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation.
I will sing to the Lord,*



Because He has dealt bountifully with me.” (Psalm 13)

Verses 1 -2: When he felt sad and troubled, David complained and wept, feeling very sorry for himself and even going so far as to blame God for forgetting about him.

Verses 3-4: However, he changes his thinking. He begins praying instead of complaining. He reveals three important aspects of answered prayer:

- a) Trust in God’s mercy;
- b) Rejoice in His salvation; and
- c) Sing praises to God for His bountiful dealings.

We are told to pray with thankfulness. Thankfulness will help alleviate the sadness we feel sometimes. If we turn our minds to God’s mercy, goodness, and grace we are better able to deal with the changes of life, including sadness. God will forever be by our side to comfort us, make us hopeful once again, and give us guidance during the good times and bad.

Invite another child to read Matthew 7:7-11.

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!” (Matthew 7:7-11)

“The more you pray to God in times of sorrow, the sooner you will feel His sweet consolation.”

- Eastern Orthodox Church Father

God understands that life is full of sadness. He became flesh and was able to relate to us in both our joy and pain. He wants us to feel and express every emotion before Him and not minimize anything. He is with us. This passage teaches us that whenever we feel sad or afraid, God will respond to our seeking of Him.

Consider concluding by introducing the quote by an Eastern Orthodox Church Father above.⁸⁷

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Clown: Turn That Frown Upside Down:

1. Have the children sit in a circle facing each other and ask for one child to volunteer as the clown.
2. The children in the circle will put on their best frown faces.
3. The clown volunteer will kneel in front of another child, may act funny and say “turn your frown upside down.”
4. If the clown gets the child to turn their frown upside down, they become the clown.

⁸⁷ St. Anthony of Optina. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.orthodoxchurchquotes.com/tag/sorrow/page/2/>



5. If they are unsuccessful they will move on to another child in the circle.
6. Continue till each child has a turn or time permitting.

Sadness Skit:

1. Split the children into small groups (3-4 people).
2. Ask them to create a skit about something that makes them sad (eg., not being able to go to a friends house, not doing well on a test etc.)
3. When each group presents their skit, ask the other children if they can come up with solutions or ways to make the situation happy
4. Once all the children have presented their skits, explain that whenever we are sad we should always turn to God who understands when we are sad and is our comfort.



SONG:

CYC - To Whom Shall I Go

When I feel worried, to whom shall I go?

You comfort me O Lord, I kneel and pray to You. (2)

When I feel tired, to whom shall I go?

You give me rest O Lord, I kneel and pray to You. (2)

When I feel sad, to whom shall I go?

You give me joy O Lord, I kneel and pray to You. (2)

When I feel sick, to whom shall I go?

You heal me O my Lord, I kneel and pray to You. (2)

When I feel oppressed, to whom shall I go?

You defend me O my Lord, I kneel and pray to You. (2)

When I feel lost, to whom shall I go?

You guide me O my Lord, I kneel and pray to You. (2)



Review



REVIEW LESSON:

The Bible is full of stories of people who experienced sadness and returned to God. Can you think of another story other than David's that shows this?

What were the three steps David took in Psalm 13 till he reached victory and overcame his sadness?

1. He complained and wept.
2. He turned to the Lord in prayer.
3. He remembered the following:
 - a. To trust in God's mercy;
 - b. To rejoice in His salvation; and
 - c. To sing praises to God for His bountiful dealings.



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

The Scriptures affirm that God hears our cries, cares about what makes us hurt, and understands us and our situations even better than we do. We can find comfort in the truth that God will never dismiss our sadness as unimportant. This week, we can apply this by doing the following:

- Reading more Psalms to learn how to pray like David when we are feeling any emotions, not just sadness.
- Turning immediately to God when I am feeling sad.
- Not only whining and complaining in my prayers, but remembering God's mercy, salvation, and many blessings to bring joy to my heart.



Lesson 5.9 - Dealing with Peer Pressure

Building Block 5
We Grow as Orthodox Christians



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Bibles, [Macrina the Younger](#), [Toba 6](#).



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will demonstrate an understanding of the negative and positive effects of peer pressure and how to distinguish between them using the stories of Adam and Eve and of St. Macrina.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Resilience and Integrity.



MEMORY VERSE:



He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed.



Proverbs 13:20

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

What is peer pressure?

- Peer pressure is the feeling that someone is pushing you towards making a certain choice, good or bad.

Consider allowing the children to share with the group some examples of peer pressure that they have experienced in their life.

Today's lesson is about two examples of peer pressure, one will show us what good peer pressure looks like and the other will show us bad peer pressure.



LESSON BODY:



We are going to look at an example of what positive peer pressure looks like: St. Macrina the younger, despite being a sister to St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory of Nyssa, was also a very good influence on both of them. We are going to learn that not all peer pressure is negative, there is positive peer pressure that can help us achieve anything we want, and we are going to learn about this through a story about St. Macrina the younger and her brothers.

Consider asking the children if they have a friend that pushes them to do the right thing.

St. Macrina the younger served as a great influence on her brothers St. Basil and St. Gregory; she was always pushing them to further their relationship with God and to always go to church. The pressure from St. Macrina to do these things, indeed resulted in their becoming very great and influential fathers in our Church. She pushed them to be better men so that they could reach God's heaven! Without St. Macrina's constant pressure on her brothers, they may not have been great fathers of the Church. Even when St. Basil returned from university very arrogant and conceited, St. Macrina talked with him and corrected his ways.

Consider the following quote by St. John Chrysostom to get a better understanding about the influence of St. Macrina on her brother St. Basil, in preparation for the lesson.⁸⁸

On the other hand, there are many examples of negative peer pressure, and what results from it. One such example of this is Adam and Eve.

It can be really hard for us to say no when our friends are telling us to do something that we know is wrong; sometimes we do it anyway because we want to be accepted by other people. In the story of Adam and Eve, Adam knew not to eat from the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of good and evil. Yet, when Eve ate from the fruit, and offered it to him, Adam could have refused, but he did not. As a result of Adam not being able to say no, he and Eve could no longer stay in the Garden of Eden.

"The great Basil, brother of the girl we have been speaking about, came back from school where he had been trained for a long time in the discipling of rhetoric. Although when she took him in hand he was monstrously conceited about his skills in rhetoric, contemptuous of every high reputation and exalted beyond the leading lights of the province by his self importance, so swiftly did she win him to the ideal of philosophy that he renounced worldly appearance...preparing for himself by means of his complete poverty a way of life which would tend without impediment towards virtue."

- St. Gregory of Nyssa

⁸⁸ Gregory of Nyssa, & Corrigan, K. (2001). *The life of Saint Macrina* (p. 26). Toronto, Ontario: Peregrina Pub.



Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Peer Pressure Activity⁸⁹:

1. Have your classroom split up into groups of four to six. There should be three groups to act out scenes, and one that sits and watches. Each group should be prepped outside of class on what roles they are playing and what they should do.
2. Then, all three groups stand up in front of the class and perform their short skit. Once all three performances are over, the group that is sitting has to choose which scenario was peer pressure. It can be more than one. Provide many different scenarios of influence, rejection, name calling, and bullying.
3. You can also use the peer pressure of example, which involves the children trying to look cool, playing on their mobile devices for instance. Their example provides a type of peer pressure for other children who want to emulate them. This range of situations shows the children that peer pressure is not always obvious.

