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FIRST SECTION

PREPARATION MATERIAL:

1. Introduction to the Series
2. Classroom Setup and Rules
3. Themes of Grades 1-5
4. Characters of First Grade Students
5. Yearly Calendar
6. Teaching Schedule Table
7. Theological Background:
 - A. Summary of St. Athanasius' book, *On the Incarnation*
 - B. Summary of St. Gregory of Nazianza, *Orations on the Holy Trinity*
 - C. Summary of *The Revelation of God*



1. INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES

Although Sunday school is a relatively recent term in our Church, its existence is very old. The school of Alexandria is one of the most ancient Christian seminaries. Catechesis of new believers was the main function of the school.

THE RITE OF BAPTISM IS THE MODEL

From the rite of Baptism in the Coptic Church, we can identify three stages of “transformation” that must happen to the new converts before they are fully inaugurated as members of the body of Christ. The first is educational, where they get to know the Gospel and get “the Story” as told by the eyewitnesses, the story of Salvation as given to us in both the Old and the New Testament. St. Luke writes, *“In as much as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us, just as those who from the beginning were eye witnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophorus, that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.”* The Gospel then is the right information, the good news. Whenever the Gospel is told, some would be moved to repentance to be “cut to the heart.” Some would be filled with joy and wonder, and speak in tongues. Some would be filled with fear and trembling. Others would be mocking. No one who hears the Gospel can be indifferent.

In this first stage, the Church anoints the “catechumens” with the sermon’s oil to guard the mind against all the work of the enemy. It is the work of the Holy Spirit in breaking down all high walls and fortified strongholds that keep humans away from the light of the Gospel of Christ.

The second stage is the stage of the movement of the heart, marked by the oil of Joy, “to be planted in the fruitful olive tree that is the Holy church of God.” The joy of Christ is what carries on with the Christians all their lives. No one can take that joy away from them. It is the joy of knowing Christ and being in Him. The joy that fills the heart more than oil and fat can satisfy the body. Our Lord becomes - to the believer in Him - the food and the drink of the spirit in the journey through the earthly life. Before the anointment with the oil of joy, the catechumen is asked to make the oath. The oath is renouncing Satan and accepting Christ. The baptized here is a spouse of Christ, pledging fidelity. It is verbalizing what he or she feels in the heart and knows in the mind. Here the Spirit brings life to the heart and satisfaction that no other can bring.

The third stage is the consecration. It starts with the immersion in the water three times in the name of the Holy Trinity. In doing this, the believer is born again to God and becomes united with Christ. He or she is now a new creation, a clean vessel ready to be indwelt by the Holy Spirit, who should never leave, as long as, he or she lives. The next step would be for the Holy Spirit to indwell in the Holy Chrism.

SUNDAY SCHOOL AS A SUPPORT AND CONTINUATION OF THE MOTHER'S WORK

When a baby is going through the rite of Baptism, the mother takes the vows for the baby. In doing this, the church recognizes the mother as the first and most important catechetical school. When the mother renounces Satan for the baby, she pledges to stand against evil work manifesting itself in her children's life. Even more importantly, she pledges to cultivate in her children a strong hate toward sin. When she accepts Christ, she pledges to bring her children to the love of Christ and all his teachings through the church. The mother does not do this alone. The divine plan had already included the help of the Comforter in achieving this goal. Seen from this perspective, the Sunday school work is complementary to the mother's work and a continuation of it.

THE CURRICULUM IS TRINITY-CENTERED

The curriculum henceforth, is a catechetical process. It starts with the Gospel as a foundation. Then a process of building continues through all the grades. The Sunday school program is fundamentally Christ centered. The religious educational process should be both by words and example, reaching mind and heart. It is also both a divine and human labor. In teaching Sunday school, as well as in the mother's early work with children, we should acknowledge and trust the work of the Holy Spirit in the children's hearts and minds.

THE CURRICULUM IS BIBLE BASED

The curriculum is fundamentally biblical, therefore the concepts, the stories and the exercises are all rooted in the Word of God. As a general recommendation, all Sunday school students should have their personal bibles and should be encouraged to use it regularly in the class. To underline, highlight and learn to navigate through the Bible. Younger classes (1-4) should find a illustrated easy read versions, older classes should use adult versions (New King James).

CHURCH TRADITION AND SUNDAY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The Holy Word of God is the Church's most valuable treasure. Only the church can explain to us the word of God. The explanation is done through words and actions. It is in the liturgies, creeds, the celebrations, in all the rites and rituals of the church and the collective writings of the church fathers that we find the correct interpretation of the word of God. Therefore Sunday school curriculum draws heavily from Church Tradition. The Feasts and the seasons of the church are at the heart of every year's course.

THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IS A REVOLVING PROCESS

Many of the concepts that are given earlier in the curriculum are revisited later in the higher grades, at a higher level adding more depth and more consequence to the first message. That puts a lot of emphasis on the foundation, because in any building the foundation would shape the whole building.

In this work, the education is taken from the point of concepts. All the stories of the Gospel and of the saints are means to serve this goal. So stories are grouped according to the concept they serve. Later on, the same stories are revisited to further develop the same concept. We can envision this as a mountain with a circular road that goes around it in a spiral fashion until you reach the top. But there is no “top” to this endeavor.

The first five years in this curriculum are the most fundamental in the formation of the child dogmatically, liturgically, morally and spiritually. *“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.”* Proverbs 22:6

This work is not meant to replace the work of the servants, but to augment it and support it by giving them a clearer, overall view of their task and of all the side points that can distract that work. The main ingredients in our spiritual life are Christ and the Holy Spirit, the two arms of God the Father by which He gathers all humanity to Himself. Likewise in this curriculum, the love of Christ through the Church and the work of the Holy Spirit inside the human heart and in the Church as the body of Christ are heavily highlighted. By doing this we can understand that every single letter and word written in these years has one goal in mind: the salvation of the souls of the students and the teachers. Since there is no salvation possible outside the Church as the “Ark of Noah,” this work is seen and is written from the perspective of the Church. This work is not meant to be a system of beliefs nor a detailed description of our life of orthodoxy, rather, it is an attempt to organize and put in order scattered themes and ideas. It is not meant to be the only way of teaching Sunday school, but a guide on how to undertake that enormous task *“And who is sufficient for these things?”* The subjects chosen for the curriculum are the most common and much needed for our times.

It should be noted that in this series, the education and spiritual advancement of the teachers themselves are kept as a primary target. The Sunday school head servant should make every effort to educate the class servants on the purpose and goal of the curriculum in each step, a task that can be broken into a meeting before they start each of the units. The parents of the students should also be involved in the process. Servants should solicit their cooperation and understanding of their role in the spiritual, moral and faith formation of their children.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

The book has three sections. The first section deals with the overall picture and contains information related to the whole process. The second section contains the material related to the grade which the book serves. The third section contains helpful material that would be useful to the teachers during their work through the lessons.


The second section includes lessons that are grouped into units. All the units fall under one subject, which is explained in an introduction and which ties all the units together. For example, the first grade's subject is "the Revelation of God." The second grade's subject is "We Are Called the Children of God." Each unit serves part of the whole subject, and has its own purpose. This purpose is explained at the beginning of each unit and in the reflection on each of the lessons.

The units are each made up of several lessons. Each lesson brings out the unit topic from a different perspective. When teaching the lessons, the servant should bear in mind that the lesson and the story are told from the perspective of the purpose of the unit. For example, the story of the flood can be told from many different angles. If it is told from the perspective of God's power, the storyteller would stress the size of the event. But if the storyteller tells the story from the point of Noah's faith, the emphasis would be on the size of the ark and how long it took him to build it as showing obedience to God. When the story of the flood is told to younger children, all care should be taken not to convey an image of an angry, destructive and vindictive God, rather, a loving Father who cared so much about Noah's both spiritual and physical survival.

LESSON STRUCTURE

Each lesson is made up of two main sections. The first section deals with preparing the servant, the second section deals with preparing the lesson. In preparing the servants, the goal is to educate and edify the servant at an adult level. This section contains nourishing portions from the word of God and the Creed, Patristic Tradition and liturgical prayers. The biblical reference or the actual passage is presented, followed by other references from the Nicene creed and church fathers, followed by a simple reflection on the text and is concluded with a prayer from the church liturgies. The second section begins with an introduction to the lesson, usually a review of the previous lesson and a preparation for the current one, a suggested song taken from the hymns of the Coptic Church liturgies and psalmody. The lesson body begins with the plan and the material that is involved in executing the story followed by the actual story in the language of the first graders. This section is concluded with a review questions and a verse to remember. There is an empty note at the end of each lesson for the teachers to write their own notes. The notes will be helpful to the teachers and gives a good feedback.

We ask the intercessions of St. Mary the Holy Theotokos, St. Mark the Evangelist, and all the saints to make this work useful and profitable to both the teachers the children and their families, who are involved in the great process of religious education and spiritual formation.



2. CLASSROOM SETUP AND RULES

CLASSROOM SETUP:

The classroom should be uncluttered, well ventilated and well lit. Colors should be bright and cheering. Since the first grade children are more interested in doing things with their hands more than listening or watching (it is also known that children retain most by doing, less by watching and least by listening), it is better to have their classroom organized as work stations. Each station is made of a circular or a square table with children sitting around. It should have closets and craft boxes. The classroom should have a white dry eraser board and if possible a projector and screen at one end of the room.

CLASS STRUCTURE AND RULES:

Children at this age needs structure and consistency, teachers will do well to keep the same structure every Sunday. The most important consistency is the teachers' attendance. It is most helpful when the children see their teachers in the class every week and have the same "drill". The same structure helps them focus on the lessons best, while change of teachers, teaching style and structure distract

Example of structured class time: (total time is 60 minutes)

- Our Father & Sign of the Cross (in English and Coptic) (5 minutes)
- Sing songs (10 minutes)
- Story (20 minutes)
- Craft (try to include Bible verse stickers to put on items that children take home) (15 minutes)
- Conclusion (5 minutes)
- Prayer (5 minutes)
- Maintain an accurate attendance list and contact information for parents

The rules should be clear, simple, and easy to remember:

- **Raise your hand** if you need to talk, move, or use the restrooms.
- **Close your eyes, stand and don not move** During prayers,.
- **Share** materials with your brothers and sisters during the lesson.
- **Help** in keeping the class neat and clean (keep five minutes at the end, for colleting and storing)
- **Do your homework.**

Setting up the classroom to reflect the theme of the unit by pictures and props might be a very helpful element in teaching the units.

PROGRESS CHARTS:

Make behavioral charts in class with stickers to encourage the children desirable behaviors and build good habits. Attendance charts also should be posted on “progress wall”. Reward children’s good behaviors at the end of each unit.

DISCIPLINE:

Discipline the children after a one-time warning. It is like a traffic light. As long as they are in their “good behavior”, the teacher is encouraging by words and gestures (green). On the first sign of disruptive or inappropriate behavior, the teacher should sound a stern warning (yellow). If the behavior is continued (red), an action should be taken. The first action would be removal of the behavior sticker from the behavior chart. If it continues or repeated in the same class, the child gets five minutes time out with another servant. There should be a minimum number of stickers per unit to receive the behavior reward. The rewards for behavior should be simple and not expensive. For that reason, each class should have more than one teacher.

HYPERACTIVE CHILDREN:

If we have a hyperactive child or a child with a special need, there is a need to assign a dedicated servant. The servants of a class with a hyperactive child should have some education about hyperactive children, and they should have a plan of action at the beginning of the class year.

3. THEMES OF GRADES 1-5

	<u>Theme</u>	<u>Faith</u>	<u>Scriptures</u>	<u>Church</u>	<u>Virtues</u>	<u>Spiritual Life</u>
<u>1st Grade</u>	<i>God Reveals Himself to Us</i>	The Trinity	Gospel	Baptism	Obedience & Sharing	Prayer & The Word of God
<u>2nd Grade</u>	<i>We are the Children of God</i>	Christ	The Patriarchs: Abraham	Eucharist	Faith & 10 Commandments	Offering
<u>3rd Grade</u>	<i>God Gives us the ministry of Reconciliation</i>	Salvation	The Patriarchs: Jacob	Confession & Liturgy	solidarity	Repentance
<u>4th Grade</u>	<i>God in our midst</i>	The Church	The Patriarchs: Joseph	The visible Church & Priesthood	Relations with Others	Prayer of the hours
<u>5th Grade</u>	<i>God called us to be Holy</i>	Sanctification	Moses and Exodus	Holy Chrism	Sanctity of the body	Fasting & Giving

4. CHARACTERISTICS OF FIRST GRADE STUDENTS

MIDDLE CHILDHOOD: AGES 6 – 10

Presence of God:

Have the kids wonder at the occurring natural events. Teachers should become familiar with science topics that the kids are exposed to in school so they could provide them with the correct Christian answers. The child's mind should not be split between the church life and the school life; there has to be some unity and the church has to provide correct explanations and information regarding the scientific issues brought up in the schools. Kids need to experience how God cares for His people, and how He saves them from temptations and sufferings.

CONCEPT OF HOLY TRINITY:

Precise doctrinal understanding is not appropriate at this age but they should be provided with correct doctrinal images and narratives to prepare them for future understanding as they get older and more mature. The Gospel is the perfect way to transmit the correct image of the Holy Trinity: God the Father loves us and sent His Son who loves us and died for us and sent the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

CHURCH SERVICES:

Kids find it very difficult to attend church services. Therefore, it is important to start teaching them about the liturgy, what is done in the liturgy, church building, and lives of saints. Pictures, diagrams, calendars, etc... are important in sending the message, and we should try to get the kids to participate and become involved in the services.

HOLY COMMUNION:

The main emphasis should be on the Last Supper. It could be explained as Christ's gift to us, the holy food He shares with us so we can live with Him. In return we should offer Him gifts too, such as obeying Him and listening to His teachings.

6 YEAR OLDS (1ST GRADE)

PHYSICAL:

Loud, messy, and in a hurry
Rapid growth

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL:

Flourish and depend on encouragement (their self-esteem is built up by praise and attention of parents, teachers and friends)
Trust important adults and depend on their reassurance and encouragement for success; fear rejection
Are becoming aware of their own personal preferences
Very competitive; behavior is characterized by extremes (for example, love being either first or last)
Use tantrums in order to test authority
Ready to take doing work as seriously as they take playing
Have the feeling that nothing is too difficult or impossible, which may lead to a feeling of inadequacy and inferiority when they fail at something; a little bit of encouragement or a little bit of criticism makes a huge difference
Egocentric and need help relating to others; can only see their own point of view
Like to have friends of the same gender
Like to be in groups and play simple, active games
Have a great ability to enjoy things, such as surprises

COGNITIVE:

Learn best by doing and experiencing (love to ask questions); much more interested in the process than the outcome (this is why encouragement is so important)
Have a short attention span; need both variety and repetition; can memorize rhymes and refrains; open to learning anything - "the eagerness, curiosity, imagination, drive and enthusiasm at age 6 are never again matched in quantity or intensity"
Recognize reality, and can think logically (for example, about personal experiences, can understand cause and effect); still not able to reverse thinking in order to give reasons for a conclusion; focus on what is superficial and visible
Love to color and paint

LANGUAGE:

Enjoy jokes and guessing games
Love talking about things they are interested in
Complain

MORAL:

Motivated by the pleasure principle; fear of punishment and hope for reward or social approval
Adopt principles of important adults, without question or doubt
Examples of moral conflicts related to their own life and experiences are the best way for them to learn
Need security, reassurance that they belong, and constant love- even when being disciplined


FAITH:

Are sensitive and open to spiritual realities

Can develop a sense of the sacred through religious attitudes of awe and wonder

Need loving relationships with important adults and an environment of warmth and security

Understand God as a parent (provides and protects)



5. YEARLY CALENDAR

Month	Action	Notes
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for Unit I & II • Prepare for Parent's Meeting • Feast of Nyrouz • Feast of the Cross 	
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Saints' Day 	
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advent • Thanksgiving • Prepare for Unit III & IV 	
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for Kiahk • Prepare for the Feast of Holy Nativity & Theophany 	
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holy Nativity • Holy Theophany • Prepare for Unit V & VI 	
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jonah's Fast 	
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lent 	
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holy Week and Holy Resurrection (could come in May) • Prepare for Unit VII & Summer 	
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feast of St. Mark 	
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holy Ascension • Apostles' Fast • Pentecost • Prepare for Unit VIII 	
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feast of the Apostles 	
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Mary's Fast and Feast • Inventory of the year 	

6. TEACHING SCHEDULE TABLE

Schedule of Servants and Lessons: September to February

#	Date	Lesson	Servant
	SEPTEMBER/	Unit Lesson	
	SEPTEMBER /	Unit Lesson	
	SEPTEMBER /	Unit Lesson	
	SEPTEMBER /	Unit Lesson	
	OCTOBER/	Unit Lesson	
	OCTOBER /	Unit Lesson	
	OCTOBER /	Unit Lesson	
	OCTOBER /	Unit Lesson	
	NOVEMBER/	Unit Lesson	
	NOVEMBER /	Unit Lesson	
	NOVEMBER /	Unit Lesson	
	NOVEMBER /	Unit Lesson	
	DECEMBER /	Unit Lesson	
	DECEMBER /	Unit Lesson	
	DECEMBER /	Unit Lesson	
	DECEMBER /	Unit Lesson	
	JANUARY /	Unit Lesson	
	JANUARY /	Unit Lesson	
	JANUARY /	Unit Lesson	
	JANUARY /	Unit Lesson	
	FEBRUARY /	Unit Lesson	
	FEBRUARY /	Unit Lesson	

	FEBRUARY /	Unit	Lesson	
	FEBRUARY /	Unit	Lesson	

Schedule of Servants and Lessons: March to August

#	Date	Lesson	Servant
	MARCH/	Unit Lesson	
	MARCH/	Unit Lesson	
	MARCH/	Unit Lesson	
	MARCH/	Unit Lesson	
	APRIL/	Unit Lesson	
	APRIL/	Unit Lesson	
	APRIL/	Unit Lesson	
	APRIL/	Unit Lesson	
	MAY/	Unit Lesson	
	MAY/	Unit Lesson	
	MAY/	Unit Lesson	
	MAY/	Unit Lesson	
	JUNE /	Unit Lesson	
	JUNE /	Unit Lesson	
	JUNE /	Unit Lesson	
	JUNE /	Unit Lesson	
	JULY /	Unit Lesson	
	JULY /	Unit Lesson	
	JULY /	Unit Lesson	
	JULY /	Unit Lesson	
	AUGUST /	Unit Lesson	
	AUGUST /	Unit Lesson	
	AUGUST /	Unit Lesson	
	AUGUST /	Unit Lesson	

7. THEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- A. St. Athanasius on the Incarnation of the Word: A Summary
- B. St. Gregory of Nazianza's teaching on the Holy Trinity
- C. The Revelation of God

A. ST. ATHANASIUS ON THE INCARNATION OF THE WORD: A SUMMARY

"His incarnation was the starting point for all the good that graced humanity till it was crowned with redemption...and was proof of the love of God to us, and the reconciliation that was fulfilled between heaven and earth." - HHPSIII

Incarnation: the embodiment of God the Son in human flesh as Jesus Christ

Corruption- not moral corruption but rather we will not physically decay; God gives us a body after this life which is not vulnerable to decay or death

INTRODUCTION

We must take a step further in our faith and consider the Word's becoming Man and His divine appearing to us. The fact is that the more unbelievers pour scorn on Him, so much the more does He make His Godhead more evident. God proves the impossible possible, He proves the unfitting to be fit through His goodness, and those things which people mark as "human" God may declare divine.

CHAPTER 1. CREATION AND THE FALL

We must understand why the amazing and great Word of the Father, has been made manifest in bodily form. He has been manifested in a human body out of the love and goodness of His Father for the salvation of mankind.

CREATION AND GOD'S GOODNESS

Creation is a sign of God's goodness, and all things came into being through Him, the Designer and Maker of all. Some people say that things created were spontaneous, or that God made all things out of pre-existent matters, just like a carpenter makes a table out of wood. However the creative abilities of God (the Maker and Designer of all) do not depend on anything else. God's abilities have no limits and He would thus not be the Creator. St John states, "All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made." (John 1:3). St. Peter refers to this saying, "By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the Word of God, so that what is seen has not been made out of things which do appear." (Heb 11:4) God is infinite not finite and the universe was made out of nothing and out of non-existence God brought it into being through the Word. He says "In the beginning..." (Gen 1:1)

IN GOD'S IMAGE

God made all things out of nothing through his own Word. Of all His creation on earth mankind only was bestowed with grace of bearing God's image. Man was created in God's image so that he may share in the Word and express the Mind of God even as He (Though to a lesser degree.) Through this image we might have the blessed and true life of saints in paradise.

THE COMMANDMENT

Since the will of man could turn either way, (Gods will vs. free will), God gave us a habitation and a law. He set Adam and Eve in His own paradise and laid one prohibition. If they guarded the grace and retained the loveliness of their original innocence, then the life of paradise would be theirs, with no sorrow, pain or care. Afterwards there would be an assurance of immortality in heaven. BUT, if Adam and Eve went astray and did not follow the one rule then they would come under nature's law of death and corruption and live no longer in paradise but dying outside of it. "Of every tree that is in the garden, thou shalt surely eat, but of the tree of good and evil, ye shall not eat, but in the day that ye do eat, ye shall surely die." (Gen 2:16-17) Ye shall surely die", not just die only, but remain in the state of death and corruption.

(When God tells them they will die, it is a decree that is understood as physical death of body as well as a spiritual death. Hades becomes the destination of all souls before the incarnation of the Word. God reveals Himself as human descended from heaven and dies for us that Adam and Eve might be granted bodies and souls incorruptible again and enter the kingdom of heaven)

OUR TRANSGRESSIONS

Why does the origin of man matter to the Word becoming Man? *It was our sorry case that caused the Word to come down, our transgressions that called out His love for us, so that He made haste to help us and to appear among us. It is we who were the cause of His taking human form, and for our salvation that in His great love He was both born and manifested in a human body.* Our fall necessitated the incarnation of the Word.

OUR WICKEDNESS

The human race in their sinning surpassed all limits. Humans in the beginning invented wickedness thus involving themselves in death and corruption, they had gone on gradually from bad to worse. Mankind did not stop at any one kind of evil but rather created even new kinds of evils and sins. Adulterers, thieves, homosexuals, and murderers filled the earth. Cities warred against each other, nations against nations, and the whole earth was filled with wickedness.

CHAPTER 2. THE DIVINE DILEMMA AND ITS SOLUTION IN THE INCARNATION

The human race through their wickedness looked to be in the process of self-destruction. Man that was created in God's image and reflected the very Word Himself was disappearing and the work of God was being undone. It would be monstrous that beings that once shared the nature of the Word would perish and turn back to non-existence. It would be unworthy of God that the beings He created would be brought back to nothing because of the deceit of the devil. Either God had to forget and give up His spoken word and thus be proven false, or man must sink into corruption which would cause God's design to be defeated.

REPENTANCE

God obviously cannot go back on His Word regarding death in order to ensure our continued existence. He could not falsify Himself. So what could He do? Should He demand repentance from men for their transgressions? He could, but that would not guard the just claim of God or be enough to bring us back from incorruption. Nothing could restore God's image except God's Word. He could bring the corruptible to incorruption (Repentance will make us stop sinning but our bodies are still corruptible. We needed to be re-created in God's image.)

THE WORD BECAME MAN

Because of our sins, the incorporeal (spiritual) and incorruptible and immaterial Word of God entered into our world. God entered our world by stooping to our level through His love and Self-revealing to us. He saw how wicked we were, how the race created by God was wasting away and he took pity on us. He chose death on the cross rather than that we should perish and the work of His Father to become undone. He took for himself a body just like ours, and not only that, but he took it from a spotless, pure and stainless virgin. And he did all this, out of love for us, that he might turn men back to incorruption and make them alive through his death.

A BODY CAPABLE OF DEATH

The Word perceived that corruption could not be got rid of otherwise than through death, yet He Himself, as the Word, being immortal and the Father's son, could not die. That is why he took the body of man, which is capable of death so death could be a sufficient exchange for us all. He became the ultimate offering and sacrifice and through his becoming man we were clothed with incorruption in the promise of the resurrection.

CHAPTER 3. THE DIVINE DILEMMA AND ITS SOLUTION IN THE INCARNATION- CONTINUED

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

God understood that men were limited in their knowledge of Him. Our purpose for life would be useless if we had no knowledge of God. What is the point of living if we do not know our maker? How can we be reasonable beings if we don't know the Word? Without the Word and understanding of the Word then we are no better

than the beasts of the earth. Therefore, God created us in His own image and His own likeness, and He did this so that we can fully understand the Word Himself, and through Him understand the Father. By understanding the Father men will achieve the only true happy and blessed life.

FOOLISHNESS

Men became foolish and turned away from God. They defiled their own souls and created new gods and idols. Rather than honoring God they honored material objects like stone or wood and even other men and gave in to the satisfaction of their lusts. There became no law for man and God was not known nor His Word. God however, did not hide from them or allow them to continue in their foolishness but instead unfolded Himself in many other forms and ways.

GOD'S COMPENSATION FOR OUR LIMITATIONS IS NOT ENOUGH

God knew we were limited so He created us in His own image and provided us with all His works of creation. God did not stop there though. He also gave us laws and sent prophets, men that the people knew. God did all this that men may gain knowledge of their Maker. God created three ways for men to understand Him. Men could look up to the heavens, converse with holy men to learn from them, or follow His laws. But men in their wickedness still bowed down to their own pleasures.

GOD MUST COME DOWN FROM THE HEAVENS

Men were dehumanizing mankind. They blasphemed the Word. What then was God to do? After all of His compensations, it was still not enough. Men had to be recreated and renewed in His Image. What could God do other than coming down Himself? Men could not save themselves because they were created only after the image of God. Angels could not save men because they were the image of God. The Word had to come down in His own person, because only Him the Image of the Father Who could recreate man made after the Image.

RE-CREATION

To achieve re-creation God had to get rid of death and corruption. Christ became man so that death could be destroyed and men could be renewed according the Image. An example to better understand this is to imagine a portrait that has been painted and becomes stained (spill something on it). The artist does not throw away the canvas but instead has the subject come and sit down again so that he can repaint the picture on the same material. God did not get rid of mankind but rather renewed us and brought back His lost sheep. We were saved and live in His Image because He died for us and He arose from dead to prove to man that He has overcome death.

THE WORD LIVED WITH MAN

The Word appeared in body to man and lived among man so that man may center his thoughts and his senses on Him. The Word came down to convince man through His human acts that He Himself is not man but God, the Word and Wisdom of the true God. St Paul states, "That ye being routed and grounded in love, may be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the length and breadth and height and depth, and to know the love of God that surpasses knowledge, so that ye may be filled unto all the fullness of God". (Luke 10)

CHAPTER 4 THE DEATH OF CHRIST

MARVELOUS GOD

God did all acts on the earth so that man may regain knowledge of their true Father. When Christ died on the cross even creation broke its silence to acknowledge Him. The sun veiled his face (that day became very dark and gloomy), the earth quaked, the mountains were rent asunder (the mountains divided or split), and all men were stricken with awe. All of these things showed that Christ on the cross was God and all of creation were bearing witness by its fear to the presence of its Master! Here is the epitome of God revealing Himself as the Word to us.

CENTER OF OUR FAITH

The center of our faith can be demonstrated by the end of Christ on earth and how he died. We understand that Christ had to die on the cross for us in order bring us back from corruption and re-create the likeness of the Image in men and ultimately abolish death so that we may have immortality through God. One of the reasons why the Word lived with us was that there was debt to be owed. Men were supposed to die. (Remember in Genesis that God didn't create death but rather if Adam and Eve followed his laws then they would live eternally with him in paradise, but because they did not, death was created). The Word revealed Himself to us in this way so that He could be a sacrifice on behalf of us, to settle man's accounts and free him from death.

CHAPTER 5 THE RESURRECTION

THE GLORY OF AN INCORRUPTIBLE BODY

Christ chose a death that was apparent to all, namely the cross to make sure that his death might not be doubted. He rose after three days in particular that the glory of his uncorrupted body might be evident. (Two days is not enough for a human body to rot, and 4 days would result in forgetfulness and doubt that indeed Christ truly had risen).

IMPORTANCE OF A RESURRECTED GOD

Although it was important for Christ to die for our sins it is equally if not more important that Christ rose from the dead. Death was destroyed and trampled on by Christ. Christ had to rise so that he could overcome death and so that as a risen God he could work through us everyday. Christ is not dead for if he was then he could not make adulterers stop being adulterers, or murders stop being murders. A dead person can do nothing, but a Savior can work miracles, persuading men to a virtuous life and teaching them about immortality through Him. The Son of God is living and active every day and effects the salvation of all; but death is daily proved to be stripped of all its strength, and it is the idols and the evil spirits who are dead. A blind man cannot see the sun, but he knows that it exists because of its warmth; similarly although Christ is risen and we cannot see Him we know that he is present with us every day.

The Savior has destroyed death and freely graced us all with incorruption through the resurrection. He raised His own body as its first fruits, and displayed it by the sign of the cross as the monument to His victory over death and its corruption.

B. ST. GREGORY OF NAZIANZA'S TEACHING ON THE HOLY TRINITY

A Paper presented by His Eminence Metropolitan Bishop of Damiette at St. Bishop Monastery - 27 December 1996

In our Coptic Orthodox Church, St. Gregory of Nazianza is always referred to as "*The Theologos*". The liturgy written by him is celebrated with great popularity on great feasts (Resurrection, Advent) and on many other occasions. It has emerged in the life of the Coptic Orthodox Church as a source of unsurpassed contemplation and spiritual joy in worship.

His Trinitarian theology has been received with great respect in the life of our Church through his liturgical text and other teachings, which are fundamentally the same as that of St. Athanasius of Alexandria.

THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME ITEMS RELATING TO HIS TEACHING ON THE HOLY TRINITY:

I. GOD IS INCOMPREHENSIBLE IN OUR HUMAN THOUGHT:

St. Gregory was a humble theologian. He admitted, in his **Second Theological Oration**, that "no man ever yet has discovered or can discover what God is in nature and in essence."¹ He also stated that "God would be altogether circumscribed, if He were even comprehensible in thought : for comprehension is one form of circumscription."² He explained that our knowledge of God is a little effluence. Thus he said "All that comes to us is but a little effluence, and as it were a small effulgence from a great Light. So that if anyone has known God, or had the testimony of scripture to his knowledge of God, we are to understand such an one to have possessed a degree of knowledge which gave him the appearance of being more fully enlightened than another who did not enjoy the same degree of illumination."³ But St. Gregory spoke of a clearer knowledge of God in the life to come.

¹ P. Schaff & Henry Wace, *Nicene & Post-Nicene Fathers*, Hendrickson Publishers, (June 1995), Vol. 7, Second Series, 2nd Theological Oration, Article XVII, p.294.

² Ibid, 2nd Theological Oration, Article X, p.292.

³ Ibid, 2nd Theological Oration, Article XVII, p.294.

II. HYPOSTATIC PROPERTIES OF THE THREE DISTINCT PROSOPA OF THE HOLY TRINITY:

In his teaching, St. Gregory defined the distinct properties of the three Persons of the Holy Trinity; thus teaching: “Let us confirm ourselves within our limits, and speak of **The Unbegotten** and **The Begotten** and **That which Proceeds from the Father**, as somewhere God the Word Himself said.”⁴

He also taught, “This is what we meant by Father and Son and Holy Ghost. The Father is **the Begetter and the Emitter**; without passion, of course, and without reference to time, and not in a corporeal manner. The Son is **the Begotten**, and the Holy Spirit is **the Emission**.”⁵ St. Gregory never mentioned any other distinct properties.

III. THE ETERNAL BEING OF THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT:

St. Gregory continued to argue in the same theological oration, “When did these come into being? They are above all “when”. But, if I am to speak with something more of boldness,—when the Father did. And when did the Father come into being. There never was a time when he was not. And the same thing is true of the Son and the Holy Ghost. Ask me again, and again I will answer you, when was the Son begotten? When the Father was not begotten. And when did the Holy Ghost proceed? When the Son was, not proceeding but, begotten—beyond the sphere of time, and above the grasp of reason ; although we cannot set forth that which is above time, if we avoid as we desire any expression as which conveys the idea of time. For such expression as “when” and “before” and “after” and “from the beginning” are not timeless, however much we may force them ; unless indeed we were to take the Aeon, that interval which is coexistent with the eternal things, and is not derided or measured by any motion, or by the revolution of the sun, as time is measured. How are They not alike unoriginate, if They are coeternal? Because They are from Him, though not after Him. For that which is originate is eternal, but that which is eternal is not necessarily unoriginate, so long as it may be referred to the Father as its origin. Therefore in respect of Cause they are not unoriginate; but it is evident that the Cause is not necessarily prior to its effects, for **the sun is not prior to its light**. And yet They are in some sense unoriginate, in respect of time, even though you would scare simple minds with your quibbles, for the Sources of Time are not subject to time”⁶

⁴ Ibid, 3rd Theological Oration (on the Son), Article II, p.301.

⁵ Ibid, 3rd Theological Oration (on the Son),Article II, p.301

⁶ Ibid, 3rd Theological Oration (on the Son, Article III, pp.301,302

Besides using the figure of the sun and its light, he also used the figure of the mind and the word as another example in expounding the relation between the Father and the Son, "He is called the Word, because He is related to the Father as the Word to Mind."⁷

IV. THE USE OF ILLUSTRATIONS DEPICTING THE HOLY TRINITY:

Although St. Gregory used illustrations of the sun and its light, and the mind and its word in depicting the relation between the Father and the Son, yet he warned that those illustrations are not identical with the full reality of the Triune God, "I have very carefully considered this matter in my own mind, and have looked at it in every point of view, in order to find some illustration of this most important subject, but I have been unable to discover anything on earth with which to compare the nature of the Godhead. For even if I did happen upon some tiny likeness it escaped me for the most part, and left me down below with my example. I picture to myself an eye, a fountain, a river, as others have done before, to see if they first might be analogous to the Father, the second to the Son, and the third to the Holy Ghost. For in these there is no distinction in time, nor are they torn away from their connexion with each other, though they seem to be parted by three personalities. But I was afraid in the first place that I should present a flow in the Godhead, incapable of standing still ; and secondly that by this figure a numerical unity would be introduced. For the eye and the spring and the river are numerically one, though in different forms.

Again I thought of the sun and a ray and light. But here again there was a fear lest people should get an idea of composition in the uncompounded Nature, such as there is in the sun and the things that are in the sun. And the second place **lest we should give Essence to the Father but deny Personality to the others**, and make Them only **Powers** of God, existing in Him and not Personal. For neither the ray nor the light is a sun, but they are only effulgence's from the sun, and qualities of **its** essence. And lest we should thus, as far as the illustration goes, attribute both Being and Not-being to God, which is even more monstrous.⁸

V. THE THREE HYPOSTASIES HAVE ONE AND THE SAME ESSENCE (CONSUBSTANTIAL):

⁷ Ibid, 4th Theological Oration (2nd concerning the Son), Article XX, p.316.

⁸ Ibid, 5th Theological Oration (on the Holy Spirit), Articles XXXI and XXXII, p.328.

* Triadiki-archy (Τριαδική-αρχή)

On several occasions, St. Gregory spoke of the undivided essence of the three Persons of the Holy Trinity. In his oration on the Triune God as Monarch with regard to His creation, St. Gregory stated, “But **Monarchy*** is that which we hold in honor. It is however, a Monarchy that is not limited to one Person, but one which is made of an equality of Nature and a union of mind, and an identity of motion, and a convergence of its elements to unity—a thing which is impossible to the created nature—**so that though numerically distinct there is no severance of Essence.**”⁹ Also, in his teaching on the Son he said, “In my opinion He is called Son because He is **identical with the Father in Essence**, and not only for this reason, but also because He is of Him. And He is called Only-Begotten, not because He is the only Son and of the Father alone, and only a Son; but also because the manner of His Sonship is peculiar to Himself and not shared by bodies. And He is called the Word, because He is related to the Father as word is related to mind ; not only on account of His passionless Generation, but also because of the Union, and of **His declaratory function.**”¹⁰ In the same oration, St. Gregory continued to say, “And the Image as **of one Substance** with Him.”¹¹

VI. THE EQUALITY OF THE THREE HYPOSTASEIS:

In his Theological Oration on the Holy Spirit, St. Gregory taught against the Arians and the Eunomians, stating; “What then, say they, is there lacking to the Spirit which prevents His being a Son, for if there were not something lacking He would be a Son? We assert that there is nothing lacking for God has no deficiency. But the difference of manifestation, if I may so express myself, **or rather Their mutual relations one to Another**, has caused the difference of Their Names. For indeed it is not some deficiency in the Son which prevents His being Father (for Sonship is not a deficiency), and yet He is not Father. According to this line of argument there must be deficiency in the Father, in respect of His not being Son. For the Father is not Son, and yet this is not due to either deficiency or subjection of Essence; but the very fact of being **Unbegotten** or **Begotten**, or **Proceeding** has given the name Father to the First, of the Son to the Second, and of the Third, Him Whom we are speaking, of the Holy Ghost that the distinction of the Three Persons may be

⁹ Ibid, 3rd Theological Oration (on the Son), Article II, p.301.

¹⁰ Ibid, 4th Theological Oration (2nd concerning the Son), Article XX, p.316.

¹¹ Ibid, 4th Theological Oration (2nd concerning the Son), Article XX,p.317.

(*)St. Gregory warned, as mentioned previously on page 3 “lest we should give Essence to the Father alone and consider the Son and the Holy Ghost as qualities of Essence, and not real hypostaseis. Hence each hypostasis has His own hypostatic property, but He is not merely a property of Essence.”

preserved in the one nature and dignity of the Godhead. For neither is the Son the Father, for the Father is One, but **He is** what the Father **is**; nor is the Spirit Son because He is of God, for the Only-begotten is One, but He is what the Son is. The Three are One in Godhead, and One Three in properties*; so that neither is the Unity of Sabellian one, nor does the Trinity countenance the present evil distinction.”¹²

VII. SHARING THE SAME PROPERTIES OF ESSENCE:

St. Gregory was very clear, as St. Athanasius, in his teaching that the Three Hypostasis do not differ from each other except in the hypostatic property. For each of them, the hypostatic properties, are: the “Origin” for the Father, the “Begotten” for the Son and the “Proceeded” for the Holy Ghost. All other properties of the divine Essence are being shared among the Three divine Hypostasis. He said, “For we have learnt to believe in and to teach the Deity of the Son from their (verses from the bible) great and lofty utterances. And what utterances are these? These: God—the Word—He That Was In The Beginning and With The Beginning, and The Beginning. “In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,” (John 1.:1) and “With Thee in the Beginning’ and “He who calleth her the Beginning from generations” (Isa. 41:4). Then the Son is Only-Begotten : The only “Begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, it says, “He that declared Him” (John 1:18), The Way, the Truth, **the Life**, the Light. “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life;” (John 14:6) and “I am the Light of the World” (John 7:12, 9:5, 14:6). Wisdom and Power, “Christ, the Wisdom of God, and the Power of God.”(1 Cor. 1:24) The Effulgence, the Impress, the Image, the Seal; “Who being the Effulgence of His glory and the Impress of His **Essence,***”(Heb 1:3) and “the Image of His Goodness,”(Wisd. 7:26) and “Him Hath God the Father sealed”(John 6:27). Lord, King, He That is, The Almighty. “The Lord rained down fire from the Lord;”(Gen 19:24) and “A Scepter of righteousness is the scepter of The Kingdom;”(Ps. 45:6) and “Which is and was and is to come, the Almighty”(Rev. 1:8), all which are clearly spoken of the Son, with all other passages of the same force, none of which is an after thought, or added later to the Son or the Spirit, any more than to the Father Himself. For Their Perfection is not affected by additions. There never was a time when He was without the Word, or when He was not the Father, or when He was not true, or not wise, or not powerful, or devoid of life, or of splendor, or of goodness.”¹³

¹² Ibid, 5th Theological Oration (on the Holy Spirit), Article IX, p.320.