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- How did St. Macrina influence her brothers? (She influenced them by guiding them to God.)
- What is an example of positive peer pressure and negative peer pressure? (St. Macrina, Adam and Eve).
- Is all peer pressure negative? (No, some peer pressure can allow you to grow.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

⁸⁹ Madison, E. (2016, November 7). Peer Pressure Games & Activities. Retrieved August 18, 2020, from <https://study.com/academy/lesson/peer-pressure-games-activities.html>



- Although doing what everyone else is doing is enjoyable in the moment, you may face the consequences after. It is important to look at the full picture before deciding to participate in something.
- What are some ways we can avoid being pressured into situations we do not wish to be in? (Just fleeing the situation, asking an adult for help, asking the intercession of a saint, etc.)
- How can you help a friend who is experiencing peer pressure? (Help remove them from the situation, be a listener, reassure them they do not need to do anything they are not comfortable with, refer them to a trusted adult.)



Building Block 6: The Church Grows in the World

Lesson 6.1 - The First Church and the Work of the Apostles

Building Block 6
The Church Grows in the World



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: A Bible

Scripture References: Acts 2:1-4, Acts 2:40-47, Matthew 28:19-20,

Craft: Colored construction paper, [Paper Human Stencil](#), scissors, markers, stickers, googly eyes, sticky tacks.

Song: [Tarek Elfass: A hymn for the Apostles fast \(4:21\)](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children should understand the work of the Apostles in the early church and how it grounds our unity as one Church.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Unity



MEMORY VERSE:

“

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

”

Acts 2:42



Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Consider beginning the lesson by playing the following game:

Turn and Talk Icebreaker⁹⁰:

1. Ask the children how the Church can get more people to know God. Once the question has been asked, instruct the children to turn to a partner and share their ideas.
2. Once children have shared their ideas with their partner, invite some of them to share with the rest of the class.
3. Ask the children how the Church can create more unity (get along better). Once the question has been asked, instruct the children to turn to a different partner and share their ideas.
4. Once children have shared their ideas with their partner, invite some of them to share with the rest of the class.

When people were beginning to spread the word of God after Jesus' resurrection, the Apostles were going to many countries so that people could know about Jesus and believe in Him. The early church was full of joy as more and more people became Christians every day. Many people who had come to Jerusalem to celebrate Pentecost stayed longer to be with the rest of the new Christians. The church devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, fellowship, communion, and to the prayers.

Today we are going to learn about how the Apostles began the church and all the works they did, through God, to bring others to Jesus.



LESSON BODY:

Ask the children if they remember what Pentecost is. (The Pentecost is when the Holy Spirit of God came down as tongues of fire on the Apostles, St. Mary and some of the other women while they were praying in a room in Jerusalem and began speaking many languages.)

The church began on the day of Pentecost - the fiftieth day from the Resurrection Feast, (Acts 2:1-4) with the Apostles preaching the word of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. St. Peter was preaching the word of God and there were about three-thousand people gathered to hear him speak. An amazing thing happened, those three-thousand people wanted to become disciples of Christ, so they all repented, were baptized and received the Holy Spirit. It must have been amazing to witness three-thousand people gladly receiving the word of God through the Apostle Peter and becoming baptized.

The servant may consider reading Acts 2:1-4.

The first chapters of the book of Acts tell the story of the first days of the Church in Jerusalem and provide us with a vivid picture of the early Christian community being built through the work of the apostles. It tells of

⁹⁰ Turn and Talk. (n.d.). Retrieved July 21, 2020, from <https://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/turn-and-talk>.



the people being baptized and endowed with the gift of the Holy Spirit through repentance and faith in Christ, and continuing steadfast in their devotion “to the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, to the breaking of the bread (communion) and the prayers.”

The servant may consider reading Acts 2:40-47 and discuss the following points:

The Apostles’ Teaching (Acts 2:42-43):

“And they continued’ it is written, ‘steadfastly in the doctrine’ (or, ‘teaching’) of the Apostles’ for it was not for one day, nor for two or three days that they were under teaching as being persons who had gone over to a different course of life. [‘And they continued with one accord in the Apostles’ doctrine,’ etc.] The expression is not, ‘homou’ - ‘together’ - but ‘homothymason’ - with ‘one accord;’ (‘and daily,’ he says [afterwards], ‘they were continuing with one accord in the temple,’) i.e. with one soul. And here again in his conciseness, he does not relate the teaching given; for as young children, the Apostles nourished them with spiritual food.”
- St. John Chrysostom

The apostles continued to fulfill what Jesus had told them to do. “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 things that I have commanded you. And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age”, (Matthew 28:19-20). The apostles were proving the authority of what they were saying through wonders and miraculous signs. The church was filled in awe (Acts 2:43). The Apostles were fulfilling their will from God, which was to spread His word to as many people in as many countries as they could. Through the grace of God, they were able to spread His word and baptize many people! They taught many people about Jesus and His love for us.

The servant may also consider the following quote by St. John Chrysostom⁹¹ to further understand what the Bible means when saying that the Apostles were “steadfast” in their mission.

Fellowship (Acts 2:42-47):

The new Christians continued to meet together every day and they shared everything (Act 2:47). St Luke tells us that they enjoyed favor with the people and that new Christians were being added every day. It was as Jesus had said, “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:35).

The servant may consider asking the children if they know what fellowship is. (Fellowship if when we gather in the name of Jesus, it is like hanging out with your friends, but instead of just hanging out with your friends, you are also hanging out with Jesus!)

Through the teaching of God and the many people that became new Christians, they started having fellowship with one another. They hung out all the time! Just like we do when we are at church and we hang out together in Sunday School or after the lesson or in Church when we are praying. This means that they were all joined together and were united in One. When we come to church for the liturgy, we are united in Christ, we all have the same goal which is to become One Body of Christ through the Holy Communion. Having communion is very important because Jesus first did it with His disciples during the mystical Supper, and every time we take communion it is a way of uniting with Christ and one another.

⁹¹ Homily 7 on the Acts of the Apostles. (n.d.). Retrieved August 17, 2020, from <https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/210107.htm>

Prayer (Acts 2:42):

This time of gladness, fellowship and new life was also focused on God through prayer. Again, praying together becomes part of the life of the church. Prayer is very important for our spiritual lives, it is our way of talking to God and connecting with Him. It is also for us to get to know Him. Prayer was also important for the early church; through the power of prayer, the Apostles were able to do amazing things to help people give their lives to Jesus. It helped them perform miracles, speak many languages and spread the word of God! When we are praying we can remember all the things Jesus has done for us and pray that others who do not know Him yet, that they may get to know Him and give their lives to Him.

The Apostles did many amazing things through the power of prayer and by the grace of God. Just like the Apostles, we should be striving to bring others through Christ through our prayers, fellowship and the Lord's teachings.

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

“Paper Human Unity Chain” Craft (Adaptation)⁹²:

1. Hand each child a [paper human stencil](#)⁹³ and instruct them to use their scissors to cut around the dolls in order to make stencils.
2. Once the children have cut out their stencils, instruct them to grab a piece of construction paper, place their stencil on top of the construction paper, and draw around the stencil until they have the outline of the paper doll drawn on their piece of construction paper.
3. Next, instruct the children to cut out their Paper Humans using their scissors. The children will write one of the words on their paper human (Teaching, Fellowship, Communion, Prayer).The children can decorate their doll any way that they wish as long as the four words are on the Paper Human.