(*) This term in the Epistle to the Hebrew (1:3) is in the Greek text : “Hypostasis” (υποστασεως) and can be translated “Person instead of “Essence”.

In his Fourth Theological Oration (second on the Son), St. Gregory explained the identity of Essence of the Son with the Father saying, “The Son is a concise demonstration and easy setting forth of the Father’s Nature. For everything that is begotten is a silent word of him that begot it”... “He is ... called... the Image as of one substance with Him, and because He is of the Father, and not the Father of Him. For this is of the Nature of an Image, to be the reproduction of its Archetype, and that whose name it bears; only that there is more here. For in ordinary language an image is a motionless representation of that which has motion; but in this case it is the living reproduction of the Living One, and is more exactly like than was Seth to Adam, or any son to his father. For such is the nature of simple Existences, that it is not correct to say of them that they are Like in one particular and Unlike in another; but they are a complete resemblance, and should rather be called **Identical than Like**. Moreover he is called Light as being the Brightness of souls cleansed by word and life. For if ignorance and sin be darkness, knowledge and a godly life will be Light... And He is called Life, because He is Light, and is the constituting and creating Power of every reasonable soul. For in Him we live and move and have our being, according to the double power of that Breathing into us ; for we were all inspired by Him with breath, and as many of us were capable of it, and in so far as we open the mouth of our mind, with God the Holy Ghost.”¹⁴

VIII. *The Holy Spirit Proceeds from the Father Alone:*

St. Gregory clarified the distinction between the generation of the Son and the procession of the Holy Spirit. In his teaching, there is no confusion among the distinct properties of the Holy Trinity.

After he spoke about the special Names of God’s Essence, ie. “He who Is’, and mentioning other titles of the Godhead such as “the Almighty, the King of Glory, or the Ages, or of the Powers, or of the Kings”, St. Gregory states: “Now these are names common to the Godhead, but the proper Name of the Unoriginate is Father, and that of the Begotten without beginning is Son, and that of **the un-begottenly Proceeding or going forth** is The Holy Ghost.”¹⁵ It is clear then, according to St. Gregory, that the Holy Ghost **is un-begottenly Proceeding** and has no source in the begotten Son in Proceeding from the Father.

¹³ Ibid, 3rd Theological Oration (on the Son), Article XVII, p.307.

¹⁴ Ibid, 4th Theological Oration (2nd on the Son), Article XX, p.316,317.

¹⁵ Ibid, 4th Theological Oration (2nd on the Son), Articles XVIII, XIX, p.316.

IX. THE MONARCHY OF THE FATHER IN THE HOLY TRINITY:

(Patriki-archy = πατρικὴ ἀρχὴ)

St. Gregory stressed many times on the Monarchy (Μοναρχία) of the Father as the Only Origin in the Holy Trinity. The Father is only Unoriginate: “How then are They not alike unoriginate, if They are coeternal? Because They are from Him, though not after Him. For that which is unoriginate is eternal, but that which is eternal is not necessarily unoriginate, so long as it may be referred to the Father as its origin. Therefore, in respect of Cause They are **not** unoriginate, but it is evident that the Cause is not necessarily prior to its effects, for the sun is not prior to its light.”¹⁶ Also, St. Gregory taught clearly “The Father is the Begetter and the Emitter.”¹⁷

X. THE GIFTS OF GOD ARE FROM THE FATHER THROUGH THE SON BY THE HOLY SPIRIT:

In his oration on the gifts of God by the Holy Spirit, St. Gregory referring to the Holy Spirit said, “That He is the Gift, the Bounty, **the Inspiration**, the Promise, the Intercession for us, and, not to go into any further detail, any other expressions of the sort, is to be referred to the First Cause, that it may be shown from whom He is, and that men may not in heathen fashion admit Three Principles. For it is equally impious to confuse the Persons with the Sabellians, or to divide the Natures with the Arians.”¹⁸ The term “First Cause” which St. Gregory mentioned in this last passage is to indicate that the gifts of God has its origin in the Father and are given through the Son by the Holy Spirit.

In his fourth Theological Oration (second on the Son), St. Gregory speaks about the double power of breathing of the Son. By double power of breathing, he meant that the gifts coming to us from the Father and given to us by the Holy Spirit are through the Son, “For in Him we live and move and have our being, according to the double power of that Breathing into us ; for we are all capable of it, and in so far as we open the mouth of our mind, with God the Holy Ghost.”¹⁹

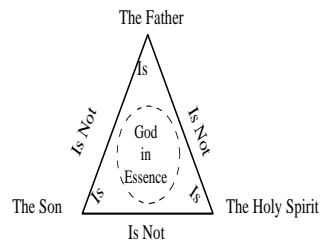
¹⁶ Ibid, 3rd Theological Oration (on the Son), Article III, p.302.

¹⁷ Ibid, 3rd Theological Oration (on the Son), Article II, p.301.

¹⁸ Ibid, 5th Theological Oration (on the Holy Spirit), Article XXX, p.328.

¹⁹ Ibid, 4th Theological Oration (2nd on the Son), Article XX, p.317.

XI. A DIAGRAM REPRESENTING THE TEACHING OF ST. GREGORY OF NAZIANZA ON THE HOLY TRINITY:



“God is Love” (1 Jn. 4:16)

No perfect love

without 3 Persons

C. THE REVELATION OF GOD

TYPES OF REVELATION OF GOD:

God is Mystery

The closer we come to know God, the more we discover the limitations of our knowledge of God and the limitation of Language in expressing God. We use positive & negating statements in speaking about God. St. Gregory's Liturgy: *"unutterable, the invisible, the infinite; without beginning, everlasting, timeless, limitless, immeasurable, unchangeable, Creator of all, Savior of everyone"* negating limits in describing God: "Apophatic Language"

If God is a Mystery, is there any way of knowing Him?

There are two ways, by which humans can know God, Natural and Supernatural. By Natural we know about Him. By Supernatural He reveals Himself to us to Know Him in a relationship.

1. NATURAL REVELATION

This revelation is the manifestations of the creator in His creation. We can know about an author from his book, an artist from his art and an architect from her architecture. There are three common places human can search a:

Nature, Human person and History.

A. NATURE & SCIENCE

Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead... "Rom 1:19

"God by His own Word gave the Universe the order it has, in order that since He is by nature invisible, men might be enabled to know Him at any rate by His works. For often the artist, even when not seen, is known by his works." St. Athanasius: Contra Gentes;"The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers."

B. HUMAN PERSON

We have a desire for God *“You have made us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until it rests in You.” St. Augustine*

For God created us for incorruption, and made us in the image of His own eternity. Wis 2:23

This desire is manifested by our endless search for Love & Truth. Man has a sense of eternity & longing for the infinite. Experiences of Love lead to an experience of the Infinite *“Within the heart are unfathomable depths”* Homily of St. Macarius

C. HISTORY

All races have manifested religious desire. *“And you shall seek Me and find Me, when you shall search for Me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:13*

The search for God demands from man all his heart. Man can never attain the knowledge of God which leads to a relationship with Him through natural capacities. The Lord puts in the nature of man longing for Him, because of that longing in the natural capacity; man can accept & welcome the Supernatural revelation of God. The natural revelation alone cannot begin a meaningful relationship between God and man.

2. SUPERNATURAL (REVELATION)

He is a hidden God, therefore if He wish for us to know Him, He must reveal Himself to us. The Bible is the Book of History of the Supernatural Revelation of God. Persons who receive this revelation will be in ecstasy, “in the spirit” These people are called Mediators of Revelation.

The greatest and perfect Revelation of God is Jesus Christ, the Absolute Teacher.

DIFFERENT WAYS OF THE REVELATION OF GOD

Visions, dreams, words, actions

Revelation (*apokaluptw* = internal) & (*phanerw* = external)

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ESSENCE & MANIFESTATION

Only God can know His own Essence We can never comprehend God's Essence. Manifestation is what creatures can perceive. We can only know God in His Manifestation.

THE GREATEST REVELATION OF GOD

God's perfect manifestation is Jesus Christ. Through all times, God has revealed Himself through Christ & the Holy Spirit *"No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him."* John 1:18

"For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God". 1 Cor 2:11-12

"Our Savior, therefore, is the image of the invisible God, in as much as compared with the Father Himself He is the truth; and as compared with us, to whom He reveals the Father, He is the image by which we come to the knowledge of the Father, whom no one knows save the Son, and He to whom the Son is pleased to reveal Him⁴. All who believe and are assured that 'grace and truth came through Jesus Christ' (John 1:17), and who know Christ to be the truth, agreeably to His own declaration, 'I am the truth' (John 14:6), derive the knowledge which incites men to a good and happy life from no other source than from the very words and teaching of Christ. And by the words of Christ we do not mean those only which He spoke when He became man and tabernacled in the flesh; for before that time, Christ, the Word of God was in Moses and the prophets." Origen De Principiis, Preface I;"The Ante-Nicene Fathers", Vol. 4, 1979, by Roberts and Donaldson. Eerdmans

"Receive Christ, receive sight, receive your light; in order that you may know well both God and man. 'Sweet is the Word that gives us light, precious above gold and gems; it is to be desired above honey and the honeycomb' (Ps.19:10)." St. Clement: Exhortation to the Heathen, Ch.9."The Ante-Nicene Fathers."

"For each one (of His titles) by itself does not express God; but altogether are indicative of the power of the Omnipotent ... It remains that we understand, then, the Unknown, by divine grace, and by the Word alone that proceeds from Him." St. Clement: Stromata, Book 5, Ch. 12.

"Now, God from His own side offered us all the abilities to perceive Him by revealing Himself to us. From our side, it is our responsibility to enjoy this divine knowledge, not only by studying and researching, but also by purifying our souls and hearts, i.e., our internal sight. Joseph C.

McLelland wrote⁸, "Moreover, since 'like knows like' in the Alexandrian world view ... 'the way to the Immutable is immutability.'" *St. Clement: Stromata, Book 2, Ch. 11, Section 6.*

"But for its knowledge and accurate comprehension, there is need of none other save of ourselves. Neither, as God Himself is above all, is the road to Him afar off outside ourselves, but it is in us, and it is possible to find it from ourselves, in the first instance, as Moses also taught, when he said, 'But the word (of faith) is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart ...' Deut. 30:14. Which very thing the Saviour declared and confirmed, when He said, 'The kingdom of God is within you,' Luke 17:21. For having in ourselves faith, and the kingdom of God, We shall quickly be able to see and perceive the king of the Universe, the saving Word of the Father". St. Athanasius: Contra Gentes, Part 2, Section 30.

"Whence also when it gets rid of all the filth of sin which covers it and retains only the likeness of the Image in its purity, then surely this latter being thoroughly brightened, the soul beholds as in a mirror the Image of the Father, even the Word .." St. Athanasius: Contra Gentes, Part 2, Section 34.

Through Revelation, God desires all men to come to His knowledge. His will is that all men respond to Him, loving Him, more than their natural ability. The Revelation of God is always in WORDS & ACTIONS

HISTORY OF GOD'S REVELATION

God's revelation is always made in the context of a covenant by words and by actions

ADAM & EVE → COVENANT WITH HUMANITY

The Fall did not stop God from revealing Himself to the descendants

And I will put enmity between you and woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel. Gen 3:15

NOAH → COVENANT WITH NATIONS

All people outside of faith belong to this covenant

We remember Noah, Melchizedek, & Job who belong to this covenant

ABRAHAM → COVENANT WITH THE PATRIARCHS

The Patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac & Jacob), Prophets, Righteous men & women of the Old Testament are celebrated as saints by the Church in its calendar

MOSES → COVENANT WITH ISRAEL

Through the Prophets, God brought up His people in the hope of the Messiah

JESUS CHRIST → COVENANT WITH THE CHURCH THROUGH APOSTLES

Full – Complete – Perfect Revelation of God - End Goal of all Revelations *“God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds.”* Heb 1:1-2

THERE IS NO FURTHER REVELATION OF GOD AFTER JESUS CHRIST

KEEPING GOD’S REVELATION

Handing down of God’s revelation: through

1. BIBLE: THE WORD OF GOD
2. HOLY CHURCH TRADITION: HOW TO INTERPRET THE BIBLE

Liturgical celebrations,
Canonical councils and Creeds,
Oral tradition,
Consensus patrum (the *consensus of the Church fathers*)

OPPOSING BELIEFS

Atheism: God does not exist

Naturalism: No existence beyond material world (no Supernatural)

Materialism: Everything can be explained on material basis (there is neither soul nor spiritual existence)

Spiritualism: Everything can be explained on spiritual basis

Pantheism: Everything is god (god & nature is one)

Deism: There is a god but no religion. Deistic god is not in control
(watchmaker theory) deistic god cannot be approached by religion

Rationalism: Mind does not need revelation (everything can be understood by the human mind)

Agnosticism: no way to prove or disprove religious revelation

Relativism: No one revelation- truth is relative to beholder

SECOND SECTION: CORE MATERIALS

FIRST GRADE CURRICULUM THEME AND OBJECTIVES

God Reveals Himself to Us

Lesson List (52 lessons)

During the First Year, students would learn about the Trinity, the story of Salvation and develop the right image of God which is no other but His only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. The Father sends the Son and the Son sends the Spirit from the Father. Through the Son and the Spirit we are reconciled to The Father.

UNIT I: GOODNESS OF GOD THE FATHER (6 LESSONS)

Purpose: The focus of this Unit is God the Father. This unit starts with our Lord –the true image of the invisible God- accepting and loving children. Our Lord tells the children about God’s power, care, kindness and love.

1. Our Lord, Jesus Christ is a Friend of children
 - Children are the friends of The Lord
 - Our Lord taught us about the Father
 - Our Lord is like His Father
 - Option: The Child Jesus in the temple
2. God is the Creator of Good Things
 - The days of creation
 - Everything God created is good
 - The creation of man is very good
 - God rested on the seventh day

3. God loves us and cares for us; God is our Father
 - Adam creation is very special
 - Each one of us is made in the image of God
 - Adam sees that he is alone
 - Eve is made out of Adam
 - God blessed them
4. God the Father is powerful
 - Noah and his family status
 - God cares for His Children
 - The Flood
 - God uses his power to help His children
 - God is Pantocrator
5. God looks out for us when we are in trouble
 - Circumstances of the birth of Moses
 - The birth of Moses, the faith of his parents
 - Trusting Moses completely to God
 - God continued to care for Moses
6. Unit Review

UNIT II: GOD CALL US HIS CHILDREN (5 LESSONS)

Purpose: This unit is the appropriate response to knowing God. How we become children of God in Baptism. The concepts of worship and honoring God in prayer, fasting and giving are explored.

7. Baptism is when we became children of God
 - We become the children of God by baptism
 - The Holy Myron
 - Baptism is when we became children of God
8. Honoring and worshipping our Holy God
 - The proper attitude toward God is Worship
 - Worship means prayer, fasting and giving.
9. We talk to God our Father
 - We talk to Him
 - Jesus taught us to pray regularly, at least first thing in the morning and before bedtime.

- The story of Hannah' the mother of Samuel
 - Prayer position
 - prayer words
10. God talks to us: we listen
- Samuel learn to listen to God
 - Learning to read the word of God
 - Unit Review
11. Unit review

Unit III: (Advent) God Sends His Son (8 Lessons)

Purpose: In this unit, the students will learn how the devil, using the serpent deceived the children of God leading them to disobey God and eventually separate them from their loving Father. The serpent trick was to change the image of God in the mind of Adam and Eve, when the serpent said *"For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil"* Genesis 3:5. This implied that God had other hidden intentions and those intentions were not so loving, but selfish and competitive. So instead of trusting the unconditionally loving Father, they were not sure anymore of His perfect love. The actions of eating, hiding and the feeling of shame show that lack of trust in God. God did not leave us also to the end but always attended us by His holy prophets and in the last day He manifested Himself to us in His only begotten Son our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ. God –in Christ- is "Manifesting" Himself to us who are hiding from Him. In this unit, the advent, we study how the Father is preparing for, and sending His son.

12. The fall of man and the need for a Savior
- Adam and Eve in the Garden
 - The devils' envy & The Serpent trick
 - Consequences
 - God's response
13. God Prepares for the coming of His Son (I): Archangel Gabriel announce the birth of St. John the Baptist
- The forerunner
 - The Saintly Parents of Saint John the Baptist:
 - The Archangel Gabriel
 - The annunciation
14. God Prepares for the Coming of His Son (II): Archangel Gabriel announce the Birth of our Lord

- Who is St. Mary
- The annunciation
- 15. God Prepares for the Coming of His Son (III): The visitation of St Mary to Elizabeth
 - St Mary quick response
 - The visitation
 - Theotokos
 - The Magnificat
- 16. Our Lord is born in Bethlehem
 - The journey to Bethlehem
 - The Birth
 - The shepherds
- 17. Unit Review

UNIT IV: OUR LORD, JESUS CHRIST IS GOOD AND LOVES US (6 LESSONS)

Purpose: In This unit, we continue the gospel story, to cover the mission, the teachings, the miracles and the making of disciples of our Lord. He is the good shepherd who does the will of the Father and shows us the true image of the Father.

- 18. Holy Baptism of our Lord (Theophany)
 - The Mission of St. John the Baptist
 - St. John's life, his calling, the baptism of St. John and our baptism, People's questions, Prophecy about our Lord
 - Baptism of our Lord
 - Our Lord fasted for 40 days
- 19. Calling Apostles (after His baptism and went to the desert and fasted, He came back and began to gather disciples)
 - St. John tells his disciples
 - The big catch
 - Levi who became St. Matthew
 - The Apostles
- 20. Our Lord, Jesus Christ looks out for us when we are in trouble; (after He gathered disciples, He did miracles)
 - The concern for the apostles
 - The Concern for the people
 - Five loaves and two fish

- Thanksgiving, blessing, breaking and giving
 - Concern for the Apostles
 - Saving St. Peter
21. Our Lord reveals the Father's care
- Jesus healed the leper
 - Healing the woman with the bleeding
 - And raising the daughter of Jairus.
22. Our Lord, Jesus teaches us to love God
- The first commandment : The widow and the two pennies
 - Our Lord, Jesus teaches us to love others :The good Samaritan
23. Unit Review

UNIT V: OUR LORD, JESUS CHRIST GIVES HIMSELF UP FOR US: (6 LESSONS)

Purpose: In This unit, we continue the gospel story, to cover the Holy week of Pascha. The gospels continue to tell us the mission of our Lord as He reaches the reason of His coming to the world *"Father, save Me from this hour"? But for this purpose I came to this hour."* John 12:27. It is God's response to the serpent trick and the price of our freedom from the slavery of death and sin. It is the Father's ultimate action of love.

24. Our Lord raises Lazarus from the dead
- Who is Lazarus?
 - Lazarus is sick
 - Our Lord in Bethany and meeting Martha
 - Our Lord meets Mary
 - Our Lord at the tomb
 - Lesson to learn
 - The response of the leaders
25. Mary the Sister of Lazarus anoints the feet of our Lord
- Supper at Bethany
 - Mary anoints the feet of our Lord
 - The disciples complain
26. Our Lord enters Jerusalem on Palm Sunday
- Preparation
 - The royal entry

- The cleansing of the Temple
27. Our Lord makes the first Eucharist on Covenant Thursday of Pascha
- Preparation for Passover
 - The washing of the feet
 - The Passover
 - Our Lord foretells the denial of St Peter
 - The first Eucharist
28. Our Lord is crucified and buried on Great Friday of Pascha
- Praying in Gethsemane
 - Capturing Jesus
 - In the house of the high priest
 - Trial by Pilot and Herod
 - The Third hour: the sentence
 - The sixth hour: the cross
 - The ninth hour: our Lord gives up the spirit
 - The eleventh hour: Bringing the body down from the cross
 - The twelfth hour: The burial of our Lord's body
29. Unit Review

UNIT VI: OUR LORD, JESUS CHRIST ROSE FROM THE DEAD AND ASCENDED TO THE HEAVEN (5 LESSONS)

Purpose: our Lord took our nature and accepted death in it to abolish the power of death in Him. His Resurrection is given to us through sharing in His flesh and His blood. He showed Himself to His disciples for them to become witnesses of that resurrection. He ascended to the heaven and sat on the right side of His Father as a first fruit of humanity and as a high priest for us in the heavenly Temple.

30. Our Lord is raised from the dead on Sunday of Resurrection.
- The women at the tomb
 - The archangel at the tomb
 - The Lord meets the women
 - The women told the disciples
31. Our Lord appears after His resurrection II: 2 disciples on the road to Emmaus
- The two disciples
 - The conversation

- The dinner
32. Our Lord appears after His resurrection III: by the sea of Tiberius
- The disciples went fishing
 - The Lord helps the disciples
 - St. Peter overboard
 - The breakfast
 - Simon do you love me
33. Our Lord ascended to the heaven
- The Holy Ascension of our Lord
 - Replacing Judas
34. Unit Review

VII UNIT VII: OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST SENT US THE HOLY SPIRIT FROM THE FATHER. (6 LESSONS)

Purpose: In This unit, the revelation of God is completed with the revelation of the Holy Spirit in the Church. We continue the gospel story, to cover the beginning of the “Age of the Church.” It is the work of the Holy Spirit in the “New Body of Christ.” In all the lessons of this unit, the teacher needs to present the Holy Spirit acting in the disciples according to what our Lord had previously said to them: *“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 thing that I said to you”* John 14:26. *“When the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.”* John 15:26-27. How that the Spirit will strengthens the disciples and encourage them to “witness” for Christ and fill them with joy and peace.

35. Our Lord sends the Holy Spirit on His disciples on Pentecost, the Birthday of the Church
- The Gift of the Holy Spirit
 - The people gathered
 - St. Peter’s sermon
 - Three thousand get baptized
36. The Holy Spirit continued the work of our Lord in the Church I: healing the lame man
- The Lame man
 - The miracle
 - St Peter’s sermon
 - The leaders get angry

- The leader's response
 - The disciples pray
37. The Holy Spirit continued the work of our Lord in the Church II: Deacon Philip's mission
- Philip goes to Samaria
 - Simon's conversion
 - St. Peter and St. John go to Samaria
 - Simon's sin
38. The Holy Spirit continued the work of our Lord in the Church III: conversion of Saul of Tarsus
- Saul of Tarsus
 - On the road to Damascus
 - Ananias's vision
 - Saul's baptism
 - Saul's escape
39. The Holy Spirit Continued the work of our Lord in the Church IV: St. Mark taught Egypt about our Lord
- St. Mark in Egypt
 - Anianus
 - St. Mark heals Anianus in the name of Christ
 - St. Mark teaches Anianus about our Lord
 - St. Mark preaches in other places
 - Our Church honors St. Mark
40. Unit Review

UNIT VIII: OUR LORD SHALL COME AGAIN (1 LESSON)

41. Our Lord shall come again.

UNIT IX: THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES US TO BE LIKE OUR LORD. (8 LESSONS)

Purpose: In This unit, the work of the Holy Spirit in Christ's body- the Church. The stories of the saints are told from this point (the work of the Holy Spirit in them). The stories in this unit are chosen to reflect different fruits of the Holy Spirit. His first action is to bring our Lord and savior into the heart and ignite the greatest love for Him. Through His work in the saints, The Holy Spirit shapes the Christians to be "like Christ". By doing this, the Holy Spirit witnesses for Christ

in the world. “Let your light shine.” The stories of Martyrs (except that of St. Mark) were kept for older age group.

42. The Holy Spirit gave Kindness and love to St. Bishoy

- An angel chose St Bishoy
- St. Bishoy loved our Lord
- Becoming a monk
- Life of Prayer
- Our Lord visited St. Bishoy
- St. Bishoy carried our Lord

43. The Holy Spirit gave obedience to St. John the short

44. The Holy Spirit gave courage to St. Barsuma the Naked

45. The Holy Spirit gave Joy and kindness to St. Nicholas

- St. Nicholas as a boy
- St. Nicholas, the monk and the priest
- The story of the poor family
- St. Nichols the bishop

46. The Holy Spirit gave Self Control & Meekness to St. Moses the Strong

- St. Moses former life
- St. Moses meets the monks
- The struggles of St. Moses
- St. Moses the father of monks

47. The Holy Spirit gave Faith to St. Simon the cobbler

- St. Simon
- The pope and the governor
- The Pope is asked to move the mountain
- St. Mary speaks to the pope
- The miracle

X UNIT 9: SEASONAL AND ACTIVITY LESSONS. (3 LESSONS)

Purpose: This unit covers the feasts and the seasons of the church. The main focus of this unit is to prepare the students to fully engage in the church life and celebrations.

48. The feast of Nyrouz: (Help the students celebrate the feast processional with colored icons of Martyrs)

49. The feast of the Holy Cross: (Help the students celebrate the vespers processional with Wooden crosses and color coded ribbons)
50. The feast of the Holy Theotokos (How to make an Icon of the Theotokos)

First Grade Curriculum:

God Reveal Himself To Us

UNIT 1: GOODNESS OF GOD OUR FATHER (6 LESSONS)

Purpose: The focus of this Unit is God the Father. This unit starts with our Lord –the true image of the invisible God- accepting and loving children. Our Lord tells the children about God’s power, care, kindness and love. This unit contains examples of biblical stories that highlight God’s power, wisdom, care and love.

LESSON 1: OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST IS THE FRIEND OF CHILDREN

LESSON 2: GOD IS THE CREATOR OF BEAUTIFUL THINGS

LESSON 3: GOD IS OUR FATHER

LESSON 4: GOD OUR FATHER IS POWERFUL

LESSON 5: GOD CARES FOR US ALWAYS: BABY MOSES

LESSON 6: UNIT REVIEW

Unit I: Goodness of God our Father

Purpose: The focus of this Unit is God the Father. This unit starts with our Lord –the true image of the invisible God- accepting and loving children. Our Lord tells the children about God’s power, care, kindness and love.

LESSON 1: OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST IS THE FRIEND OF CHILDREN

SERVANT PREPARATION:

Verse & References:

“Then little children were brought to Him that He might put His hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, “Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” And He laid His hands on them and departed from there.” (Matt 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17)

CHURCH FATHERS:

“And why did the disciples repel the little children? For dignity? What then did He teach them to be lowly, and to trample under foot worldly pride, He did receive them, and took them in His arms, and to such as them promises the kingdom; which kind of thing He said before also. Let us also then, if we would be inheritors of the Heavens, possess ourselves of this virtue with much diligence. For this is the limit of true wisdom; to be simple with understanding; this is angelic life; yes, for the soul of a little child is pure from all the passions. Towards them who have annoyed him he bears no resentment, but goes to them as to friends, as if nothing had been done; and how much so ever he be beaten by his mother; after her he seeks, and her does he prefer to all. Though you show him the queen with a crown, he does not prefer her to his mother dressed in rags, but would choose rather to see her in these, than the queen in splendor. For he is used to distinguish what belongs to him and what is strange to him, not by its poverty and wealth, but by friendship. And nothing more than necessary things does he seek, but just to be satisfied from the breast, and then he leaves sucking. The young child is not grieved at what we are grieved, as at loss of money and such things as that, and he doth not rejoice again at what we rejoice, namely, at these temporal things, he is not eager about the

beauty of persons. Therefore He said, *“of such is the kingdom of Heaven,”* that by choice we should practice these things, which young children have by nature. For since the Pharisees from nothing rise so much as out of craft and pride did what they did, therefore on every hand He charges the disciples to be single hearted, both darkly hinting at those men, and instructing these. For nothing so much lifts up unto haughtiness, as power and superiority. Forasmuch then as the disciples were to enjoy great honors throughout the whole world, He preoccupies their mind, not letting them to feel anything after the manner of men, neither to demand honors from the multitude, nor to have men deare the way before them. For though these seem to be little things, yet are they a cause of great evils. The Pharisees at least being thus trained were carried on into the very summit of evil, seeking after the salutations, the first seats, the middle places, for from these they were cast upon the shoal of their mad desire of glory, then from thence upon impiety. So therefore those men went away having drawn upon themselves a curse by their tempting, but he little children a blessing, as being freed from all these. Let us then also be like the little children, and *“in malice be we babes.”* For it cannot be, it cannot be for one otherwise to see Heaven, but the crafty and wicked must needs surely be cast into hell.” *St John Chrysostom commentary on St. Matthew Homily 62 Nicene and post Nicene Fathers Vol.10*

REFLECTION:

The purpose of this unit is to tell the young children about God the Father. The stories are told to them by His only begotten Son, the image of the invisible Father. This should be done both in words and actions.

Knowing that their attitude toward God would depend in part in how they perceive Him, the right image of God shown in Christ is vital. During this unit it might be important to speak to the parents, how they should avoid using God as a threatening person in their trials to control their children’s behavior. This could be done during parents meetings, during visits or even through newsletter.

PRAYER:

You are He who created man according to Your own image and likeness; and created everything in Your wisdom-Your true light Your Only-Begotten Son, our Lord, God and Savior, and King of us all, Jesus Christ, through Whom we give thanks...

For great is Your name O Lord, among all the nations, and in all places sweet incense and pure sacrifices are offered to Your Holy Name...

For You are above every principality, and authority, and above every power, every lordship and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the ages to come...

From St Cyril liturgy- Anaphora

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

Zoxa Patri Ke Eyo Ke Agio Epnivmati.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit

Ke nin Ke aei Ke Estos eona estos eonon
Amen

*Now and forever and unto ages of ages
Amen*

VOCABULARY:

Blessing, disciples

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	Christ is image of God the Father, God is love
Liturgical:	Priestly blessing
Moral:	love and respect
Spiritual:	Prayer

INTRODUCTION

Who is our friend?

Start the class by introducing yourselves and ask each child to say his/her name.

Servants make the sign of the cross first, and then ask the children to do the sign of the cross so you can watch each one and make sure they all know how to do it.

Ask them how many people they love and when they see them what would they do first?! Then open your arms wide and say “wouldn’t you run and hug them”?

And our story today is about how much our Lord Jesus Christ would be happy when He sees the ones He loves

LESSON BODY:

THE LORD IS THE FRIEND OF CHILDREN

One day our Lord Jesus was walking with His **disciples (the close friends of our Lord)**. He saw a boy walking with his mother. The boy was looking at a huge tree as he was walking, and wishing that he could climb to the very top of it and touch the highest leaf. The boy’s name was Michael (use the names of the children in the class). As our Lord was walking, He looked at Michael and smiled at him. Then He said, in a very gentle and deep voice, “Hello Michael.” It was only those two small words, but Michael couldn’t forget them. Our Lord looked so friendly, and so happy to see him, and so nice, that this made Michael very happy- that our Lord knew his name. He also felt so important, because even though our Lord was walking with other grownups, He stopped especially to say hi to him. Michael had a feeling inside, he just *knew*, that our Lord was a very good and kind, and he wanted very much to see Him again. The next day, Michael told his friend John (use another name from a child in the class) what happened and John became very excited and wanted to see our Lord Jesus. He went with Michael and their parents the next day and again our Lord passed by them, almost as if He was waiting there especially for them to come. He had so many people around them, but He still noticed them, stopped and smiled and said “hi” to them. Mike and John went and told their friend Elizabeth what happened and she was exited too. She went with them and the same thing happened again, but *this* time our Lord gave them gifts *and* He **blessed** them (**put His holy hand over each one’s head**). By the way, you can ask abouna to bless you and to put his hand over your head to be blessed, like Jesus did with the little children. The grownups around our Lord were not happy about that, but the kids were so happy that they went and told all their friends and their parents, and they all decided to go and see our Lord.

The next day they all went where our Lord was giving a big talk to many people, and they were so happy to see Him. When the other people saw the children, they said to them, “Stop, you

can't come because the Lord is talking about very important things to the grownups." But our Lord did something different. When He saw the kids, He opened his arms very wide to them with a big smile and asked His disciples not to stop the kids from coming to Him and this is what He said:

"Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

OUR LORD TELLS US ABOUT HIS FATHER

One day the disciples of our Lord were arguing with each other, each one was trying to say that he was the most important person. Our Lord took a child and made him stand in the middle, then He took the child in His arms and said to them: *Whoever loves me, will also love my little children, and who loves me and my little children will love My Father also* " Mark 9: 33-37

And since that day, everyone loved to see the kids with our Lord, because they saw that He put them before anyone else, even though they were the youngest ones.

What did our Lord Jesus tell the children when he saw them again?

He started to tell them stories about The Heavenly Father who loves everyone and very kind, very wise and very powerful.

We shall learn some of those stories over the following few weeks.

OUR LORD IS LIKE HIS FATHER

The children knew that our Lord is like His heavenly Father. He too is very wise, very loving and kind, and very powerful. **WE LOVE OUR LORD AND HIS FATHER MORE THAN ANYONE OR ANYTHING BECAUSE HE LOVED US FIRST.**

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- **Acting: one servant dresses like our Lord. Another servant like the disciples and the children act the friends of our Lord**
- ***scrap book building***
- ***Coloring, Cut and paste "Jesus loves me"***
- ***Puppets***

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What did we learn from today's lesson?

A. That Our Lord Jesus Christ loves the children and they are His special friends. He loves to see them. He is always ready to listen to them.

Q. What did our Lord tell the children?

A. He told them stories about the heavenly Father.

Q. What did our Lord say to His disciples when they argued who is the greater among them?

He said even the little children are great because they are the children of our Lord. Who loves them, loves the Lord, and who loves the Lord loves His Father in heaven

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Matt 19:14

DAILY READINGS

Our Lord is the friend of the children

The Child Jesus was brought to the temple- *Luke 2:22-38*

The daughter of the Canaanite woman- *Luke 15:21-28*

Healing the Nobleman's son- *John 4:46-54*

Healing a demon possessed boy- *Luke 9:47-52*

Raising the son of the widow in Nain- *Luke 7:11-17*

Raising the daughter of Jairus – *Mark 5:21-24, 35-43*

Unit I

Purpose: The focus of this Unit is God the Father. This unit starts with our Lord –the true image of the invisible God- accepting and loving children. Our Lord tells the children about God’s power, care, kindness and love.

LESSON 2: GOD IS THE CREATOR OF GOOD THINGS

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

“Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good”. *Genesis 1:31*

“O LORD, how great are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all.” Psalm 104: 24

“The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge” *Psalms 19:1-2*

CREED:

Truly we believe in one God,

God the Father, the Pantocrator,

Creator of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible

CHURCH FATHERS:

"God by His own Word gave the Universe the order it has, in order that since He is by nature invisible, men might be enabled to know Him at any rate by His works. For often the artist, even when not seen, is known by his works." **St. Athanasius:** *Contra Gentes*; "The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers."

"God did not create things with instruments or art, but "He spoke and it was done" (Psalm 33: 9); the power of action lies in the divine utterance." *St. Ambrose*

“Utterance is, in itself, an action.” *St. Basil, the Great*

“God does not see something as good, through admiring it by eye, or tasting its beauty by mind, as we usually do, but sees it as good, when it is perfect, according to His will, and beneficial to the end.” *St. Basil*

“God’s creation is not corrupt; so if it so became, you have the cure: Seal it with the sign of the cross, and give God praise and glory; then its corruption will be taken away.” *St. John Chrysostom*

As man was created in the sixth day, the Lord Christ offered His life a sacrifice on the cross, to restore His creation or to renew it spiritually on the sixth day, and in the sixth hour. (Agpeya)

God ended His talk about the work of creation, by proclaiming His rest in His creation that carried the signs of His love, especially man who carried His image and likeness. God remains in His rest, as long as man also rests in the bosom of His heavenly Father. That is why many fathers believe that the commandment of “keeping the Sabbath”, which means in Hebrew “the rest”, is actually a symbol of abiding in the Lord Christ, being the rest of the Father, in whom He finds His pleasure concerning us, as well as our own rest, as in Him we enter into the bosom of the Father; the Lord Christ, Himself, is our true Sabbath. ... This is the secret of God’s care for keeping the commandment of the Sabbath, and for making it a main line in His plan of salvation of His people; whoever breaks it would be breaker of the divine covenant, and would deny himself the membership of holy congregation. Let us then keep the true Sabbath, through accepting the Lord Christ, risen from the dead, as the secret of our true rest; Let us accept Him as risen from the dead, by keeping the Sabbath all our life, especially on the first day of the week; as the apostles used to get together on each Sunday, to practice the collective worship around the Sacrament of the Eucharist, as the object of their true rest. If the Lord Christ is the “Seventh Day” or the “True Sabbath”, in whom we were reconciled with the father by the blood of His cross; We, if we abide in Him, would carry His features in us, get filled with His righteousness, and become ourselves an object of rest, so become counted as a “Sabbath” or a “seventh day”. And as St. Augustine says: “We become, ourselves, a seventh day, when we enjoy and get filled with God’s blessings and sanctification.” It is to be noticed that the Holy Book did not say about the seventh day, “So the evening and the morning were the seventh day”; and as said by St. Augustine: “We find no evening in the Sabbath, as our rest has no end.”
Genesis: early history 1- Fr. Tadros Malaty

REFLECTION:

God the creator: The children should be exposed to the experience of wondering at natural events. It is important to let the children discover God's glory and characters in the creation. Using their imagination and wonder faculties, each one can get in touch with the "hand of God".

How a beautifully painted picture, reveal the beauty hidden in the mind and the heart of the painter. For example, the biblical words "And God said, let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit" can be made meaningful to children if we have them watch the process. Simple experiments can be carried out in class, or a film shown on the growth of plants. Many other aspects of creation can be illustrated in similar ways.

It will be very helpful for the teacher to become acquainted with science textbooks used in the corresponding grade in public school and thus illustrate in imaginative ways the story of creation. It will help to overcome the divorce in the child's mind between church and school teaching and what he learns in public school. *Christian education- (Preparatory notes) by Saad I. Sefein chapter 5*

PRAYER:

O Creator of the whole creation, of that which is seen and of that which is not seen, who cares for all things; for Yours they are. *St. Cyril Liturgy prayer of the veil*

Blessed are you on the throne of Your Kingdom and exceedingly blessed and exceedingly exalted above all forever. *From the Third Hose*

O' Lord and Master, God of truth, Existent before the ages, and reigning forever. Abiding in the highest and beholding the lowly, Who created heaven, earth, sea and everything therein, the Father of our Lord, God and Savior, Jesus Christ. Through whom You have created all things, seen and unseen. Who sits upon the Throne of His glory; and is worshipped by all the holy powers." *St Basil Anaphora*

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

Zoxa Patri Ke Eyo Ke Agio Epnivmati.

Ke nin Ke aei Ke Estos eona estos eonon Amen

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit

Now and forever and unto ages of ages Amen

VOCABULARY:

Creator, Spirit of God, Image of God, Holy

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	God the Creator of good things
Liturgical:	Sunday is the Day of the Lord
Moral:	Obedience
Spiritual:	Praising God for His good creation

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

.....
"Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Matt 19:14

CONNECTION POINT:

.....
This year, we are learning about our God. In these weeks we learn about God the Father. Later in the year, we shall learn about His Son and at the last part of the year we shall learn about the Holy Spirit. Our Lord Jesus Christ told us many true stories about our Father. Today, our Lord tells the children of the story of creation. In the creation, the Father and His Son our Lord Jesus Christ worked together to make all things that we see and those we cannot see.

Let the kids name their favorite creatures and ask each one why they like their favorite creatures.

LESSON BODY:

THE DAYS OF CREATION

In the beginning there was water and the Earth was empty and dark all over, no one could live there. It was like a ruined house. The Spirit of God was there.

1st day: light (have the children close their eyes first to feel the darkness, and then open their eyes to feel the light); 2nd day: sky; 3rd day: separated land from the sea and plants; 4th day: sun, moon, and stars; 5th day: birds and fish; 6th day: animals and man; 7th day: God rested. God is very special. He only has to say something, and it would be that way. He makes things out of nothing. No one else has the power to do that; it's only God. And we call this "creation." He can create things.

EVERYTHING THAT GOD CREATED IS GOOD

God saw everything was good.

Ask the kids to draw their favorite creatures. Ask them what they like about the creatures they draw. Then make a comment on how the different creatures speak of the glory of God. For example, the heavens with the stars speak of God's greatness because when you look at them you think of how great they are and if God created them, He has this greatness in Himself; the flowers speak of His beauty, the mountains speak of His strength, the small creatures of His gentleness, and the big ones of His strength. Every time you see a beautiful flower or a tree, a nice sunset or morning, the snow and the rain, when you feel happiness in your heart remember our awesome God and creator and give thanks. We also should care for God's creation and protect it when we can.

CREATION OF MAN IS VERY GOOD

When God made man, God said that it was very good. Out of all God's creation God loves Adam the most. He created human beings in His own **image (like Him in a special way) and His likeness**; He breathed the breath of life into his nose and made him a human being. God created everything beautiful for Adam to enjoy and to take care of. He created different kinds of tastes and colors for humans to enjoy. God wants Adam to love Him back and talk to Him all the time.

GOD RESTED ON THE 7TH DAY

God finished all the creation in six days. On the seventh day, God rested and made that day "Holy" which means very special. God asked Adam to keep that day "Holy". God wanted Adam

and his family to spend that day with God and with each other. FOR THAT REASON WE KEEP SUNDAY FOR GOD BY CELEBRATING THE LITURGY AND ENJOYING GOOD TIME WITH OUR FAMILY. ON SUNDAY WE GIVE THANKS TO GOD FOR ALL HIS GOOD CREATION AND FOR ALL HIS CARE FOR ALL THE CREATION.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- **Scrap book building:** Divide the page into seven parts. Fill “the days” by Sticking or drawing different creatures. Leave day seven for GOD
- **Planting projects** (pots of plants, seeds, water and light)
- Use pictures of nature and solicit responses from the children about what the images make them feel and let them respond by a short prayer like “I thank you Lord”
- YouTube: short clip on plants growing
- White board and dry eraser: divide the board into seven days, write the day number on the top of each day, let the kids draw the specific creatures with different colors.
- Coloring pages Movie Storytelling Merry go round

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What was created on different days?

A. *1st day: light; 2nd day: sky; 3rd day: separated land from the sea and plants; 4th day: sun, moon, and stars; 5th day: birds and fish; 6th day: animals and man; 7th day: God rested.*

Q. Why God created all kinds of different creatures?

A. *For humans to enjoy them because He loves us and wants us to have good things.*

Q. What should we do when we see beautiful creatures?

A. *Remember God to give Him thanks from our happy hearts.*

Q. what happened on the seventh day?

A. *God rested on the seventh day.*

Q. What ought we to do on the Lord's Day?

A. We keep it "Holy" by attending the liturgy and spending time with our family

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"O LORD, how great are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all." Psalm 104: 24

CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

GOD IS THE CREATOR OF GOOD THINGS

God created good plants – the devil plants bad – Matthew 13:24-30

Balaam's donkey – Numbers 22

Jonah and the whale - Jonah

The parable of the sower and the seed – Matthew 13

Our Lord entered Jerusalem on a donkey – Matthew 21

The fish that had swallowed a piece of money – Matthew 17:24-27

Unit I

Purpose: The focus of this Unit is God the Father. This unit starts with our Lord –the true image of the invisible God- accepting and loving children. Our Lord tells the children about God’s power, care, kindness and love.

LESSON 3: GOD IS OUR FATHER

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

“7And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.” Genesis 2:7

“18And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him." 19Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature that was its name. 20So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him. 21And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. 22Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman and He brought her to the man. 23And Adam said: " This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." 24Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. 25And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.” Genesis 2:18-25

“Doubtless You are our Father, Though Abraham was ignorant of us, And Israel does not acknowledge us. You, O LORD, are our Father; Our Redeemer from Everlasting is Your name.” Isaiah 63:16

“for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God.” John 16:27

"So He said to them, "When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name" Luke 11:2

"Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God;" 1 John3:1-2

CREED:

**"Truly we believe in One God,
God the **Father**, the Pantocrator
Creator of heaven and earth and of all things seen and unseen"**

CHURCH FATHERS:

*"After this manner, therefore, pray ye," said He: "Our Father, which art in heaven." See how He straightway stirred up the hearer, and reminded him of all God's bounty in the beginning. For he who calls God Father, by him both remission of sins, and taking away of punishment, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, and adoption, and inheritance, and brotherhood with the Only-Begotten, and the supply of the Spirit, are acknowledged in this single title. For one cannot call God Father, without having attained to all those blessings. Doubly, therefore, does He awaken their spirit, both by the dignity of Him who is called on, and by the greatness of the benefits which they have enjoyed. But when He said, "*in Heaven*," He speaks not this as shutting up God there, but as withdrawing him who is praying from earth, and fixing him in the high places, and in the dwellings above. *St John Chrysostom commentary on St. Matthew Homily 19 Nicene and post Nicene Fathers Vol.10**

REFLECTION:

How great is the fatherly love of our God. When God made us, we were the crown of His creation. The gentleness by which the creator handled us and the grace were beyond words. Humans are made in the image and likeness of God.

The promise made to Abraham announces the economy of salvation, on the summit of which the Son Himself is the “image” (Phil 2:7; John 1:14). In the promise to Abraham (above all human hope) God commits Himself by His own solemn oath to giving His beloved Son and “the promised Holy Spirit... [who is] the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it” (Eph 1:13-14; Gen 22:17-19; Luke 1:73; John 3:16; Romans 8:32; Gal 3:14).

How in naming the animals, God watches Adam as he takes his time in examining each animal and bird giving to each of them its proper name. It is an image of a perfect Father who have all the time for their children. God approves of the names Adam gives. It is important to keep the unit theme in perspective “The Goodness of God the Father”. This means that we tell the story from the point of view of the special care of the fatherhood of God.

PRAYER:

Holy, Holy are You, O Lord and Holy in everything, and exceedingly elect is the light of your essence. And inexpressible is the power of Your wisdom. No manner of speech is able to define the deep expanse of Your love for mankind. You, as a Lover of mankind, created me, a man. You had no need of my servitude. Rather, it was me who was in need of Your lordship.

Because of the multitude of Your compassions, You formed me when I had no being...

You are He who formed me; and placed Your hand upon me. You wrote within me the image of Your authority; And placed within me the gift of speech. You opened for me the paradise, for my delight; and gave me the learning of Your knowledge. You revealed to me the tree of life; and made known to me the thorn of death...

The Liturgy of Saint Gregory

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

Zoxa Patri Ke Eyo Ke Agio Epnivmati. Ke nin
Ke aei Ke Estos eona estos eonon Amen

Glory to the father and to the Son And to
The Holy Spirit Now and forever and to the
ages of ages Amen

VOCABULARY:

Adam, Eve

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	God is our Father
Liturgical:	Marriage
Moral:	Honoring parents
Spiritual:	Prayer

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW LESSON 2:

Q. What did our Lord tell the Children about The heavenly Father?

A. Our Lord told the Children the true story of creation.

Q. What did God do on each of the days of creation?

A. 1st day: light; 2nd day: sky; 3rd day: separated land from the sea and plants; 4th day: sun, moon, and stars; 5th day: birds and fish; 6th day: animals and man; 7th day: God rested.

Q. Why God created all kinds of different creatures?

A. For humans to enjoy them because He loves us and wants us to have good things.

Q. What should we do when we see beautiful creatures?

A. Remember God to give Him thanks from our happy hearts.

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"O LORD, how great are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all." Psalm 104: 24

CONNECTION POINT:

We learned last week that God the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit created all things, those we see (like the animals, plants, stars, sea creatures, birds and mountains) and those we do not see (like the wind and the angels). Today – God willing- we shall learn how our God created the first parents of all humans. Over the following weeks, we shall continue to learn about God. We are going to know that God is our Father and that He is powerful and very loving.

LESSON BODY:

THE CREATION OF ADAM IS VERY SPECIAL.

Tell the story of the creation of Adam: *(use an icon of the first parents' creation to color)*

God took clay from the earth and shaped it into a man, very carefully and gently. He formed each and every single part of him, to make sure that he was beautiful and very good. Then God breathed in his nose the breath of life. And God called the man **Adam** which means that **he was taken from the earth**.

HOW IS ADAM THE SON OF GOD?

Adam was different from everything else God created, he was special, because God made Adam in God's image and in God's likeness. When God made Adam, God "breathed" in his nose. This gave Adam life, so that he would live forever, like God.

God gave Adam the Garden of Eden and a job of working (raking leaves, caring for trees and animals, and watching and guarding it).

Each one of you is made in the image of God, and that makes each one of you very special. God also gave each one of us a job like Adam. Do you know what job? To submit to your parents. How would you obey your parents?

By: 1. Coming when your parents call you. 2. Doing what your parents tell you to do. 3. Doing your best in school and 4. Helping your parents in home chores.

ADAM SEES THAT HE IS ALONE

God knew that it is important that Adam should have a family. But God wanted Adam to find that out that he was in need of a family on his own. God called the animals one by one for Adam to name them. Whatever name Adam gave the animal, God made it their name. But while naming the animals, Adam discovered that all the animals were males and females (he animal and she animal). He also discovered that all the animals had families. But then he looked at himself and saw that he did not have a wife or a family. When he found that all the animals had families, he felt that he also wanted to have a family like them. He did not want to be all alone, by himself. God knew that Adam wanted to have a family so He wanted to give him a wife.

EVE IS MADE OUT OF ADAM

This is how God made a wife for Adam: God made Adam to be in deep sleep, and then God took a rib from Adam and filled the space with Adam's own flesh. God took the rib and made it into a woman. When Adam woke up from his sleep, He saw the woman and knew that she was his wife. Later Adam called her **Eve**; her name means "**the mother of all living humans.**"

GOD BLESSED THEM

Adam & Eve were living in the garden. They were very happy being around God. They were like children in their father's house and needed nothing. They could see God all the time and feel His love and care all the time. God blessed them. God gave them all the creation to take care of it. God gave them the power to have children and grand children, and great grandchildren, God continue to give the husband and the wife the blessing of having children.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- Clay, to make a human figure (Adam) out of the whole lump. And to take from the human figure a piece to make the second human being (Eve), pictures of different animals in couples.
- Scrap book building: a small card paper dolls for Adam and Eve, Figures of different animal couples, a picture of clay.
- Story telling
- White board, dry eraser Markers.

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. How did God show his love and care in creating Adam?

A. *God showed special care as a Father and creator: By making us humans in His image and likeness*

Q. What did our Lord told us that God is?

A. *Our Lord Jesus told us that God is our Father.*

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

“You, O LORD, are our Father; Our Redeemer from Everlasting is Your Name.” Isaiah 63:16

CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

GOD BLESSED MATRIMONY

Noah’s ark hosted four sets of married couples (and males and females of animals)- Genesis 7:1-16

The marriage of Isaac - Genesis 24

The marriage of Jacob - Genesis 29

The marriage of Boaz and Ruth – Ruth

The marriage of Tobias-Tobit

The wedding in Cana – John 2:1-12

Unit I

Purpose: The focus of this Unit is God the Father. This unit starts with our Lord –the true image of the invisible God- accepting and loving children. Our Lord tells the children about God’s power, care, kindness and love. This unit is concluded with the concepts of worship and honor of God in prayer, fasting and giving.

LESSON 4: GOD OUR FATHER IS POWERFUL

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Genesis 6, 7, 8

“He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty” *Psalms 91:1*

“God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, Even though the earth be removed, And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;” *Psalms 56:1*

“Behold, God is mighty, but despises no one; He is mighty in strength of understanding” *Job 35:5*

“Lift up your heads, O you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in. 8Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, The LORD mighty in battle.” *Psalms 24:7-8*

“O LORD God of hosts, Who is mighty like You, O LORD? Your faithfulness also surrounds You.” *Psalms 89:8*

CREED:

“Truly we believe in one God,

God the Father, the **Pantocrator**

Creator of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible”

CHURCH FATHERS:

“God created man from dust, renewed him by water, let him grow by His Spirit, and trained him by the word of adoption and salvation, guiding him by the holy commandments, in order to turn man, born of dust, into a heavenly sanctified being, on His coming.” *St. Clement of Alexandria*

“In the great flood -- in the days of Noah -- all people died, except for Noah and his family ... So, the outer man perishes, but the inner one is renewed. This does not only happen in the water of Baptism, but also by repentance, when the lusts of the flesh perish, and the Spirit grows; as we are taught by the apostolic authority, saying: *“For indeed as absent in body, but present in spirit, have already judged, as though I were present,, deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus”* (1 Corinthians 5: 3, 5). *St. Ambrose*

Material of the ark: *“Make yourself an ark of gopher wood”* (Gen. 6: 14); and according to the Septuagint version “of square boards”; which St. Augustine believes, refer to the Church, or to steadfast and well-established life of saints, as the square boards, whatever their movement is, remain standing upright.

“You see water, wood, and a dove! Do not get confused! In the water, the body is emerged to get all its sins cleansed, and all its evil buried; on the wood, the Lord has been nailed as He suffered for our sake; and in the appearance of a dove, the Holy Spirit descended, as we read in the New Testament, He who grants peace to your soul and mind; and the raven is a symbol of sin, that goes not to return, as righteousness is kept in you inside and outside”. *St. Ambrose*

REFLECTION:

In this story, as in many other stories in the Old Testament, we should care to stress God’s care for His people. Teachers should avoid words like anger, wrath, punishment, etc...By focusing on God’s care for Noah, the true goals of the lesson (salvation) can be communicated. Salvation of Noah’s family from corruption in the world was by water (a type of our baptism). The ark saved them from physical death. *1 Peter 3:20-21*

Titus 3:4, 5

Other option to teach the same point would be the splitting of the red sea, or the moving of the Mokattam.

PRAYER:

We lifted up our eyes to You, O Lord, and the eyes of our souls are directed toward You. We ask You, O lord the Pantocrator, the God of our Fathers who created heaven and earth and all their beauty, Who created the waters above the firmament and established the earth upon the waters, Who gathered all waters into one place, Who tied up the sea and closed the deep pit and sealed it with Your Name, Which is filled with glory and fear, of Whom everything is afraid and trembles before Your power.

Liturgy of Baptism

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

Zoxa Patri Ke Eyo Ke Agio Epnivmati. Ke nin
Ke aei Ke Estos eona estos eonon Amen

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to
the Holy Spirit Now and forever and unto
ages of ages Amen

VOCABULARY:

Ark, flood, Pantocrator

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	God the Pantocrator
Liturgical:	Baptism

Moral:	Steadfastness
Spiritual:	Prayer

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. How special are humans to God?

A. *Very special. God is our Father*

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

You, O LORD, are our Father; Our Redeemer from Everlasting is Your name.” Isaiah 63:16

CONNECTION POINT:

Over the last few weeks we have been learning who our God is. We learned that He is the Father of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ, that He is the creator of all things, seen and unseen; He is our creator and our Father. Today we- God willing- shall learn that He is very powerful. Later on, we shall learn how God cares for us always because He is our loving Father. What do you think the strongest thing in the world is?

Ask the kids about their fears? Show the kids that God is stronger than our fears.

LESSON BODY:

NOAH AND HIS FAMILY

There once was a man named Noah. He had a wife and three boys. Noah and his family loved God very much and worshiped Him. But Noah and his family had a very hard time. You see, this is because they lived during a time when everyone in the world did very bad things. Everybody around them, their neighbors, the people they saw every day, did not care about knowing God. There were so many bad things in the world happening all around them. Noah and his family were the only ones who did not do these bad things; they were different than everyone else. They were the only ones in the whole world who really cared to know God. Noah’s sons were not like the other children in school, they did not play outside with them, and they did not go to

their houses. They were different and special, but that made things very difficult for them because they always felt like they were alone.

Noah felt sad when he saw people doing wrong things, and he was scared that his family might get hurt. He prayed to God for help. (You can also pray for your family, for God to help them to always follow Him and keep them safe). God heard Noah and He helped Noah and protected his family. This is how God helped them.

GOD USES HIS POWER TO HELP HIS CHILDREN. GOD CARES FOR HIS CHILDREN

God told Noah to build an **ark** (a very big ship made of wood). God told Noah to make it in a certain way; Noah listened to everything God said and made the ark exactly the way God told him to. The ark was HUGE, it had 3 floors with many rooms inside, one window at the top, and a door on the side. God told Noah to make this ark because He was going to bring a **flood** (great amount of water) on the whole earth, and every single animal and every single person who was not inside the ark would die. Who was going to be inside the ark while the rain fell down and the flood came? Noah, his wife, his three sons, and their wives. 8 people total. But that is not all who would be inside. God also told Noah to take with him inside the ark 2 of every single kind of animal and 2 of every kind of bird, a male and a female of each kind. God called to all the animals and brought them to Noah and his family. Their job was to keep them alive and to feed them. Can you imagine Noah and his family standing outside the ark, and the elephants, giraffes, monkeys, lions, and bears all coming to them? God also told Noah to take all kinds of food with them in the ark, for his family and for the animals. And Noah did everything that God asked him to do.

THE FLOOD

Now the rain was going to come. Noah was very old when the rain came – he was 600 years old! And he went inside the ark with his family and with all the animals. The animals went in two by two inside the ark, in pairs, male and female. The animals were very peaceful with each other inside the ark – the big, scary animals did not hurt the smaller ones. They all stayed there together. And then God closed the door of the ark behind them. Then the rain came. (God waited to send the rain until Noah and his family and all the animals were safely inside the ark). They could hear the rain falling outside from inside the ark. Inside the ark, Noah and his family heard all the sounds from the animals: moos and bird songs, growls and purrs, roaring and barking. And outside it rained. Do you know how long it rained for? 40 days without stopping. The rain did not stop once, not even at night, and the flood waters rose very high and lifted up the ark and it floated on top of the water. (40 days is a little bit longer than one month). There was so much water on the earth, that all the very high mountains were completely covered

with water. If Noah had looked out the window while it was raining, he would have seen nothing at all except for rain and water. After the rain stopped falling, it took some time for the flood to go down on the earth.

GOD REMEMBERED NOAH, HIS FAMILY AND THE ANIMALS

Then God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the animals that *were* with him in the ark. And God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters went away. And the ark rested on top of some mountains (the mountains of Ararat).

Noah wanted to see if it was okay for them to come out, so he opened the window that he had made and he sent out a raven (a black bird that eats dead animals). The raven kept going back and forth until the waters dried up from the earth. Noah also sent out a dove to see if the water was gone from the earth. The dove did not find a place to rest (there was still water everywhere, so she came back to Noah). Noah waited 7 days and then sent the dove out again. She came back to him in the evening, with a freshly plucked olive leaf in her mouth; because of this, Noah knew that the waters had gone down from the earth. So he waited another seven days and sent out the dove again, and this time she did not come back to him. So Noah knew it was safe to come out of the ark now. They had been in the ark for almost 300 days (that is almost one whole year). That was how long the water stayed on the earth, even after the rain stopped. So Noah looked out and saw that the earth was dry. And God told Noah to come out with his family and with all the animals, and to spread out all over the earth and enjoy it. So they walked out of the ark and the first thing that Noah did was to build an altar to God and make him an offering. And God made a promise with Noah and He would never again bring a flood over the whole earth. And He gave Noah a sign of His promise with him: the rainbow in the sky. God told Noah that every time He sees the rainbow in the sky, He will remember that He promised Noah that He would never bring a huge flood on the earth again.

GOD IS PANTOCRATOR

God's power is so great, He is the **Pantocrator** (He cares for and supports everything).

God always cares and protects His family on earth (the church)

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- Scrap book building, a figure of the Ark, different animals and birds in couples and the Family of Noah.
- Building an ark: the whole class would help in building the ark of card board or wood and help in putting in it different items.
- Movie
- Story telling

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What is the meaning of Pantocrator?

A. God cares for and supports all creation

Q. Why did God send the flood?

A. To protect Noah and his family

Q. How did God save Noah and His family?

A. By water and the ark

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

“He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty” Psalm 91:1

CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

GOD OUR FATHER IS PANTOCRATOR

God saved Israel from Egypt – Exodus 14

God cut off the stream of the Jordan river –Joshua 3

God knocked down the walls of Jericho – Joshua 6

God made the sun to stand still – Joshua 10

God saved Israel from Assyria- 2nd Chronicles 32

God sends an army to fight for His people- 2nd kings:8-23

God moved the mountain for His church – Synexarium-the sixth day of the blessed month of Kiahk

Unit 1

Purpose: The focus of this Unit is God the Father. This unit starts with our Lord –the true image of the invisible God- accepting and loving children. Our Lord tells the children about God’s power, care, kindness and love. This unit is concluded with the concepts of worship and honor of God in prayer, fasting and giving.

LESSON 5: GOD OUR FATHER CARES FOR US ALWAYS

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

And a man of the house of Levi went and took *as wife* a daughter of Levi. 2So the woman conceived and bore a son. And when she saw that he *was* a beautiful *child*, she hid him three months. 3But when she could no longer hide him, she took an ark of bulrushes for him, daubed it with asphalt and pitch, put the child in it, and laid *it* in the reeds by the river's bank. 4And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him. 5Then the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river. And her maidens walked along the riverside; and when she saw the ark among the reeds, she sent her maid to get it. 6And when she opened *it*, she saw the child, and behold, the baby wept. So she had compassion on him, and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children." 7Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call a nurse for you from the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for you?" 8And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the maiden went and called the child's mother. 9Then Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give *you* your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him. 10And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. So she called his name Moses, saying, "Because I drew him out of the water." *Exodus 2*

“By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king’s command” *Hebrews 11: 23*.

“Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me! For my soul trusts in You; And in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge,” *Psalms 57:1*

“For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock.” *Psalms 27:5*

"You are my hiding place; You shall preserve me from trouble; You shall surround me with songs of deliverance." *Psalms 32:7*

CREED:

"Truly we believe in one God

God the **Father, the Pantocrator**

Creator of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible"

CHURCH FATHERS:

"If the children were not cast into the river, Moses would not have been saved, and would not have been raised in the security and dignity of the palace. The Saint believes that all events, even the most fierce, against the children of God, are used by the Lord, as part of His plan for their salvation. *St. John Chrysostom*

"Whoever escapes such things, should follow Moses' example, and should never stop shedding tears; for although having been secure inside the ark, yet the tears are the strong keeper of him who is saved by virtue. Tears of repentance are keepers of every virtue, hidden inside the heart, as well as its support, lest it would be devoured by the evil one?" *St. Gregory of Nyssa*

REFLECTION:

The story of baby Moses reflects God's continuous care for His children. The beauty of Moses face, the timing of the events shows God's tender mercies towards His people.

The story of baby Moses' deliverance is one of the images of our Baptism. How our mothers gave us to the water and took us from the water with a new name, our baptismal name. It is in Baptism, that we show the greatest trust in God.

PRAYER:

O' True Light, that enlightens every man, that comes into the world. You came to the world because of Your love to mankind, and all the creation rejoiced at Your coming. You saved our forefather Adam from temptation and our mother Eve from the pains of death and granted us the spirit of sonship - we praise You, we bless You saying; **Zok-sa-patri Ke ey-you Ke agiyou ep-nevmaty**

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

Zoxa Patri Ke Eyo Ke Agio Epnivmati. Ke nin
Ke aei Ke Estos eona estos eonon Amen

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to
the Holy Spirit Now and forever and unto
ages of ages Amen

VOCABULARY:

Saved, faith, Moses

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	God the Pantocrator and Lover of mankind
Liturgical:	Baptism
Moral:	Trusting God
Spiritual:	Prayer

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What is the meaning of Pantocrator?

A. *The One who care for and supports all creation*

Q. Why did god send the flood?

A. *To save Noah and His family from the sin in the world*

Q. How did God save Noah and His family?

A. *The water saved them from the sin and the ark saved them from drowning*

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

“He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty” Psalm 91:1

CONNECTION POINT:

Over the last few weeks, we have been learning about God our Father. We learned that He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that He is the creator of all things. That He is our creator and our loving Father. Today – God willing we shall learn that He cares for us every single second of our lives. God is Pantocrator

LESSON BODY:

CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE BIRTH OF MOSES

When Joseph died and an evil king ruled Egypt. The king was afraid of Joseph’s huge family. He made slaves of the people and made them work very hard, and he was afraid that, the boys become soldiers and fight against him, so he ordered that all the baby boys be killed. If the parents of the baby did not give the solders the baby to be killed, the parents themselves would be killed.

THE BIRTH OF MOSES, THE FAITH OF HIS PARENTS

When Moses was born, he was a beautiful child. His parents knew that God had given them a beautiful child because God wanted them to have **faith (trusting God)** in God and trust themselves and the baby Moses in God's hands. They trusted God and were not afraid of the king.

TRUSTING MOSES COMPLETELY TO GOD

Moses' mother hid him for 3 month, then he started to grow and his crying was louder and she Prayed to God to give her wisdom what to do to keep her baby from Pharaoh's soldiers so they would not drown him in the water. And she got an idea, she called her daughter (and his sister) Miriam to help her to make a basket and she put the baby in it. She painted the bottom of the basket with tar, to prevent water from going inside the basket. She lined the basket with soft cloth and laid the baby Moses inside. She was crying but trusted God with all her heart that He will continue to protect her child. She did not know what God is going to do, but she knew that God will do something. She took the basket with the baby in it and laid it gently in the water of the Nile River. She asked his sister to watch the basket as it floated on the water of the Nile.

GOD CONTINUED TO CARE FOR MOSES

The basket kept floating with the baby inside it, no waves or any big fish from the water would stop the small boat, (God was watching him very carefully) do you think anything could hurt him? No. At the same moment the princess (pharaoh's daughter) was swimming in the water with her maids and saw the basket floating and coming near her and she heard a noise coming out of it, so she asked her maids to get her the basket. They brought her the basket. When she looked inside, she found a beautiful baby boy, the princess loved the baby. The princess said: "This is one of the Hebrew babies but I love to keep him as my son, and she gave him a name "**Moses**" which in her language means "**son of the water**" because she found him in the river. We too are the children of water and Spirit because of our Baptism. The baby was crying. It looked like that he was hungry, so she asked if anyone can help. And her maids were looking to each other and had no answer, (God was working on his plan) Miriam (Moses' sister) was watching the whole time, and saw how everybody was excited about her brother. She start praying to God to give her wisdom to speak to the princess (as her mother did before) and she went up and asked the princess "would you like me to find for you woman who can nurse this baby"?, and the princess agreed, so she ran to her mother and told her the story, the mother knelt down and praised and thanked God for listening to her prayer and saving her baby, and she went to the princess to take care of Moses without letting her know that she was his real mother

GOD OUR FATHER IS THE PANTOCRATOR

God takes care of us like He did for baby Moses in every detail of our life every day. God loves us and continue to protect and support because He is Our Father and He is Pantocrator

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- **Building a basket for the baby:** need a straw basket, a doll for a baby, cloths, (you can use black plastic bag or black clay instead of Tar to paint the base of the basket) and a basin for water
- **Moses basket craft:** a coloring and pasting paper activity
- **Scrap book building**
- **Movie**

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What does God do for us when we get in trouble?

A. *God our Father looks out for us when we are in trouble. He protects us from danger*

Q. What is our job?

A. *We need to have faith in Him. Faith means to trust and obey Him*

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

“You are my hiding place; You shall preserve me from trouble; You shall surround me with songs of deliverance.” Psalm 32:7

CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

GOD OUR FATHER KNOWS US AND CARES FOR US

God was with Joseph – Genesis 39

God sent Saul to Samuel to be the first king – 1 Samuel 9

God sent Samuel to anoint David a king – 1 Samuel 16

God heals Hezekiah and extend his life – Isaiah 38

God heals Job and restore his fortune – Job

God cared for Ishmael and Hagar – Genesis 21:8-20

God accepted the repentance of Manasseh- 2nd Chronicles 33, the prayer of Manasseh

Unit Review Lesson:

First Grade Curriculum:

God Reveal Himself To Us

UNIT II: GOD CALL US HIS CHILDREN (5 LESSONS)

Purpose: This unit is the appropriate response to knowing God. How we become children of God in Baptism. The concepts of worship and honoring God in prayer, fasting and giving are explore

LESSON 6: BAPTISM IS WHEN WE BECOME CHILDREN OF GOD

LESSON 7: HONORING AND WORSHIPPING OUR HOLY GOD

LESSON 8: WE TALK TO GOD OUR FATHER

LESSON 9: GOD TALKS TO US WE LISTEN

LESSON 11: UNIT REVIEW

Unit II

Purpose: This unit is the appropriate response to knowing God. How we become children of God in Baptism. The concepts of worship and honoring God in prayer, fasting and giving are explored.

LESSON 7: BAPTISM IS WHEN WE BECOME CHILDREN OF GOD

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

"And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased." Luke 3:22

"Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3)

"Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God;" 1 John 3:1-2

"3Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Romans 6:3-4

"26For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Galatians 3: 26-29

"4But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, 5not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, 6whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Titus 3:4-7

“Repent and let everyone of you be baptized” (Acts 2:38)

CREED:

“Truly we believe in One God,

God the **Father, the Pantocrator**

Creator of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible”

CHURCH FATHERS:

“Thus it is written, “Many believed in His name, seeing the signs which He did. But Jesus did not trust Himself to them. For He needed not that any should testify of man; for Himself knew what was in man.” Behold, they already believed on Jesus, and yet Jesus did not trust Himself to them. Why? Because they were not yet born again of water and of the Spirit. From this have we exhorted and do exhort our brethren the catechumens. For if you ask them, they have already believed in Jesus; but because they have not yet received His flesh and blood, Jesus has not yet trusted Himself to them. What must they do that Jesus may trust Himself to them? They must be born again of water and of the Spirit; the Church that is in travail with them must bring them forth. They have been conceived; they must be brought forth to the light: they have breasts to be nourished at; let them not fear lest, being born, they may be smothered; let them not depart from the mother’s breasts.” *St. Augustine Commentary on John 3:6, Post Nicene Fathers*
Other Church Fathers references: St. John Chrysostom on John 3:6, St Cyril of Jerusalem Catechesis on Baptism

“And then remember that you received the seal of the Spirit; the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and godliness, and the spirit of holy fear, (Isaiah 11:2) and preserved what you received. God the Father sealed you, Christ the Lord strengthened you, and gave the earnest of the Spirit in your heart, (2 Corinthians 5:5) as you have learned in the lesson from the Apostle.” *St. Ambrose on the Sacraments*

REFLECTION:

In this lesson, the rite of baptism and Christmation is explained to the students without going into great details. The main focus is how it is a new birth, cleansing the vessels to be indwelt by the Holy Spirit in the Mystery of Myron. In this lesson we should collect from the families the baptismal dates of the children and make a list in the classroom of their dates to make celebration in their baptismal rather than birth dates.

PRAYER:

Blessed are You, our king, God the Pantocrator. Blessed is your only begotten Son Jesus Christ our God, through whom all the nations have been invited from darkness to the true and marvelous light, from the darkness of sin and falsehood of idols into the knowledge of truth...

To You every knee shall bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue shall confess, saying Jesus Christ is Lord...

Through the goodwill of Your good Father and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and ever. Amen

From the liturgy of Baptism

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

Χεῖς μαροῦ τ' ἡ χεῖς Φῶς τ' ἐμ Πωρι : ἐμ Πνεῦμα
ἐθοῦαβ : ἡ τριάς ἐτ' ἡ ἐβόλ : τ' ἐνοῦα τ' ἡ μος τ' ἐν ἡ
νας

Blessed is the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.
The perfect Trinity, Whom we worship and glorify

VOCABULARY:

Baptism, Myron, Procession

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	God is Our Father
Liturgical:	Baptism
Moral:	Keeping God's commandments

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What does God do for us when we get in trouble?

A. *God our Father looks out for us when we are in trouble. He protects us from danger*

Q. What is our job?

A. *We need to have faith in Him. Faith means to trust and obey Him*

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"You are my hiding place; You shall preserve me from trouble; You shall surround me with songs of deliverance." Psalm 32:7

CONNECTION POINT:

We were created as children of God, but through the sin of Adam we lost our status. Through **baptism** we are born again from God. It is a better status than before the fall.

LESSON BODY:

TO BE CHILDREN OF GOD, WE HAVE TO BE BAPTIZED

A story: Mary and Mark are a brother and sister who love to go to Church every Sunday, and to attend Sunday school. They now have a baby brother, his name is John. On this Sunday, they are even happier because their brother John will be baptized. Their mom and dad told them that when their brother John is baptized, he will be a Christian like them. Their mom bought new white clothes for John, which he will wear after he is baptized. The white clothes are a sign of being clean and pure, just like John will be when he is baptized.

BAPTISMAL VOWS

Early on Sunday morning, the whole family goes to the Baptism room in the Church. Do you know where the baptism room in our Church is? First the priest prays on the water to make it holy before the baby is baptized in it. Then the mother holds the baby on her left arm, looking towards the West and lifts her right hand, reciting after the priest: "I renounce you Satan, and all your evil deeds and all your wicked powers". The mother is doing this instead of the baby, since the baby is too small to speak. After that the mother looks towards the East, holds John on her left arm and raises her right hand to repeat after the priest: "I confess to you O Christ my God and to all Your redeeming laws and commands, and your life giving works". Then the priest asks her three times: "Do you believe on behalf of this child?" and she answers him three times "I believe". Here the mother is accepting the faith on behalf of John, since he cannot speak. This also means that she is taking the responsibility of teaching him all about our Church and the faith.

EMERSION

Early on Sunday morning, the whole family goes to the Baptism room in the Church. Do you know where the baptism room in our Church is? First the priest prays on the water to make it holy before the baby is baptized in it. Then the mother holds the baby on her left arm, looking towards the West and lifts her right hand, reciting after the priest: "I renounce you Satan, and all your evil deeds and all your wicked powers". The mother is doing this instead of the baby, since the baby is too small to speak. After that the mother looks towards the East, holds John on her left arm and raises her right hand to repeat after the priest: "I confess to you O Christ my God and to all Your redeeming laws and commands, and your life giving works". Then the priest asks her three times: "Do you believe on behalf of this child?" and she answers him three times "I believe". Here the mother is accepting the faith on behalf of John, since he cannot speak. This also means that she is taking the responsibility of teaching him all about our Church and the faith.

THE HOLY MYRON

We become a temple of the Holy Spirit by the **Myron (the most holy oil, made especially from different ingredients, prayed over it by the Pope and the Bishops, contains a very small amount of the spices that was around the body of our Lord in the tomb)**

Demonstrate to them how the priest anoints the baby with Myron oil and show them the 36 times: After that the priest takes the bottle of Myron, and anoints John 36 times: (I will demonstrate this to the children on the doll, without going through the names of all 36 places below

1. The top of the head
2. The right side of the nose
3. The left side of the nose
4. The mouth
5. The right ear
6. The right eye
7. The left eye
8. The left ear
9. The heart
10. The belly
11. The back of the heart
12. The whole back (spine)
13. The right shoulder joint
14. The right underarm
15. The right elbow joint
16. The right inner elbow joint
17. The right wrist joint
18. The back of the right wrist
19. The left shoulder joint
20. The left underarm
21. The left elbow joint
22. The left inner elbow joint
23. The left wrist joint
24. The back of the left wrist
25. The right hip joint
26. The right inner hip joint
27. The right knee joint
28. The right inner knee joint
29. The right ankle joint
30. Above the right ankle joint
31. The left hip joint
32. The left inner hip joint
33. The left knee joint
34. The left inner knee joint
35. The left ankle joint
36. above the left ankle joint

As the priest anoints John, he says: "I anoint you John with the Holy Oil in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit". After anointing John, the priest breathes into his face saying "Receive the Holy Spirit and be a pure vessel through Jesus Christ our Lord."

After that the priest dressed John in his new white clothes, and tied a red ribbon on his chest. This refers to the power and deep joy, and that John has become a soldier belonging to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now John is a Christian, and after attending the Holy Liturgy with his parents, he will have communion for the first time. The whole family is very happy on this blessed day, and at the end of the Liturgy,

The procession FOR THE NEW CHILD OF GOD:

The church celebrates the newly baptized baby or adult by a **procession (a joyful walk around the church 3 times with singing. Deacons go in front with the cross and the banners)**

YOU AND I ARE THE CHILDREN OF GOD BY HOLY BAPTISM AND HOLY MYRON

We know this because we can take communion. Only the children of God can take communion. No one can take communion unless they are baptized first.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- Scrap book building: include actual appropriate pictures of each child baptism, pictures of the church's font of Baptism, their date of baptism in bold colors, when their mothers took the baptismal etc.
- Play-acting Baptism: a basin of water, a small baby doll, and three small bottles for the three oils of baptism. Kids should take turn in playing the roles of abouna and the mother.
- Movie Drawing Coloring Power point

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. How did we become children of God?

A. *In Baptism*

Q. How were we baptized?

A. Immersed (put completely under water) 3 times in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit

Q. What is Myron?

A. The Holy Oil

VERSE TO REMEMBER

"Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Mark 1:11

CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

WE BECAME GOD'S CHILDREN BY BAPTISM

Father's voice proclaimed His Son in Baptism – Mark 1

Naaman was healed by emersion in the Jordan – 2 kings Chapter 5

Our Lord Jesus before His ascension commanded His disciples to Baptize- Matthew 28:16 -20

The baptism of Saul of Tarsus – Acts 9

Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch – Acts 8:26-40

The baptism of the house of the jailor in Philippi – Acts 16:16-34

Unit II

Purpose: This unit is the appropriate response to knowing God. How we become children of God in Baptism. The concepts of worship and honoring God in prayer, fasting and giving are explored.

LESSON 8: HONORING AND WORSHIPPING OUR HOLY GOD

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

"I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word" John 17:6

"Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Philippians 2: 9-11

"Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. 2And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed. 3Then Moses said, "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn." 4So when the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." 5Then He said, "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground." 6Moreover He said, "I am the God of your father-- the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God." Exodus chapters 3:1-6:

"Oh come, let us worship and bow down; Let us kneel before the LORD our Maker. For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand." Psalm 95:6-7

"That you may fear this glorious and awesome name, THE LORD YOUR GOD," Deuteronomy 28:58 "Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness! Tremble before Him, all the earth." Psalm 96:9

"But as for me, I will come into Your house in the multitude of Your mercy; In fear of You I will worship toward Your holy temple." Psalm 5:7

“For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named” Ephesians 3:14-15

CREED:

**“Truly *we believe* in One God,
God the Father, the Pantocrator
Creator of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible”**

CHURCH FATHERS:

“What is holier ground than the Church of God? Therefore, let us stand in it barefooted, namely reject the dead works.” St. Augustine

“Moses, as a symbol of the people, was commanded by the Lord to take off his sandals, to set the steps of his feet and of his spirit free of the shackles and bonds of the body, to walk in the way of the Spirit.” St. Ambrose.

“I wish that whoever approaches the holy ground of God’s sanctuary, will take his sandals off, as Moses did, so as not to enter there with something dead, and would have nothing between him and God. As to him, who intends to flee from Egypt (love of the world, and things related to it), let him put them on for the sake of his safety, lest the numerous serpents and scorpions found there, would “bruise his heel” (Gen. 3: 15). But let him, as commanded, “trample on them” (Luke 10: 19).? St. Gregory of Nyssa

REFLECTION:

In this lesson we come to harvest the fruits of telling the children “who God is”. Therefore teachers should be consistent. They would teach by example and by lessons of how to pray and worship. Teachers should pray with their students in sincere simple words, with closed eyes, standing or kneeling. Have an icon in the class and let them take turn in lighting the candle before the icon each class.

Faith:	One God
Liturgical:	How do Orthodox worship God
Moral:	Honoring God
Spiritual:	Prayer, fasting and giving

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What did our Lord Jesus teach us about our God in the last few lessons?