SONG:

[Tarek Elfass: A hymn for the Apostles fast \(4:21\)](#)

⁹² Paper Doll Chain Unity Bible Craft. (2017, March 09). Retrieved July 21, 2020, from <https://christianmontessorinetwork.com/paper-doll-chain-unity-bible-craft/>

⁹³ Dutch Renaissance Press Paper Doll Template. Retrieved July 24, 2020 from <https://timvandevall.com/2019/templates/printable-paper-doll-templates/>



Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- What did the Apostles do to bring others to Jesus? (They spread His word and baptized people.)
- What is Pentecost? (The Pentecost is when the Holy Spirit came down unto the Apostles and St. Mary and they started speaking many languages.)
- What are the four main things the Apostles did to spread the word of God? (They taught His teaching through prayer, communion, fellowship and the teachings of our Lord.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

- How can I continue in the apostolic teaching? (Answers may include; reading and learning my church doctrine by reading, paying attention in Sunday School.)
- How can I have fellowship with others? (Attend services and ask about my brothers and sisters in Christ and partake in communion.)
- What are some ways we can pray like the Apostles? (Pray together, pray for others, read our Bible to know the teachings of God.)
- What are the forms of prayer I can participate in? (The liturgy, agpeya, tasbeha, etc.)



Lesson 6.2 - The Apostle Paul's First Missionary Journey

Building Block 6
The Church Grows in the World



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Plastic bowling pins and a ball.

Scripture References: Acts 13:1-12

Craft: Papers sheets, white glue, tape, colored pencils/crayons, markers, pom-poms, googly eyes, cereal box or thin cardboard, and a shoebox.

Activity: Flashlight, stickers, and a mirror.



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will learn about St. Paul's first missionary journey and understand the importance of evangelizing to those who do not believe in our God through mercy and love.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Steadfastness



MEMORY VERSE:

“

*I have set you as a light to the Gentiles,
that you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth.*

”

Acts 13:47

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Consider opening the lesson by playing the following game.

Barrier Ball:

1. Place plastic bowling pins on a hard, flat surface



2. Explain to the children that these pins represent the various issues people run into when trying to spread the word of God such as money, way, governments, false religions, laws, crime and hatred. To successfully spread the word of God, they have to knock down these barriers and be **steadfast** in their efforts.
3. Instruct the children to roll a ball to knock down these barriers getting in the way of spreading God's message.

The servant may clarify that it is not by our own strength that these barriers come down. Rather, it is through the goodness and providence of God.

To flow into the lesson body, ask the following questions to engage the children. What kind of trips have you been on? How did you prepare? Where did you go? How did you travel? Who went with you? Why did you go? Today we will talk about St. Paul's first missionary trip he took.



LESSON BODY:

St. Paul and St. Barnabas were both Apostles and they were both in Antioch to serve the church there. Then, the Holy Spirit directed the church in Antioch to send St. Barnabas and St. Paul on a mission trip to teach people about Christ. We know that St. Paul took 3 major missionary trips, and this was his very first one.

They set sail and went to Cyprus and as they crossed over the island, they came to the town of Paphos. An interesting thing happened in that town.

There was a false prophet named Bar-Jesus who was a sorcerer who practiced magic and tricked the people. His master, a government official named Sergius Paulus, wanted to learn from St. Paul and St. Barnabas since they were powerfully preaching the word of God. But Bar-Jesus did not want his master to hear their message, so he started speaking against them and arguing with them. Bar-Jesus did not want his master to follow Jesus. As St. Paul and St. Barnabas were trying to teach Sergius, Bar-Jesus would argue with them and speak against Jesus.

Consider asking the children how they would deal with someone speaking against Jesus. Would they get mad? Would they just ignore it? What could they do to guide the person to Jesus?

St. Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked Bar-Jesus in the eyes and called him evil for what he was doing. He said that he was full of deceit, meaning lies. St. Paul was calling him to repent, asking him to stop trying to prevent God's will. He told him that he was going to become blind for a while and not be able to see the light of the sun. Immediately everything became dark to him. He couldn't see a thing so he started trying to find someone to lead him by the hand.

"It was the sign by which he was himself converted, and by this he would fain convert this man. As also that expression, for a season, puts it not as an act of punishing, but as meant for his conversion: had it been for punishment, he would have made him lastingly blind, but now it is not so, but for a season (and this), that he may gain the proconsul. For, as he was prepossessed by the sorcery, it was well to teach him a lesson by this infliction (and the sorcerer also), in the same way as the magicians (in Egypt) were taught by the boils."

- St. John Chrysostom

The servant should consider emphasizing to the children that what St. Paul did to Elymas was not a punishment for being bad, but was a way to help bring him and the official, Sergius to Jesus.

Consider asking the children what happened to St. Paul when he converted. He went blind too! This action would teach the sorcerer a lesson, and convince everyone who saw it happen that Jesus really is God! Consider reviewing the quote by St. John Chrysostom prior to giving the lesson.⁹⁴

When the official saw what had happened, he believed the words of St. Paul and St. Barnabas. He was amazed at the story of Jesus.

The two preachers continued to travel. There were no cars, trains, or buses. They either walked or rode on animals. They traveled miles and miles, and many people believed their teaching and became followers of Jesus. They suffered countless hardships and persecutions, but they considered these things to be very minor compared to the joy and promised reward of obeying the Lord and following the directions of the Holy Spirit. They no longer lived for themselves, but for God.

Consider reminding the children that St. Paul teaches here that when we interact with people who do not believe, our goal should be to bring them towards Christ, not punish them for their unbelief. While what St. Paul did to Elymas through Jesus may have looked like a punishment, it was a temporary consequence intended to bring him, and the government official, closer to Jesus with a stronger belief.

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Shine Your Light Activity:

1. Have a servant turn off all the lights in the classroom and place stickers all over the room.
2. Have the children at a location in the room and ask them if they notice anything, a couple people might notice some but make sure they can't notice all the stickers around the room.
3. Give them a couple minutes to make a prediction on how many stickers you have put up around the room, and where they are.
4. Explain to the children that by using a mirror you can reflect a beam of light from a flashlight to various areas of the room.
5. Select a target point in the room and use the mirror to direct the beam to that place to reveal all the glow in the dark black light stickers, even the darkest area of the room can be reached.

Consider linking this activity to the lesson, how we, as children of God, can shine His light in even the darkest of places through the power of Christ.

Let's Spread the News! Craft:

1. Ask the children to bring cardboard boxes ahead of time and allow them to start decorating their boxes by covering the edges of the box using large rectangles of paper.



⁹⁴ Chrysostom, J. (1839). The homilies of S. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, on ... Oxford, UK: J.H. Parker.



2. Glue the paper on the box.
3. Have other decorations for them to put on it and they can color the box if they want.
4. When they are done decorating their boxes, on pieces of paper they can write down attributes they've noticed in the story that would be important for a missionary to take on their journey with them. They can also draw pictures of items they would take with them on their journey to spread God's word.

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- Who was Bar-Jesus? (Bar-Jesus was a false prophet trying to lead people away from Jesus.)
- Who was Bar-Jesus' master? (Sergius Paulus.)
- What did St. Paul do to Bar-Jesus through Jesus? (He made him temporarily go blind.)
- Why did God allow Bar-Jesus to go blind? (Allow the children to discuss. God allowed him to go blind so that he could convert and give his life to Jesus, while being a sign for everyone around them that Jesus is God, allowing others to convert as well.)

LIFE APPLICATION

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

What are some ways we can be steadfast like St. Paul and Barnabas? (We can be steadfast by learning more about Jesus through reading our Bible everyday, and praying using our Agpeya.)

When we interact with people who do not believe in Jesus, how can we try to bring them closer to Him? (We can pray that God gives us guidance to use the right words when interacting with people who do not believe. We can focus on showing them Jesus' love by being loving to them, instead of judging them.)