A. Our Lord Jesus taught us that God is our Father who created everything, God is Pantocrator. We become the children of God in Baptism. God is Powerful (strong as in the flood), Beautiful and gentle (as in roses), wise (very smart as in humans), very loving (as in good parents), does not change (as in mountains)

Q. What do we call God?

A. Father

What does God call us?

A. His Children

Q. How did we become His Children?

A. In creation, then we got lost from Him, and Christ brought us back again to be the children of God in Baptism

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased."

CONNECTION POINT:

We have been learning about our God. We learned how God is the creator of good things. God made good things out of nothing. God is our creator and our Father. We learned how God is very powerful in the story of the flood. How is He very caring in the story of baby Moses. How we become the children of God by our Baptism and our Christmation. Today we shall learn how to honor our awesome Father God.

LESSON BODY:

THE PROPER ATTITUDE TOWARD GOD IS WORSHIP:

Since God is our loving Father, who is very kind, very beautiful, very strong, and very wise – how do we connect with Him, come closer to Him?

The answer is that we **Worship**: worship means the **(greatest love and respect in action and words)**.

We **worship** in 3 ways: **Prayer, Fasting, and Giving**

PRAYER

(the best way is to show by acting the prayer position and the Metanoia)

Before we pray, we always make the Sign of the Cross. Ask the children to demonstrate this, and ask them what we say when we are doing it: “In the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.” Whenever we hear the Name of God – who knows what the name of God is? The name of God is “*The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,*” or “*Jesus Christ.*” Whenever we hear these two names of God, we always bow down to God. There are different ways to bow down: bowing the head, bowing from the waist, kneeling, or face down to the ground. Sometimes we do “**Metanoia**” which is **(bowing down to the ground)** many times in worship [demonstrate this for the kids]. Can you remember any time in church when you saw people doing metanoias? Tell them to watch for this during Holy Week, and especially Good Friday

Now we are going to hear a story about someone who worshipped God. His name was Moses, and he was a shepherd. One day he was taking care of the sheep, making sure none of them got lost or left the flock. As he was with the sheep, he came to a mountain, and at the bottom of the mountain, he saw something that made him stop everything he was doing and pay very

close attention. He saw a bush (a small tree), and there was a fire in the bush. But, the bush was not catching on fire like what would happen to a tree in a forest fire. The bush was not burnt at all. So Moses knew that this fire was from God. Then God called to Moses from the bush, and said to him, “Moses, Moses!” Moses said, “Here I am.” Then God told Moses, “Do not come near this place, but take off your sandals from your feet because the place where you are standing is **holy**. I am God, the God of your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” And Moses bowed down with his face to the ground before God, because God is so great and powerful, and awesome.

What does “**holy**” mean? Holy means **very special and belongs to God**. God is very special, and any ground where God is also is very special. Where do we take off our shoes in church? (When we are going to take communion and going inside the altar). We do this because it means we are coming close to God, the same way that Moses was. Moses also did a **metanoia** and worshipped God. For us, the Liturgy is the greatest worship that we can do. During the liturgy, we also stop everything that we are doing (like Moses did) and we come to church to come close to God and to pray and bow down before God. How do we pray? With closed eyes, standing or kneeling, and raised hands.

The **church** is the **house of God** and we all love and respect the house of God. How can we respect the house of God? [Let the kids make suggestions]. Also, in the house of God we see icons (pictures) of the saints. We have these icons because we love the saints and we want to keep them with us always. The same way that we have pictures of our family and friends that we love and we keep those pictures with us, we also keep the pictures of the saints with us, and kiss them.

FASTING:

Another way that we **worship** is by fasting. Who knows what fasting is?

[Let the kids tell you what they know about fasting]. Sometimes fasting means not eating at all: like when we fast before communion and we don’t eat anything until after we have communion. And sometimes, fasting means not eating certain food, like when we fast with the Church on Wednesdays and Fridays and during seasons of fasting

GIVING:

(prepare a box for collection, servants start putting in it coins)

The third way to **worship** God is by giving. What are some things that I can give? [Let the kids make suggestions then tell them] I can give some of my money from my allowance to the church and to poor people. I can also give some of my time to the church and to poor people. This makes God very happy because He loves to see us all together in the church, helping each other. How could I help in the church? [Again, let the kids make suggestions].

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- **Acting out** the teaching about prayer, worshipping and giving (need to prepare a box for collection)
- **Scrap book building:** figures of persons praying and worshipping, the Name of The Holy Trinity and of our Lord in Bold colors.
- **Make a worship box:** a container for each child, labeled “..... worship box” in it each child will drop a symbol of their prayer, fasting and giving.
- Movie,
- singing

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What is the meaning of worship?

A. *Worship: loving and honoring God in words and action.*

Q. What are the 3 ways to worship?

A. *Praying, fasting, and giving*

Q. What does holy mean?

A. *Holy: very special and belong to God*

Q. What is the name of God?

A. *The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit / Jesus Christ*

Q. What do we do when we hear the name of God?

A. *We bow down and make the sign of the cross*

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"Oh come, let us worship and bow down; Let us kneel before the LORD our Maker." Psalm 95:6

CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

IT IS WORTHY AND FITTING TO HONOR OUR HOLY GOD

Abraham gives tithing to Melchizedek- Genesis 14:18-20

Jacob consecrated Bethel and promise tithing to God– Genesis 28:10-22

Moses asked God what is His name – Exodus 3

Israel at Mount Sinai – Exodus 19

King David danced before the Ark of the Covenant – 2 Samuel 6

Baby John leapt in the womb of his mother – Luke 1: 39-45

Unit II

Purpose: This unit is the appropriate response to knowing God. How we become children of God in Baptism. The concepts of worship and honoring God in prayer, fasting and giving are explored.

LESSON 9: WE TALK TO GOD OUR FATHER

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

1 Samuel 1

"When you pray go to your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in Heaven" Matthew 6:6

"Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed." Mark 1:35

"Let my prayer be set before You as incense, The lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice" Psalm 145:2

Parable of the Persistent Widow -Luke 18:1-8

Parable of the Servant Luke -17:5-10

CREED:

"Truly we believe in One God,

God the Father, the Pantocrator

Creator of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible"

CHURCH FATHERS:

"As to Hannah, once she harbored the thought, her wish was granted, and got Samuel. The Book says: *"Ask and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find"* (Matthew 7: 7). We are taught that God knows the heart; and does not care for the apparent movements of the body, nor influenced by the outer events."

"Praying is to dare to speak and debate with God; If we silently whisper, without even opening our lips; yet we cry out from inside, we should be sure that God will always hear us.

Now, if we assign for ourselves, certain hours for praying -- like the third, the sixth, and the ninth hours -- the Gnostic; namely, the spiritual man of knowledge, prays all his life long, seeking to have a communion with God through his prayers."

"It is possible to utter a prayer with no sound; through the concentration of all the inner spiritual nature, without the distraction of the mind from thinking of God." *St. Clement of Alexandria*

"Hannah -- mentioned in the first book of the kings (1 Samuel) -- a symbol of the Church, held fast to praying to God, not by noisy requests, but in silence and meekness from the depths of her heart, She uttered a secret prayer in a clear faith. She did not speak with her voice, but within her heart; and believing that God listens to such prayer, she got what she prayed for. That is what the Book confirms, saying: *"Hannah spoke in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard (but God listened to her)"* (1 Samuel 1: 13). And we read in the Psalms: *"Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still"* (Psalm 4: 4). *St. Cyprian*

"Hannah, though her voice was not heard, yet her quest was granted, because her heart cried out ! 'Abel', the righteous, not only prayed while silent, but also prayed while dead, as his blood cried out louder than any trumpet! Her tears preceded her tongue, more clearly than any trumpet; that is why God opened her womb, and turned the solid rock into a fruitful field. If you so weep, you would follow the lead of your Lord; who has wept for Lazarus, and for Jerusalem; and got troubled in spirit because of Judas. He often wept, but was never seen laughing. "This is the proof of a contrite heart; when we do not respond in anger to him who slanders us; but within the limits of self defense." *St. John Chrysostom*

REFLECTION:

This is the time to establish the habit of prayer and encourage the family to participate in it. They already received a journal on what they should pray, two weeks ago. This week they get instruction on how to pray. We need to check if everyone got the prayer sheet. It might be

helpful also to pray those prayers with them in the class so they can memorize it. When you utter the Name of the holy Trinity or the Name of Christ, you should bow your head (at least) down.

The prayers of Hanna are example of what our Lord spoke about in the Gospels. She had the faith in God's response, which made her stayed and persist until she got what she needed.

PRAYER:

Out of the depths I have cried to You, O LORD;

LORD, hear my voice! Let Your ears be attentive To the voice of my supplications.

If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with You, That You may be feared.

I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, And in His word I do hope.

My soul waits for the Lord More than those who watch for the morning—

I say, more than those who watch for the morning.

O Israel, hope in the LORD; For with the LORD there is mercy, And with Him is abundant redemption.

And He shall redeem Israel From all his iniquities. **Alleluia.**

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

Χεῖς μαροῦ τῆς Φωτὸς καὶ Πνεύματος ἁγίου: τῆς τριάδος ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ψυχῆς ἐβόλῃ: τὸν ὁποῦν τιμῶμεν
τὸν ἡμεῖς.

Blessed is the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. The perfect Trinity, Whom we worship and glorify.

VOCABULARY:

Hanna, Elkanah, Eli, Temple, pray

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	God Listens
Liturgical:	Priests as Stewards
Moral:	Respect of the church
Spiritual:	Prayer in difficult times

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What is the meaning of worship? Holy?

A. *Worship: loving and honoring God in words and action.*

Holy: very special and belong to God

Q. How we worship?

A. *3 ways: prayer, fasting and giving*

Q. What is the name of God?

A. *The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit / Jesus Christ*

Q. What do we do when we hear the name of God?

A. *We bow down and make the sign of the cross*

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

“Oh come, let us worship and bow down; Let us kneel before the LORD our Maker.” Psalm 95:6

CONNECTION POINT:

We learned from the Bible that our God is our loving Father, who is most powerful (the flood) and most caring (baby Moses and the Ark of Noah). We learned how to worship our Holy God: Prayer, Fasting, giving and bowing down before God. Today we shall learn how we talk to our Holy God.

LESSON BODY:

HANNAH IS VERY SAD

Today, we are going to hear the story about what happened to woman whose name was Hanna. Hannah spent a long time not having any children. This made her very sad. She wanted a child very much. All of her friends had children and she would see them playing with them, and she would feel even more sad that she did not have a child of her own. She used to go to the **Temple (the place like the church where people went to pray in the Old Testament)**, and pray **(to come before God and talk to Him.)** to God to give her a child. Her husband, whose name was **Elkanah**, did not like to see his wife so sad and always tried to cheer her up by buying presents for her and trying to comfort her. But none of this worked because the only thing that Hannah wanted was a child.

HANNAH PRAYS IN THE TEMPLE

One day Hannah went to the **Temple** and she was crying so hard and **praying** to God inside her heart to give her a son. She promised God that if he gave her a boy, she would give him to God to serve Him all his life and he would stay in the Temple always. As she was praying, Eli the high priest saw her. Now Hannah was praying inside her heart, she did not say anything out loud, but her lips were moving [*demonstrate to the kids what you mean*]. So Eli the high priest saw her, just moving her lips, [*again, demonstrate to the kids, then ask them what they would think if they saw you doing this?? Take their responses, and see if anyone says that it looks like something is wrong. When someone says it, then agree with them right away. If they do not, tell them that Eli thought something was wrong with her!*] She did not look normal! But this was because she was praying so hard in her heart, that she didn't even notice anyone around her or care what she looked like. And she wasn't praying out loud so Eli did not know that she was

praying. Eli came up to Hannah and he told her, “what is wrong with you? Why aren’t you acting like a normal person?” She told him, “It is because I am very sad, my father, and I am crying to the Lord.” She meant that she was telling our Lord every single thing she was feeling and not hiding any of her feelings from Him, and asking Him for help. Eli the priest knew something very important: he knew that if someone was praying this much and this honestly from her heart, that God would hear this person and listen to her. He knew that God always hears people when they pray from their hearts. So Eli told Hannah something very important; he said, “Go in peace, my daughter, and God will give you what you have asked from Him.” What did Eli mean? He meant that God had *listened* to Hannah and heard her. What was Hannah asking God for? Yes, a child! So that meant now, that God had heard Hannah’s prayer for a son, and would give her a son. Hannah felt peace in her heart after she heard Eli the high priest tell her this, and she left the Temple. She was not feeling sad anymore. She knew God would give her a son very soon.

GOD LISTENS TO HANNAH AND SAMUEL IS BORN

The next morning she went with her husband Elkanah to worship and thank God in the Temple, and then they went back home. Very soon, she had a baby boy! Hannah and Elkanah were so happy! They took care of him for a little bit, and then Hannah brought him to the Temple, like she had promised God she would do. She showed him to Eli the high priest, and said, “do you remember me? See, this is the boy that you told me God would give me!” And the boy’s name was Samuel.

GOD LISTENS TO US

Hannah needed God to listen to her and she needed His help. She was so sad, and she cried to God and talked to Him about how she felt. God listened to her heart, and helped her. In the same way, God always listens to us when we talk to Him. Have you ever thought about running to God when you are crying so that He can take care of you? He will hear you if you do that, and He will take very good care of you. What about if you are scared, maybe at night, or maybe if someone says something not nice to you in school. Do you know that you can pray to God when you feel this way, and He will hear you, even if you don’t say anything out loud? Inside yourself, tell Him, “God I’m so scared right now, I’m afraid that something bad is going to happen, and I don’t want to be alone.” Or you can say anything you want! Whatever you are feeling. Our heavenly Father listens to us always.

Here is a question for you: do you say “good morning” to your parents in the morning? (Yes) Do they hear you? (Yes) In the same way, when we wake up in the morning, we say “Good

morning” to God, and He will hear us. At night, we tell Him “Good night.” But there are very special ways to tell God “Good morning” and “good night” because God is very special, and He is not like any regular person. He is so good. This is what we can do to: Before we go to sleep at night, we can think about all the good things that God has given us, and we can say thank you for them. Let us think right now about some good things that God has given us. [Let the kids think of these things and say them out loud]. You can each do this by yourselves at night. Then we can pray in the way that our Lord Jesus taught us, “Our Father...” then we pray for all the people that we know who need prayer and for our family, friends, our Sunday School class, our church, our abounas, and even our enemies - people who are mean to us. We ask God to take care of them and help them, and to keep us all safe and joyful. Then we can ask for things that we want. We pray with our eyes closed, we raise our hands to God [demonstrate for the kids]. When we stand like this, it is like we are asking God for a very big hug. How do you ask your parents for a hug? [Have one of the kids demonstrate]. In the same way, we can stand like this when we pray, and our prayer is our way of asking God to give us a hug, to give us Love.

OUR BEDROOMS ARE HOLY

Also, our bedroom should be kept holy, which means it should be a very special place for talking to God and for sleeping. We should not have a TV or a computer and internet in our bedroom, because it is a special place. And, I will tell you a secret, if we keep our bedroom special like this, then God will find a place to come and stand in our bedroom and call to us like He called to Samuel and tell us special and important things that are only meant for us to hear. And He will find a place to come and listen to us when we talk to Him, and to make us feel better when we are sad or scared. And He will be our best friend, and never leave us.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- At the end of this lesson you give each student a cross to hang in their bedrooms.
- Puppet show: Hanna, Elkana, Pannena, Eli the high priest, a picture of the Tabernacle (or an iconostasis of the Church)
- Acting,
- Scrap book building,
- Story telling
- Singing Ten Theno

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. Why was Hannah sad?

A. She didn't have any children

Q. What did Hannah do when she was sad?

A. She went to the Temple (the place that was the church in the Old Testament) and she prayed from her heart to God, and cried and told Him all what she was feeling and asked Him to help her.

Q. How did Hannah know that God listened to her and heard her?

A. Eli the priest told her that God had heard her and would give her what she was asking for, and Hannah felt peaceful in her heart.

Q. When can we talk to God so that He will listen to us too?

A. Anytime! Whenever we feel sad, scared, and when we feel happy.

Q. How can we talk to God? **What** to pray, **when** to pray, **where** to pray, **how** to pray?

A. We can pray the way our Lord Jesus Christ taught us how to pray by saying "Our Father..." and we remember all the good things God has given us, and say "Thank you." We pray with our eyes closed, we raise our hands to God [demonstrate for the kids]. When we stand like this, it is like we are asking God for a very big hug. How do you ask your parents for a hug? [Have one of the kids demonstrate]. In the same way, we can stand like this when we pray, and our prayer is our way of asking God to give us a hug, to give us Love.

For example, they can remember that God was good to them that they have a home; He was with them when they were in trouble. Clear instructions on praying Our Father and the first part of the Thanksgiving prayer in the morning and at night. They should also learn how to pray "Our Father" before food. Instruction to remember everyone in their prayer: family, friends, Sunday school class, our church, our abounas and even our enemies.

Distribute the Crosses with instructions to hang on top of their beds or in their prayer corner.

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

“When you pray go to your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in Heaven” (Matthew 6:6)

CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

WE TALK TO GOD OUR FATHER

Abraham intercede for Sodom – Genesis 18:16-33

Jacob wrestled with God for blessing– Genesis 32:22-32

Israel won battle when Moses raised his hands in prayer- Exodus 17:8-16

Elijah prayed to God to accept his sacrifice – 1king:18

Solomon prayed in the dedication of the Temple- 1king:8

Daniel used to pray three times every day- Daniel:6

Unit II

Purpose: The focus of this Unit is God the Father. This unit starts with our Lord –the true image of the invisible God- accepting and loving children. Our Lord tells the children about God’s power, care, kindness and love. This unit is concluded with the concepts of worship and honor of God in prayer, fasting and giving.

LESSON 10: GOD TALKS TO US, WE LISTEN

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Now the LORD came and stood and called as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel answered, "Speak Lord, for Your servant hears." 1 Samuel 3:10

CREED:

**“Truly we believe in One God,
God the Father, the Pantocrator
Creator of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible”**

CHURCH FATHERS:

“Reflect then how great an evil it is for us, who ought to live so purely as not even to need written words, but to yield up our hearts, as books, to the Spirit; now that we have lost that honor, and are come to have need of these, to fail again in duly employing even this second remedy. For if it be a blame to stand in need of written words, and not to have brought down on ourselves the grace of the Spirit; consider how heavy the charge of not choosing to profit even after this assistance, but rather treating what is written with neglect, as if it were cast forth without purpose, and at random, and so bringing down upon ourselves our punishment with increase. But that no such effect may ensue, let us give strict heed unto the things that are written; and let us learn how the Old Law was given on the one hand, how on the other the New Covenant.” First homily of St. John Chrysostom on St. Matthew’s Gospel, Post Nicene Fathers

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	God speaks to us in the Bible
Liturgical:	Priests as guides
Moral:	Obedience (submission)
Spiritual:	Reading the Word of God

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Q. Why was Hannah sad?

A. She didn't have any children

Q. What did Hannah do when she was sad?

A. She went to the Temple (the place that was the church in the Old Testament) and she prayed from her heart to God, and cried and told Him all what she was feeling and asked Him to help her.

Q. How did Hannah know that God listened to her and heard her?

A. Eli the priest told her that God had heard her and would give her what she was asking for, and Hannah felt peaceful in her heart.

Q. When can we talk to God so that He will listen to us too?

A. Anytime! Whenever we feel sad, scared, and when we feel happy.

Q. How can we talk to God? **What** to pray, **when** to pray, **where** to pray, **how** to pray?

A. We can pray the way our Lord Jesus Christ taught us how to pray by saying "Our Father..." and we remember all the good things God has given us, and say "Thank you." We pray with our eyes closed, we raise our hands to God [demonstrate for the kids]. When we stand like this, it is like we are asking God for a very big hug.

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"When you pray go to your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in Heaven" (Matthew 6:6)

CONNECTION POINT - REVIEW PRACTICE

We learned from the Bible that our God is our loving Father, who is most powerful (the flood) and most caring (baby Moses and the Ark of Noah). We learned how to worship our Holy God: Prayer, Fasting, giving and bowing down before God. Today we shall learn how we talk to our Holy God.

(Check if the kids are applying what they learned last week about prayer and Check to see if they kids hung up their crosses at home.)

LESSON BODY:

SAMUEL LISTENS

Last week we talked about how we talk to God and *He* listens. Today we are going to see how *God* talks to us and we **listen**. **True listening is listening with the heart, and not just with the ears.** Remember how we learned last week that Hannah had a son? Does anyone remember what his name was? [When someone says Samuel, move on. If not, remind them that his name was Samuel]. Today, we are going to hear about Samuel and about the things that happened to him. If you remember, we said that his mother brought him to the **Temple** (this was a place like a church where people used to go to worship God in the Old Testament) after he grew up a little bit. She brought him there to stay because she had promised God that she would give her son to Him. So Samuel stayed all the time in the **Temple**; he would pray and help the priest, like deacons do now. Does anyone remember from last week what the priest's name was? His name was Eli, and he taught Samuel how to serve God and how to worship Him. One time, when Samuel was lying down to go to sleep, something happened. Samuel heard a Voice calling for him, saying, "Samuel, Samuel!" Samuel got up right away and ran to see Eli the priest, because he thought it was Eli who was calling for him. But when he came to Eli, Eli told him, "I did not call, go lie down again." Well, this is strange. Who was calling for him then? It wasn't Eli, and there was no one else around them. Can you guess who was calling Samuel? [Let the children guess, and see if they will know it was God]. It was our Lord who was calling Samuel's name, but Samuel did not know

it was Him because he couldn't see Him. So he went to lie down again, like Eli told him. Then our Lord called Samuel again, and said, "Samuel!" But again, Samuel didn't know it was the Lord and he got up and ran to Eli the priest because he *still* thought it was him, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Eli answered him and said, "I did not call you, my son, go back and lie down again." Samuel listened, and went back to lie down again. Then it happened a third time, the Lord called for Samuel, and Samuel got up and went to Eli. But this time, Eli the priest figured out that Samuel must be hearing the Voice of our Lord. So Eli told him to do this: "Go back and lie down, and if our Lord calls you, then you must say, 'Speak, Lord, for Your servant hears.'" So Samuel obeyed and went to lie down in his place again. Now the Lord came and stood and called for Samuel as He had done the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" And what do you think Samuel answered and said? [Have the kids say it if they can remember]: "Speak Lord, for Your servant hears." [Have the kids repeat this all together] Then our Lord starting to speak with Samuel and tell him very important and special things, things that He only wanted to tell to Samuel. And this is how the relationship between Samuel and our Lord began. As Samuel kept growing up, he kept growing closer and closer to our Lord and our Lord always spoke with Samuel.

GOD SPEAKS TO US THROUGH THE BIBLE.

Ask the children, "does your father at home speak to you?" "How often does he speak to you?" When the kids say, "all the time," or "a lot," tell them that just like our fathers at home speak to us, God our Father in heaven speaks to us all the time too, like He spoke with Samuel. We hear His voice in different and special ways:

The first way we hear His voice is in the Bible. Has anyone here noticed what we do in the church when we read the Bible? (Let the kids respond). We all stand up so that we can listen very carefully, and we light candles. This means that we are listening to something very important: God's Voice, and we are listening with our hearts, and not just our ears. We close our eyes, so that we only hear the deacon or abouna reading the Bible. We should also read the Bible at home, and pay very close attention, because it is still God's Voice speaking to us even though we are at home.

GOD SPEAKS IN OUR HEARTS

The other way we hear God's voice is inside our own hearts. This is a very special way. Whenever we feel sad or we feel bad that we did something wrong, this means that God wants to tell us something very important, because He loves us very much and doesn't want us ever to stay sad or keep doing wrong things. He wants us to be happy. So when we feel

sad, this means that it is time to get ready to listen to God's Voice: just like Samuel *got up* and went to go see Eli the priest, we should *get up* and go see abouna or our parents. We tell our parents or abouna that we feel sad and listen to what they say. What are some things that make us sad? [Have the kids say some things, and then suggest]: What about if I hit my sister or my brother? Does that make me sad? Yes, it does, and if that happens, I can go tell abouna that I did that and that it made me very sad, and listen to what he will say. Inside our hearts, God will also tell us when we *should do* something that is good. Can you think of good things that we could do? [Let the kids suggest things like helping other people, sitting with someone if they are crying, etc..]

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

At the end of this lesson you pass the first grade Bibles

Puppets: Samuel and Eli the high priest a puppet beds

Scrap book building,

Acting,

Coloring

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What does it mean to listen?

A. *True listening is listening with the heart, and not just with the ears*

Q. What did Samuel say when Eli told him that our Lord was speaking to him?

A. *"Speak Lord, for your servant hears."*

Q. What are the 4 ways that God speaks to us?

A. *Through the Bible, through the abounas, through our parents, and in our hearts*

Q. What do we do when we read the Bible in church?

A. *We stand up, and we listen very carefully (with our hearts). We close our eyes, so that we only hear the deacon or abouna reading the Bible.*

Reading the word of God at home:

1. Let us listen to God's word at home by reading with our parents the 365 and answering the questions of each day, writing them in our notebook.
2. Put your Bible on top of your study books so you always start with it before you go on and finish your books.

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"Speak Lord for your servant is listening" 1 Samuel 3:10

DAILY READINGS

WE LISTEN TO THE WORD OF GOD

- Ezra read the Word of God to the people of God- Nehemiah 8
 - Hilkiah found the book of the Law, and Israel rejoices – 2 Chronicles: 34
 - Our Lord read the Bible in the synagogue – Luke 4: 14-30
 - The parable of the sower and the seed – Matthew 13
 - Our Lord's family are those who listen to the Word of God and keep it- Matthew:12:46-50
 - Moses commanded the Israelites to keep the word of God- Deuteronomy 28
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Unit II Review Lesson

First Grade Curriculum:

God Reveal Himself To Us

UNIT III: GOD SENDS HIS SON (8 LESSONS)

Purpose: In this unit, the students will learn how the devil, using the serpent deceived the children of God leading them to disobey God and eventually separate them from their loving Father. The serpent trick was to change the image of God in the mind of Adam and Eve, when the serpent said *“For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil”* Genesis 3:5. This implied that God had other hidden intentions and those intentions were not so loving, so instead of trusting the unconditionally loving Father, they were not sure anymore of His perfect love. The actions of eating, hiding and the feeling of shame show that lack of trust in God. God did not leave us also to the end but have always attended us by His holy prophets and in the last days He manifested Himself to us in His only begotten Son our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ. God –in Christ- is “Manifesting” Himself to us who are hiding from Him. In this unit, the advent, we study how the Father is preparing for, and sending, His son.

Lesson 12: The fall of man and the need for a Savior

Lesson 13: God Prepares for the coming of His Son I: Archangel Gabriel announces the birth of St. John the Baptist

Lesson 14: God Prepares for the coming of His Son II: Archangel Gabriel announces the Birth of our Lord

Lesson 15: God Prepares for the coming of His Son III: The visitation of St Mary to Elizabeth

Lesson 16: Our Lord is born in Bethlehem

Lesson 17: Unit Review

Unit III

Purpose: In this unit, the students will learn how the devil, using the serpent deceived the children of God leading them to disobey God and eventually separate them from their loving Father. God did not leave us also to the end but always attended us by His holy prophets and in the last days He manifested Himself to us in His only begotten Son our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ. God –in Christ- is “Manifesting” Himself to us who are hiding from Him. In this unit, the advent, we study how the Father is preparing for, and sending His son.

12. THE FALL OF MAN AND THE NEED FOR A SAVIOR

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Genesis 2:8-25, 3:1-24

Romans 5:12-21

“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

“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.” Genesis 3:15 (the Protoevangelion-the first Gospel)

“And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.” 2 Corinth 11:14

“I will bless the LORD who has given me counsel; my heart also instructs me in the night seasons. I have set the LORD always before me; because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.” Psalm 16:7-8

CREED:

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; consubstantial with the Father,
By whom all things were made.

Who for us and for our salvation, He descended from heaven,

He was incarnated from the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

CHURCH FATHERS:

"But men, having turned from the contemplation of God to evil of their own devising, had come inevitably under the law of death. Instead of remaining in the state in which God had created them, they were in process of becoming corrupted entirely, and death had them completely under its dominion. For the transgression of the commandment was making them turn back again according to their nature; and as they had at the beginning come into being out of non-existence, so were they now on the way to returning, through corruption, to non-existence again. The presence and love of the Word had called them into being; inevitably, therefore when they lost the knowledge of God, they lost existence with it; for it is God alone Who exists, evil is non-being, the negation and antithesis of good. By nature, of course, man is mortal, since he was made from nothing; but he bears also the Likeness of Him Who is, and if he preserves that Likeness through constant contemplation, then his nature is deprived of its power and he remains incorrupt. So it is affirmed in Wisdom: "The keeping of His laws is the assurance of incorruption." And being incorrupt, he would be henceforth as God, as Holy Scripture says, "I have said, you are gods and sons of the Highest all of you: but ye die as men and fall as one of the princes.

This, then, was the plight of men. God had not only made them out of nothing, but had also graciously bestowed on them His own life by the grace of the Word. Then, turning from eternal things to things corruptible, by counsel of the devil, they had become the cause of their own corruption in death; for, as I said before, though they were by nature subject to corruption, the grace of their union with the Word made them capable of escaping from the natural law, provided that they retained the beauty of innocence with which they were created. That is to say, the presence of the Word with them shielded them even from natural corruption, as also Wisdom says: God created man for incorruption and as an image of His own eternity; but by envy of the devil death entered into the world. When this happened, men began to die, and corruption ran riot among them and held sway over them to an even more than natural degree, because it was the penalty of which God had forewarned them for transgressing the commandment. Indeed, they had in their sinning surpassed all limits; for, having invented wickedness in the beginning and so involved themselves in death and corruption, they had gone on gradually from bad to worse, not stopping at any one kind of evil, but continually, as with insatiable appetite, devising new kinds of sins. Adulteries and thefts were everywhere, murder and rapine filled the earth, law was disregarded in

corruption and injustice, all kinds of iniquities were perpetrated by all, both singly and in common.

Cities were warring with cities, nations were rising against nations, and the whole earth was rent with factions and battles, while each strove to outdo the other in wickedness. Even crimes contrary to nature were not unknown, but as the martyr-apostle of Christ says: "Their women changed the natural use into that which is against nature; and the men also, leaving the natural use of the woman, flamed out in lust towards each other, perpetrating shameless acts with their own sex, and receiving in their own persons the due recompense of their perverseness." *St Athanasius-On the incarnation*

"They experienced a new sensation in their bodies that became rebellious against them, as a reward for their rebellion against God. The rebellious soul as to the ministry to God, despising that work with its free will, would lose its former authority over the body." *St Augustine*

"Their eyes were opened, not to see, as they used to see before, but to discern between the good that they lost, and the evil they fell into. They knew that they were naked, of that grace that kept them from the shame of body nakedness; while the Law of sin presented them with unsteadiness of their minds" *St Augustine*

"It was necessary for our Lord to get tempted in the same way Adam did, when he was in the image of God before being corrupted, namely, greed, conceit, and pride, that were intermingled and reproduced, after he challenged the commandment, and corrupted the image and likeness of God." *St Serapion*

"The guilty conscience is usually heavily laden, so that it punishes itself by itself without need for a judge; seeking to get covered, but would be naked before God." *St Ambrosias*

REFLECTION:

The serpent trick was to change the image of God in the mind of Adam and Eve, when the serpent said "*For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil*" Genesis 3:5. This implied that God had other hidden intentions and those intentions were not so loving. So instead of trusting the unconditionally loving Father, they were not sure anymore of His perfect love. The actions of eating, hiding and the feeling of shame show that lack of trust in God.

PRAYER:

You, who are, who were, who continue forever, The self existent, Consubstantial, co enthroned and co-creator with the Father. Who for goodness alone, brought man into being from what was not.

And You placed him in the paradise of joy.

But after he had fallen by the guile of the enemy, and the disobedience toward Your holy commandment, and when You willed to renew him, and restore him to his original rank:-

Neither an angel nor an archangel nor a patriarch nor a prophet did You entrust with our salvation.

But You Yourself, without change, took flesh and became man¹⁴, and resembled us in everything except sin alone.

You became for us a Mediator with the Father; And the middle wall of division, You have broken down; And the old enmity you have abolished.

You reconciled the earthly with the heavenly and made the two into one, and You completed the dispensation in the flesh.

The Liturgy of St. Gregory – the Reconciliation prayer

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

The Lord reigns, and was clothed with magnificence; the Lord is adorned, with power and glory. He removed sadness, and offenses from Adam, and restored him again, to his authority. The book of our sins, He tore asunder by the cross, He abolished death, by His Death superiorly. Truly He gave us, the everlasting life, and all the gifts, that are perfect. Therefore let us say, with the psalmist, David the prophet, the pure and righteous. Truly the Lord said, “Now I will arise, I will perform, salvation openly”. That He may, let God arise, let His enemies, be scattered. He also descended, to the lower parts, of the earth, to Hades, through His mercy.

From the Resurrection psalm Adam on the first hose

VOCABULARY:

Commandments, serpent, savior, Curse

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	God loves us- God keeps His Promises
Liturgical:	Baptism
Moral:	Obedience (submission)
Spiritual:	Fasting

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS (THE IMAGE OF GOD)

Q. What did we learn about God in the last unit?

A. God is our loving Father, who is most wise, most powerful and looks out for us always.

Q. What does the creation teaches us about God?

A. That He is the creator of very good things

Q. How special are we to God? What does God call us?

A. His Children

Q. When did we become the children of God?

A. In Baptism

Q. What do we do to God in return to His love?

A. We honor and worship God our father (pray, fast and give)

REVIEW PRACTICE

Check if the kids are applying what they learned last unit about prayer and reading their Bibles.

CONNECTION POINT

The last few weeks we learned that our heavenly Father is powerful and that He loves us and called us His children. Today we will learn how Adam and Eve the first parents of the human race disobeyed God. And how our loving father promised us a savior.

LESSON BODY:

ADAM AND EVE IN THE GARDEN

God planted a garden in a place called Eden. When God created Adam and Eve, God put them in the Garden of Eden. It was a very beautiful place. The Garden was very big and filled with very beautiful trees. All the trees in the Garden were fruit trees. There was grape, vine, apple and orange, banana, mango trees and all kinds of fruit trees. God did not plant there any tree that made no fruits even if it looked very good. The garden smelled fresh with the smell of all kinds of fruits and the flowers of the fruit trees. There was a river in the garden that watered all the trees. In the middle of the garden God planted 2 trees: a tree called the tree of life, we were not told what kind of fruit it gave, but if you would eat of its fruits you would end up living forever and never die. The other tree was the tree of knowing good from evil. Before God created Eve, God told Adam not to eat from the tree of knowing good from bad, because God said to him the day you eat of it you would die. When God created Eve for Adam to be his wife, Adam told Eve about the tree of knowing good from evil, and told her how God said not to eat of it, because if they eat from it, they would die. Adam and Eve were used to get visited by God in the garden and they were very happy to see God and speak to Him. God was their wonderful loving Father and with Him they needed nothing. They also had friends from all the animals who used to visit them in the garden. By the way Adam and Eve were naked in the Garden but they were not ashamed. They were like little children innocent and care free. They trusted God and each other. They knew perfectly well that God loves them so much and will never see them as ugly or think bad of them. And that God will always look out for them. God told Adam to do two jobs in the garden, the first is to take

care of the garden which meant to rake the leaves and care for the trees and this was very easy work. The second job was to watch over the garden, Adam must have asked himself, what does God want me to watch the garden from?

There got to be some evil person who might want to enter the Garden of Eden and God want me to be careful and watchful.

THE DEVILS' ENVY & THE SERPENT'S TRICK

The devil was watching the couple in their garden, how they were extremely happy. The devil envied them and was angry that they were having all these great things. More than anything, the devil was so envious of their closeness to God. The devil wanted to kill them but he knew that he could never be able to do it by force, because no one can take anything by force from God. God is the most powerful. The devil had to think of a plan. He knew that Eve had some friends from the animals. Some animals enter the garden to visit Eve and spend time with her. After some thinking, he made a plan. He had the serpent (a big snake at that time, it had big legs and very big body) speak to Eve. The devil thought that God spoke to Adam and gave him the commandment. Maybe it would be more difficult to trick him, while Eve received the commandment from Adam and it just might be easier to trick her. One day, the serpent came to Eve and acted like she is having a nice conversation with Eve. The serpent asked Eve:

"Has God truly said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?" it seemed like a silly question but it really was a trick to get Eve to talk to her about the commandment of God, because the serpent saw Adam and Eve eating from trees all the time. Eve said: ***"We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'"*** Then the serpent said to Eve, ***"You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*** The serpent made Eve to think that maybe God does not truly love them as He said. If God loved them, God would have not kept them from eating the fruit of the tree of knowing good from evil, because God knows you will be like Him.

How awful, and disgusting what the serpent did tell her. The serpent made Eve doubt God's love to her and to Adam. Eve looked at the tree for some time. This was the first time ever that she thought of the tree of knowing good from evil as something very important. The serpent talk made Eve pay a lot of attention to that tree and forgot that God loved her very much, and if God did not want them to eat from the tree, it was for their best, not because He did not love them. She only thought of what the eating of the tree would make her feel, to be like God. She did not understand what would really happen and she did not care. She did took from the fruit of the tree and gave also to Adam and both ate the fruit.

CONSEQUENCES

When they ate, they looked at their bodies and knew that they are naked and it is not good to be naked. They felt ashamed for the first time. They ran to the fig tree and plucked from its leaves and tried to cover themselves. The leaves kept getting dry and fell off. They started to feel miserable and did not know what to do. They did not expect these bad feelings. They also thought about how they are going to tell God. Now they do not feel good about themselves, and they thought that God would not feel good about them either. They thought God might get very angry because they disobeyed Him. They were mistaking. God continued to love them; He was not angry, but sad because they messed up their lives, and unable to come back to be happy with Him.

GOD'S RESPONSE

When God came to the garden, He looked for them, when they heard him coming; they were afraid and ashamed and also did not trust God like before. They hid themselves from Him. God kept looking and calling Adam "Where are you?" Adam said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself." God said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I **commanded** you that you should not eat?" Then Adam said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate." And the LORD God said to Eve, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The **serpent** deceived me, and I ate." So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than the animals; On your belly you shall go. And I will make your kinds be enemies to one another the humans and the **serpents**. Then God made a promise that a time will come when **a son of a woman will come to crush the head of the serpent**. This was a promise that God will send His Son to be born of a woman which is St Mary. This Son is our Lord Jesus. And our Lord when He comes will defeat the devil that used the **serpent**. To the woman He said: " I will cause you to have babies with difficulty and pain; Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I **commanded** you, saying, "You shall not eat of it': " **Cursed** is the ground for your sake; you will have to work hard to make food all the days of your life. It shall bring forth thorns for you, and you shall eat the grass of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return. God made them clothes of skin and covered them, because God cared about them and wanted them to feel good about themselves and not to be ashamed. Now they are separated from God. No more could they go back to that happiness. They continued to feel bad about themselves and

could not see God the same way anymore. From that point on, they started to get old and have all kinds of problems and after sometime die.

It is very sad story, especially because Adam and Eve are the grandparents of all human beings. We are all born away from God when we are born and need the baptism to go back to be God's children. We fast in the church to learn self control and be more able to offer God our Father true obedience.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

Plan a: This lesson can be taught through scrap book building. Materials needed: card paper man and woman, card paper tree, card paper serpent. Coloring pens, sticker "eyes" paper leaves and fruits and pieces of leather to cover them. The story can be told as they construct the story in their scrap book

Plan b: This lesson can be also taught through puppet show, the materials should include: 1. three puppets, Adam, Eve and the serpent. 2. A tree of cardboard should be made for the couple to hide behind. 3. A picture of a beautiful garden should be placed in the background. The servant should narrate the story and introduce the Characters.