Lesson 6.3 - The Theotokos in the Feasts of the Coptic Orthodox Church

Building Block 6
The Church Grows in the World



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Slideshow or poster listing and describing the feasts of St. Mary.

Craft: [The Feast of the Assumption Craft Printable](#), light blue and dark blue construction paper, coloring materials, children’s scissors, cotton balls, green strips of paper, and glue.

Song: [Marcin W. Markowicz: O Mary \(Coptic hymn\) \(10:29\)](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will learn about the Feasts of St. Mary to reflect on her life and try to grow in the virtues she demonstrated.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Obedience, Dedication to a life with God



MEMORY VERSE:



Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word."



Luke 1:38

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Saint Mary is regarded as the highest saint in the Church. She is higher than all the heavenly saints and any man or woman saint who ever lived. She is called the Theotokos, which is a Greek word meaning “Mother of God.” Saint Mary is the Mother of God, the one who gave birth to our Lord Jesus Christ.



Since St. Mary is the mother of our Saviour, we take lots of opportunities to celebrate her life throughout the year. When we celebrate different feasts we remind ourselves of the life of St. Mary, and we try to learn from her and reflect the virtues she had.



LESSON BODY:

Consider supporting the lesson by making a slideshow or poster which reviews the following feasts of St. Mary. Highlight the significance of each feast for our Church and the lessons we can learn from each.

The Birth of St. Mary: This is the day celebrating the annunciation of the birth of Saint Mary to Joachim, the father of Saint Mary. Joachim and Anna were the parents of Saint Mary. Her parents did not have a child for many years, but they prayed for a long time, and promised that if God gave them a child, they would dedicate them to the Temple. Then the angel Gabriel told St. Joachim that his wife Anna would have a child that would delight the Lord. This day is celebrated on 7 Misra. The birth of Saint Mary is celebrated on 1 Bashans. On this day the church celebrates the birth of the pure Virgin Saint Mary, the Mother of God (Theotokos), through whom Salvation came to mankind. She was born in the city of Nazareth, where her parents lived.

Consider emphasizing the faithfulness St. Mary's parents demonstrated. Remind them of other parents from the Bible who waited for a child, such as Abraham and Sarah, or Hannah.

The Entrance of St. Mary into the Temple at Jerusalem: The Entrance of Saint Mary into the Temple at Jerusalem is celebrated on 3 Kiahk. On this day we commemorate the entrance of our holy Lady, the Virgin, Saint Mary, the Theotokos, into the Temple when she was three years old, for she was dedicated to God.

Consider asking the children why it would be important for St. Mary to be dedicated to God from her childhood. Remind them of the promise made by her parents prior to her birth and how important it would be for the Mother of God to be dedicated to Him all her life.

The Annunciation of St Mary: The Annunciation is celebrated on 29 Baramhat, the day angel Gabriel told St. Mary would have a baby named Jesus. On this day, God sent His honorable angel Gabriel to announce to Saint Mary that she would be carrying the Savior of the world in her womb. "This day then is the first-born of all feasts, for in it was the beginning of the salvation of the world which was fulfilled by the Holy Resurrection of our Lord..." ([Baramhat 29](#)).

Consider emphasizing St. Mary's obedience during the Annunciation. She accepted the will of God without hesitation, becoming a model for all of us to be obedient to God's will. Consider reviewing the quote by Father Tadros Malaty prior to giving the lesson.⁹⁵

"Zacharias the priest doubted his wife begetting an offspring, whereas the Virgin believed, and in her obedience she accepted God's work. As St. Ambrosios says, "In her faith, she was more sublime than the priest, for the priest erred and hid, whereas the Virgin corrected the error". This is why Zacharias became dumb due to his doubt, whereas the Virgin became pregnant with the Incarnate Word, or the divine utterance that will not be silent."

- Father Tadros Malaty

⁹⁵ Father Tadros Malaty. (n.d.) Interpretation of The Gospel According to St. Luke. Retrieved on August 17, 2020 from <http://www.orthodoxebooks.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Gospel%20of%20Luke%20-%20Father%20Tadros%20Yacob%20Malaty.pdf>

The Dormition of St. Mary, the Theotokos: The departure of Saint Mary is celebrated on 21 Tubah. As she was always praying in the holy sepulcher, the Holy Spirit informed her that she was about to depart from Earth. When the time of her departure arrived, the apostles, who were still alive, arrived and they surrounded her bed. She blessed them. The Lord Jesus Christ, with a host of angels came to her, received her spirit and ascended it with it to heaven.

Consider emphasizing to the children that even after Jesus ascended into Heaven, St. Mary continued her life of dedication to God. She was praying, even to the time of her departure.

The Assumption of St. Mary, the Theotokos: The Assumption is celebrated on 16 Mesra. Saint Thomas the Apostle saw the pure body of Saint Mary carried by the angels and ascended to heaven with it. One of the angels told him, "Hurry and kiss the pure body of Saint Mary," and he did. When Saint Thomas arrived where the disciples were, they went with him to the tomb and uncovered the place of the body, but they did not find it, and everyone was surprised. Saint Thomas told them how he saw the holy body and the angels that were ascending with it. The Lord had promised His pure apostles to let them see her in the flesh once again. They were waiting for this promise to be fulfilled, until the 16th day of the month of Mesra, when the promise was fulfilled, and they saw her. They saw her sitting on the right hand of her Son and her Lord, surrounded by the angelic Host, as David prophesied and said, "At your right hand stands the queen." ([Mesra 16](#)). St. Mary was on earth for sixty years.

Consider emphasizing to the children that St. Mary was truly the Mother of God. Consider concluding the lesson by emphasizing the virtues demonstrated by St. Mary and her family such as faithfulness, dedication, obedience, and prayerfulness.

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Feast of The Assumption craft⁹⁶:

1. Pre-print [The Feast of the Assumption Craft Printable](#).
2. Have the children color in the images. There is one image of the Blessed Virgin Mary, two angels, and an optional crown as well.
3. Have the children cut out their colored work.
4. Take one piece of paper and cut a small horizontal slit on the top part of this paper.
5. Let the children glue cotton balls on the upper part of this first piece of paper, to make it look like clouds. Glue the angels on it as well. This signifies heaven.
On the bottom part of the same piece of paper, glue green strips of paper. This signifies earth.
6. Cut out a thin strip using the second piece of paper and glue one end of this thin strip of paper behind the Blessed Virgin Mary cut out.



⁹⁶ Tina, Cindy, Madalina-Romania, Smith, T., & Kauffman, A. (2018, August 14). The Feast of the Assumption Craft for Catholic Kids. Retrieved July 21, 2020, from <https://www.reallifeathome.com/feast-of-the-assumption-craft/>



7. Insert the other end of this thin strip into the small horizontal slit you created in Step #2.
8. The children can now pull Mother Mary from earth towards heaven, where God and the angels await for her.
9. Optional: Glue the crown just above the small horizontal slit, so that when Mother Mary is pulled to heaven, the crown lands on her head.

Feasts of St. Mary Activity:

1. Divide the children into groups of five.
2. Assign each group a feast of St. Mary. (Her birth, her Assumption, etc.)
3. Have the children work in groups to determine how they can act out that feast. They could make a short skit or stand still like statues as in a tableau.
4. Have the children present their skits or tableau.