Alternative plans: drawing and coloring, story booklet, acting.

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

We lost being children of God through the envy of the devil. We continue to do the same today when we listen to anyone who would lead us to disobey God and our parents. The devil can use friends and people as he used the serpent

- God promise a savior who would bring us back to Him

- The Savior would be His Son:

Q. What did the devil do to Adam and Eve?

A. *Used the serpent to trick them to disobey God*

Q. How did the serpent trick them?

A. Made them think that God did not love them enough

Q. What did God promise Adam and Eve that God would do?

A. Send them a savior.

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"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

DAILY READINGS

Our Lord Jesus is our Savior

1. Jonah is sent to save the Ninevites - Jonah
 2. The dream of St. Joseph – Matthew 1:18-24
 3. The vision of the Shepherds – Luke 2:1-20
 4. Zacchaeus received the savior – Luke 19:1-10
 5. Our Lord healed the Paralytic and forgave him his sins – Luke 5:17
 6. Our Lord is the good shepherd – John 10:1-16
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Unit III

Purpose: In this unit, the students will learn how the devil, using the serpent deceived the children of God leading them to disobey God and eventually separate them from their loving Father. God did not leave us also to the end but always attended us by His holy prophets and in the last days He manifested Himself to us in His only begotten Son our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ. God –in Christ- is “Manifesting” Himself to us who are hiding from Him. In this unit-the advent- we study how the Father is preparing for, and sending His son.

LESSON 13: GOD PREPARES FOR THE COMING OF HIS SON I: ARCHANGEL GABRIEL ANNOUNCES THE BIRTH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

“⁵There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ⁶And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. ⁷But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years. ⁸So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, ⁹according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. ¹⁰And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense. ¹¹Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. ¹²And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. ¹³But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. ¹⁴And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. ¹⁵For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. ¹⁶And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. ¹⁷He

will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, "to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children," and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." ¹⁸And Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years." ¹⁹And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings. ²⁰But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time." ²¹And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple.

22But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless.

23So it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house. 24Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying, 25"Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked on me, to take away my reproach among people." Luke 1:5-25

CREED:

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; consubstantial with the Father,

By whom all things were made.

Who for us and for our salvation, He descended from heaven,

He was incarnated from the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

CHURCH FATHERS:

St John the Baptist was called the voice crying in the wilderness (*Isaiah 40:3*)

"That can probably explain how Zechariah lost his voice, as John was conceived, and did not get it back until the "voice" that preceded the "Word" was born. The ear must hear the "voice," so that the mind would apprehend the "Word" to which the voice refers. John refers to Christ, as the talk (the Word) is proclaimed through the voice." *Origen*

"Silence is to cease offering sacrifice. And is the silence of the prophets; for the voice of the prophet and the priest has ceased. God therefore says: 'I will take away the mighty, the prophet and the judge.' As for us, the Word of God has come down for us. He who can never be silent in us (1 Corinthians 13:3)"

St. Ambrose

REFLECTION:

The main point in this lesson is the preparation to the birth of the Messiah. In the light of this main point, we can understand God's delay in answering Zachariah's & Elizabeth's prayers and explain that to the children (God waited for the right time when God is going to send His Son Jesus). The persons of this lesson story are great (archangel, saintly old priest and his saintly wife), we need to explain their places in the work of God. The part of turning St. Zachariah mute because of his lack of faith can be a problem for the young believers. It might give the message that God punishes lack of faith, which is not the real image of our loving God. In God's great works, when human expectations will not grasp God's supernatural plan, God gives a "sign" to help the person believe in what God promised to do. Moses hand and staff, Gideon many signs, the quickening of the baby in St. Elizabeth womb, the star to the wise men, and the baby in the manger to the shepherds are few examples. In the case of St. Zachariah, he "gave up" on God's answer because *"I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years"*. It was his old body that made it hard to believe, and by turning him mute, the archangel is helping him to believe that: *"Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the LORD?"* Exodus 4:11

PRAYER:

Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people,

And has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of His servant David, as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, who *have been* since the world began,

That we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us, to perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers and to remember His holy covenant,

The oath which He swore to our father Abraham:

To grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.

And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest;

For you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways,

To give knowledge of salvation to His people by the remission of their sins,

Through the tender mercy of our God, with which the Dayspring from on high has visited us;

To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death,

To guide our feet into the way of peace." *Prayer of St Zachariah*

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

The Lord sent Gabriel, to announce to Zacharias, with the birth of John, to remove Elizabeth's shame.

You are higher than the patriarchs, more honored than the prophets, for no one born of women, is like you

Gospel response of the first week of Kiahk

VOCABULARY:

Archangel, Annunciation, Incense, Temple, Gabriel

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	Angels are servants of God
Liturgical:	The Church is the house of Angels
Moral:	Obedience (submission)
Spiritual:	Prayer in the Church

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS (THE IMAGE OF GOD)

Q. What did the devil do to Adam and Eve?

A. *Used the serpent to trick them to disobey God*

Q. How did the serpent trick them?

A. *Made them think that God did not love them enough*

Q. What did God promise Adam and Eve that God would do?

A. *Send them a savior.*

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

“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

CONNECTION POINT:

Last week we learned how the first parents Adam and Eve disobeyed God through the trick of the serpent, and lost their life and brought death to the world. God promised them a Savior, we learn today how God is preparing for the coming of His Son.

LESSON BODY:

THE FORERUNNER

When someone wants to visit your house and spend some time with you and your family, how they make sure that you will be home waiting for them? They need to call ahead or make sure that you are ready to receive them. When God the Father wanted to send His Son to us, he wanted to prepare the people for his coming. God the Father sent St. John the Baptist to prepare for the Coming of His Son. St. John the Baptist would tell the people to expect the coming of our Lord Jesus. Today story is the story of the **annunciation** (*to tell the news*) of the birth St. John the Baptist.

THE SAINTLY PARENTS OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

There was an old man whose name was St. Zachariah and he was a **Priest** (*a man who works in the church to serve God and offer prayers and sacrifices like abouna...*) and St. Elizabeth his

wife, they were very old, and they loved God very much. They asked God for children but God had a reason to wait and not respond to them quickly. One day St. Zachariah was in the Temple praying and offering **incense** (*the nice smelling substance that abouna offers by burning it to God*)

THE ARCHANGEL GABRIEL

Suddenly, an **angel of the Lord** appeared to him. The angel was standing on the right side of the altar. St. Zachariah was startled, surprised and he was afraid.

THE ANNUNCIATION

The angel said to him: *"Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. He will be a great prophet and will prepare the way of the Lord."* St. Zachariah did not believe the archangel and said: *"how do I know this? Because I am an old man and my wife is an old woman."* The archangel said to him: *"I am **Gabriel**, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these joyful news. But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time."* The archangel Gabriel (*One of seven **Archangels**, Whom God sends to do His work*) wanted to help St. Zachariah to believe what he said, that is why he made him not able to speak for a while. St. Zachariah knew if God can make him unable to speak, then God can give him a son. St. Zachariah was very happy although he now was unable to speak. The archangel left him and ascended to heaven. St. Zachariah took long time inside, and the people outside was waiting for him and was asking each other what had happened to him. They did not know that he saw the archangel Gabriel. When he came out, he made signs with his hands and face to tell them that he saw the archangel. They understood after he made many signs with great effort. When he went home, he was excited and wanted to tell his wife St. Elizabeth what had happened to him and how the archangel appeared to him and told him that God heard their prayers and that they are about to have a son. Again, he needed to write everything so she can know what happened to him in the Temple. He told her that the archangel said that their son would be great and his name shall be John. And that he would prepare the people to be able to love our Lord Jesus when he comes and listen to Him. St.

Zachariah told St. Elizabeth how he could not -at first- believe the archangel, and how the archangel said that he would not talk until their baby is born. St. Elizabeth was very happy. They both thanked God for listening to their prayers. St. Elizabeth was an old woman, and was embarrassed to go around for people to see her pregnant. She hid herself from people and said that God did a wonderful thing to her, when He saw her need of a child, in His own time.

GOD OUR FATHER ALWAYS LISTEN TO OUR PRAYERS.

But He answers them in His own time. God's timing is always perfect, although we usually do not understand His ways. We trust our heavenly Father with our prayers because He loves us and is able to do everything when it is good for us.

THE PRAYER REQUESTS.

In the Church, abouna offer incense to God as he prays for us. We can ask abouna to pray for us as he offers the incense, like Zachariah the priest did. You can prepare a piece of paper with the names of people that you need abouna to pray with you for them. You may write the name of the persons and their needs; for example: Mark needs help with his study, grandma Julia is sick, Dad is travelling please pray for his safe return. **(Teachers can prepare papers and pens for students to write their prayer request every week).**

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

Plan a: This lesson can be taught through role- playing. One person might play the role of the Archangel, another of St. Zachariah, a girl for St. Elizabeth. Materials needed are: a red curtain hung on the wall (for the curtain of the Holy of Holies), a tall table (for the Altar of incense) and a drawing board and chalk. Need Costumes for the Archangel, St. Zachariah and St. Elizabeth. The people waiting can be the rest of the class.

Plan b: Storytelling, when you tell the story, ask the children to clap when you hear certain words, like: God hears our prayers, Holy Spirit, promises, John.

Alternative plans: drawing and coloring, story booklet and Puppet show.

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. Who is Archangel Gabriel?

A. *One of seven **archangels**. They do God's work*

Q. Where did St. Zachariah see the archangel Gabriel?

A. *He saw him on the right side of the altar.*

Q. When did St. Zachariah see the archangel?

A. *He saw him at the hour of offering incense.*

Q. What do we learn from this?

A. *We learn that the church is the house of the angels and that they are around us (but we do not see them) when we pray especially when we pray in the church during the liturgy.*

Q. Why God did not listen quickly to St. Zachariah and his wife St. Elizabeth, when they asked God for children?

A. *Because God wanted St. John to be born in the right time to prepare for the coming of our Lord Jesus*

Q. Who gave the name of St. John?

A. *the archangel Gabriel.*

Q. what was the Job of St. Zachariah?

A. *a **priest**, a man who serve God in the church by offering prayers and sacrifices*

Q. what was St. Zachariah doing when the archangel appeared to him

A. *He was offering **incense** to God.*

Q. How did St. Zachariah tell the people and his wife of the good news?

A. *He made signs with his head and hands.*

Q. what did St. Zachariah and his wife, St. Elizabeth do when they knew that God answered their prayers?

A. *They thanked God.*

Q. What do we learn from this story?

A. That God our Father loves us and listen to our prayers. He will do the best for us in the right time.

Q. What does abouna do when he offers incense?

A. abouna prays for us and for the people we care about.

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John." Luke 1:13

DAILY READINGS

God answer the prayers of His people

1. God respond to Elijah's prayer and raised the widow's son – I kings 17:17-24
 2. God respond to Elijah's prayer on mount Carmel – 1 Kings 18:20-39
 3. God respond to Hezekiah prayer concerning Sennacherib threat – Isaiah 37
 4. God respond to Hezekiah prayer concerning his sickness – Isaiah 38
 5. God respond to the prayer and the fasting of the Ninevites – Jonah 3:5-10
 6. God respond to the prayers and fasting of Cornelius – Acts 10
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Unit III

Purpose: In this unit, the students will learn how the devil, using the serpent deceived the children of God leading them to disobey God and eventually separate them from their loving Father. God did not leave us also to the end but always attended us by His holy prophets and in the last days He manifested Himself to us in His only begotten Son our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ. God –in Christ- is “Manifesting” Himself to us who are hiding from Him. In this unit-the advent- we study how the Father is preparing for, and sending His son.

LESSON 14: GOD PREPARES FOR THE COMING OF HIS SON II: THE ARCHANGEL GABRIEL ANNOUNCES THE BIRTH OF OUR LORD

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

“Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, “Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!” But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.” Then Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I do not know a man?” And the angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible.” Then Mary said, “Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.” Luke 1:26-38

“And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.” Matthew 1:21”

“The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God” Luke 1: 35

“But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.” Galatians 4:4

“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel” Isaiah 7:14

“For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6

CREED:

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; consubstantial with the Father,

By whom all things were made.

Who for us and for our salvation, He descended from heaven,

He was incarnated from the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

CHURCH FATHERS:

“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.” (Is. 7: 14)

“It is obvious for all, that no one of Abraham’s race has been born, or said to be born, by a virgin, except our Christ.”

St. Justin

“As what was going to happen, was an amazing thing, difficult to believe, even when it is realized, that is why, He sent, beforehand, prophets to proclaim that fact.” *St John Chrysostom*

Those who proclaimed that He is Immanuel, born from a virgin (Is.7: 14), also proclaimed the union of God with the product of His hands. As the Logos became flesh; and the Son of God became a Son of Man; He gave, to humanity, through the purity of the womb, a renewal in God.” *St. Irenaeus*

“The Lord Christ opened the source of the holy Church, that silent source, the blameless, full of fruits, where the people of God are born.” *St. Ambrose*

“Your divine birth, O Lord, has given all humanity a birth... Humanity begot You according to the flesh, and You begot it according to the Spirit... Glory to You, who became a child, to make everything new.” *St. Ephram, the Syrian*

“We confirm that the “*Only-Begotten Son*” became man... so that as He is begotten from a woman, according to the flesh, He would reclaim the human race anew in Him. *St. Cyril the Great*

“It would not be not an easy matter for a girl to become the mother of God, if she was not very humble- hearted. Bearing dignity is not an easy matter, as saint Abba Antonius said: “Bearing dignity is more difficult than bearing outrage “. But a humble heart can bear dignity. Therefore God waited till He found that humble pure heart, in order to annunciate to her with the divine Incarnation.” *Pope Shenouda- The feast of Annunciation*

REFLECTION:

The point of this lesson is the preparation for the birth of the Savior. Few elements are brought to light: the messenger, the message, and the recipient. St. Mary is the greatest preparation for the coming of the Messiah. St. Mary is the Theotokos.

PRAYER:

We praise and glorify the God of gods and the Lord of Lords, Who in the fullness of time, planned the salvation of the world by His incarnation. So He sent His angel to St. Mary the virgin, to announce to her the holy conception. And she gave birth to Him in Bethlehem of Judea.

From the prayer of the fraction in the Lord's feasts

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

Grade1 CD song #12

We give unto you greeting, with Gabriel the angel saying, "Hail to you O full of grace, the Lord is with you."

Wherefore we glorify you, as the ever-Theotokos, ask the Lord on our behalf, that He may forgive us our sins.

Gospel response of the second week of Kiahk

VOCABULARY:

Virgin, full of grace, Theotokos, Savior

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	Incarnate of the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin
Liturgical:	The place of St Mary in the Church
Moral:	Obedience (submission)
Spiritual:	Prayer and offering oneself to God

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. Who is Archangel Gabriel?

A. One of seven **archangels**. They do God's work

Q. Where did St. Zachariah saw the archangel Gabriel?

A. He saw him on the right side of the altar.

Q. When did St. Zachariah saw the archangel?

A. *He saw him at the hour of offering incense.*

Q. What do we learn from this?

A. *we learn that the church is the house of the angels and that they are around us (but we do not see them) when we pray especially when we pray in the church during the liturgy.*

Q. Why God did not listen quickly to St. Zachariah and his wife St. Elizabeth, when they asked God for children?

A. *Because God wanted St. John to be born in the right time to prepare for the coming of our Lord Jesus*

Q. Who gave the name of St. John?

A. *The archangel Gabriel.*

Q. what was the Job of St. Zachariah?

A. *a **priest**, a man who serve God in the church by offering prayers and sacrifices*

Q. what was St. Zachariah doing when the archangel appeared to him

A. *He was offering **incense** to God.*

Q. How did St. Zachariah tell the people and his wife of the good news?

A. *He made signs with his head and hands.*

Q. what did St. Zachariah and his wife, St. Elizabeth do when they knew that God answered their prayers?

A. *They thanked God.*

Q. What do we learn from this story?

A. *That God our Father loves us and listen to our prayers. He will do the best for us in the right time.*

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John." Luke 1:13

CONNECTION POINT:

We are learning how God is preparing to send His Son, our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ. Last week He sent His archangel Gabriel to St. Zachariah the priest to tell him that he will have a son and would name him John and John would be the one to prepare for the coming of our Lord. Today we will see how the same Archangel is going to visit St Mary to tell her that God wants to send His Son to be born of her.

LESSON BODY:

WHO IS ST. MARY?

We will talk today of the most wonderful saint, we call her many names like: our Lady, the Queen, the virgin and many wonderful other names. I think you know that I am going to talk to you about St. Mary. Our Lady, the queen of us all. St. Mary was a little girl when her parents gave her to God, to be in the temple. She was gentle, humble, and loved to serve God and other. If you were living with St. Mary you would know what I am talking about, but we can learn to be her friends and take her to be our mother. She never shouted or called names, never disobeyed; always sharing everything she had, loved God with all her power and kept God's commandments in her heart always. She grew up to serve God in humility in the temple, until the time came for her to leave the temple at 12 years old. The old men in the Temple asked God to show them a person to take care of St Mary, and God chose St Joseph, who was a holy old man, to take care of St Mary. She was engaged to St. Joseph whose job was a carpenter (in making wooden tables, chairs and all wooden things) and lived in a house in Nazareth (a town in Israel).

THE HOLY ANNUNCIATION:

God sent the Archangel Gabriel who visited St. Zachariah in the Temple again to visit St. Mary in her house in Nazareth. This was six month after he visited St. Zachariah. Archangel Gabriel entered the house of St. Mary and greeted her. He said to her: ***"Rejoice, O full of grace (which means very special to God), the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!"*** St. Mary was not afraid of the angel, but she was thinking in her heart: *"why is the archangel saying blessed are you among women, what does he mean?"* The archangel Gabriel knew

that she would be thinking about what he told her so he said: *"Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. You will conceive in your womb (the place in the mother's belly that carry the baby) and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."* She asked Him "how can that happen since she was a **Virgin** which means not married?" The Angel told her that God can do anything, and That she would give birth to the **Savior**, because *He would save His people from their sins*. The Archangel also, told her that her old relative Elizabeth is already pregnant with a baby (now you know what will be the name of St. Elizabeth baby). St. Mary believed God and said to the Archangel that she is the servant of God and is ready to do anything God want her to do. So the archangel left her and ascended back to heaven.

THE LESSON

We learn from St. Mary to believe and trust God even when we do not fully understand. God can do all things. We receive God's word through the Bible and the Church.

WE BLESS AND HONOR ST. MARY AS THE THEOTOKOS (THE MOTHER OF GOD THE SON)

We sing songs to St. Mary as *"Through the intercession of the Theotokos St. Mary..."*, *"the Doxologies of St Mary"* and the church put her icon on the right side of the door to the Altar, when we pray, we use her intercession before her Son, we dedicate a fast in her name in the month of August.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

Suggested Plan a: This lesson can be taught through scrap book building. Materials needed are: A 5"x 7" coloring picture of the annunciation. A ½" figure of a dove (for the Holy Spirit) and ½" hand figure (for the power of the most High). Both figures should be glued to the coloring page above the head of St. Mary.

Plan b: single cardboard with big figures to stick to make the icon of transfiguration. The verse can be stuck separately

Alternative plans: Acting and singing.

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What did St Mary do when she was young?

A. *Served God in the Temple*

Q. Can they tell of the good characters of St. Mary?

A. *Humble, gentle, obedient, sharing, loving God and keeping the commandments of God etc.*

Q. St. Mary was a Virgin what does that mean?

A. *She was not married*

Q. Who was St. Joseph?

A. *the Holy old Man that took care of St. Mary and of our Lord Jesus*

Q. What does the word Savior means?

A. *The one who saves us from our sins (clean away our bad doings)*

Q. Who is the Savior?

A. *Is our Lord Jesus Christ*

Q. How do we honor St. Mary?

A. *By singing, by putting her icon on the right side of the door to the altar, by asking her intercession before her Son, by dedicating a fast to her name in August*

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins." Matthew 1:21"

DAILY READINGS

With God everything is possible

1. God gave Sarah a son in her old age – Genesis 18
 2. God divided the red sea for His people – Exodus 14
 3. God gave His people bread in the wilderness – Exodus 16
 4. God brought out water from the rock for His people – Exodus 17
 5. God made the sun stand still – Joshua 10
 6. God sent a whale to take Jonah to Nineveh – Jonah 1
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Unit III

Purpose: In this unit, the students will learn how the devil, using the serpent deceived the children of God leading them to disobey God and eventually separate them from their loving Father. God did not leave us also to the end but always attended us by His holy prophets and in the last days He manifested Himself to us in His only begotten Son our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ. God –in Christ- is “Manifesting” Himself to us who are hiding from Him. In this unit-the advent- we study how the Father is preparing for, and sending His son.

LESSON 15: GOD PREPARES FOR THE COMING OF HIS SON III: THE VISITATION OF ST MARY TO ELIZABETH

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

“Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord.” And Mary said: “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. 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.” and Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her house.” Luke 1:39-56

CREED:

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; consubstantial with the Father,
By whom all things were made.

Who for us and for our salvation, He descended from heaven,

He was incarnated from the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

CHURCH FATHERS:

“ I ask you to accept this conception, and to dance before Him, if not in the womb as John did, then let it be when the ark is set, just as David did” *St Gregory of Nazianzen*

There appeared on the spot, the blessing of St. Mary’s visit and the Lord’s presence, because as soon as Elizabeth heard the voice of St. Mary’s greeting, the babe leaped joyfully in her womb, and she was filled with the Holy Spirit. Elizabeth was the first to hear St. Mary’s voice, but John was the first to be affected by the blessing. Elizabeth knew of St. Mary’s coming, and John felt the presence of Christ. The woman felt the woman’s presence, and the babe felt the babe’s presence. As they were speaking of the blessings and the graces, the babes were fulfilling the divine deeds of God, so full of mercy. The babe leaped, then the mother was filled of the Holy Spirit, but she was not filled before the leaping.” *St. Ambrose*

“‘He has shown strength with His arm; he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.’ St Mary refers to ‘the arm’ as to mean the Lord Jesus Christ to whom she gave birth; ‘the proud’ refers to Satan and his hosts that have been misled by their pride, and thus they into the mire of humiliation and misery. St Mary refers by the ‘proud’ to the Greek wise people (or any human wisdom) that rejected the Christian faith, which they reject as ignorance. She also refers to the Jewish multitude who did not believe in Christ, and thus they got scattered all over the earth” *St. Cyril the great*

REFLECTION:

In the visitation we learn how quick St. Mary to respond to the news given to her by the archangel. Once she knew that St. Elizabeth is pregnant, she goes to serve her. How quick St. Mary is to give the glory to God when she received the blessing. The voice of St. Mary carried God’s blessing and sanctification to everyone who heard her. We too carry life and blessing when we go to the world carrying Christ who unites Himself to us through the Mysteries. The work of sanctifying and blessing is the priestly action of the Christian life.

PRAYER:

"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.

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."

The Magnification

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

We magnify you worthily, with Elizabeth your cousin saying, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb."

Wherefore we glorify you, as the ever-Theotokos, ask the Lord on our behalf, that He may forgive us our sins.

Gospel response of the third week of Kiahk

VOCABULARY:

Blessing, Theotokos, Holy Spirit, womb

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	We Trust God's Promises
Liturgical:	The greeting of peace

Moral:	Sanctity of Life
Spiritual:	Service: offering of self, praise in response to grace

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What did the archangel tell St. Mary?

A. That she was very special to God and that God is sending His Son to be born of her, and that Elizabeth is pregnant.

Q. Who is St. Elizabeth

A. An old relative of St. Mary, her name was Elizabeth, her husband was Zachariah, and they had no children. The archangel Gabriel told Zachariah that they would have a son and call his name John. The archangel said that John would make the people ready to listen to our Lord Jesus when He comes.

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"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

CONNECTION POINT:

In preparing for the birth of His Son, God the Father had the archangel tell St. Mary about St. Elizabeth's pregnancy. St. Mary quickly went to visit St. Elizabeth. How the meeting of St. Mary the Theotokos and St. Elizabeth will go.

LESSON BODY:

ST. MARY'S QUICK RESPONSE

Remember in the last lesson how the archangel Gabriel told St. Mary that her relative Elizabeth is already pregnant with a child in her sixth month. Because St. Mary was very

loving and caring and knew that St. Elizabeth is an old woman and will need help, St. Mary went quickly to see St. Elizabeth

THE VISITATION

When St. Mary entered the house of St. Elizabeth and saw St. Elizabeth she greeted her and maybe said congratulations for your pregnancy. When St. Elizabeth heard the voice of St. Mary immediately the baby moved hard in her belly. St. Elizabeth understood that her baby wanted to tell her something. She understood that the **Holy Spirit** of God moved her son to tell her that St. Mary is the mother of God. She immediately said to St. Mary ***"Blessed (St. Elizabeth is saying that St Mary is very good and her goodness comes from God, who made her very special) are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb (which means the baby that comes out from the belly)! But why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped (jumped) in my womb (the place that carry the babies in the mother's belly) for joy."***

THEOTOKOS

St. Elizabeth called St. Mary the "Mother of my Lord" and we call St. Mary the Mother of God – **the Theotokos**- because she carries in her Our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ.

THE MAGNIFICATION

St. Mary gave a beautiful prayer to God. She taught us how when someone says something good about us, we should give the **blessing** to God: to say how good God is and how great is His love to us. She also showed us that we should thank God for everything That God give to us. She said: ***"My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. For He has regarded the lowly state of His servant; for behold, that's why 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. He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has put down the strong 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 children forever."***

St. Mary stayed with her to the end of her pregnancy then left back to her home

YOU CARRY THE BLESSING.

Like St. Mary carrying our Lord in her womb, when we take the body and the blood of our Lord in the Holy Communion, we too carry the blessing to everyone we meet.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

Plan a: This lesson can be taught through play acting. Materials needed are: costumes for St. Mary and for the six months pregnant, St. Elizabeth. When it comes to the prayer, the Magnification, the students should all be able to memorize it.

Alternative plans: drawing and coloring, story booklet, Puppet show.

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What did St. Elizabeth call St. Mary? And what do we call her?

A. she called her "the Mother of my Lord" and we call her "Theotokos" which means the Mother of God. We love St. Mary and ask her for her prayers and support.

Q. how did St. Elizabeth know that St. Mary is the Mother of the Lord?

A. The Holy Spirit caused her baby to move in her womb, when St. Elizabeth heard the greeting of St. Mary.

Q. What did St Elizabeth call St. Mary?

A. She called her "blessed" and "the mother of my Lord"

Q. What do we call St. Mary?

A. many great names and also "blessed" and "Theotokos" which means the mother of God.

Q. What is the meaning of calling St. Mary "blessed"?

A. it means that St. Mary is very special to God.

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

“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”

Luke 1:46-48

DAILY READINGS

St Mary is the Holy Theotokos

1. St. Mary gave birth to our Lord in Bethlehem – Matthew 1:18-25
 2. St. Mary fled to Egypt with our Lord and St. Joseph - Matthew: 2
 3. St. Mary at the wedding in Cana – John 2
 4. St. Mary at the foot of the cross of her son – John 19:25
 5. St. Mary at Pentecost – Acts:1
 6. St. Mary is the woman clothed with the sun – Revelation 12
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Notes

Unit III

Purpose: In this unit, the students will learn how the devil, using the serpent deceived the children of God leading them to disobey God and eventually separate them from their loving Father. God did not leave us also to the end but always attended us by His holy prophets and in the last days He manifested Himself to us in His only begotten Son our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ. God –in Christ- is “Manifesting” Himself to us who are hiding from Him. In this unit-the advent- we study how the Father is preparing for, and sending His son.

LESSON 16: GOD SENDS HIS SON TO THE WORLD. OUR LORD, JESUS CHRIST IS BORN IN BETHLEHEM

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

“And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. 2This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. 3So all went to be registered everyone to his own city. 4Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, 5to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. 6So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. 7And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. 8Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. 10Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. 11For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. 12And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.” 13And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: 14 “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!” 15So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, “Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us.” 16And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the Babe lying in a manger. 17Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. 18And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. 19But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her

heart. 20Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.” Luke 2:1-20

CREED:

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; consubstantial with the Father,

By whom all things were made.

Who for us and for our salvation, He descended from heaven,

He was incarnated from the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

CHURCH FATHERS:

“Give honor to the manger, even if you have lost the sensitivity, and man has become as an animal, you will find in the manger the Word as food for you” *St Gregory of*

“ He was born in a manger to left you up to the altar. He came down to earth to left you up to heaven. He could find no place for Himself except in the cow’s manger so He prepares for you mansions in heaven (John14:2). As the apostle says: ‘that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might be rich’ (2 Corinthians 8:9). For my inheritance is the poverty of Christ and my strength is the weakness of Christ.” *St. Ambrose.*

“Today the shepherds rejoiced and there was a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven “who could sleep on a night like this, when the entire world is watchful?”

Adam brought sleep on the entire world by means of his iniquity, but He who watched came down to wake us up from the deep sleep of iniquity.

Tonight, the heavenly hosts above have united with the watchful earthly shepherds, for the watcher, the guard, to create guards and shepherds amidst the creation.

Look at this: the watchful shepherds have become in company with the heavenly guards.

Therefore sing praises with the seraphim!

Blessed is he who becomes a violin for Your praise; for Your grace and blessings will be Your reward!

The heavenly hosts have spoken their peace to the watchful shepherds

The heavenly guards have come to proclaim the good news to those who were watching at night! The guards have blended together, and all have come to rejoice, for the world has come to life”

St. Ephraim the Syrian

“Today, the virgin bears Him who is transcendent, and the earth presents the cave to Him who is beyond reach. Angels, along with shepherds glorify Him. The Magi make their way to Him by a star. For a new child has been born for us, the God before all ages. “ *Romanous the melodist*

REFLECTION:

The nativity of our Lord is the beginning of the spring time of salvation history. The overwhelming joy that permeate the story is made in contrast with the humble places and circumstances. In telling the story, this sharp contrast should be highlighted. God’s glory is made in the humility of His saints and their lowly appearances. The shepherds, the manger, the stable is the perfect place for the Glory of God to be revealed.

PRAYER:

O Master Lord, our God, the invisible, the infinite, unchangeable and immeasurable creator, Who sent His true light, His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, the eternal Logos. He, Who is in the Fatherly bosom at all times, came and dwelt in the undefiled virginal womb.

She, being a virgin gave birth to Him and her virginity is forever sealed.

Behold, the angels praise Him and the heavenly hosts chant unto Him, singing and saying: “Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of Your holy glory.”

Likewise, we too, the weak and sinful, make us worthy with them, O our master and lover of mankind; so that we may praise You, together with Him and with the Holy Spirit, the coessential Trinity. Amen

The fraction prayer-advent and Holy Nativity

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

Alleluia Alleluia: Alleluia Alleluia: Jesus Christ
the Son of God: was born in Bethlehem.

This is He to Whom the glory is due: with His
Good Father: and the Holy Spirit: now and
forever.

Gospel response of the feast of the holy Nativity

VOCABULARY:

Manger, Bethlehem, shepherd

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	Christ was born
Liturgical:	The Feast of Holy Nativity
Moral:	Humility
Spiritual:	Praise

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What did the devil do to Adam and Eve?

A. Used the serpent to trick them to disobey God

Q. What did God promise Adam and Eve that God would do? *A. Send them a savior.*

Q. How did God prepare for the coming of His Son?

A. God sent the prophets. And just before sending His Son He gave St. John the Baptist to prepare the way for our Lord.

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"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"

Luke 1:46-48

CONNECTION POINT:

God the Father had promised our grandparents Adam and Eve that He would send His Son as the savior. God prepared for the birth of His Son. When the time came Our Lord, Jesus is born in Bethlehem.

LESSON BODY:

THE JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM

When St Mary was in her last days of her pregnancy, the Roman king of those days ordered all people to go to the city of their grandparents to write their names in the records of the king. The king wanted to count the people. St. Joseph had to take St. Mary and go to **Bethlehem** (the city of king David) because king David was a "great great great.." grandfather of St. Joseph. After a long journey, they arrived and it was a hard journey for St. Mary.

THE BIRTH

It was night when St. Joseph took St. Mary to the Hotel in **Bethlehem**, but there was no place for them in the hotel. All the rooms were full because of all the people who came to Bethlehem to write their names. St. Mary was in labor, about to give birth to our Lord. St. Joseph asked if there is any place that they can spend the night, the people in the hotel told him they have no place for them. They told St. Joseph about the stable where they kept the animals (donkeys) of the travelers. He had no other choice and took St. Mary in the stable. St. Mary gave birth to our Lord Jesus that same night. She wrapped Him in swaddling (wrapping) clothes and laid him in a **manger** (the place where the animals eat). Our Lord did not have a place to be born into. He was very poor.

THE SHEPHERDS

Somewhere in the countryside around Bethlehem there were **shepherds** (the people who takes care of the sheep) who were staying up late to watch over their sheep in the fields. Suddenly an angel from God appeared to them and great light shown around them. The angel said to them *"Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."* There were other angels who were singing *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"*. When the angels left, the shepherds said to each other: *"Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord sent the angels to tell us."* They went and saw Our Lord Jesus in the manger as the angel told them. They saw St. Mary and St. Joseph. The shepherds told all people about what happened. St Mary remembered all these thing by keeping them in her heart.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

Plan a: This lesson can be taught through building a single manger for the class. The manger should have our Lord as a baby, St Joseph (old aged), St Mary, shepherds, lambs, other animals and birds. The children would take different roles in telling the story and putting the statues in their places. Do not add the wise men in this lesson nor the star yet. They would appear in the next lesson

Alternative plans: each child builds his/her paper model of the manger.

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. Where was our Lord born

A. *In a manger in Bethlehem*

Q. What were the shepherds doing

A. *watching over their sheep*

Q. What was the sign the Angel gave to the shepherds?

A. *a baby in a manger*

Q. what is a manger?

A. *the place in which the animals eat.*

Q. The angel told the shepherds that the birth of our Lord will be for great Joy (happiness). Why?

A. *Because our Lord is the Savior God promised Adam and eve to bring them back to God.*

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" Luke 2:10-11

DAILY READINGS

The Holy Nativity

1. The Annunciation of the birth of St. John – Luke 1: 1-25
2. The Annunciation of the birth of Our Lord - Luke 1: 26-38
3. The Visitation of St. Mary to St. Elizabeth – Luke 1: 39- 56
4. The birth of ST. John – Luke 1: 57- 80
5. The dream of St. Joseph and the birth of our Lord – Matthew 1:18-25 and Luke 2:1-20
6. The visitation of the Magi flee of the holy family to Egypt and the return to Galilee – Matthew 2

Unit Review lesson: 17

UNIT REVIEW LESSON 17

God Reveal Himself to Us

UNIT IV: OUR LORD, JESUS CHRIST IS GOOD AND LOVES US (6LESSONS)

Purpose: In This unit, we continue the gospel story, to cover the mission, the teachings, the miracles and the making of disciples of our Lord. He is the good shepherd who does the will of the Father and shows us the true image of the Father.

LESSON 18: OUR LORD IS BAPTIZED IN THE JORDAN RIVER (THEOPHANY)

LESSON 19: OUR LORD CALLS HIS HELPERS - MAKING FISHERS OF MEN

LESSON 20: OUR LORD LOOKS OUT FOR US WHEN WE ARE IN TROUBLE

LESSON 21: OUR LORD REVEALS THE FATHER'S CARE

LESSON 22: OUR LORD TAUGHT US TO LOVE GOD AND TO LOVE OUR NEIGHBOR

LESSON 23: UNIT IV REVIEW LESSON

Unit IV

Purpose: In This unit, we continue the gospel story, to cover the mission, the teachings, the miracles and the making of disciples of our Lord. He is the good shepherd who does the will of the Father and shows us the true image of the Father.

LESSON 18: OUR LORD IS BAPTIZED IN THE JORDAN RIVER (*THEOPHANY*)

I. SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

St. Mark:

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. 2As it is written in the Prophets: "Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You." 3" The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight." 4John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. 5Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. 6Now John was clothed with camel's hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 7And he preached, saying, "There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." 9It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. 10And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. 11Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Mark1:1-11

St. Matthew 3:1-17

St. Luke 3:1-22

St. John 1:19-34

Isaiah 40:3-5

Malachi 4:5,6

CREED:

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; consubstantial with the Father,

By whom all things were made.

Who for us and for our salvation, He descended from heaven,

He was incarnated from the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

CHURCH FATHERS:

“The Lord was baptized, not to get purified, but to purify the water. As Christ, Who knew no sin, descended into the water, it gained the power to purify everyone who is buried therein, casting away his sins in it.” *St Ambrose*

“The heaven became open so that man is now close to the holy angels.” *St Cyril*

“It descended, at first, over Christ, Who received the Holy Spirit, not for His own sake but for ours, the human kind, as we, by Him and in Him, we are granted grace over grace... And now, we took Christ as our role model; so let us approach the grace of holy baptism... that God would open for us the gates of heaven, and would send to us the Holy

Spirit, who receives us as His children; As God, the Father, addressed Christ, at the time of His holy baptism, as though, by Him and in Him, He received man who is inhabiting the earth, proclaiming in the sweet voice, the sonship of human kind, saying: “*You are My beloved Son; In You I am well pleased*” (Lk.3:22).” *St Cyril*

REFLECTION:

What does it mean to “*prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight?*” It seems that, it is not us who come back to the Lord, but it is He who comes to us looking for us, since it is His way and His paths. But that does not mean that He was the one that left us, but we were the ones to leave Him. By

calling to repentance then receiving confessions and eventually absolving in the water, St John “*prepare*” and “*makes straight*” the way of Christ to the hearts of those who listened to his call.

In the baptism of St. John is the precursor of the New Testament mystery of confession as a preparation for the Eucharist. The hand of St. John the Baptist is the hand of the priest the son of a priest (John son of Zachariah) as the steward of God’s grace. He is sent by God to call for the cleansing of hearts by his Baptism. By Combining the word of God (his call to repentance) with the action (of immersion), he lead people to confession and renouncing of sin and receiving the sign of their cleansing. St. John’s work is accomplished by the coming of our Lord to be baptized by him, so to reveal Him to Israel.

PRAYER:

You appeared to us who are living in darkness and in the shadow of death, through Your only-begotten Son, our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ. Who is of the Holy Spirit, and of the Virgin Saint Mary. He was incarnated and became man, and taught us the ways of salvation.

He granted us the grace of the rebirth from above through water and the Spirit. He made us a united people unto Him and purified us by Your Holy Spirit.

He loved His own people of the world, and for our salvation He gave Himself up to death that had possessed us, whereby we were bound and sold on account of our sins.

He descended into Hades through the cross.

He arose from the dead on the third day. He ascended to the heavens and sat down at Your right hand O Father. He appointed a day for retribution on which He will appear to judge all the world in equity, and reward each one according to his deeds.

St. Basil Anaphora

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

John has witnessed, in the four Gospels, saying I have baptized my Savior, in the waters of the Jordan. "I saw the Holy Spirit, come down from heaven, I heard the voice of the Father, proclaiming and

saying." "This is My beloved Son, with whom My soul is well pleased, He does My will hear Him, for He is the life Giver." Intercede on our behalf, O forerunner and baptizer, John the Baptist, that He may forgive us our sins.

2nd Doxology of St. John

VOCABULARY:

Monk, Locusts, repentance, baptize, tax collector

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	We become the children of God by Holy Baptism
Liturgical:	Holy Baptism
Moral:	Love the Lord from all your heart
Spiritual:	Repentance

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. The devil used the serpent to trick us. How?