SONG: [Marcin W. Markowicz: O Mary \(Coptic hymn\) \(10:29\)](#)

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- What are some feasts regarding St. Mary that our church celebrates? (We celebrate her Assumption into heaven, her birth, the Annunciation when she found out she was going to have Jesus, etc.)
- Who came to St. Mary to tell her she was going to give birth to Jesus? (Angel Gabriel was the one who told St. Mary that she was going to have baby Jesus.)
- How old was St. Mary when she entered the temple in Jerusalem? (She was three years old when she entered the temple in Jerusalem.)
- Why is it important that our Church celebrates St. Mary so many times? (Allow the children to discuss. Remind them of the virtues that the feasts remind us of, such as obedience. Reinforce the idea that St. Mary is the Mother of God, and we should celebrate her and learn from her example.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?



How can we be like St. Mary? (We can be like St. Mary by being obedient to our parents and Abouna, focusing on God in our lives, praying, and always trusting in God. We can also learn to obey/respond to disciplinary action without complaining.)

What can we do next time we are praying? (Next time we are praying we can ask St. Mary to pray for us through her intercessions.)



Lesson 6.4- The Church is Apostolic

Building Block VIII
The Church Grows in the World



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Picture of the current Coptic Orthodox patriarch, a [list of patriarchs](#), a picture of the current Holy Synod, and a picture of the Laying on of Hands.



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children should understand what it means to be part of an apostolic church and how that means we can trace our Church's origins back to Christ. By knowing that our church is apostolic, it is our responsibility to continue to preserve our faith by knowing and living it.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Faithful



MEMORY VERSE:

“

*...they set before the apostles;
and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.*

”

Acts 6:6

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Do you know the name of our current patriarch? *The servant should have a picture of the patriarch to show to the children. This image should be kept in the class.*

Consider asking the children if they know who started the Coptic Church in Egypt? St. Mark is the one who told the Egyptians about Jesus and began the Church there.

Consider showing the children the [list of all the patriarchs](#) of the Coptic Church, going back all the way to St. Mark.



LESSON BODY:

With our Pope (...), the group of bishops make the Holy Synod. The Holy Synod makes decisions for the Church surrounding how it is led, Church teachings, and leadership. They are the fathers of our Coptic Church today.

Consider showing the children a picture of the current Holy Synod.

In the Coptic Church we do have a list of all of our patriarchs beginning from St Mark all the way to our current patriarch. This list is called the Apostolic Succession. The apostles received the gift of the Holy Spirit, and in turn they gave it to their disciples who became patriarchs, who in turn gave this gift to their disciples and so on. It is only through the apostles and their successors that the gift of the Holy Spirit is given. The gift of the Holy Spirit is given by Laying-on of Hands of the apostles and their successors.

Consider showing the children the [list of patriarchs](#) again and a picture of the laying on of hands.

In this list there are great saints like: St. Peter the Seal of Martyrs, St. Athanasius, St. Cyril the Pillar of the Faith, St. Cyril the Sixth and many others that we shall study later. But who is the first on this list? St Mark the apostle, the writer of the second gospel.



The Church is Apostolic because:

1. She has her teachings from the Lord Himself and His saintly apostles who were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word from the beginning.
2. The Church keeps the teachings as received without any change or additions (Romans 16:17 and Galatians 1:8-11). Also these teachings have been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. (Ephesians 2:20). If our faith has been preserved for so long, it is our responsibility to learn and protect it.
3. Her shepherds have apostolic succession and are connected to the apostles themselves *“and how shall they preach unless they are sent.”* (Romans 10:15) *“For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things and appoint priests in every city as I commanded you.”* (Titus 1:5)

The Church is Apostolic because she was built on Christ's gift of the Holy Spirit to the holy apostles. Through the Apostolic Succession we receive the gift in our own generation from one patriarch and the holy Synod to another. For any church to be Apostolic, she has to be founded by an apostle or an apostle disciple and to have an uninterrupted list of patriarchs, just like the list we saw today!



Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Succession Tag Game:

The servant may use the following activity which can relate to the apostolic succession.

1. One child will be selected to be “it”. Their goal is to tag everyone remaining.
2. The child who is tagged then becomes “it” and is the next in succession and holds the hand of the child who was previously it.
3. This continues as the children who are tagged make a chain, holding the hand of the last child who was it.
4. The game continues until all the children have been tagged and form a chain of line of succession, all the way to the first child who was it.

Consider asking the children if it was difficult to stay connected once they had been tagged during the entire game. Remind them that even though it is difficult to ensure constant apostolic succession, the Church is committed to it to ensure that the Holy Spirit can be passed on through the leaders of the Church, and delivered to us!

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- What is the meaning of the word apostolic church and apostolic father? (Apostolic church is started by the Holy Apostles and their Disciples and maintains apostolic succession.)
- Who is the Apostle who started God's family in Egypt? (St. Mark)
- Can anyone give the gift of the Holy Spirit? (No, it is only the apostles and their successors who have the power to give the gift of the Holy Spirit.)
- What makes a church apostolic? (For any church to be Apostolic, she has to be founded by an apostle or an apostle disciple and to have an uninterrupted list of patriarchs.)
- Why is it important for our church to be Apostolic? (Allow the children to discuss. Remind them of the importance of being connected to an Apostle in order to be connected to the gift of the Holy Spirit which was granted to them and to be connected to the teachings of Christ Himself.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

- How can we be more like the Apostles and maintain the faith of our Church? (We can pray that God grants us the wisdom to understand His Word and Will. We can share our love with others, that they may feel the love of Jesus.)
- We must make sure we learn our faith from the church so we can pass it down from generation to generation.



Lesson 6.5 - Priests Are Stewards and Shepherds

Building Block 6
The Church Grows in the World



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Bibles.

Scripture References: Acts 20:28, 1 Timothy 3:1-, and Luke 12:42-48.

Craft: Six Beads per child (black, red, white, blue, green, and gold or yellow), a thin cord or rawhide lace that will fit through the beads, and clear glue.

Activity: Printed pictures of: a baby doll, a small bucket of water, grapes, bread, a bottle of oil, a cross, priest clothes, wedding rings/two rings, a piece of white lace, a tie, surgical mask, pen, and notepad.

Video: [Coptic Orthodox Answers: Should you address a priest as 'father'? What is the meaning of do not call anyone on earth father? \(8:25\)](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will be able to understand that priesthood is Christ's way of continuing His priestly work.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Respect



MEMORY VERSE:



For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.



Hebrews 5:1



Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Introduce today's lesson with a short fact/fiction game. The servant can choose to have these statements cut out before the lesson for the children to categorize under fact or myth. Otherwise, the servant can have children identify if the statement is a fact or a myth by standing/sitting or placing their hand in a fist or high five position.

- Abounas are not ordained. (Fiction!)
- Only ordained priests can give communion, take confession and baptize. (Fact!)
- Ordained priesthood is not one of the seven sacraments of the Church. (Fiction!)
- Abouna can consecrate an altar. (Fiction!)



LESSON BODY:

Every single one of us is called upon and formed to become a servant of God. We are all called to serve because of something that is called common priesthood, and this is something that we all share. We are all priests, in a certain type of way, because we offer sacrifices to God.

Abounas are a type of priesthood that belongs only to those who have been ordained. It is only the ordained priests that give communion, take confession, and baptize new Christians.

Ordained priesthood is one of the seven sacraments of the Church. The sacraments are where we meet Christ, and they can be divided into three groups:

1. **Sacraments of Initiation:** Baptism, Myron, Eucharist.
2. **Sacraments of Service:** Myron, Priesthood, and Matrimony.
3. **Sacraments of Healing:** Confession and Unction of the Sick.