A. *The serpent told Eve "God knows when you eat from the tree you will be like God". The serpent meant for Adam and Eve to not trust God.*

Q. God our loving Father did not leave us. What did He do?

A. *He sent His Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*

Q. How did God our Father prepare for the coming of His Son?

A. *He sent many prophets, and 6 months before sending His son, He sent St. John the Baptist*

Q. Who did God send to announce the birth of His Son?

A. Archangel Gabriel

Q. Where was our Lord born?

A. In Bethlehem

Q. What did the angel say to the Shepherds?

A. *"Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."*

Q. What do we call St. Mary?

A. Theotokos = Mother of God

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"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

CONNECTION POINT:

Last unit we learned how God the Father prepared for the coming of His Son. And in the right time, He sent His son. Our Lord grew up and as a young child and became a man. The story of today happened when He was about thirty years old.

LESSON BODY:

THE MISSION OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST:

ST JOHN LIFE

St. John the Baptist lived all his life in the desert. He was like a **monk** (*a man who lives in the desert and spend all his life in worshipping God*). He was dressed in rough clothing made of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist. St. John was not interested in nice looking shirts,

pants or coats. He grew up in the desert and spent all his time in prayer, reading the Bible and learning how to please God. His food was of **locusts** (an *insect that eats green leaves and can be found in the desert*) and wild honey (made by wild bees). He was always fasting, and did not care for different foods and ate what he found in the desert.

HIS CALLING

When the time came for our Lord Jesus to start calling people to the love of our Father and to God's kingdom, God the Father sent St. John from the desert to the Jordan river in Israel to call people to **repentance** (to change their hearts, to love God more than sin). They first **confessed** (told loudly of the wrong things they did, as we will in confession with abouna later) their sins to Saint John. The people did that because St. John reminded them of God's love and that God our Father wanted them to come back to Him. He **baptized** them (immersed them in the river) as a sign that God cleaned them from the sin, and that they can pray, fast and give to God in honor and service. You know that a persons who do not obey God does not feel like praying or fasting nor feel like giving. They first need to confess and receive God's forgiveness, and then their heart will be clean to receive our Lord Jesus.

THE BAPTISM OF ST. JOHN'S AND OUR BAPTISM

The baptism that St. John did was not like our baptism. Our baptism made us the children of God. St. John's Baptism is only for repentance (cleansing). He was preparing the people hearts to love and receive our Lord Jesus Christ.

PEOPLE'S QUESTIONS

The people asked St. John many questions, they asked him: give us an advice what should we do to please God? *"He answered and said to them, "He who has two shirts, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him give who has no food."* Then **tax collectors** (collects money for the king) also came to be baptized, and said to him, *"Teacher, what shall we do?"* 13And he said to them, *"do not take more money than what you should."* The soldiers asked him, saying, *"And what shall we do?"* So he said to them, *"Do not bully anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages."*

Other people asked him: *are you the Christ?* He said *no*. *Are you Elijah or the prophet?* He said *no*. they then asked him: *who are you?* He said: *"I am the voice of one shouting in the desert: "Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His way straight"*.

PROPHECY ABOUT OUR LORD

Then St. John said: *"There comes One after me who is stronger than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."* Of course St. John was telling them of our Lord Jesus, because all what St. John is doing, is to prepare the hearts of the people to receive Him.

THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD

One day, our Lord Jesus went to St. John in the Jordan river and stood with the people who wanted to be baptized. When His turn came, St. John saw Him and knew Him. St. John was troubled and said: *"I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?"* But Jesus answered and said to him, *"let it to be so now, for we should do all the work of God."* Then St. John let Him. Let me tell you how it was done. As in the icon, St. John stood in the water, our Lord went towards him, and St. John put his hand over the Head of our Lord. For St. John, this must be very difficult, imagine you put your hand on the holy head of the Son of God. How humble is our Lord Jesus to let any human do that to Him. Then, helping the person to go down under the water and be completely immersed in it. When our Lord came out from the water, St. John saw the heaven opened up like a curtain and The Holy Spirit of God coming down from heaven in the shape of a Dove and landing on our Lord Jesus and stayed on Him and did not leave Him. At the same time, St. John heard the voice of God the Father saying: *"You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*

OUR LORD FASTED FOR 40 DAYS

When our Lord finished His baptism he left to the wilderness to fast for 40 days.

PLAN & MATERIALS:

Plan a: acting, the children takes different roles. The heavens can be a blue tarp with the Spirit coming down from heaven as a (paper) dove.

Plan b: coloring, scrap book building, singing the doxology of Saint John the Baptist.

CONCLUSION

1. Review questions:

Q. Can you tell me about St. John's life?

A. He grew up in the desert, his food was locusts and wild honey, he wore a shirt of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist.

Q. What was the job of St. John and how did he do it?

A. He was to prepare the hearts of the people to receive our Lord. He was to call them to repentance and to receive their confessions and immerse them in the water of the Jordan river as the sign of cleaning of their hearts by God.

Q. What was the advice that St. John gave to the tax collectors?

A. Do not collect more money than you should.

Q. What did St. John say to our Lord Jesus when our Lord came to be baptized by him?

A. "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?"

Q. Can you describe to me how did St. John baptize our Lord? How did he feel?

A. St. John put his hand over the Head of our Lord. How humble is our Lord Jesus to let any human do that to Him. Then, helping the person to go down under the water and be completely immersed in it. For St. John, this must be very difficult.

Q. what did St. John see and hear after the baptism of our Lord?

A. He saw the heavens opened and the Holy Spirit coming down like a dove, landing on our Lord and remained on Him. He heard the voice of the Father saying: "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased." Luke 3:22

III. DAILY READINGS

Our Lord was Baptized in the Jordan River

1. Jacob crossed the Jordan after wrestling with God – Genesis 32

2. The waters of the Jordan River stood before the Ark of the covenant – Joshua 3
 3. Elijah divide the waters of the Jordan River – 2Kings: 2
 4. Naaman the Syrian is healed in the Jordan River – 2kings:5
 5. God saved baby Moses by the river – Exodus 2
 6. God saved the Israelites by the red sea – Exodus 14
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Unit IV

Purpose: In This unit, we continue the gospel story, to cover the mission, the teachings, the miracles and the making of disciples of our Lord. He is the good shepherd who does the will of the Father and shows us the true image of the Father.

LESSON 19: OUR LORD CALLS HIS HELPERS (*MAKING FISHERS OF MEN*)

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

St. Luke:

"So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, 2and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing their nets. 3Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat. 4When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." 5But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net." 6And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. 7So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. 8When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" 9For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; 10and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men." 11So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him." *Luke 3:1-22*

St. Mark 1:20

St. Luke 5:27-34

St. John 2: 35-51

A. Creed:

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; consubstantial with the Father,

By whom all things were made.

Who for us and for our salvation, He descended from heaven,

He was incarnated from the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

CHURCH FATHERS:

“Thou art Simon, the son of Jonas.” By the present, the future is guaranteed; for it is clear that He who named Peter’s father foreknew the future also. And the prediction is attended with praise; but the object was not to flatter, but to foretell something future. Hear at least in the case of the Samaritan woman, how He utters a prediction with severe reproofs; “Thou hast had,” he saith, “five husbands, and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband.” (c. 4:18) So also His Father makes great account of prophecy, when He sets Himself against the honor paid to idols: “Let them declare to you,” saith He, “what shall come upon you” (Isaiah 47:13); and again, “I have declared, and have saved, and there was no foreign God amongst you” (Isaiah 43:12, LXX.); and He brings this forward through all prophecy. Because prophecy is especially the work of God, which devils cannot even imitate, though they strive exceedingly. For in the case of miracles there may be delusion; but exactly to foretell the future belongs to that pure Nature alone. Or if devils ever have done so, it was by deceiving the simpler sort; whence their oracles are always easily detected. But Peter makes no reply to these words; as yet he knew nothing clearly, but still was learning. And observe, that not even the prediction is fully set forth; for Jesus did not say, “I will change thy name to Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church,” but, “Thou shalt be called Cephas.” The former speech would have expressed too great authority and power; for Christ does not immediately nor at first declare all His power, but speaks for a while in a humbler tone; and so, when He had given the proof of His Divinity, He puts it more authoritatively, saying, “Blessed art thou, Simon, because My Father hath revealed it to thee”; and again, “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church.” (Matthew 16:17, 18) Him therefore He so named, and James and his brother He called “sons of thunder.” (Mark 3:17) Why then doth He this? To show that it was He who gave the old covenant, that it was He who altered names, who called Abram “Abraham,” and Sarai “Sarah,” and Jacob “Israel.” To many he assigned names even from their birth, as to Isaac, and Samson, and to those in Isaiah and Hosea (Isaiah 8:3; Hosea 1:4, 6, 9); but to others He gave them after they had been

named by their parents, as to those we have mentioned, and to Joshua the son of Nun. It was also a custom of the Ancients to give names from things, which in fact Leah also has done; and this takes place not without cause, but in order that men may have the appellation to remind them of the goodness of God, that a perpetual memory of the prophecy conveyed by the names may sound in the ears of those who receive it. Thus too He named John early, because they whose virtue was to shine forth from their early youth, from that time received their names; while to those who were to become great at a later period, the title also was given later.” *St. John Chrysostom commentary on St. John’s Gospel*

REFLECTION:

Our Lord chose and called His disciples, sometimes He would go to their place of work (the sea shore, the ship, the tax collectors place, and the road to Damascus), and other times He would pick them up from among those who followed Him. He would proclaim to them that “You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain” *John 15:16*.

PRAYER:

You are the Logos of the Father, God, Who is before the ages; the great High Priest; Who was incarnate and became man for the salvation of mankind. And out of all nations, He called unto Him a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation and a justified people.

As You had sent the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, and He came upon each one of them like cloven tongues of fire. And filled them with every knowledge, every understanding and every spiritual wisdom, according to Your faithful promise. And they spoke in every language, and they preached Your Holy Name to all the nations.

O You, Who has granted His holy Disciples and His honored Apostles the descent of the Spirit, the Paraclete, upon them, and gave them authority to work healings, signs and miracles, they preached us Your Holy Name and restored us to the True Faith of the Holy Trinity. We praise You, bless You, glorify You and give thanks unto You, on account of these great gifts. *Fraction of the Lent*

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

- Our Lord Jesus Christ, has chosen His apostles, who are Peter and Andrew, and John and James.
- Philip and Matthew, Bartholomew and Thomas, James the Son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Canaanite.
- Thaddeus and Matthias, Paul Mark and Luke, and the rest of the disciples, who followed our Savior.
- Matthias was chosen, instead of Judas, and was counted with the rest, who followed the Master.
- Their voices went forth, onto the face of the whole earth, and their words have reached, the ends of the world.
- Pray to the Lord on our behalf, my masters and fathers the Apostles, and the seventy two disciples, that He may forgive us our sins.

The first annual doxology of the apostles

VOCABULARY:

Disciple, apostle, Galilee, Iconostasis

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	We believe in one holy Catholic and apostolic Church
Liturgical:	Iconostasis- We honor the Apostles
Moral:	Love the Lord more than anyone or anything
Spiritual:	Offering

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What did St. John say to our Lord Jesus when our Lord came to be baptized by him?

A. *"I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?"*

Q. Can you describe to me how did St. John baptize our Lord? How did he feel?

A. St. John put his hand over the Head of our Lord. How humble is our Lord Jesus to let any human do that to Him. Then, helping the person to go down under the water and be completely immersed in it. For St. John, this must be very difficult.

Q. what did St. John see and hear after the baptism of our Lord?

A. He saw the heavens opened and the Holy Spirit coming down like a dove, landing on our Lord and remained on Him. He heard the voice of the Father saying: "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased." Luke 3:22

CONNECTION POINT:

Our Lord Jesus was sent by His heavenly Father to our world to save us. When He was thirty years old, He went to Saint John the Baptist to be baptized by him. Today He is about to chose His helpers.

LESSON BODY:

ST. JOHN TELLS HIS DISCIPLES:

- After the baptism of our Lord, When St. John saw our Lord Jesus walking; St. John pointed at Him and said: *"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"* St. John had many **disciples** (students who learned from him how to please God). Two of his disciples were St. John (another St. John) and St. Andrew. When they heard St. John the Baptist saying "behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" they left St. John the Baptist and followed our Lord. Our Lord Jesus saw them following, He asked them: *"what do you want?"* They said: *"Lord where do you stay?"* our Lord said: *"come and see."* They went and stayed with Him. St. Andrew had a brother, his name was Simon. St. Andrew told his brother Simon about our Lord and brought him to see our Lord. When our Lord saw Simon He said to him: *"You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Peter"* (which is translated, a Rock). The following day Jesus wanted to go to **Galilee** (another place

in Israel, where they all came from), and He found Philip and said to him, *"Follow Me."* Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter."

THE BIG CATCH

They all left the place where St. John the Baptist was baptizing and traveled to Galilee. One day our Lord was walking by the sea of Galilee and was talking to the people, while St. Peter (whose name was Simon before) and St. Andrew his brother, St. John and St. James his brother were out on the shore fixing the cuts in their nets. They all had been out in the sea the whole night and could not catch any fish. The people were very many and were crowding around our Lord, and He needed a place where He can be a little higher and a little away from them so everyone can hear Him and see Him. He looked at St. Peter and asked him to let him use his boat. St. Peter was happy that our Lord wanted to use his boat. We too should be happy when we give our Lord of our time or our possessions. Our Lord asked him to take the boat a little from the land, but not too far. Our Lord sat on the boat and taught the people. When He was done, He told St. Peter to take the boat into the deep water and threw their nets to catch fish. But St. Peter answered and said to Him, *"Master, we have tried hard all night long and caught nothing; but at Your word I will let down the net."* And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. So they waved to their partners (St. John and St. James) in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, until that they began to sink. 8When St. Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, *"leave me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"* For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, *"Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men."* So when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything: the boats, the nets, and the fish with the helpers and their father Zebedee and followed Him. This was wonderful because St. Peter and the rest loved our Lord more than their job and their own families. We too should love Jesus our Lord more than anyone or anything.

LEVI WHO BECAME ST. MATTHEW

After these things our Lord went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, *"Follow Me."* So he left all, rose up, and followed Him. Then Levi gave Him a great feast in his own house. Levi became a disciple of our Lord and his other name was Matthew.

THE APOSTLES

Our Lord chose 12 disciples and asked them to follow Him to every place He went; he called them **apostles** (the disciples who our Lord sent to help Him caring for His people). You can see their icons

on the **Iconostasis** (the carrier of icons) in the church. Jesus our Lord would have His apostles help him in establishing His church, that we are all part of now. We honor the holy Apostles of our Lord.

PLAN & MATERIALS:

Plan a: coloring Page, scrap book building with coloring page and fish and pieces of net and the call: follow Me in bold colors, picture of the church iconostasis portion of the 12 apostles

Plan b: Singing the apostles doxology acting movie.

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. Who told The disciples about our Lord Jesus?

A. St. John the Baptist

Q. What was St. Peter doing by the sea shore?

A. Fixing the cuts in his nets

Q. What did our Lord ask him to do for Him?

A. To use his boat to teach the crowd from it.

Q. What did St. Peter say when our Lord told him to go fishing?

A. "we have tried hard all night and caught nothing, but at Your word I will let down the net"

Q. Where can I see the icons of the 12 apostles?

A. On the Iconostasis

Q. What is the Iconostasis?

A. The carrier of icons

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." Mark 1:17

III. DAILY READINGS

Our Lord sent His disciples to do God's work

7. Elisha sent his disciple to raise the widow's son – 2 Kings 4:8-36
 8. Our Lord sent the twelve on a mission – Luke 9:1-11
 9. Our Lord sent the seventy on a second mission – Luke 10: 1-12
 10. Our Lord sent two disciples to get the donkey for Him to ride – Matthew 21
 11. Our Lord sent Peter and John to prepare for the Passover – Luke 22:7-13
 12. The great mission –Matthew 28: 16- 20
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Unit IV

Purpose: In This unit, we continue the gospel story, to cover the mission, the teachings, the miracles and the making of disciples of our Lord. He is the good shepherd who does the will of the Father and shows us the true image of the Father.

LESSON 20: OUR LORD LOOKS OUT FOR US WHEN WE ARE IN TROUBLE

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

St. Matthew:

"13When Jesus heard it, He departed from there by boat to a deserted place by Himself. But when the multitudes heard it, they followed Him on foot from the cities. 14And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick. 15When it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is already late. Send the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food." 16But Jesus said to them, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat." 17And they said to Him, "We have here only five loaves and two fish." 18He said, "Bring them here to Me." 19Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes. 20So they all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained. 21Now those who had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children. 22Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. 23And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there. 24But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary. 25Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. 26And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. 27But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." 28And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." 29So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. 30But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" 31And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" 32And when they

got into the boat, the wind ceased. 33Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God." Matt. 14:13-21

CREED:

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; consubstantial with the Father,

By whom all things were made.

Who for us and for our salvation, He descended from heaven,

He was incarnated from the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

CHURCH FATHERS:

"For great as their assiduity was, yet nevertheless His doings exceeded what any diligence could earn. Wherefore He sets forth also His motive for so healing them, His mercy, and intense mercy: and He healed all. And He requires not faith here. For both by coming to Him, and by leaving their cities, and by diligently seeking Him, and by abiding with Him even when hunger was pressing, they display their own faith. But He is about to feed them also. And He doth not this of Himself, but waits to be entreated; on every occasion, as I have said, maintaining this rule, not to spring onward to His miracles, preventing them, but upon some call. And why did none of the multitude come near and speak for them? They revered Him exceedingly, and felt not even their hunger, through their longing to stay with Him. Neither indeed do His disciples, when they were come to Him, say, "*Feed them;*" for as yet they were rather in an imperfect state; but what?" *St John Chrysostom Commentary on St Matthew 14*

"Now by saying, "*He constrained them,*" He indicates the very close attendance of the disciples. And His pretext indeed for dismissing them was the multitude, but He was Himself minded to go up into the mountain; and He did this, instructing us neither to be always in intercourse with multitudes, nor always to fly from the crowd, but each of the two as may be expedient, and giving each duly his turn."

He Himself then went up thither with this object, but the disciples are tossed with the waves again, and undergo a storm, equal even to the former. But whereas before they had Him in the ship when this befell them, now they were alone by themselves. Thus gently and by degrees He excites and urges them on for the better, even to the bearing all nobly.

Accordingly we see, that when they were first near that danger, He was present, though asleep, so as readily to give them relief; but now leading them to a greater degree of endurance, He doth not even this, but departs, and in mid sea permits the storm to arise, so that they might not so much as look for a hope of preservation from any quarter; and He lets them be tempest-tost all the night, thoroughly to awaken, as I suppose, their hardened heart. For such is the nature of the fear, which the time concurs with the rough weather in producing. And together with the compunction, He cast them also into a greater longing for Himself, and a continual remembrance of Him.” *St John Chrysostom Commentary on St Matthew 14*

REFLECTION:

Our Lord, the true light of His Father, showed great care and compassion towards humans. In this passage from the Gospel of St. Matthew, He was greatly caring for both the hungry multitudes and for His own troubled disciples. Therefore, the church calls Him “Lover of mankind”. The Father and the Holy Spirit also are the “lovers of mankind”

PRAYER:

You, as a Lover of mankind, created me, a man. You had no need of my servitude. Rather, it was me who was in need of Your lordship. Because of the multitude of Your compassions, You formed me when I had no being.

You set up the sky for me as a ceiling. You made the earth firm for me so that I could walk on it. For my sake You bridled the sea. For my sake You have revealed the nature of the animals.

You subdued everything under my feet.

From the Anaphora of St. Gregory Liturgy

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

We follow You with all our hearts and we fear You, we seek Your face, O Lord do not forsake us

But rather deal with us, according to Your Meekness, and according to Your great mercy, O Lord help us.

May our prayers ascend unto You, O our master, like burnt offerings of rams and fatted calves

Do not forget Your covenant, which You have made with our fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Israel your holy one

Tenoeh Enthok- Midnight Psalmody

VOCABULARY:

Loaves

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	Christ loves us
Liturgical:	Ologia - sharing the blessed bread
Moral:	Obedience
Spiritual:	Offering-Thanksgiving before meals

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What was St. Peter doing by the sea shore?

A. Fixing the cuts in his nets

Q. What did our Lord ask him to do for Him?

A. To use his boat to teach the crowd from it.

Q. What did St. Peter say when our Lord told him to go fishing?

A. *"we have tried hard all night and caught nothing, but at Your word I will let down the net"*

Q. Where can I see the icons of the 12 apostles?

A. *On the Iconostasis*

Q. What is the Iconostasis?

A. *The carrier of icons*

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." Mark 1:17

CONNECTION POINT:

Our Lord Jesus was sent by His heavenly Father to our world to save us. When He was thirty years old, He went to Saint John the Baptist to be baptized by him. Our Lord Jesus Christ showed us the love and the care of His Father. Today we are going to see how He cared for all people when they were in need. The Church calls Him the lover of mankind.

LESSON BODY:

THE CONCERN FOR THE APOSTLES:

One day, our Lord sent His disciples to tell people in different towns about Him. After a couple of days, when He was busy telling people about His Father and healing the sick who came to Him, the disciples came back. When they came back, He saw that they were very tired. Our Lord loved His disciples very much. **1and because our Lord cared so much for** His disciples, He wanted for them to rest after their journey and their hard work for Him. He said to them: *"Come aside by yourselves to a place where there are no people and rest a while."* For there were a lot of people coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat. So they left in the boat with our Lord to a place where there was no one. But the people saw them leaving, and many of them knew Him and ran

there on foot from all the cities. They arrived before them and came together to Him. They came to Him on foot carrying their sick friends and relatives.

THE CONCERN FOR THE PEOPLE

Our Lord saw them and felt sorry for them. **And because our Lord cared so much for** the people, **1**He healed the sick people all day long. When evening came, His disciples told Him to let the people go to the villages and buy themselves food and find a place to rest, because it was too late and there was no food in the place they were in. **And because our Lord cared so much for** the people, **2**He asked His disciples to give the people to eat. They said they would need to spend a lot of money to buy bread. Even then each person would eat very little. The people were five thousand men with their families.

THE GIFT OF THE FIVE LOAVES AND TWO FISH

The disciples said to our Lord: *"There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what five loaves and two fish do for all those people?"* Then Jesus said, *"Make the people sit down."* Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down. *He said, "Bring the five loaves and the two fish here to Me."* Then He told the multitudes to sit down on the grass in groups of fifty and of hundred.

How wonderful was the gift of the little boy when he gladly gave our Lord his meal to share it with others. We too are very happy to share with our Lord our things. We can share our toys with other children who does not have, we can ask our parents to spare some money to be put in the donation box of the church.

THANKSGIVING, BLESSING, BREAKING AND GIVING

And our Lord took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He gave thanks, blessed and broke (our Lord teaches us to give thanks and blessing before meals) and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes. So they all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments of leftover. Can you imagine: five loaves and two fish feeds five thousand men and their families!? We do share similar meal every Sunday when abouna gives us the blessed bread after the liturgy we remember the many families that our Lord fed.

CONCERN FOR THE APOSTLES

When the people finished eating, they stood up and wanted to be with our Lord again. Our Lord saw them coming. He knew that His disciples by now are very tired and did not rest at all the whole day. **And because our Lord cared so much for His disciples, 2** He told His disciples to take the boat and cross the sea to other side. He stayed to take care of the people. He made sure that His disciples are safe in the boat. Our Lord knew that the people wanted to take Him and make Him a king. He left that place and climbed the mountain to pray for His disciples and for the people.

As He was praying, the disciples were in the boat having very hard time. The sea waves were very high and strong and the wind was blowing hard in the wrong direction. Our Lord knew that they were having very hard time. **And because our Lord cared so much for His disciples 3** So He left the mountain stepped into the sea and did something very wonderful. He walked on the water of the sea to go and be with His disciples so He can save them. It was about Three o'clock am. When He came closer to the boat, He saw that they were trying very hard to row against the wind. The boat was filling with water and about to sink. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were worried, they said: *"It is a ghost!"* And they screamed out of fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, *"take courage! It is I; do not be afraid."*

SAVING ST. PETER

And St. Peter answered Him and said, *"Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water."* So He said, *"Come."* And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was very strong, he was afraid; and began to sink and he cried out, saying: *"Lord, save me!"* **And because our Lord cared so much for St. Peter, 4** He immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, *"O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"*, because St. Peter was looking to the sea and the wind and not keeping his eyes on our Lord. He should have known that nothing can hurt Him as long as he is with our Lord. And when they got into the boat, the wind calmed down. Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him (knelt down before Him), saying, *"Truly You are the Son of God."*

Our Lord continues to care very much for all of us because He loves us. He is with us all the time although we do not see Him. **And because our Lord cared so much for** us His children, He made a promise to be with us always all our lives.

PLAN & MATERIALS:

Plan a: scrap book building with 2 coloring pages one for the multiplication of loaves and fishes and one for the saving the disciples. Different “sticky items” can be used: loaves, fish, basket, ship items, etc.

Plan b: Acting out the story with loaves and paper fishes.

Other: tell the story, let the children count how many times our Lord cared for the people and how many times He cared for His disciples. You can let them mark the times by saying: “and because our Lord cared so much for..., He..”

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What do we learn from the boy who gave his meal to the disciples?

A. *To share what we have, even if it was little with our Lord through the church.*

Q. What did our Lord do before the breaking the bread?

A. *He gave thanks and blessings.*

Q. How many times our Lord Jesus showed concern for His disciples?

A. *Four times in this story: When they came back tired, when they finished gathering the leftover and when they were about to sink and when St. Peter was about to sink*

Q. How did our Lord show concern for the people?

A. *By healing the sick and teaching them. By feeding them when they were hungry in a place where there is no food.*

Q. What was our Lord doing up the mountain at night?

A. *Praying for His disciples and for the people.*

Q. Does our Lord Jesus know when we are in trouble?

A. *Yes He knows and is always looking out for us.*

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters." Psalm 23:1-2

III. DAILY READINGS

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the lover of mankind

1. Our Lord's compassion on the people – Matthew 9:35-38, Luke
 2. Our Lord had compassion on the two blind men – Matthew 20: 29-34
 3. Our Lord had compassion on the leper – Mark 1:40-45
 4. Our Lord had compassion on the widow of Nain – Luke 7:11-17
 5. Our Lord is the compassionate master – Matthew 18: 21-35
 6. Our Lord showed us the compassion of our heavenly Father – Luke 15: 11-32
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Unit IV

Purpose: In This unit, we continue the gospel story, to cover the mission, the teachings, the miracles and the making of disciples of our Lord. He is the good shepherd who does the will of the Father and shows us the true image of the Father.

LESSON 21: OUR LORD REVEALS THE FATHER'S CARE

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

St. Luke:

"12And it happened when He was in a certain city, that behold, a man who was full of leprosy saw Jesus; and he fell on his face and implored Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean." 13Then He put out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." Immediately the leprosy left him. 14And He charged him to tell no one, "But go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as a testimony to them, just as Moses commanded." *Luke 5:12-15*

"40So it was, when Jesus returned, that the multitude welcomed Him, for they were all waiting for Him. 41And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And he fell down at Jesus' feet and begged Him to come to his house, 42for he had an only daughter about twelve years of age, and she was dying. But as He went, the multitudes thronged Him. 43Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, 44came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped. 45And Jesus said, "Who touched Me?" When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, "Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, "Who touched Me?"" 46But Jesus said, "Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me." 47Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately. 48And He said to her, "Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace." 49While He was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, "Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the Teacher." 50But when Jesus heard it, He answered him, saying, "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be

made well." 51When He came into the house, He permitted no one to go in except Peter, James, and John, and the father and mother of the girl. 52Now all wept and mourned for her; but He said, "Do not weep; she is not dead, but sleeping." 53And they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was dead. 54But He put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Little girl, arise." 55Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given something to eat. 56And her parents were astonished, but He charged them to tell no one what had happened."
Luke 8:40-56

CREED:

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; consubstantial with the Father,

By whom all things were made.

Who for us and for our salvation, He descended from heaven,

He was incarnated from the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

CHURCH FATHERS:

"He touched the leper not because He is unable to heal him without the touch, but to prove He was not a prisoner of the law, and that He does not fear contagion, since He will never be infected by it."
St. Ambrose

"The old law commands that the leper comes forth to the priest not to offer an outer sacrifice, but to offer himself a spiritual sacrifice to God, and thus it wipes out his previous iniquity. He thus becomes consecrated to the Lord as a pleasing sacrifice. 'I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.' *Rom 12:1*". *St Ambrose*

"Wherefore did she not approach Him boldly? She was ashamed on account of her affliction, accounting herself to be unclean. For if the monstrous woman was judged not to be clean, much more would she have the same thought, who was afflicted with such a disease; since in fact that complaint was under the law accounted a great uncleanness. Therefore she lies hidden, and

conceals herself. For neither had she as yet the proper and correct opinion concerning Him: else she would not have thought to be concealed. And this is the first woman that came unto Him in public, having heard of course that He heals women also, and that He is on His way to the little daughter that was dead. And she durst not invite him to her house, although she was wealthy; nay, neither did she approach publicly, but secretly with faith she touched His garments. For she did not doubt, nor say in herself, *“Shall I indeed be delivered from the disease? shall I indeed fail of deliverance?”* But confident of her health, she so approached Him. *“For she said,”* we read, *“in herself, If I may only touch His garment, I shall be whole.”* Yea, for she saw out of what manner of house He was come, that of the publicans, and who they were that followed Him, sinners and publicans; and all these things made her to be of good hope.”

“Let no man therefore beat himself any more, nor wail, neither disparage Christ’s achievement. For indeed He overcame death. Why then dost thou wail for naught? The thing is become a sleep. Why lament and weep? Why, even if Greeks did this, they should be laughed to scorn; but when the believer behaves himself unseemly in these things, what plea hath he? What excuse will there be for them that are guilty of such folly, and this, after so long a time, and so clear proof of the resurrection?” St John Chrysostom commentary on St. Matthew Gospel

REFLECTION:

Our Lord, the true light of His Father, showed great care and compassion towards humans. Our Lord was not uncomfortable to touch the Leper, but with great compassion and pity, He offered that miserable man Himself. It is the image of the cross, where we see our Lord carrying all our sicknesses on Himself. He carried the bleeding of the woman, and the death of the daughter of Jairus. The woman with the issue of blood showed great faith, in that she pushed her way through the crowd, when she knew that it is not lawful for her to touch anyone. In the three cases, the leper, the woman with the issue of blood and the dead girl, our Lord takes on Himself our defilement, and gives us His healing and life.

PRAYER:

You are He who exists at all times. You came to us upon the earth: You came to the womb of the Virgin.

O You who cannot be contained; being God, You did not consider it snatching to be equal with God. But You emptied Yourself and took the form of a slave.

You blessed my nature in Yourself. You fulfilled Your Law for me.

You showed me the way to rise from my fall. You gave freedom to those who had been under the dominion of Hades.

You cast away the curse of the law. You brought to naught sin in the flesh. You showed me the power of Your authority.

You granted sight to the blind. You raised the dead from the graves. You raised up *human* nature through the word.

You revealed to me the dispensation of Your tender compassions.

From the Anaphora of St. Gregory Liturgy

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

The sick heal them, those who have slept O Lord repose them, and all of our brothers in distress, help us my Lord and all of them.

May God bless us, and let us bless His holy name, and may His praise continually be, always upon our mouths.

For blessed is the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the perfect Trinity, we worship Him and glorify Him.

The conclusion of the watos Theotokia

VOCABULARY:

Leprosy, leper, grieves, sorrow, Unction of the sick, anointing

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	Christ Loves us
Liturgical:	Unction of the sick
Moral:	Loving others, caring for the sick
Spiritual:	Going to our Lord in prayer if we have a need

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. How many times our Lord Jesus showed concern for His disciples?

A. four times in this story: When they came back tired, when they finished gathering the leftover and when they were about to sink and when St. Peter was about to sink

Q. How did our Lord show concern for the people?

A. by healing the sick and teaching them. By feeding them when they were hungry in a place where there is no food.

Q. What was our Lord doing up the mountain at night?

A. Praying for His disciples and for the people.

Q. Does our Lord Jesus know when we are in trouble?

A. Yes He knows and is always looking out for us.

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters." Psalm 23:1-2

CONNECTION POINT:

Our Lord Jesus was sent by His heavenly Father to our world to save us. When He was thirty years old, He went to Saint John the Baptist to be baptized by him. Our Lord Jesus Christ showed us the

love and the care of His Father. Today we are going to see how He cared for sick people and even the dead. The Church calls Him the lover of mankind.

LESSON BODY:

HEALING THE LEPER

One day, our Lord was walking in a city. In that city there was a man who had a sickness in all his skin called **"leprosy"**. It is a disease that made the person lose their fingers, toes, nose and ears and lips. Their skin looked very bad and they smelled terrible. Any person who had leprosy was not allowed to touch anything or anybody. They used to put them together in a place by themselves outside the city. If they pass by someone in the street, they would have to shout "I have leprosy, I have leprosy". No one wanted to come near them or touch them. They were very lonely and sad people. This man had leprosy in all his body. When he saw our Lord, he fell on his face and said to our Lord: "Lord, if You want You can heal me from the leprosy". Our Lord Jesus did something unexpected, everyone who saw that was surprised big time. Our Lord touched the leper (the person with leprosy). Our Lord said: "I want you to be clear from leprosy. Be healed". The leprosy was gone from the man at once.

THE WOMAN WITH ISSUE OF BLOOD

One day, Our Lord was in a city and a big crowd of people was all around Him. A man whose name was Jairus came and fell at Our Lord's feet and begged Him to come to His house, because his daughter was very sick and about to die. She was his only daughter & she was 12 years old. Our Lord was trying to make His way to Jairus house while the people were all around Him. It was very difficult to move. Now a woman who had bleeding (having a flow of blood out of her body) for twelve years, who had spent all her money on doctors and could not be healed by any doctor, came from behind our Lord. She believed that if she just could touch the robe of our Lord she would be healed. She was very nervous and afraid that people would push her away. But she pushed her way through the crowd and went to where our Lord was and touched the border of His cloths. And right away, her bleeding stopped. She did not want anyone to know that she touched our Lord because she was like the leper not supposed to touch anyone. Our Lord stopped and said: *"who touched Me?"* everyone stopped and said: *"not me"*. Saint Peter said: *"the people are all over You and push You and You ask who touched You?"* Our Lord said: *"Somebody touched Me, for I felt power going out from Me."* Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came shaking; and dropping down before Him, she told Him the truth in the presence of all the people the reason she had

touched Him and how she was healed immediately. 48And He said to her, *"Daughter, do not be afraid; your faith has made you well. Go in peace."*

RAISING JAIRUS DAUGHTER

While our Lord was speaking, someone from Jairus house came and said to Jairus: *"your daughter is dead do not trouble the Teacher."* Our Lord heard the person and knew that Jairus would be giving up. He looked at Jairus and told him: *"do not be afraid, only believe and your daughter will be made well."* Jairus believed our Lord and took Him to his house. Our Lord took with Him St. Peter, St. John and St. James and entered Jairus house. He entered to the room where Jairus daughter was Inside the room, there were relatives and friends crying and weeping. Our Lord said to them: *"do not cry, she not dead but sleeping."* The people laugh at our Lord because they knew that she really died. Our Lord calls the death sleep, for He can raise the dead back to life. He put them all outside. He took her by the hand and called, saying, *"Little girl, arise."* Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He told them to give her food to eat. And her parents were surprised a lot, but He asked them to tell no one what had happened."

THE MYSTERY OF THE UNCTION OF THE SICK.

Our Lord work of healing continues in the Church through the sacrament of healing, **the Unction of the sick**. When the priests pray over the oil, it becomes special oil that carries the power of healing. If we are sick, let us ask abouna to **anoint** us (paint our forehead, our chin or neck, our wrists with the sign of the cross) with the Oil of the Unction of the sick before we take communion. We can ask abouna to do the same for family members who are sick too. We also learn how we need to trust the Lord that He could help us when we go to Him with our needs in prayers especially in the liturgy.

PLAN & MATERIALS:

Plan a: scrap book building with the figure of our Lord in the center, and a figure of a woman kneeling to touch His garment and a leper kneeling before Him. The picture of raising the daughter of Jairus can be added. The verse is printed out on sticker paper.

Plan b: Acting out the stories in puppets or in play acting, movies or storytelling.

Other: bring a bottle with the sign (unction of the sick written on it) to show the class.

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. How did our Lord heal the leper

A. *Our Lord touched the leper to heal him*

Q. What is special about touching a leper?

A. *A leper has leprosy, a sickness that causes It is a disease that made the person lose their fingers, toes, nose and ears and lips. Their skin looked very bad and they smelled terrible. Any person who had leprosy was not allowed to touch anything or anybody.*

Q. What did the woman with the bleeding do to get healed?

A. *Touched the end of our Lord's coat.*

Q. How our Lord knew about it?

A. *He felt power going out of Him.*

Q. Why did the relatives of Jairus laugh at our Lord?

A. *Because He told them that she was asleep. They were sure that she was dead.*

Q. What do you think happened in the house of Jairus after our Lord raised Jairus daughter?

A. *They had a great celebration because our Lord raised Jairus daughter after she died*

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

“Surely He has borne our **grieves** (*sadness*) and carried our **sorrows** (*pains*)” *Isaiah 53:4*

III. DAILY READINGS

Our Lord Jesus Christ has born our grieves

13. Our Lord healed the centurion servant– Matthew 8:5-13,
 14. Our Lord healed St. Peter’s mother in-law – Matthew 8: 14-17
 15. Our Lord healed a paralytic – Matthew 9:1-8
 16. Our Lord healed a man with withered hand –Luke 7:6-11
 17. Our Lord healed the paralytic by the pool– John 5: 1-15
 18. Our Lord gave sight the man born blind – John 9
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Unit IV

Purpose: In This unit, we continue the gospel story, to cover the mission, the teachings, the miracles and the making of disciples of our Lord. He is the good shepherd who does the will of the Father and shows us the true image of the Father.

LESSON 22: OUR LORD TAUGHT US TO LOVE GOD AND LOVE OUR NEIGHBOR

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

St. Luke:

"And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury, 2and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites. 3So He said, "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all; 4for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had." Luke 21:1-4

25And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" 26He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" 27So he answered and said, ""You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your 40 strength, and with all your mind,' and "your neighbor as yourself."28And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live."29But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"30Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. 31Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. 33But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. 34So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, "Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' 36So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the

thieves?" 37And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise." Luke 10: 25-37

CREED:

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; consubstantial with the Father,

By whom all things were made.

Who for us and for our salvation, He descended from heaven,

He was incarnated from the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

CHURCH FATHERS:

"He is teaching us that the life of worldly pleasures separates us from God. This life pulls us downwards and chokes us with the heat of shameful lust. It also causes worry, and drives man towards death, which he eventually faces. If humanity falls down in this way, and flips over and is pulled down, then bit by bit it is led to the abyss below. There, humanity is attacked by hosts of devils that strip it of the garment of perfection the same way a gang of robbers would do. They left humanity no power or any trace of purity, or righteousness or wisdom or anything that depicts the divine image. In this way those devils have inflicted blows on the repeated various sins, and thus left humanity half dead. This shows clearly what this parable actually meant when we think of its depth. It is customary with thieves that they first inflict injuries and wounds so they strip off the victim's garments, and they are not interested in inflicting more injuries after that. But as for the devils, which are like thieves, they cannot do so unless they first take off the victim's garment of righteousness. After that, they injure him mercilessly till death, because they do not want our clothes from us. What they really want is our loss and our death. This is why the Lord said in wisdom: "they stripped off his garments and wounded him." *St Severus of Antioch*

"The soul that fell in robbers' hands was carried on Christ's shoulder" *St. Jerome*

REFLECTION:

Our Lord, the true light of His Father, showed great care and compassion towards humans. He taught us to love God and our neighbor both by acting and teaching. The ultimate work of love is perfected on the cross, “for there is no more love than for one to put down his life for those whom he loves.” In the cross the two commandments are made one. Therefore if we love Christ, we love the brethren. No one can say that he loves God if he does not show the love of the brethren. *“By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” 1 John 3:16*

PRAYER:

You have ordered Your disciples to follow Your commandments and statutes for You have said, “love one another; by this shall all men know you are my disciples because you love one another.” You also have taught us love and unity; and You have reconciled us with Your Father. Through Your love and compassion for mankind, You have crowned our freedom by the example of washing the disciples’ feet. When Peter exalted Your Divinity and refused saying, “You shall never wash my feet,” he heard Your answer, “If I do not wash you, You have no part with me,” but he cried sincerely saying, “Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!” and he also heard Your divine voice which is full of truth saying, “He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean.”