The ordained priests are called clergy; we need them, and they need strength to continue Christ's work. We pray for the clergy that God may give them strength. They are stewards and shepherds.

A steward is someone who has been entrusted with something – God has entrusted the priests to look after His people. The priests are also shepherds who take care of the flock and go after the lost sheep.

Read Acts 20:28 and 1 Timothy 3:1-7 as a class, have each child read one verse.

After reading, the servant may want to ask the children what the rules for bishops were.

Explain to the children that marriage was kept for the priests while the bishops were chosen from the celibate monks. The servant may have to explain the meaning of celibate.

There is a difference between the roles of a priest and the roles of a bishop. A bishop has the full capacity of an apostle of Christ (the Apostles were the 12 who were always with Jesus Christ). Where the bishop is, there



a church will be. The priest is a delegate of the bishop, someone the bishop sends. There are certain jobs that only a bishop can do and there are other jobs that both bishops and priests can do (like taking confession, and giving communion).

A bishop can ordain priests, but a priest cannot ordain another priest. A bishop can lay hands to give the Holy Spirit; a priest needs the permission of the bishop, through the Myron in baptism, for example. A bishop can consecrate an altar, but a priest cannot.

We pray for the priests and bishops that God may give them strength and we also thank God that He has given them for us, to take care of us and shepherd us.

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Making a Cross⁹⁷:

1. Cut your cord. If you're making a necklace, start with three feet of cord. For a bookmark, bracelet, or key chain use one foot of cord. Place the gold bead onto one end of the cord and place it in the center. See illustration.
2. Put the cord ends together and pull them through the green bead. See illustration.
3. Put the red bead onto one side of the cord, and the blue bead onto the other side. Pull them tight.
4. Put the cord ends together again and pull them through the black bead. See illustration.
5. Place a very small dot of clear drying glue onto the red and blue bead, at the center of the cross where they touch. Wedge* your white bead between the red and blue bead so that the white bead's holes touch the sides of the red and blue bead where the glue was placed. Pull the string tightly and tie a knot against the top of the black bead.
6. Tie the ends of the cord. Wrap the cord ends around your finger, and loop it through the hole, pull tight.

Sacraments Game:

List of objects for each sacrament:

1. Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Myron, Eucharist
 - Baby doll, a small bucket of water, grapes, bread, and a bottle of oil with fragrance in it.
2. Sacraments of Service: Myron Priesthood and Matrimony
 - Cross, priest clothes, wedding rings/two rings, a piece of white lace, and a tie.
3. Sacraments of Healing: Confession and Unction of the Sick
 - Surgical mask, pen, and notepad.

Have a table and layout all the objects randomly and lay out three papers (one for each group shown above) with the sacraments written on them. One in the center and the other two near the ends of the table.

⁹⁷ The "Colors-of-Christ" Cross. (n.d.). Retrieved July 21, 2020, from <http://www.christiancrafters.com/colorsofchrist.html>



VIDEO:

[Coptic Orthodox Answers: Should you address a priest as ‘father’? What is the meaning of do not call anyone on earth father? \(8:25\)](#)

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- What kind of priests are the Abounas? (Ordained priests.)
- Name two of the three groups of sacraments. (Sacraments of Initiation, Sacraments of Service, Sacraments of Healing.)
- Who are stewards and shepherds? (Ordained priests, members of the clergy.)
- What does a bishop have the full capacity of? (An apostle of Christ.)

The Gospel portrait of clergy is that of stewards and shepherds. They are selected to take care of the flock of Christ as shepherds. They are entrusted with the mysteries of God as stewards who feed God’s people.



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

We are all priests, so we should all be spreading God’s word to as many people as we can. It is important that we do this daily because we continue God’s work. Each priest, steward and shepherd have a role to play. What are ways we can ensure to be priests in our day-to-day lives?

- we can talk to our friends and families about God
- pray for others
- help others



Lesson 6.6 - Pope Kyrillos VI: Life of Prayer

Building Block 6
The Church Grows in the World



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Whiteboard/ poster paper, pictures of a telephone, letters and envelopes (or anything else that is used to communicate.).

Craft: White pillow cases, colored permanent markers, cardboard insert, and blank sheets of paper.

Activity: Markers, Bibles, and a whiteboard or large paper poster.

Video: [St.Mary & St.Mina's Coptic Church: The Life Story of Pope Kyrillos VI \(English\) \(7:14\)](#)

Song: [Coptic Bulgaria: Worthy \(Axios\) hymn for Saint Pope Kyrillos and Saint Mina + Epouro \(3:33\)](#)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children should understand that a life of prayerfulness is important and is good for their spiritual lives.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Prayerfulness



MEMORY VERSE:



Seven times a day I praise You, because of Your righteous judgements.



Psalm 119:164

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Consider beginning the lesson with the following activity:

Stick pictures of a telephone, letters and envelopes on the board or paper and ask the children what these pictures have in common. (These are all images of things we use to communicate with each other.)



Today our lesson is about another way we communicate. More specifically, it is about how we communicate with God. When we pray we communicate with God and it is important that we do it all the time.

Consider asking the children if they can name a saint and if they have a favorite saint. (Allow for discussion.)

Consider also asking them what they think is the most interesting part of their favorite saint's life. (Allow for discussion.)

Today we are going to be learning about Pope Kyrillos and his relationship with St. Mina and how his life of prayerfulness allowed him to be so much closer to God.



LESSON BODY:

Before Pope Kyrillos became a Pope, he was a priest. He spent many years in the monastery and then alone in a deserted windmill, which he turned into a church. In this small church he prayed liturgies daily and raised evening incense. He accepted everyone who came to him, asking for his prayers, especially the children. Pope Kyrillos had a special relationship with St. Mina, so anytime a child came to him, he used to say, "I will send St. Mina to help you."

Consider asking the children if they have saints that they like to ask for intercessions from.

After Pope Kyrillos was selected as a Pope, he continued to pray daily liturgies very early in the morning. He loved children and allowed them to serve with him inside the altar. The children also loved him, and in turn, started learning the prayers and the Coptic praises.

Since Pope Kyrillos was a man of prayer, many miracles occurred during his rule as Patriarch (Pope). One day, a child and his brother were returning home, on a bike, after liturgy, when suddenly a car hit them. Back at the church, Pope Kyrillos stepped out of his room and said with a loud voice, "God forbid; St. Mina protect your sons." One of the children felt a hand grab him and put him on the curb of the street. Meanwhile, the other child fell under the bike and the car passed on top, flattening the rims of the bike.

Not only did the Pope have a special relationship with St. Mina, but he also had a relationship with St. Mary. He used to use her intercessions to heal the sick and help people in times of trouble.

Consider asking the children if they ever pray for others. (E.g., those who are sick or need help, praying for family and friends etc.)

Consider asking the children if they remember times in the bible when people prayed to God. (Jonah while in the belly of the fish, Jesus in the garden of gethsemane etc.)

A life of prayer is very important for us because it is the way in which we communicate with God, and get to know Him more. With the power of prayer, amazing things happen in our lives. Furthermore, through the intercessions of our saints we become even closer to our Lord.

Consider asking the children ways in which they can pray

- Thanksgiving prayers
- Praising God
- Asking for forgiveness

- *Praying for help*
- *Prayer for others*
- *etc*

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

What Should You Pray For? Activity⁹⁸:

1. Write out the letters of the alphabet leaving space to write words beside them a white board or large paper poster.
2. Put the children into five groups and give each group a Bible.
3. Assign each group one of the following Scriptures, and have the children read the verses together and determine why the person was praying. (Genesis 24:12-14 ,1 Kings 3:7-9, Acts 9:36-4, Daniel 9:4-5, and Mark 6:41.)
4. Allow five to seven minutes for children to read and discuss. Then ask each group to report what the person in their passage was praying about. As they report, write their answer beside the letter of the alphabet that corresponds with the first letter of their answer. For example, Group 1 might answer "guidance," so you would write this beside the letter G on your alphabet list. Group 2 might say "wisdom," so this would go beside the letter W.
5. After each group has reported, have the children fill in the rest of the blank letters.

Prayer Pillowcase Craft⁹⁹:

1. Insert the piece of cardboard into the pillowcase to keep the marker from going through to the other side of the pillow.
2. Have the children practice their designs on a blank sheet of paper first.
3. Give each child a pillowcase (and cardboard insert).
4. On one side, have the children draw a large picture of a sun. Have the children write the words "Rise and shine, give God the glory, glory, children of the Lord." around the sun.
5. Once complete, flip the pillowcase over and draw a picture of a crescent moon and stars. Have the children write, "Watch over me as I sleep, sweet Lord Jesus."



VIDEO:

[St.Mary & St.Mina's Coptic Church: The Life Story of Pope Kyrillos VI \(English\) \(7:14\)](#)

⁹⁸ What is Prayer? A Sunday School Lesson for Elementary-Aged Kids. (n.d.). Retrieved July 22, 2020, from <https://childrensministry.com/elementary-lesson-prayer/>

⁹⁹ Jesus Pillow. (n.d.). Retrieved July 22, 2020, from <https://www.kidssundayschool.com/gradeschool/crafts/jesus-pillow>



SONG:

[Coptic Bulgaria: Worthy \(Axios\) hymn for Saint Pope Kyrillos and Saint Mina + Epouro \(3:33\)](#)

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Questions:

- What are some of the qualities exhibited by Pope Kyrillos that you admire the most, or wish to emulate or learn from? (Allow the children to discuss.)
- How can his example guide and inspire you to grow in your relationship with God? (Answers may include: to pray more, to intercede more, to go to church, etc.)



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

What values did you learn from Pope Kyrillos' life? What is one thing from these values you can apply this week to your life? (To live a life of prayerfulness, we can apply it by praying more throughout the day.)

How can we be more like Pope Kyrillos? (We can be more like Pope Kyrillos?)

- Helping others who need help,
- Giving freely.
- Being closer to God.

How can we live a life of prayerfulness? (We can live a life of prayerfulness by

- Attending church regularly
- Reading our Bible daily
- Praying everyday using our Agpeya.



Spare Lessons

These lessons are spare and can be given in the event a lesson is given on the day of Palm Sunday or the feast of Resurrection.

SPARE.1 - Striving for holiness: St. Arsenius

Building Block I
We Grow as We Worship God



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Foil paper (a piece to cover every child’s face).



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The purpose of this lesson is to know how to relate to saints’ lives. In this story, St. Arsenius strives for holiness throughout his life and in different situations. The children should be able to relate and learn that they can also strive for holiness in their everyday life.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Growing with God by striving to be holy.



MEMORY VERSE:



*But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written
“Be holy, for I am Holy”*



1 Peter 1:15-16

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Can you name a saint? Who is your favorite saint?
What you think is the most interesting thing about his/her life?



What is holiness? As Christians we are called to be holy. To be holy is to be perfect, to be set apart. When your mom has a special vase or set of plates/ cups that she sets apart and far from everyone's reach because she doesn't want anyone to break them by mistake? They are special to her and have such a high value that she cares for them so well! We are the same to God! God is holy and He wants us to be holy too! He wants us to be "set apart" from this world too! God calls us to be SANCTIFIED... a Christian word for the process of becoming holy. Being holy is a lifelong process. It is the process of looking and acting less and less like the base things of this world and acting and looking more and more like Jesus. God wants us to live for Him and do His will and act like Him in all situations. It is a commitment! A big and wonderful commitment!

Is it a process of denying self... Not only denying selfish ways but putting those ways away. Letting them no longer have power or purpose in our lives. Sanctification, becoming holy, is the process of looking like our Lord.

The story of St. Arsenius is a beautiful example of someone who tried to be holy throughout his life!



LESSON BODY:

St. Arsenius was born in Rome, about 350 A. D. His parents were Christian & very rich.. They taught him the different subjects concerning Church matters. He was later ordained as a Deacon. He was familiar with Latin, Greek knowledge, & Christian virtues . After his parents died, his sister Afrositty and he gave all their riches to the poor, and lived an ascetic life. One day, king "Theodosius the Great" asked for a virtuous wise man to teach his two children "Honorius" & "Arcadius", and he found nobody like St. Arsenius, who was full of wisdom & virtues. He did a good job in teaching them Christian and knowledge in general.

Then, one day he seemed clearly to hear the voice of God through the Gospel: "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matthew 16:26)"Arsany.. Arsany.. Run away from people, and you'll be saved." He left Constantinople and came by sea to Alexandria and fled into the wilderness.

From the beginning, St. Arsenius showed great eagerness for learning. Once while he was asking an old monk about something, another monk came and asked him: "How come do you; Father Arsenius, who knows much about the great Greek & Roman knowledge, ask this illiterate monk about your thoughts?!". St. Arsenius told him with true modesty: "You're right about my great knowledge of Greek & Roman literature.. But the "Alpha Vita" that this Egyptian knows very well, I have not learned yet..!". (He meant the way to virtues - how to live a holy life).

Arsenius often spent the whole night praying, and on Saturdays it was his custom to go to prayers turning his back to the evening sun, and continue with his hands lifted up to Heaven till the sun shone on his face the next morning.

He liked silence and was very cautious of talking, and when he was asked about it, he answered:

"I have always something to repent for after having talked, but have never been sorry for having been silent".

"Often have I spoken and regretted, but for silence I never did".



One day, a messenger came to him from Rome with a will from one of his deceased relatives, giving him all his possessions.. Then St. Arseny asked the messenger: - "When did this man die?" - "A year ago." - "But I died 11 years ago!! And the dead don't inherit the dead!!".

He used to repel Satan's wars by praying a lot.. So, one day the devils came to him in the shape of angels, blessing him for his holiness and determination (in order to make him commit the sin of pride). But he cried for God: "Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me: O Lord, make haste to help me. Let them be ashamed those who seek after my soul to destroy it.Oh Lord.. Don't let me down.. for I did not do you any good at all.. But give me the strength now to do Your own will, and to start doing what is right." Just then all the devils disappeared.

There is so much to learn from this saint. He truly is an example of someone who strived to be holy in all the aspects of his life. To be holy is to be perfect, and we are all called to be perfect. Few points to learn in this story:

- Giving away all his riches to the poor.
 - How much do we give to the poor and needy? We are called to give tithes to the church (10% of our money) so everytime our parents give us money we are supposed to give a portion to God. Ex: for every \$10, I should give \$1. But I should also give from my time and comfort and serve people around me or someone in need.
- He was honest when he was teaching the King's children.
 - Are we always honest when given a task? Sometimes we don't like a certain task that our parents give us, and find ourselves doing it half-heartedly. We need to be faithful in all the aspects of our life: school, homework, project, sunday school, activities, even home chores. The Bible teaches us: "Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' (Matthew 25:21)
- St. Arsenius truly obeyed the Bible:
 - When he heard the verse calling him to leave everything behind, he obeyed it. When we read the Bible, we should take it very seriously as it always has a message for us. When we do our daily readings, we should always ask "What is God trying to tell me in this passage?"
- St. Arsenius was very disciplined in his prayer.
 - He would spend all night praying! It is not easy to get to that spiritual level easily but we must be disciplined and make sure to pray every single day!
- St. Arsenius was known for his silence.
 - Saying the right words at the right time is a very difficult task. Oftentimes when we are angry, sad or hurt, we end up saying something that hurts others. Or sometimes we divulge someone's secret or gossip about a friend. The tongue is a very dangerous little organ that we need to protect by practicing silence! "Whoever guards his mouth and tongue, keeps his soul from troubles." (Proverbs 21:23)
- He was humble when the demons came to praise Him. And that humility pushed them to leave him.
 - I should not take pride or boast in any talent, or good work I do, instead I should always give glory to God!