From the liturgy of the water – holy Thursday

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

And also that love, will never fail, as said by the wise, Paul the Apostle.

The love that, the holy Apostle speaks of, is the name of salvation, of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Wednesday Psalm – midnight psalmody

VOCABULARY:

Widow, Samaritan

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	Christ is our Teacher
Liturgical:	The remembering of others in the liturgy
Moral:	Do good to others even if they are not our family or friends
Spiritual:	Prayer disposition and Offering

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. How did our Lord heal the leper

A. Our Lord touched the leper to heal him

Q. What is special about touching a leper?

A. A leper has leprosy, a sickness that causes It is a disease that made the person lose their fingers, toes, nose and ears and lips. Their skin looked very bad and they smelled terrible. Any person who had leprosy was not allowed to touch anything or anybody.

Q. What did the woman with the bleeding do to get healed?

A. Touched the end of our Lord's coat.

Q. How our Lord knew about it?

A. He felt power going out of Him.

Q. Why did the relatives of Jairus laugh at our Lord?

A. Because He told them that she was asleep. They were sure that she was dead.

Q. What do you think happened in the house of Jairus after our Lord raised Jairus daughter?

A. *They had a great celebration because our Lord raised Jairus daughter after she died*

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"Surely He has borne our grieves and carried our sorrows" Isaiah 53:4

CONNECTION POINT:

Our Lord Jesus was sent by His heavenly Father to our world to save us. When He was thirty years old, He went to Saint John the Baptist to be baptized by him. Our Lord Jesus Christ showed us the love and the care of His Father. Today we He teaches us to love God and others. We will learn two stories one of them teaches the love of God and the other, the love of people.

LESSON BODY:

OUR LORD TEACHES US TO LOVE GOD

One day our Lord was in the Temple, which was the church for Jewish people; it was God's house. He was standing in the front, and He was closing His eyes, praying. At just the right moment, He happened to look up and He saw a certain woman. She was older, like your grandmother's age, and she was a **widow** (*her husband had died*). She was alone and she had almost no money. She couldn't get a job because it was only the men who worked in those days. She only had two pennies left. That was it. After those were gone, she would have no more money, no way to live. How would she buy food? How would she buy clothes? Our Lord watched this woman do something *unheard of* with those last two pennies of hers, something that not very many people would do. She took them and she put them in the Temple money box – she gave her last two pennies, everything she had, to God. Because she did this, Our Lord knew that she loved God very, very much because she didn't keep anything back for herself but gave it all to God.

THE LESSON:

Our Lord showed us how much we ought to love God. When we are willing to give God generous gifts happily and not think selfishly.

OUR LORD TEACHES US TO LOVE OUR NEIGHBOR

Our Lord told us this story to teach us about loving others:

There once was a man who was traveling from one city to another. In those days there were no cars or bikes, so he was walking and he was alone. It was going to be a long journey through a dangerous road.

It happened that on the same road that he was walking on, there were some thieves hiding and waiting for someone to walk by so they could steal his money. They saw this man coming, and in evil and scary voices, they whispered to each other, “Let’s get him!” They ran at him, beat him up really bad, and stole everything even his clothes. Then they ran away and left him lying on the ground, barely alive, not caring if he would die or live. It happened that someone else came walking down the road a little bit later – an important man who had an important job. He was a Jewish priest. He saw our friend lying there on the ground, and do you know what he did? He didn’t want to be late – he was on his way to the Temple to pray – so he crossed to the other side of the road and just kept walking, almost as if he hadn’t even seen our friend lying there.

Another important man came walking down the road. He was a Jewish deacon and he was also on his way to the Temple. When he saw our friend, who was still lying there on the ground unable to move, he also crossed the road to the other side and kept walking. You see, he had told himself that if he stopped to help this man, he would have made himself dirty by touching his blood and having to carry him, and there was just no way that, he would be able to stand in front of God and pray after doing that. This is what he *thought*.

Now after this, a third man came walking down the road. He was very different from the first two men who passed by. He wasn’t important. In fact, people didn’t like him. They thought he wasn’t good enough to talk to them or to be near them. He wasn’t even allowed in the Temple even though he loved God very much. He was from a place called Samaria, so we will call him the **Samaritan**. When this Samaritan saw our friend, broken and about to die, on the ground, he felt sorry for him in his heart and he felt for him. He saw his cuts, his wounds, his bruises, maybe even his broken bones and he cried because he understood how much that must hurt. He went to him and he knelt down next to him. He started to clean his cuts and put bandages on them. He wiped all the dirt and blood off of him, very gently. He put oil on him to help him feel better and to help his cuts to heal. This Samaritan had a donkey that he had been using to carry all his packages – he was on his way to sell things in the market in town. He took everything off the donkey, put the man on

the donkey, and picked up all his heavy packages. He led the donkey to a hospital. It took a long time and the Samaritan was very tired when they finally got there. But, he continued to take care of the man until the next day when he had to leave. Before he left, he told the manager of the hospital, "please take care of this man" and he also gave him some money and told him that if it cost any more to take care of him, he would give it all to him when he came back.

THE LESSON:

Our Lord is teaching us to be ready to do good to everyone, especially to those who do not like us. Think of those people who are sick when you are praying in the church.

PLAN & MATERIALS:

Plan a: The story of the widow can be a coloring page. The good Samaritan can be either, dramatized or made into scrap book page with items like the donkey, the bottles of wine and oil, the money given to the inn keeper and the verse.

Plan b: puppets, coloring, movies or storytelling.

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. How much money did the widow put in the box?

A. *Two pennies*

Q. Our Lord said she put more than all, why?

A. *Because the two pennies is all what she had?*

Q. What do we learn from the widow?

A. Our Lord showed us how much we ought to love God. When we are willing to give God generous gifts happily and not think selfishly.

Q. How many persons saw the wounded man?

A. *Three*

Q. Who is the Samaritan?

A. *A man from Samaria. The Jewish people did not like them.*

Q. What did the Samaritan do to the wounded Jewish man?

A. *The Samaritan man cared for the man's wounds and put him on his donkey, put him in a hotel and paid his stay and planned to come back to visit him and see how he is doing.*

Q. What do we learn from the Good Samaritan story?

A. *To love everyone by being ready to do good to anyone when we can, especially those who do not like us.*

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind," and "your neighbor as yourself." Luke 10:27

III. DAILY READINGS

Our Lord Jesus Christ taught us to love God and our brethren

19. Our Lord taught us to love God from all our hearts – Matthew 6:5-21
 20. Our Lord commanded us to be compassionate – Matthew 25: 31-46
 21. Our Lord gave an advice to the rich young man – Matthew 19:16-30
 22. Our Lord told a parable on the rich fool – Luke 12:13-21
 23. Our Lord told a parable of the rich man and Lazarus – Luke 16:19-31
 24. Our Lord restore the love of God to Zacchaeus – Luke 19:1-10
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Unit IV

Purpose: In This unit, we continue the gospel story, to cover the mission, the teachings, the miracles and the making of disciples of our Lord. He is the good shepherd who does the will of the Father and shows us the true image of the Father.

LESSON 23: UNIT REVIEW LESSON

God Reveal Himself to Us

UNIT V: OUR LORD, JESUS CHRIST GIVES HIMSELF UP FOR US (6 LESSONS)

Purpose: In This unit, we continue the gospel story, to cover the Holy week of Pascha, the glorious forty days and the Ascension. The gospels continue to tell us the mission of our Lord as He reaches the reason of His coming to the world "*Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour.*" John 12:27. It is God's response to the serpent trick and the price of our freedom from the slavery of death and sin. It is the Father's ultimate action of love.

Lesson 24: Our Lord raises Lazarus from the dead

Lesson 25: Mary anoints the feet of our Lord

Lesson 26: Our Lord enters Jerusalem on Palm Sunday

Lesson 27: Our Lord makes the first Eucharist on Covenant Thursday of Pascha

Lesson 28: Our Lord is crucified and buried on Great Friday of Pascha

Lesson 29: Unit Review

Unit V

Purpose: In This unit, we continue the gospel story, to cover the Holy week of Pascha. The gospels continue to tell us the mission of our Lord as He reaches the reason of His coming to the world *"Father, save Me from this hour"? But for this purpose I came to this hour."* John 12:27. It is God's response to the serpent trick and the price of our freedom from the slavery of death and sin. It is the Father's ultimate action of love.

LESSON 24: OUR LORD RAISES LAZARUS FROM THE DEAD

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

"Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. 2It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. 3Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick." 4When Jesus heard that, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it." 5Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. 6So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was. 7Then after this He said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." 8The disciples said to Him, "Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone You, and are You going there again?" 9Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. 10But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." 11These things He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up." 12Then His disciples said, "Lord, if he sleeps he will get well." 13However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. 14Then Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. 15And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him." 16Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him." I Am the Resurrection and the Life 17So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days. 18Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away. 19And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. 20Now Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. 21Now Martha said to

Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. 22But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You." 23Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." 24Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." 25Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. 26And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" 27She said to Him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world." 28And when she had said these things, she went her way and secretly called Mary her sister, saying, "The Teacher has come and is calling for you." 29As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly and came to Him. 30Now Jesus had not yet come into the town, but was in the place where Martha met Him. 31Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and comforting her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her, saying, "She is going to the tomb to weep there." 32Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." 33Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. 34And He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see." 35Jesus wept. 36Then the Jews said, "See how He loved him!" 37And some of them said, "Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?" 38Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. 39Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days." 40Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" 41Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. 42And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me." 43Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" 44And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go." 45Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him. 46But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did. 47Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. 48If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation." 49And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all, 50nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish." 51Now this he did not say on his own authority; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, 52and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad. 53Then, from that day on, they plotted to put Him to death. 54Therefore Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there into the country

near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, and there remained with His disciples. 55And the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went from the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves. 56Then they sought Jesus, and spoke among themselves as they stood in the temple, "What do you think--that He will not come to the feast?" 57Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a command, that if anyone knew where He was, he should report it, that they might seize Him." John 11

CREED:

He was crucified for us at the time of Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried.

CHURCH FATHERS:

Wherefore did He tarry? That Lazarus might breathe his last, and be buried; that none might be able to assert that He restored him when not yet dead, saying that it was lethargy, a fainting, a fit, but not death. On this account He tarried so long, that corruption began, and they said, "He now stinks." *St. John Chrysostom*

"And showing His own God befitting power, He calls the departure of the human soul from the body by the name of sleep, and very rightly: for He does not think it proper to call it death, who created man for immortality, according as it is written, and made the generations of the world to be healthful. Moreover, the language is also true, because the temporary death of our body is in the sight of God really a sleep and nothing different, brought to an end by a mere and single sign from that which is by nature life, namely Christ." *St Cyril of Alexandria the commentary on the Gospel of St John part II – Oriental Orthodox Library*

"*do you believe in this?*" It is necessary to know that we make the confession of our faith unto God, although we are questioned by men, I mean those whose lot it is to minister in sacred things, when we say the "I believe" at the reception of the Holy Baptism. Certainly therefore to speak falsely and to slip aside towards unbelief is a most awful thing; lest we may have as both judge and witness of our folly the Lord of all Himself, saying: "*even I am a witness, says the Lord.*" And we must observe that, as Lazarus was lying dead, on his behalf in a certain way the assent to the faith is demanded of the woman, that the type in this also may have force among the churches; for when a newborn baby is brought, either to receive the chrism of the catechumens, or that of the complete- (Galilawn) –condition at Holy Baptism the person who brings it repeats aloud the "Amen" on its

behalf. And on behalf of those who are assailed by extreme sickness, and on that account are going to be baptized, certain persons make the renunciation (of Satan) and the declaration of attachment (to Christ), by an act of charity lending as it were their voices to those who are disabled by sickness; a thing which we see to have been done in the case of Lazarus and his sister. And Martha wisely and prudently first sows the confession of faith, that she may reap the fruit of it” *St. Cyril of Alexandria the commentary on the Gospel of St John part II – Oriental Orthodox Library*

“He came then to the tomb; and again rebuked His feelings. Why does the Evangelist carefully in several places mention that “He wept,” and that, “He groaned”? That you may learn that He had of a truth put on our nature. For when this Evangelist is remarkable for uttering great things concerning Christ more than the others, in matters relating to the body, here he also spoke much more humbly than they. For instance, concerning His death he hath said nothing of the kind; the other Evangelists declare that He was exceedingly sorrowful, that He was in an agony; but John, on the contrary, said, that He even cast the officers backwards. So that he had made up here what is omitted there, by mentioning His grief. When speaking of His death, Christ said “I have power to lay down My life” (c. 10:18), and then He uttered no lowly word; therefore at the Passion they attribute to Him much that is human, to show the reality of the Dispensation. And Matthew proves this by the Agony, the trouble, the trembling, and the sweat; but John by His sorrow. For had He not been of our nature, He would not once and again have been mastered by grief. What did Jesus? He made no defense with regard to their charges; for why should He silence by words those who were soon to be silenced by deeds? a means less annoying, and more adapted to shame them.” *St John Chrysostom*

“He said, “I thank Thee,” showing that He needed not prayer. “And I knew that You hears Me always.” This He said not as though He Himself were powerless, but to show that His will and the Father’s is one. But why did He assume the form of prayer? Hear, not me, but Himself, saying, “For the sake of the people which stand by, that they may believe that Thou hast sent Me.” He said not, “That they may believe that I am inferior, that I have need of an impulse from above, that without prayer I cannot do anything; but, “That Thou hast sent Me.” For all these things the prayer declared, if we take it simply.” *St. John Chrysostom*

REFLECTION:

The miracle of raising Lazarus is found in the Gospel of St. John. And in this Gospel, It is the prelude to the Holy week. It is at the end of the story, that we find the answer to many of the questions raised in the beginning of chapter 11. Why did our Lord delay in coming to the help of His beloved friend? The

Gospel emphasized that our Lord Loved this family and St. Lazarus (verses 3, 5, 11, 36). Yet with all this stress on our Lord loving Lazarus, he *"So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was."* John 11:6. The answer to this riddle is *"This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it."* John 11:4. Bethany is very close to Jerusalem, where the Jewish leaders, the High priest and the Sanhedrim reside. If our Lord to enter into serious confrontation with them and with darkness, He would have to come to it in a direct way. *"He did not Come to heal us the sick, but to raise us the dead"* St. John Chrysostom.

By waiting 2 days, Lazarus would have been dead for 4 days and a stench would be expected. The more desperate the situation, the more the Glory of God (remember crossing the red sea). The result is the great envy of the corrupt leaders would feel towards our Lord then the high priest would declare: *"You know nothing at all, nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish."* John 11:50. Our Lord comes to the cross Himself through the miracle of Lazarus as He prepare to enter Jerusalem as her king.

The second question would be: If our Lord knew all along that He would raise Lazarus, why did He cry then? The fact that He knew that all will turn well at the end for Lazarus and his sisters, did not mean that our Lord did not feel their agony as they went through it. Being there, getting rebuked for apparent lack of concern, it affected Him greatly. The Gospel documented it for us in the expressions of *"Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled"* and *"Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb"* John 11:33,38. In His incarnation, our Lord showed us the divine emotions in response to our sickness and death. God is moved with compassion toward us always.

PRAYER:

You showed me the power of Your authority.

You granted sight to the blind.

You raised the dead from the graves.

You raised up *human* nature through the word.

St Gregory Liturgy – Anaphora

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

The communion hymn of Lazarus Saturday or the doxology

VOCABULARY:

Lazarus, Bethany, Resurrection

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	Christ feel our pains when we suffer
Liturgical:	Lazarus Saturday
Moral:	Mourning with mourners
Spiritual:	Waiting on God

INTRODUCTION

Have you had a really sick person in your family and you were worried about them? What did your parents do? Did your family pray to God for the healing of the sick person? And what happened? (Let the children share their stories)

Today we will learn the story of a sick person who was a close friend of our Lord.

CONNECTION POINT:

For the last few weeks we have been learning about the love and the care that our Lord Jesus Christ has for us His people. Today we will have a new true story, that happened sometime before our Lord went to Jerusalem for the last time.

LESSON BODY:

WHO IS LAZARUS?

Our Lord had a very special friend whom He *loved*, his name was **Lazarus**. One day Lazarus was very sick. Lazarus had two sisters, Mary and Martha. They all lived in a town near Jerusalem called **Bethany**

LAZARUS IS SICK

The sisters sent a person to our Lord telling Him that Lazarus his *beloved* friend is very sick. They expected our Lord to come and heal Lazarus their brother at once. But our Lord Jesus had another plan. He definitely *loved* Lazarus very much. He had to wait 2 days before He decided to go to see Lazarus. Our Lord had a plan that only Him and God His Father knew. Our Lord told His disciples that Lazarus whom we *love* had died.

OUR LORD IN BETHANY WITH MARTHA

When our Lord went to Bethany Lazarus sister, Martha, saw him and said to Him: *"if you were here, my brother would not have died"*. Martha was crying and was very sad. Our Lord felt very sad for her. But He encouraged her and said: *"your brother will rise again. If you believe you will see the glory of God"*. Martha said to Him: *"I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."* Jesus said to her, *"I am the **resurrection** (to come back to life after death) and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"* She said to Him, *"Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."*

WITH MARY

Martha called her sister to meet our Lord. All the people who were with her trying to comfort her came with her to the place where our Lord was. When she saw our Lord she cried and said to Him: *"if you were here my brother would not have died"*. The people said *"why did He not heal Lazarus before he died?"* Our Lord cried because He *loved* Lazarus, Mary and Martha.

AT THE TOMB

Our Lord asked: *"where did you lay Lazarus?"* They said: *"come and see"*. They took our Lord to where Lazarus tomb is. Lazarus was buried in the family tomb outside Bethany. The tomb was like a cave with a big stone on its door. Our Lord asked the people to take away the stone. Martha said to our Lord: *"Lord, by this time there is a very bad smell, for he has been dead four days."* Jesus said to her, *"Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?"* Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. Our Lord knelt down on his knees and prayed to God the Father saying: "Thank you Father for listening to me, and I know you always listen to me. But I want all these people to know that You Father who sent me to do all these great things." Then He shouted loudly "Lazarus come out!" Immediately, Lazarus came out all bound. Our Lord asked the people to loose him and let him go. Our Lord knew from the beginning that He would raise Lazarus from the dead. No one believed Him when he told them before He did it.

LESSON TO LEARN

When we ask God for something we need, sometimes God wants us to have it even better. We have to wait for His right time. God has a great plan, we would not believe it if even He told us about it now.

THE RESPONSE OF THE LEADERS

When the people saw that they were very surprised, and they went and told the leaders in Jerusalem. The leaders got very jealous of our Lord. They could not do any miracles. They decided to kill our Lord because they hated Him.

LAZARUS SATURDAY

We are coming closer to the holy week and the Saturday before palm Sunday is when we remember the great miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead. I hope that all of you will be able to be in the church then.

PLAN & MATERIALS:

Plan a: ask the children to clap whenever they hear the word love, loved, beloved. To highlight that God allow His friends to be sick.

Plan b: acting the story with a boy acting Lazarus, when acting burial toilet papers can be used to wrap him. Another can act our Lord and two girls for the sisters. The rest of the class can be disciples and crowd

Coloring page

Scrap book building

CONCLUSION:

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What is the meaning of the word “resurrection”?

A. To come back to life after death.

Q. why did our Lord wait two days and not go to see Lazarus when He knew that Lazarus was sick? Did he not love Lazarus enough?

A. No, Our Lord Loved Lazarus very much, but He had a plan and needed to wait. Our Lord knew that He would raise Lazarus from the dead.

Q. Why God sometimes does not give us what we ask-for immediately?

A. God always listens, but he always has the best plans. We need to wait for His right time

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

*Jesus said: "I am the **resurrection** and the life" John 11:25*

III. Daily Readings

God has a plan

- 25. Abraham gets a promise – Genesis 15
- 26. Joseph awaits God’s deliverance – Genesis 39-41
- 27. King Hezekiah was healed – 2 kings 20:1-11
- 28. The three saintly youth were delivered– Daniel 3

- 29. Daniel awaits God's deliverance – Daniel 6
 - 30. Tabitha is raised from the dead– Acts 9:36-42
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Unit V

Purpose: In This unit, we continue the gospel story, to cover the Holy week of Pascha. The gospels continue to tell us the mission of our Lord as He reaches the reason of His coming to the world *"Father, save Me from this hour"? But for this purpose I came to this hour."* John 12:27. It is God's response to the serpent trick and the price of our freedom from the slavery of death and sin. It is the Father's ultimate action of love.

LESSON 25: MARY ANOINTS THE FEET OF OUR LORD

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

St John:

"Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. 2There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. 3Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil. 4But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him, said, 5"Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" 6This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it. 7But Jesus said, "Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. 8For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always." 9Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. 10But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also, 11because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus." John 12:1-8

CREED:

He was crucified for us at the time of Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried;

CHURCH FATHERS:

While Martha was serving, Mary anointed the Lord with ointment, thus accomplishing her love towards Him; and by the actions of both, the measure of love was filled up and made perfect. *St. Cyril of Alexandria, Commentary on St. John Gospel- the Oriental Orthodox Library volume V*

And He said in defense of the anointing with the ointment, that it had been done, not out of luxuriousness, but because of a certain mystery which had reference to His burying; although she who did it was unaware of the design of the mystery. For many things have been both said and done with reference to a mystical type, when they who spoke and acted were unaware of it. Yet here again the Lord rebukes Judas, because he said this not out of piety, but because he was greedy of base gain, and was going for a little gain to betray his Master. For the burying and the allusion thus made to His death indicates this plainly. And the Lord also brings forward an argument which convinces us that nothing is better than devotion toward Him. For, He says, love for the poor is very praiseworthy, only let it be put after veneration of God. *St. Cyril of Alexandria, Commentary on St. John Gospel- the Oriental Orthodox Library volume V*

Mary did not minister, for she was a disciple. Here again she acted in the more spiritual manner. For she did not minister as being invited, nor did she offered her services to all alike. But she directed the honor to Him alone, and approached Him not as a man, but as a God. On this account she poured out the ointment, and wiped (His feet) with the hairs of her head, which was the action of one who did not entertain the same opinion concerning Him as did others; *St. John Chrysostom commentary on the Gospel of St. John, Post Nicene Fathers Vol 14, Homily 65*

And if any one ask why He put the bag of the poor in the hands of a thief, and made him steward who was a lover of money, we would reply, that God knows the secret reason; but that, if we may say something by conjecture, it was that He might cut off from him all excuse. For he could not say that he did this thing from love of money, (for he had in the bag sufficient to allay his desire,) but from excessive wickedness which Christ wished to restrain, using much condescension towards him. Wherefore He did not even rebuke him as stealing, although aware of it, stopping the way to his wicked desire, and taking from him all excuse. "Let her alone," He said, "for against the day of My burying hath she done this." Again, He made mention of the traitor in speaking of His burial. But him the reproof reached not, nor did the expression soften him, though sufficient to inspire him with pity: as if He had said, "I am burdensome and troublesome, but wait a little while, and I shall depart." This too he intended in saying, *"But Me you have not always."*

But none of these things turned back that savage madman; yet in truth Jesus said and did far more than this, He washed his feet that night, made him a sharer in the table and the salt, a thing which is wont to restrain even the souls of robbers, and spoke other words, enough to melt a stone, and

this, not long before, but on the very day, in order that not even time might cause it to be forgotten. But he stood out against all.

For a dreadful, a dreadful thing is the love of money, it disables both eyes and ears, and makes men worse to deal with than a wild beast, allowing a man to consider neither conscience, nor friendship, nor fellowship, nor the salvation of his own soul, but having withdrawn them at once from all these things, like some harsh mistress, it makes those captured by it its slaves. And the dreadful part of so hitter a slavery is, that it persuades them even to be grateful for it; and the more they become enslaved, the more doth their pleasure increase; and in this way especially the malady becomes incurable, in this way the monster becomes hard to conquer. This made Gehazi a leper instead of a disciple and a prophet; this destroyed Ananias and her with him; this made Judas a traitor; this corrupted the rulers of the Jews, who received gifts, and became the partners of thieves. This hath brought in ten thousand wars, filling the ways with blood, the cities with wailings and lamentations.

St. John Chrysostom commentary on the Gospel of St. John, Post Nicene Fathers vol. 14, Homily 65

REFLECTION:

The anointing of the feet of our Lord is a sign of love that the material world cannot understand. The world may even call such act “a waste”. The gift of Mary continues to trouble us today. When someone gives him/herself to God in a consecrated life of prayer, spending time in prayer that does not materialistically change the world, many get offended. The Lord defends those who act their love of Him out in sacrificial services to Himself. The way the world think is not the way God thinks. The orthodox worship is a sacrificial worship, the core and center of it is the altar.

PRAYER:

Behold, the bridegroom comes at midnight. Blessed is the servant whom He finds awake, But he who is found in slumber does not deserve to go with Him. Keep your watch my soul, Lest You go to sleep and be thrown outside the Kingdom. Keep awake and shout: Holy, Holy, Holy are You God, for the sake of the Mother of God, have mercy upon us.

From the first watch of Midnight prayer

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

The communion hymn of Lazarus Saturday or the doxology

VOCABULARY:

Offering, Anointing, Monks, Nuns

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	Christ is the prince of Life
Liturgical:	Lazarus Saturday
Moral:	We pray for others in trouble
Spiritual:	Prayer and waiting on God

INTRODUCTION

Q. What is the meaning of the word “resurrection”?

A. to come back to life after death.

Q. why did our Lord wait two days and not go to see Lazarus when He knew that Lazarus was sick?
Did he not love Lazarus enough?

A. no Our Lord Loved Lazarus very much, but He had a plan and needed to wait. Our Lord knew that He would raise Lazarus from the dead.

Q. Why God sometimes does not give us what we ask for immediately?

A. God always listens, but he always has the best plans. We need to wait for His right time

CONNECTION POINT:

For the last few weeks we have been learning about the love and the care that our Lord Jesus Christ has for us His people. Today we will continue to learn what happened after our Lord raised Lazarus from the dead.

LESSON BODY:

THE FEAST

We learned last week of the story of how our Lord raised Lazarus from the dead and called him out of the tomb. A few days later, Lazarus' family (himself and his two sisters, Mary and Martha) invited our Lord to a supper at their house and they made a big party to say "thank you" to Him for raising Lazarus from the dead. We too need to learn how to say thank you to God whenever we receive good things from Him. The best way to do this is by going to the church and sharing in the liturgy. During this supper many people were invited. They came because they wanted to see Jesus and because they wanted to see Lazarus. They had never seen anyone who had been raised from the dead before (came back to life after dying)! They could hardly believe that it had happened and they wanted to see Lazarus for themselves.

MARY'S OFFERING

While everyone was eating, Mary, Lazarus' sister felt a lot of love in her heart for Jesus, and she wanted to do something for Him to express how she was feeling. Sometimes when we love our parents very much, and we want to show them that we love them, we do something nice for them. Mary took a bottle of very, very expensive and sweet-smelling perfume. When she opened the bottle, the whole house began to smell so beautiful from the perfume. Then she did something very surprising. She poured the perfume all on our Lord's feet and **anointed** them with the perfume. **Anointing is to** (1. put oil on things or people to dedicate them to the service of God, and for healing and blessing. 2. They put perfume on the body of the dead to give it nice smell in honor of the person, we do that special care for the relics of the saints) Mary had very long and beautiful hair. After she poured the perfume on His feet, she wiped our Lord's feet with her hair. After this, Judas - one of our Lord 12 disciples- got annoyed and he was shocked because the perfume was very, very expensive. He started to blame her loudly, but Jesus defended her and said, 'don't say anything harsh to her because she did this in preparation for My death and burial.'

JUDAS' RESPONSE

Judas was angry because he loved money more than anything and even more than our Lord. Judas later went and took money from the Leaders to tell them where our Lord was to kill Him. loving money is very bad and can make people do all kinds of bad things. some people might steal because of greed, they will cheat and lie, they would turn their back on their friends and family, and even they would kill others.

OUR OFFERINGS

An offering that we offer to God might seem useless in the eyes of people who love money and care for riches. God the Father accept all the offering -His loving children give and return the gift with greater gifts and love. What gifts can you give God the Father and His Son - our Lord Jesus Christ? Prayer, when we offer ourselves to our Father in the morning and at night, when we fast, when we honor our parents, when we help others and when we come to church and pray in the liturgy and the feasts, and when we offer from our money to God.

PRACTICAL POINTS

How many of you offer our Father and our Lord Jesus a sacrifice of prayer in the morning and at night? How many of you want to offer themselves to God in the liturgy by singing and listening? how many raise their hands when they pray? How many listen to their parents in honor to God?

PLAN & MATERIALS:

Plan a: scrap book building, include elements of the icon of Mary anointing the feet of our Lord, pictures of monks, nuns, prayer with raised hands, on one side and another side where Judas stand they put pictures of money bags.

Plan b: Coloring page with all the above elements

CONCLUSION:

1. Review questions:

Q. why Lazarus' family made a supper for Christ?

A. To say thank you to Christ for bringing Lazarus back from the dead.

Q. How can we say thank you to God?

A. By going to the liturgy and sharing in it (offering thanksgiving to God)

Q. Why did a lot of people come to the supper?

A. They wanted to see Christ and to see Lazarus who had been raised from the dead

Q. What did Mary do while they were eating?

A. She poured a bottle of very expensive perfume on Christ's feet and wiped His feet with her hair

Q. What is the meaning of the word "anoint"? have you been anointed?

A. It means 1. Put oil on things or people to dedicate them to the service of God or for healing and blessing. 2. putting perfume on dead people bodies to honor them. Abouna anoint my head with oil in the church for my blessing .

Q. What do we learn from this lesson?

A. To give to God generously and to be excited about giving, to be happy about it

Q. What can we offer to God the Father that would be an offering acceptable to Him?

A. Prayers in the name of Christ our Lord, fasting, the Liturgy and material offerings like money.

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

" God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:7

DAILY READINGS

God accept the hearty offerings of His people

1. The offering of Abel– Genesis 4:3-5
 2. The offering of Melchizedek and Abraham – Genesis 14:18-20
 3. Jacob consecrated Bethel and promise to tithe to God – Genesis 28:10-22
 4. Aaron offered incense to God-Numbers 16: 46-50
 5. A widow offered all the oil and the flour she had – first King 17:1-16
 6. A widow offered all the money she had- Luke 21:1-4
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Unit V

Purpose: In This unit, we continue the gospel story, to cover the Holy week of Pascha. The gospels continue to tell us the mission of our Lord as He reaches the reason of His coming to the world *"Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour."* John 12:27. It is God's response to the serpent trick and the price of our freedom from the slavery of death and sin. It is the Father's ultimate action of love.

LESSON 26: OUR LORD ENTERS JERUSALEM ON PALM SUNDAY

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

St John:

12The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, 13took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: "Hosanna! " Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' The King of Israel!" 14Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written: 15" Fear not, daughter of Zion; Behold, your King is coming, Sitting on a donkey's colt." 16His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and that they had done these things to Him. 17Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness. 18For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign. 19The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, "You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!" *St John 12:1-19*

St. Matthew:

"Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, 2saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to Me. 3And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, "The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them." 4All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: 5" Tell the daughter of

Zion, " Behold, your King is coming to you, Lowly, and sitting on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey." 6So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them. 7They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him on them. 8And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 9Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David! "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!" Hosanna in the highest!" 10And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, "Who is this?" 11So the multitudes said, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee." 12Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. 13And He said to them, "It is written, "My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a "den of thieves.'" 14Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. 15But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant 16and said to Him, "Do You hear what these are saying?" And Jesus said to them, "Yes. Have you never read, " Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise'?" 17Then He left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and He lodged there." Matthew 21:1-27

CREED:

He was crucified for us at the time of Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried;

CHURCH FATHERS:

"At first therefore they (the apostles) were ignorant that these words had been written with regard to Him; but after the Resurrection, they did not continue to suffer from the Jewish blindness, but the knowledge of the Divine words was revealed to them through the Spirit. And then was the Christ glorified, when after being crucified He came to life again. And the Evangelist does not blush to mention the ignorance of the disciples, and again their knowledge, since they his object was, to take no heed of respect for men, but to plead for the glory of the Spirit; and to show what sort of men the disciples were before the Resurrection, and what sort of men they became after the Resurrection. If therefore these disciples were ignorant, how much more were the other Jews? And after He was crucified, *the veil was rent*, in order that we may know that nothing any longer remains hidden and concealed from faithful and godly. They were enlightened therefore with

knowledge from the time of the Resurrection, when the Christ breathed into their face, and they became different from the rest of men. And to a still greater extent they were enlightened on the Day of Pentecost, when they were transformed to the power of the Holy Spirit Who came upon them. *St. Cyril of Alexandria, Commentary on St. John Gospel- the Oriental Orthodox Library volume V*

“And yet He had often entered Jerusalem before, but never with so much circumstance. What then is the cause? It was the beginning then of the dispensation; and neither was He very well known, nor the time of His passion near; wherefore He mixed with them with less distinction, and more disguising Himself. For He would not have been held in admiration, had He so appeared, and He would have excited them to greater anger. But when He had both given them sufficient proof of His power, and the cross was at the doors, He makes Himself then more conspicuous, and doeth with greater circumstance all the things that were likely to inflame them. For it was indeed possible for this to have been done at the beginning also; but it was not profitable nor expedient it should be so.” *St. John Chrysostom Commentary on St. Matthew’s Gospel Homily 66*

“For this cause, I say, even when He was to be born He sought not a splendid house, nor a mother rich and distinguished, but a poor woman, and one that had a carpenter as her betrothed husband; and is born in a shed, and laid in a manger: and choosing His disciples, He chose not orators and wise men, not rich men and nobly born, but poor men, and of poor families, and in every way undistinguished; and providing His table, at one time He sets before Himself barley loaves, and at another at the very moment commands the disciples to buy at the market. And making His couch, He makes it of grass, and putting on raiment, He clothes Himself in what is cheap, and in no respect different from the common sort; and a house He did not so much as possess. And if He had to go from place to place, He did this traveling on foot, and so traveling, as even to grow weary. And sitting, He requires no throne nor pillow, but sits on the ground, sometimes in the mountain, and sometimes by the well, and not merely by the well, but also alone, and talks with a Samaritan woman.

Again, setting measures of sorrow, when He had need to mourn, He weeps moderately, everywhere setting us rules, as I have said, and limits how far one ought to proceed, and not any further. So for this intent now also, since it happens that some are weak and have need of beasts to carry them, in this too He fixes a measure, showing that one ought not to yoke horses or mules to be born by them, but to use an ass, and not to proceed further, and everywhere to be limited by the want.” *St. John Chrysostom Commentary on St. Matthew’s Gospel Homily 66*

REFLECTION:

Our Lord entered Jerusalem this time with a great crowd. He had the crowd witnessed the resurrection of Lazarus. The crowd witnessed for His power to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. This event would lead to the Cross, as the high priest had “prophesied”. The Name of “Jesus Christ” the “prophet from Nazareth” became known in Jerusalem as sent by God to do great miracles. When our Lord was crucified on the Friday of the same week, the whole city knew who He was. Likewise when the apostles and the resurrected righteous dead proclaimed His Resurrection, thousands were ready to receive this wonderful news with faith. In the first of His miracles, our Lord said “my hour has not come yet” and continued to conceal Himself, but when the hour drew near He performed the resurrection of Lazarus and proceeded to enter Jerusalem gloriously.

PRAYER:

O God our Lord, Your holy name is marvelous all over the world. For the majesty of Your glory is high above the heavens. Out of the mouths of infants and suckling’s You have prepared praise. O Lord prepare our souls that we may praise You, chant for You, bless Your holy name, serve You and offer You our thanks, every day and every hour. And that we may proclaim Your holy name.

Palm Sunday Fraction Prayer

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

Hosanna in the highest this is the king of Israel, Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord of hosts.

VOCABULARY:

Hosanna, Palm branches, Procession, relics

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	Christ is our King
Liturgical:	Palm Sunday prep
Moral:	Cleansing the heart with repentance
Spiritual:	Praying in church

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. why Lazarus' family made a supper for Christ?

A. *To say thank you to Christ for bringing Lazarus back from the dead.*

Q. How can we say thank you to God?

A. *By going to the liturgy and sharing in it (offering thanksgiving to God)*

Q. Why did a lot of people come to the supper?

A. *They wanted to see Christ and to see Lazarus who had been raised from the dead*

Q. What did Mary do while they were eating?

A. *She poured a bottle of very expensive perfume on Christ's feet and wiped His feet with her hair*

Q. What is the meaning of the word "anoint"? have you been anointed?

A. *It means 1. Put oil on things or people to dedicate them to the service of God or for healing and blessing. 2. putting perfume on dead people bodies to honor them. Abouna anoint my head with oil in the church for my blessing.*

Q. What do we learn from this lesson?

A. *To give to God generously and to be excited about giving, to be happy about it*

Q. What can we offer to God the Father that would be an offering acceptable to Him?

A. *Prayers in the name of Christ our Lord, fasting, the Liturgy and material offerings like money.*

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:7

CONNECTION POINT:

For the last few weeks we have been learning about the love and the care that our Lord Jesus Christ has for us His people. Today we will learn How our Lord entered Jerusalem on Holy Palm Sunday.

LESSON BODY:

PREPARATION

One sunny day, soon after Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, there was a big **feast** in Jerusalem. It was the biggest feast of the whole year. Almost every Jewish person from all the nearby cities and towns came to Jerusalem to celebrate this big feast. Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to Me. 3And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, "The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them. It was just an ordinary donkey. Even though Jesus was the Son of God, the greatest King of all the kings that ever lived, He didn't show off by wearing fancy clothes or riding a beautiful horse like a stallion. He just liked to be with anyone that wanted to spend time with Him, even people that had done a lot of bad things. That's why almost everyone loved Him very much wherever He went.

THE ROYAL ENTRY

That day, around twelve o'clock, our Lord and His disciples came from the Mountain of Olives into Jerusalem, and Jesus was riding on the donkey that His disciples had brought Him. As He was going by, all the people of the city started singing praises to Jesus, shouting out loud that He is the Son of David. They even put down clothes and palm branches on the ground in front of Jesus' donkey, for it to walk on, just like nowadays someone would lay out the red carpet for a very important king. Our Lord went with a great **procession** (*a walk is done around the church with singing to honor*

great persons) all the way from the gate of Jerusalem to the Holy Temple. In the Church we have a procession in all our feasts with an icon or **relics** (*martyrs and saints holy remains*), we also make a procession for the Pope and the bishops when they visit our church. We make a procession because we honor our church's pope and bishops as sent to us by our Lord and continue His work. The people were remembering all the miracles that Jesus had done. They remembered how He healed people that were sick with very bad sicknesses, how He had opened the eyes of blind people so that they could see for the first time, and how he had even raised people that had died from the dead, like Lazarus. Because of all these things, they praised and glorified Jesus, and prayed to Him to save them, saying "Hosanna!" And all the people that hadn't met Jesus yet were so amazed that everyone praised Jesus so much, and they knew that He must be very great.

The leaders were very jealous of our Lord because the people were praising Him more than the leaders. The leaders said to our Lord: "let them be quite." Our Lord said to the leaders: "if they are to be quite, the stones will shout out."

THE CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE

When He reached the Temple, He found many people selling and buying. He made a whip (a rope to hit with) and drove all those who sold stuff from the temple and said: "do not make my Father's house a din of thieves." He did not hit the people with it but went and turned over the tables and the boxes of the things they sold.