There is so much more to learn from this holy saint's life, he is a true example of someone who was trying to be perfect in his words, action, obedience and prayer life.

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

Give each child a piece of aluminum foil big enough to cover their face. Ask them each to place the foil on their face and create a mold by pressing the foil to their face.

Have them examine the mold they've made. Say: you've made an impression of your face, but the foil isn't really you, is it? It looks a little like you, but it's not you. It's just an impression of who you are. Have the children then give their foil impression to someone else. Have the other people mold the foil impression to their face and then return it to the original person.

Ask: What changed about your foil?

Say: Even though the foil was in the shape of your face, now it bears the resemblance of someone else. That's something like what it means to be holy. We all look like ourselves, but we bear a resemblance to God. Holiness is God's impression on us. We still look like ourselves, but God wants us to look like him in the ways we live and think.

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

- What are some of the qualities exhibited by St. Arsanius that you admire the most, or wish to emulate? Ex: Humility, discipline in prayer, obedience to the Bible.
- How can his example guide and inspire you to grow in your relationship with God? Ex: Always be faithful in any task I'm given, read the Bible daily while trying to get a message from God, give my 10% to God.
- How can we learn today from the warfare he witnessed and his response to it? To always be humble and give glory to God.
- In general, do you find it easy or difficult to lead a Christian life? Name one thing you find difficult about being a Christian in today's society, as well as one easy thing about following Christ. Ex: It is hard to fight peer pressure and do the right thing, it is hard to obey my parents when I want to play video games with my friends, it is hard to make time to pray and read the Bible, etc.



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?



- Just like St. Arsenius was able to pray all night and stand still, I should also strive to stand still during liturgy.
- I should be disciplined in my Bible reading daily.
- I should be faithful in all the little and big things: house chores, school homeworks, sunday school homeworks, helping a friend, cleaning my room, etc.

SPARE.2 - The Coptic Church Around the World: History of the Spread of our Church



SERVANTS PREPARATION/ MATERIALS NEEDED:

Lesson: Globe or a world map and pins/stickers to mark locations.

Craft: [Printable](#), colored pencils/ crayon, pencils, and gold star stickers.

Song: [Christian Youth Channel: My Coptic Church Hymn - Global Coptic Day \(2:25\)](#)

Video: [The Story of Our Coptic Church \(Cartoon Movie for Children\)](#) (27:26)



OVERALL GOAL OR PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The children will learn about the history of the Coptic Orthodox Church in order to gain a greater respect for their Church and its members.



MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Respect and Love.



MEMORY VERSE:

“

Out of Egypt I called My son.

”

Hosea 11:1

Lesson



LESSON OPENING (CREATE AN INTEREST):

Consider opening the lesson by having the children sit in a circle. Ask the children if they have ever travelled to another country before. Allow each child to share.



Then ask the children if they visited a Coptic Church in the country they visited. What did it look like? How was it similar to our Church at home, how was it different?

There are Coptic Churches all over the world, each a little different based on the language spoken in those countries. Despite these differences, each Church is united in the faith.



LESSON BODY:

The Church of Egypt was established by St. Mark the Evangelist in the year 56 AD. His martyrdom also took place in Egypt in 68 AD and the first church was built in Alexandria at the beginning of the second half of the first century.

The Coptic Orthodox Church is an Apostolic Church, not only because Her founder is St. Mark the Apostle who ministered in Egypt, but also because She preserves the Apostolic thought in Her life, spirituality, liturgies and dogmas. She is actually a living extension of the apostolic church without deviation.

The Church of Alexandria, that is the Coptic Church, is one of the four most ancient churches in the world. The mother church of Christianity is the Church of Jerusalem, where Christianity began. The other three churches are the Church of Alexandria, the Church of Rome, and the Church of Antioch.

At this point in the lesson, consider marking where Rome, Jerusalem, Antioch (Turkey), and Alexandria are on a world map or globe. Emphasize how far the Church had spread even in its earliest days.

The Coptic Church Revival:

We teach our children not only to have Christian knowledge, but to experience God's love as well. After the children of Sunday schools become Teachers, they also remain as children in higher classes in order to take refresher courses which remind them that they have not advanced beyond discipleship. We also have pastoral care for the Christian children in the university.

The revival of Sunday school teaching in our Church has helped prevent deep problems with our young men and women. They are taught the Christian education, faith, and simple principles of theology, history and the Creed.

Consider asking the children what they think would happen if there was no Sunday School. Would they know how to explain what they believe?

The Coptic Church Arounds the World:

The Copts began to immigrate to the United States as early as the late 1940s. Immigration to Canada was soon to follow, and in general, this was to be the case throughout North America. Copts were looking for a place they could live without living in fear, so many Copts moved all around the world.

There are Coptic Churches all over the world, including the following countries:

- United States
- Canada
- Kuwait
- UAE



- Australia
- Italy
- Jordan
- Kenya
- Lebanon
- Germany
- Austria
- Switzerland
- France
- Sudan
- Libya
- Bolivia

As our Church continues to grow, we are blessed by the new believers and recent immigrants who make the Church even stronger. We want to witness for the Lord wherever we can. But we confess that we still need the help of God to maintain our strength, to meet our goals, and to meet the needs of our people.

Consider concluding the lesson by emphasizing the importance of using the gifts the diverse members of our Church offer in order to strengthen our Church. While not all Church members may be Egyptians, they all are children of God and partake in the beauty of His Coptic Church.

Supplementary



CRAFTS/ACTIVITIES:

The Spread of the Coptic Church Craft:

1. Have the children color and label the different countries that have Coptic churches using their [map printable](#). Consider reminding them of the list of countries shared in class.
2. Put a gold star on Egypt as the place of origin of the Coptic Church.
3. Have the children draw lines from where the Church originated from to where it's spread to.
4. Have the children write the memory verse on the bottom of the page.



VIDEO:

[Christian Youth Channel: My Coptic Church Hymn - Global Coptic Day \(2:25\)](#)



SONG:

[Christian Youth Channel: My Coptic Church Hymn - Global Coptic Day \(2:25\)](#)

Review



REVIEW LESSON:

Using a globe or world map and pins/stickers, invite the children to try to identify all the places in the world where there are Coptic Churches. Deepen the discussion by asking the children how their life might be different if they still lived outside of Egypt, but the Church had not spread yet.



REVIEW MEMORY VERSE



REVIEW MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS



LIFE APPLICATION:

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

Our Church is beautiful, strong and diverse. Despite this diversity, there is still a unity among us regarding our faith and dogma. What are some ways this week that I can respect this diversity and show its importance in my life?

- By being nice and loving to everyone, no matter where they come from.
- Next time you go to Church make sure you thank God for the wonderful Church that He built for you in which to worship! Give thanks for this in your personal prayers as well.