The church is the house of God. The church is where we pray to God and offer our Father ourselves in the Eucharist. We should always keep it Holy: No shouting, No running around, No laughing loudly. When we enter the church we should make the sign of the cross and bow down before the altar.

PLAN & MATERIALS:

Plan a: scrap book building: use a coloring page of the entry to Jerusalem and pieces of real palm and a picture of the church where the class is located.

Plan b: learning the Palm Sunday responses and singing it holding palm branches.

CONCLUSION:

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. what did our Lord ride-on to enter Jerusalem?

A. *He rode on a donkey and a colt.*

Q. What is a colt?

A. *A colt is the young donkey.*

Q. How would the disciples get the donkey and the colt?

A. *Our Lord sent them to the town and told them that they would find the donkey and the colt. They will loose them and bring them.*

Q. What our Lord told the two disciples to answer if someone asked them “what are you doing?

A. *"The Lord has need of them."*

Q. What did the people shout saying to our Lord? And what does it mean?

A. *"Hosanna" which means save us*

Q. What did our Lord do in the Temple?

A. *He cleansed the Temple*

Q. What is a procession?

A. *A procession is when a walk is done to honor a great person.*

Q. When do we do a procession in the church?

A. *We do a procession around the church with singing to honor our Lord in the feasts, or to honor a martyr and a saint. We also do a procession to honor our pope and bishops.*

VERSE TO REMEMBER

Matthew 21:13 "My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves."

III. DAILY READINGS

Processions and worship Restorations

1. King David brought the Ark of the covenant with a great procession – 2nd kings 6:12-19
 2. The procession made to enthrone king Solomon 1st King 1:32-40
 3. King Hezekiah restores the worship in the Temple – 2nd Chronicles 31
 4. King Josiah restores the worship in the Temple – 2 kings 23
 5. Restoration of the worship in the Temple – Ezra 3
 6. A procession to honor Mordecai – Ester 6
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Unit V

Purpose: In This unit, we continue the gospel story, to cover the Holy week of Pascha. The gospels continue to tell us the mission of our Lord as He reaches the reason of His coming to the world *"Father, save Me from this hour"? But for this purpose I came to this hour."* John 12:27. It is God's response to the serpent trick and the price of our freedom from the slavery of death and sin. It is the Father's ultimate action of love.

LESSON 27: OUR LORD MAKES THE FIRST EUCHARIST ON COVENANT THURSDAY OF PASCHA

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

St Luke:

"7Then came the Day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover must be killed. 8And He sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat." 9So they said to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare?" 10And He said to them, "Behold, when you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house which he enters.11Then you shall say to the master of the house, "The Teacher says to you "Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?"12Then he will show you a large, furnished upper room; there make ready."13So they went and found it just as He had said to them, and they prepared the Passover" Luke 22:7-13

St John:

"Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. 2And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, 3Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, 4rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. 5 After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. 6Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, "Lord, are You washing my feet?" 7Jesus answered and said to him,

"What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this." 8Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me." 9 Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!" 10Jesus said to him, "He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." 11For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, "You are not all clean." 12So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? 13You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. 14If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15For I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you. 16Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. 17If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them." St John 13:1-16

St Luke:

14 When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. 15Then He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; 16for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." 17Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; 18for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." 19And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." 20Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you. 21But behold, the hand of My betrayer is with Me on the table. 22And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!" 23Then they began to question among themselves, which of them it was who would do this thing." Luke 22:14-23

St Paul

"23For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." 25In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." 26For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. 27Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28But let

a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. 31For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. 32But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world. 33Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. 34But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come.” 1st Corinthians 11:23-34

CREED:

He was crucified for us at the time of Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried

CHURCH FATHERS:

St. Cyril of Alexandria, Commentary on St. John's Gospel

“He says therefore that it is an offence admitting of no palliation, for servants to refuse to be of the same mind as their own masters: because a passionate longing for greater things, and for things higher than our merits deserve, is really covetousness and nothing else. And just so He would with perfect justice bring the same charge against the Apostles mainly, of seeking to be on a higher level than He Who commissioned them. For the mind of Him Who sent them should suffice for them, as the measure of all their glory. But this is nothing else than to use exactly the following argument: ‘you will justly be laughed to scorn before the Divine tribunal if through excess of pride you refuse to do for each other the same things that I have done for you, although you have received as your lot the common name of servants, whereas I have been from the beginning in My nature God and Lord’ for it would be truly preposterous, or rather not without indication of a share in the most extreme madness, for those who are servants, and therefore inferior to their Master and Sender, to blush with unsuitable shame at the idea of being servants to one another.”

“St. Cyril of Alexandria, Commentary on St. Luke's Gospel - SERMON CXXI

St Cyril recommended that this Exposition is fit to be read on Thursday in the week of the Mystery (Holy Week).

THE law by its shadows prefigured from of old the mystery of Christ: and of this He is Himself the witness where He said to the Jews, "If you had believed Moses, you would have believed also Me:

for he wrote concerning Me." For everywhere He is set forth, by means of shadows and types, both as slain for us, as the Lamb without blame and true; and as sanctifying us by His life-giving blood. And we further find the words of the holy prophets in complete accordance with those of most wise Moses. But when "the fullness of time was come," as Paul says, in which the Only-begotten Word of God was about to submit to the emptying of Himself, and to endure the birth in the flesh of a woman, and subjection also to the law, according to the measure that was fitting for human nature, then He was also sacrificed for us, as the lamb without blame and true, on the fourteenth day of the first month. And this feast-time was called Pessac, a word belonging to the Hebrew language, and signifying the passing over: for so they explain it, and say that this is its meaning.

We must explain then what it is from which we pass over, and on our journey to what country, and in what manner we effect it.

As then Israel was delivered from the tyranny of the Egyptians, and having loosed its neck from the yoke of bondage, was now free; and fleeing from the violence of the tyrant passed with dry foot in a manner wonderful and beyond the power of language to describe through the midst of the sea, and journeyed onwards to the promised land: so must we too, who have accepted the salvation that is in Christ, be willing no longer to abide in our former faults, nor continue in our evil ways, but manfully cross over the sea, as it were, of the vain trouble of this world, and the tempest of affairs that is therein. We pass over therefore from the love of the flesh to temperance; from our former ignorance to the true knowledge of God; from wickedness to virtue: and in hope at least, from the blame of sin to the glories of righteousness, and from death to incorruption. The name therefore of the feast on which Emmanuel bore for us the saving cross, was the Passover.

But let us behold Him Who is the Truth still honoring the types, and Him Who was represented therein still permitting the shadows to hold good. "For when the day, it says, had come, on which it was fitting for the Passover to be sacrificed, He sent to the city two men chosen from the holy apostles, Peter namely and John, saying, that there shall meet you a man carrying a pitcher of water: follow him to the house into which he enters; and say to the master of the house, The Teacher says to you, where is the guest-chamber, where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?" 'But why, someone perchance may say, did He not plainly mention the man to those whom He sent? For He did not say, Having gone to such and such a person, whoever it might be, there prepare for us at his house the Passover: but simply gave them a sign,----a man bearing a pitcher of water.' To this then what do we reply? That lo! Already Judas the traitor had promised the Jews to deliver Him to them, and was continuing in His company watching for an opportunity; and while still making profession of the love that was the duty of a disciple, he had admitted Satan into his heart, and was travelling with the crime of murder against our common Savior Christ. He gives a sign therefore, to prevent him from learning who the man was, and running to tell those who had hired him. "For there shall meet you, He says, a man carrying a pitcher of water."

Or even perchance He so speaks signifying something mystical and necessary thereby. For whither the waters enter, even those of holy baptism, there lodges Christ. How, or in what manner? In that they free us from all impurity, and we are washed by them from the stains of sin, that we may also become a holy temple of God, and partakers of His divine nature, by participation of the Holy Spirit. In order therefore that Christ may rest and lodge in us, let us receive the saving waters, confessing moreover the faith that justifies the wicked, and raises us aloft so as for us to be accounted "an

upper room." For those in whom Christ dwells by faith have a mind raised aloft, unwilling to creep upon the dust, and refusing, so to speak, to be set upon the earth, and everywhere seeking that which is exalted in virtue. For it is written, that "the mighty ones of God are raised high above the earth." "For here they have no abiding city, but seek that which is to come:" and while walking upon earth, their thoughts are set upon those things which are above, and "their dwelling is in heaven."

We may also notice something true, but wonderful, that happens, so to speak, constantly among us: namely that those who prize their carnal life are often puffed up, and have their heart full of pride accursed and hated of God; but yet perhaps they are brought to humiliation even upon earth: while those who are poor in spirit obtain exaltation by the honor and glory which comes from God. For as the disciple of Christ writes, "Let the humble brother glory in his exaltation, but "the rich in suffering humiliation: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away." He therefore would not miss the truth, who should say that the soul of every saint is "an upper room."

When then the disciples had prepared the Passover, Christ ate it with them, being long-suffering towards the traitor, and deigning to admit him to the table from His infinite loving-kindness: for he was already a traitor, because Satan was lodging within him. And what did Christ also say to the holy apostles? "I have desired a desire to eat this Passover with you." Let us examine the deep purport of this expression: let us search out the meaning concealed therein, and what it is which the Savior intends.

As then I have already said that covetous disciple was seeking an opportunity to betray Him: and, that he might not deliver Him to His murderers before the feast of the Passover, the Savior did not declare either the house or the person with whom He would celebrate the feast. To explain therefore to them the cause of His unwillingness openly to tell them with whom He would lodge, He says, "I have desired a desire to eat with you this Passover:" apparently meaning, I have used all diligence to enable me to escape the wickedness of the traitor, that I might not endure My passion before the time.

"But I will not eat of this Passover until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." And in this again Christ utters a profound and mysterious truth, of which He Himself, however, reveals to us the meaning. For it is His custom to give the name of "the kingdom of heaven" to justification by faith, to the cleansing that is by holy baptism and the participation of the Holy Spirit, and to the offering of spiritual service, now rendered possible by the entering in of the gospel laws. But these things are the means of our being made partakers of the promises, and of our reigning together with Christ: and therefore He says, "I will no more draw near to such a Passover as this," one namely that consisted in the typical eating,----for a lamb of the flock was slain to be the type of the true Lamb,---"until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God:" that is, until the time has appeared in which the kingdom of heaven is preached. For this is fulfilled in us, who honor the worship that is superior to the law, even the true Passover; nor is it a lamb of the flock which sanctifies those who are in Christ, but Himself rather, being made a holy sacrifice for us, by the offering of bloodless oblations, and the mystical giving of thanks, in which we are blessed and quickened with life. For He became for us "the living bread that came down from heaven, and gives life to the world:" by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. Amen.

22:17-22. *And He took a cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it with one another: for I say to you, that I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God is fulfilled. And He took bread, and gave thanks, and broke it, and gave to them, saying, This is My body, which is given for you: do this in remembrance of Me. In like manner also the cup, after He had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you. But, behold! the hand of him that betrays Me is with Me at the table. And the Son of man indeed goes, according to that which was determined: but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!*

TO be made partakers of Christ, both intellectually and by our senses, fills us with every blessing. For He dwells in us, first, by the Holy Spirit, and we are His abode, according to that which was said of old by one of the holy prophets. "For I will dwell in them, He says, and lead them: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people."

But He is also within us in another way by means of our partaking in the oblation of bloodless offerings, which we celebrate in the churches, having received from Him the saving pattern of the rite, as the blessed Evangelist plainly shows us in the passage which has just been read. For He tells us that "He took a cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it with one another." Now by His giving thanks, by which is meant His speaking to God the Father in the manner of prayer, He signified to us that He, so to speak, shares and takes part in His good pleasure in granting us the life-giving blessing which was then bestowed upon us: for every grace, and every perfect gift comes to us from the Father by the Son in the Holy Spirit. And this act then was a pattern for our use of the prayer which ought to be offered, whenever the grace of the mystical and life-giving oblation is about to be spread before Him by us: and so accordingly we are wont to do. For first offering up our thanksgivings, and joining in our praises to God the Father both the Son and the Holy Spirit, we so draw near to the holy tables, believing that we receive life and blessing both spiritually and corporeally: for we receive in us the Word of the Father, Who for our sakes became man, and Who is Life, and the Giver of life.

Let us then enquire, to the best of our ability, what is the view held among us of this mystery: for it is our duty to be "ready to give an answer concerning the hope that is in us," as the wise Peter says. "The God of all therefore created all things for immortality, and the beginnings of the world were life; but by the envy of the devil death entered the world:" for it was that rebel serpent who led the first man to the transgression of the commandment, and to disobedience, by means of which he fell under the divine curse, and into the net of death: for it was said to him, "Earth you are, and to the earth you shall return." Was it then right that one who was created for life and immortality should be made mortal, and condemned to death without power of escape? Must the envy of the devil be more unassailable and enduring than the will of God? Not so: for it has been brought to naught; and the clemency of the Creator has transcended the evil effects of his malignity. He has given aid to those upon earth. And what then was the manner in which He aided them? One truly great, and admirable, and worthy of God; yes, worthy in the very highest degree of the supreme Mind. For God the Father is by His own nature Life; and as alone being so, He caused the Son to shine forth Who also Himself is Life: for it could not be otherwise with Him Who is the Word That proceeded substantially from the Life: for He must, I say must, also Himself be Life, as being One Who sprang forth from Life, from Him Who begat Him.

God the Father therefore gives life to all things by the Son in the Holy Spirit: and everything that exists and breathes in heaven and on earth, its existence and life is from God the Father by the Son in the Holy Spirit. Neither therefore the nature of angels, nor anything else whatsoever that was made, nor aught that from non-existence was brought into being, possesses life as the fruit of its own nature: but, on the contrary, life proceeds, as I said, from the Substance which transcends all: and to it only it belongs, and is possible that it can give life, because it is by nature life.

In what manner therefore can man upon earth, clothed as he is with mortality, return to incorruption? I answer, that this dying flesh must be made partaker of the life-giving power which comes from God. But the life-giving power of God the Father is the Only-begotten Word: and Him He sent to us as a Savior and Deliverer. And how He sent Him, the blessed John the Evangelist clearly tells us, saying, "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt in us." But He became flesh, not by having undergone any change or alteration into what He had not been, nor again by having ceased to be the Word;---for He knows not what it is to suffer the shadow of a change;---but rather by having been born in the flesh of a woman, and taken to Himself that body which He received from her, in order that, having implanted Himself in us by an inseparable union, He might raise us above the power both of death and corruption. And Paul is our witness, where he says of Him and of us, "For inasmuch as the children are partakers of blood and flesh, so He in like manner was partaker of the same, that by death He might bring him to naught who has dominion over death, that is, the devil; and deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For He does not take hold of angels, "but He took hold of the seed of Abraham: for which reason it was right for Him in all things to be made like to His brethren:" that is, to us. For He was made in our likeness, and clothed Himself in our flesh, that by raising it from the dead He might prepare a way henceforth, by which the flesh which had been humbled to death might return anew to incorruption. For we are united to Him just as also we were united to Adam, when he brought upon himself the penalty of death. And Paul testifies thereunto, thus writing on one occasion, "For because by man is death, by man is also the resurrection of the dead:" and again upon another, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all live." The Word therefore, by having united to Himself that flesh which was subject to death, as being God and Life drove away from it corruption, and made it also to be the source of life: for such must the body of (Him Who is) the Life be.

And do not disbelieve what I have said, but rather accept the word in faith, having gathered proofs thereof from a few examples. When you cast a piece of bread into wine or oil, or any other liquid, you find that it becomes charged with the quality of that particular thing. When iron is brought into contact with fire, it becomes full of its activity; and while it is by nature iron, it exerts the power of fire. And so the life-giving Word of God, having united Himself to His own flesh in a way known to Himself, endowed it with the power of giving life. And of this He certifies us Himself, saying, "Verily, I say to you, he that believes in Me has everlasting life. I am the bread of life." And again, "I am the living bread, that came down from heaven; if a man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I shall give is My flesh for the life of the world. Verily, I say to you, that if you eat not the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you have no life in you. 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 true food, and My blood is true drink. He that eats My flesh, and drinks My blood, abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father; so He that eats Me shall also live

because of Me." When therefore we eat the holy flesh of Christ, the Savior of us all, and drink His precious blood, we have life in us, being made as it were, one with Him, and abiding in Him, and possessing Him also in us.

And let none of those whose wont it is to disbelieve say, 'Since therefore the Word of God, being by nature life, dwells in us also, is the body of each one of us too endowed with the power of giving life?' Rather let him know that it is a perfectly different thing for the Son to be in us by a relative participation, and for Himself to become flesh, that is, to make that body His own which was taken from the blessed Virgin. For He is not said to become incarnate and be made flesh by being in us: but rather this happened once for all when He became man without ceasing to be God. The body therefore of the Word was that assumed by Him from the holy virgin, and made one with Him; but how, or in what manner this was done, we cannot tell: for it is incapable of explanation, and altogether beyond the powers of the mind, and to Himself alone is the manner of the union known. It was titling therefore for Him to be in us both divinely by the Holy Spirit, and also, so to speak, to be mingled with our bodies by His holy flesh and precious blood: which things also we possess as a life-giving Eucharist, in the form of bread and wine. For lest we should be terrified by seeing (actual) flesh and blood placed upon the holy tables of our churches, God, humbling Himself to our infirmities, infuses into the things set before us the power of life, and transforms them into the efficacy of His flesh, that we may have them for a life-giving participation, and that the body of (Him Who is the) Life may be found in us as a life-producing seed. And do not doubt that this is true, since Himself plainly says, "This is My body: "This is My blood:" but rather receive in faith the Savior's word; for He, being the Truth, cannot lie. And so will you honor Him; for as the very wise John says, "He that receives His witness has set his seal that God is true. For He Whom God sent speaks the words of God." For the words of God are of course true, and in no manner whatsoever can they be false: for even though we understand not in what way God works acts such as these, yet He Himself knows the way of His works. For when Nicodemus could not understand His words concerning holy baptism, and foolishly said, "How can those things be?" he heard Christ in answer say, "Verily I say to you, that we speak that which we know, and testify that which we see, and you receive not our testimony. If I have spoken to you the earthly things, and you believe not, how will you believe if I tell you the heavenly things?" For how indeed can a man learn those things which transcend the powers of our mind and reason? Let therefore this our divine mystery be honored by faith.

But Judas the traitor, who was eating with Him, was reprov'd in those words which Christ spoke, "But behold the hand of him who betrays Me is with Me at the table." For he imagined perchance in his great senselessness, or rather as being filled with the haughtiness of the devil, that he could deceive Christ, though He be God. But, as I said, he was convicted of being altogether wicked, and hateful to God, and traitorous: and yet admission was deigned him to the table, and he was counted worthy of the divine gentleness even to the end: but thereby is his punishment made the more severe. For Christ has somewhere said of him by the Psalmist's voice, "That if an enemy had reproached Me, I had borne it: and if he that hated Me had spoken against Me proud things, I had hid myself from him. But it was you, My like in soul, My neighbor and My acquaintance, who in My company had sweetened for Me meats, and we went to the house of the Lord in concord." Woe therefore to him, according to the Savior's word! For He indeed, according to the good will of God

the Father, gave Himself in our stead, that He might deliver us from all evil: but the man who betrayed into the hands of murderers the Savior and Deliverer of all, will have for his inheritance the condemnation which is the devil's fitting punishment. For his guilt was not against one such as we are, but against the Lord of all: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be praise and dominion, with the Holy Spirit, forever and ever, Amen.

REFLECTION:

The Fathers of the Church had explained to us that what our Lord had done on Holy Thursday is the fulfillment of what He taught in St. John's Gospel chapter 6. We are given the antidote of immortality in the Eucharist. It is also linked to St Paul who wrote to the Corinthians, warning them of partaking of the Mysteries in an unworthy manner beginning his warning by: *"on the night He was betrayed..."* and ending by addressing the unworthy partaking of the Body and the blood as being guilty of the body and the blood of Christ. There is a hint to the betrayal of Judas as the model of all those who are guilty of not discerning the subject of our faith, although they claim to be faithful.

PRAYER:

"Receive me today, O son of God, in your mystical supper. For I did not tell your secrets to your enemies, nor did give you a kiss like Judas, but like the thief, I cry out saying remember me O Lord when you come into your kingdom"

Communion Hymn

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

At your mystical supper, communion song of Holy Thursday or part of "night of the last supper" or *"Thok Teti Gome"*

VOCABULARY:

Passover, Lakan, Eucharist, Theophany, betray, deny

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	Christ suffered
Liturgical:	Rite of the Lakan
Moral:	Humility
Spiritual:	Preparation to, and behavior during liturgy

INTRODUCTION:

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. what did our Lord ride-on to enter Jerusalem?

A. He rode on a donkey and a colt.

Q. What is a colt?

A. A colt is the young donkey.

Q. How would the disciples get the donkey and the colt?

A. Our Lord sent them to the town and told them that they would find the donkey and the colt. They will loose them and bring them.

Q. What our Lord told the two disciples to answer if someone asked them “what are you doing?

A. "The Lord has need of them."

Q. What did the people shout saying to our Lord? And what does it mean?

A. "Hosanna" which means save us

Q. What did our Lord do in the Temple?

A. He cleansed the Temple

Q. What is a procession?

A. A procession is when a walk is done to honor a great person.

Q. When do we do a procession in the church?

A. We do a procession around the church with singing to honor our Lord in the feasts, or to honor a martyr and a saint. We also do a procession to honor our pope and bishops.

VERSE TO REMEMBER

Matthew 21:13 "My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves."

CONNECTION POINT:

For the last few weeks we have been learning about the love and the care that our Lord Jesus Christ has for us His people. Today we will learn how our Lord made the first Eucharist or Liturgy on the Holy Thursday of Pascha.

LESSON BODY:

PREPARATION FOR PASSOVER

The Jewish people have a feast called ***"Passover" (the feast in which they celebrate God saving them from Egypt in the time of Moses)***. Few days after our Lord entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, He asked two of His disciples to prepare for Him to celebrate the feast with His disciples. That year was the last feast of Passover in His life on earth. He said to them: *"Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat."* So they said to Him, *"Where do You want us to prepare?"* And He said to them, *"when you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house which he enters. Then you shall say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, 'Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?'"* Then he will show you a large, furnished upper room; there make ready." The two disciples went and found exactly like our Lord told them. That house was the house of St. Mark's family, who loved our Lord and was very excited that He and the Disciples should be their guests.

THE WASHING OF THE FEET

When they all sat down in that upper room, our Lord took-of His outer garment and laid it aside, and had a towel around His waist. He poured water in a basin and washed the feet of His disciples one by one. They all felt very uncomfortable. When our Lord came to wash St. Peter's feet, St. Peter said to Him: "Lord I cannot let you wash my feet." Our Lord Jesus said: "if I do not wash you, you would not be my friend." St Peter answered: "then wash all of me, my head and my hands." Our Lord told him: "there is no need except to wash your feet." St. Peter let Him wash his feet. Our Lord dried their feet with the towel He had around His waist. Our Lord told His disciples to wash each other's feet. In the old times people did not have cars and motorcycles. They did not have shoes like what we have today. They used open sandals. Their feet were covered with dirt from the streets and they usually have their servants wash it for them when they com-in the house. It was difficult for the disciples to see our Lord doing the work of the servant for them. But He wanted to teach them humility and how they should not be ashamed of serving one another. The more important a person is in the church, the more he or she is humble in serving the others. Do you know that we are called children and servants of God, so if Our Lord did wash the feet of His disciples, how should we behave with each other? We also should not be proud and feel better than our brothers and sisters in the church, but think always of how to serve them, starting with our own family. We remember this washing of the feet three times in the year: on Holy Thursday of Pascha, on the feast of the apostles and on the feast of **Theophany (Baptism of our Lord)**. We call it "Lakan" (basin). Have any of you attended a Lakan before?

THE PASSOVER

Then they sat down to eat the Passover. Our Lord told them that one of them (His disciples) would **betray** Him (**to tell His secrets to His enemies**). St Peter asked St. John to ask our Lord who is the disciple who would betray Him. Our Lord told St. John: "The one I dip the bread and give". Our Lord dipped the bread and gave it to Judas. After that Judas left.

OUR LORD FORETELL THE DENIAL OF ST. PETER

Our Lord told His disciples that all of them would leave Him and even **deny** Him (**to say that they do not know Him**.) St. Peter said:"even if all the disciples deny you, I shall not." Our Lord said to St. Peter: "Peter, you will deny me three times before the cock crow"

THE FIRST EUCHARIST

After supper, Our Lord took bread in His Holy hands and looked up toward heaven and He gave thanks and blessed and sanctified it. He broke the bread and gave it to His disciples and said: "take and eat of it all of you, for this is my body which is broken for you and for many to be given for the

remission of sins.” When they took and ate, He took the cup and mixed it of wine and water. He gave thanks and blessed it and sanctified it and said: “take and drink of it all of you for this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured for you and for many, do this in remembrance of me.” After they drank, they sang praise. That was the first **Eucharist (*giving thanks over bread and wine in the church*)**. In the church we continue to do the same every Sunday and on other days too. The Eucharist is most special and the most holy prayer. We give thanks to God our Father in the Eucharist. We also receive the bread of life, that we may live forever.

THE ICON OF THE EUCHARIST

On top of the iconostasis, in the middle of the icons of the 12 disciples, you can find the icon of the Eucharist. What do you see in the icon? Our Lord is seated at a table with His disciples around Him. On the table there are one cup full of wine and one plate with bread in it.

PLAN & MATERIALS:

Plan a: acting Holy Thursday: let the students prepare the table, the basin of water, the grape juice and the bread, the matzo etc. a servant act as our Lord and direct the others, Judas role should not be given to anyone in the class.

Plan b: scrap booking.

CONCLUSION:

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What was the name of the feast that our Lord celebrated?

A. *Passover*

Q. What does the feast of Passover celebrate?

A. *The deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt.*

Q. Where did our Lord Celebrate the Last Passover in His Life on earth?

A. *in the house of St. Mark's family*

Q. what would Judas do?

A. betray our Lord

Q. what does betray mean.

A. tell His secrets to His enemies

Q. What is Lakan?

A. washing of the feet in the church

Q. when is it done?

A. 3 times every year: Holy Thursday, feast of the apostles, feast of Theophany (Baptism of our Lord)

Q. What did our Lord do with the bread? And the wine?

A. took it gave thanks, blessed, sanctified and gave it to his disciples

Q. describe the icon of the Eucharist on our church iconostasis.

A. Our Lord is seated to a table with His disciples. Before Him is on cup full of wine and one plate with one loaf of bread in it.

VERSE TO REMEMBER

"I am the bread of life." John 6:48

DAILY READINGS

Processions and worship Restorations

7. Melchizedek, king of Salem blessed Abraham with bread and wine- Genesis 14:18-20
 8. Abraham receives the divine visitors and wash their feet and prepared a meal for them- Genesis 18:1-10
 9. The offering of Isaac – Genesis 22
 10. The First Passover – Exodus 12
 11. The Manna, bread from heaven - Exodus 16
 12. Our Lord turned the water into wine – John 2
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Unit V

Purpose: In This unit, we continue the gospel story, to cover the Holy week of Pascha. The gospels continue to tell us the mission of our Lord as He reaches the reason of His coming to the world *"Father, save Me from this hour"? But for this purpose I came to this hour."* John 12:27. It is God's response to the serpent trick and the price of our freedom from the slavery of death and sin. It is the Father's ultimate action of love.

LESSON 28: OUR LORD IS CRUCIFIED AND BURIED ON HOLY FRIDAY OF PASCHA

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

St. John:

¹ When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. ² And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples. ³ Then Judas, having received a detachment of troops, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. ⁴ Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, "Whom are you seeking?" ⁵ They answered Him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them, "I am He." And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. ⁶ Now when He said to them, "I am He," they drew back and fell to the ground. ⁷ Then He asked them again, "Whom are you seeking?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." ⁸ Jesus answered, "I have told you that I am He. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way," ⁹ that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, "Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none." ¹⁰ Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. ¹¹ So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?" ¹² Then the detachment of troops and the captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound Him. ¹³ And they led Him away to Annas first, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas who was high priest that year. ¹⁴ Now it was Caiaphas who advised the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people. ¹⁵ And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another ^[a] disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest. ¹⁶ But Peter stood at the door outside. Then the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to her who kept the door, and brought Peter in. ¹⁷ Then the servant girl who kept the door said to Peter, "You are not also one of this Man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not." ¹⁸ Now the

servants and officers who had made a fire of coals stood there, for it was cold, and they warmed themselves. And Peter stood with them and warmed himself. ¹⁹ The high priest then asked Jesus about His disciples and His doctrine. ²⁰ Jesus answered him, "I spoke openly to the world. I always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where the Jews always meet, ^[b] and in secret I have said nothing. ²¹ Why do you ask Me? Ask those who have heard Me what I said to them. Indeed they know what I said." ²² And when He had said these things, one of the officers who stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, "Do You answer the high priest like that?" ²³ Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why do you strike Me?" ²⁴ Then Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest. ²⁵ Now Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. Therefore they said to him, "You are not also one of His disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not!" ²⁶ One of the servants of the high priest, a relative of him whose ear Peter cut off, said, "Did I not see you in the garden with Him?" ²⁷ Peter then denied again; and immediately a rooster crowed. ²⁸ Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the Praetorium, and it was early morning. But they themselves did not go into the Praetorium, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover. ²⁹ Pilate then went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this Man?" ³⁰ They answered and said to him, "If He were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him up to you." ³¹ Then Pilate said to them, "You take Him and judge Him according to your law." Therefore the Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death," ³² that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled which He spoke, signifying by what death He would die. ³³ Then Pilate entered the Praetorium again, called Jesus, and said to Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" ³⁴ Jesus answered him, "Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning Me?" ³⁵ Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered You to me. What have You done?" ³⁶ Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here." ³⁷ Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?" Jesus answered, "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." ³⁸ Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to them, "I find no fault in Him at all. ³⁹ "But you have a custom that I should release someone to you at the Passover. Do you therefore want me to release to you the King of the Jews?" ⁴⁰ Then they all cried again, saying, "Not this Man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a robber.

Chapter 19

¹ So then Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him. ² And the soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe. ³ Then they said, ^[c] "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they struck Him with their hands. ⁴ Pilate then went out again, and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you, that you may know that I find no fault in Him." ⁵ Then Jesus came out,

wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, "Behold the Man!" ⁶ Therefore, when the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "You take Him and crucify Him, for I find no fault in Him." ⁷ The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to our^[d] law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." ⁸ Therefore, when Pilate heard that saying, he was the more afraid, ⁹ and went again into the Praetorium, and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. ¹⁰ Then Pilate said to Him, "Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?" ¹¹ Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin." ¹² From then on Pilate sought to release Him, but the Jews cried out, saying, "If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar's friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar." ¹³ When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. ¹⁴ Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" ¹⁵ But they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!" ¹⁶ Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. Then they took Jesus and led Him away. ¹⁷ And He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha, ¹⁸ where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, one on either side, and Jesus in the center. ¹⁹ Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. ²⁰ Then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. ²¹ Therefore the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'He said, "I am the King of the Jews."'" ²² Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written." ²³ Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece. ²⁴ They said therefore among themselves, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be," that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says: " They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots." Therefore the soldiers did these things. ²⁵ Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!" ²⁷ Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home. ²⁸ After this, Jesus, knowing^[g] that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst!" ²⁹ Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on hyssop, and put it to His mouth. ³⁰ So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit. ³¹ Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain

on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.³² Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him.³³ But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs.³⁴ But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.³⁵ And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe.³⁶ For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, "Not one of His bones shall be broken."³⁷ And again another Scripture says, "They shall look on Him whom they pierced."³⁸ After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus.³⁹ And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds.⁴⁰ Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury.⁴¹ Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid.⁴² So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews' Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby. St. John 18-19.

CREED:

He was crucified for us at the time of Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried;

CHURCH FATHERS:

3rd hour:

"He does not deny the glory of His Kingdom, nor leave it to the voice of Pilate only to affirm it, for as God He is King, whether man so will, or no; but He once more showed the power of the truth which impelled Pilate, though reluctant, to declare the glory of Him Who was on His trial; for, He says: Thou hast said, *that I am a King*. For this cause was I born, He says, and came into this world when I became Man, *that I should bear witness unto the truth*; that is, that He might take lying out of the world, and, having subdued the devil, who gained his way by guile, He might show truth triumphant over the universe; truth----that is, that nature that is truly sovereign by nature, which has not by craft acquired the ability to hold rule and dominion over heaven and earth, and, in a word, everything that is brought into being; nor has this been added unto it from without, but it is seen to be essentially and naturally inherent. In order, too, that He might show that Pilate's dullness of

apprehension arose from his stubborn heart, and his reluctance to admit the truth, Christ fitly adds the word: *Everyone that is of the truth hears My voice*. For the word of truth gains a ready acceptance from those who have already learnt and love it; but with others it is not so. Yea, the Prophet Isaiah said to some: *If ye will not believe, neither shall ye understand*. Pilate showed at once the truth of this, when he said: *What is truth?* For, just as those whose sight is injured, and who have wholly |602 lost the use of their eyes, have their sense of color entirely annihilated, so as not to note when gold is brought before them, or a shining and precious stone shown them, nay, even the very light of the sun's rays excites in them no wonder, as they have no perception thereof, and can gain no profit from any such thing; so to men whose minds are warped, truth seems a foul and ugly thing, although it instills into the minds of those who behold it its spiritual and Divine radiance."

"He scourges Him unjustly, and suffers the crowd of soldiers to insult Him, and put a crown of thorns about His Head, and throw a purple robe upon Him, and buffet Him with the palms of their hands, and otherwise dishonor Him. For he thought he could easily put to shame the people of the Jews, if they saw the Man Who was altogether free from guilt suffering this punishment, only without a cause. He was scourged unjustly, that He might deliver us from merited chastisement; He was buffeted and smitten, that we might buffet Satan, who had buffeted us, and that we might escape from the sin that cleaves to us through the original transgression. For if we think aright, we shall believe that all Christ's sufferings were for us and on our behalf, and have power to release and deliver us from all those calamities we have deserved for our revolt from God. For as Christ, Who knew not death, when He gave up His own Body for our salvation, was able to loose the bonds of death for all mankind, for He, being One, died for all; so we must understand that Christ's suffering all these things for us sufficed also to release us all from scourging and dishonor. Then in what way *by His stripes are we healed*, according to the Scripture? Because *we have all gone astray, every man after his own way*, as says the blessed Prophet Isaiah; and the Lord hath given Himself up for our transgressions, *and for us is afflicted*. For He was bruised for our iniquities, and *has given His own back to the scourge, and His cheeks to those who smite*, as he also says. The soldiers indeed take Jesus as a pretender to the throne, and insult Him soldier like. And for this cause was a crown of thorns brought and put upon His brow, being the symbol of earthly |607 sovereignty; and the purple robe was, as it were, an image and type of royal apparel; and ridicule also was thereby heaped upon Him, for they came near unto Him, and cried, as the Evangelist says: *Hail, King of the Jews*!"

6th hour:

They lead away, then, to death the Author of Life; and for our sakes was this done, for by the power and incomprehensible Providence of God, Christ's death resulted in an unexpected reversal of

things. For His suffering was prepared as a snare for the power of death, and the death of the Lord was the source of the renewal of mankind in incorruption and newness of life. Bearing the Cross upon His shoulders, on which He was about to be crucified, He went forth; His doom was already fixed, and He had undergone, for our sakes, though innocent, the sentence of death. For, in His own Person, He bore the sentence righteously pronounced against sinners by the Law. For He became a *curse for us*, according to the Scripture: *For cursed is everyone, it is said, that hangs on a tree.* And accursed are we all, for we are not able to fulfill the Law of God: *For in many things we all stumble;* and very prone to sin is the nature of man. And since, too, the Law of God says: *Cursed is he which continues not in all things that are written in the book of this Law, to do them,* the curse, then, belonged unto us, and not to others. For those against whom the transgression of the Law may be charged, and who are very prone to err from its commandments, surely deserve chastisement. Therefore, He That knew no sin was accursed for our sakes, that He might deliver us from the old curse. For all-sufficient was the God Who is above all, so dying for all; and by the death of |624 His own Body, purchasing the redemption of all mankind.

The Cross, then, that Christ bore, was not for His own deserts, but was the cross that awaited us, and was our due, through our condemnation by the Law. For as He was numbered among the dead, not for Himself, but for our sakes, that we might find in Him, the Author of everlasting life, subduing of Himself the power of death; so also, He took upon Himself the Cross that was our due, passing on Himself the condemnation of the Law, that the mouth of all lawlessness might henceforth be stopped, according to the saying of the Psalmist; the Sinless having suffered condemnation for the sin of all. And of great profit will the deed which Christ performed be to our souls----I mean, as a type of true manliness in God's service. For in no other way can we triumphantly attain to perfection in all virtue, and perfect union with God, save by setting our love toward Him above the earthly life, and zealously waging battle for the truth, if occasion calls us so to do. Moreover, our Lord Jesus Christ says: Every man *that doth not take his cross and follow after Me, is not worthy of Me.* And taking up the Cross means, I think, nothing else than bidding farewell to the world for God's sake, and preferring, if the opportunity arise, the hope of future glory to life in the body. But our Lord Jesus Christ is not ashamed to bear the Cross that is our due, and to suffer this indignity for love towards us; while we, poor wretches that we are, whose mother is the insensate earth beneath our feet, and who have been called into being out of nothing, sometimes do not even dare to touch the skirt of tribulation in God's service; but, if we have anything to bear in the service of Christ, at once account the shame intolerable, and shrinking from the ridicule of our adversaries, and those who sit in the seat of the scornful, as an accursed thing, and preferring to God's pleasure this paltry and |625 ill-timed craving for reputation, fall sick of the disease of disdainful arrogance, which is the mother, so to say, of all evils, and so make ourselves subject to the charge. For thus is the servant above his lord, and the disciple above his master, and thinks and acts accordingly. Alas,

for this grievous infirmity, which always in some strange shape lies athwart our path, and leads us astray from the pursuit of what is meet!

Call to mind, too, how the inspired Peter could not endure Christ's prophecy, when He foretold His sufferings upon the Cross, for He said: *Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man is betrayed unto the hands of sinners; and they shall crucify Him, and kill Him.* The disciple, not yet understanding the mysterious ways of God's providence, God-loving and teachable as he was, was moved by his scruples to exclaim: *Be it far from Thee, Lord; this shall never be unto Thee.* What answered Christ? *Get thee behind Me, Satan; thou art a stumbling block unto Me: for thou mind not the things of God, but the things of men.* But we may hence derive no small profit, for we shall know, that when occasion calls us to exhibit courage in God's service, and we are compelled to endure conflicts that ensue for virtue's sake; yea, even if they who honor and love us best strive to hinder us from doing anything that may tend to establish virtue, alleging, it may be, our consequent dishonor among men, or from some worldly motive, we must not yield. For they, then, are in nowise unlike Satan, who loves and is ever wont to cast stumbling blocks in our path by divers deceits, and sometimes by smooth words, so as to divert from the pursuit of what is meet, the man who is urged thereto by the spirit of piety. And methinks Christ meant something like this, when He said: *If, therefore, thy right eye causes thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from you.* For that which does us injury is no longer our own, even though united to us by the bond of love, and though its connection with us be but its natural desert.

Two robbers were crucified together with Christ, and this was owing to the malice of the Jews. For, as though to emphasize the dishonor of our Savior's death, they involved the just Man in the same condemnation as the transgressors of the Law. And we may take the condemned criminals, who hung by Christ's side, as symbolical of the two nations who were shortly about to be brought into close contact with Him, I mean the children of Israel and the Gentiles. And why do we take condemned criminals as the type? Because the Jews were condemned by the Law, for they were guilty of transgressing it; and the Greeks by their idolatry, for they worshipped the creature more than the Creator.

And after another manner those who are united with Christ are also crucified with Him; for enduring, as it were, death to their old conversation in the flesh, they are reformed into a new life, according to the Gospel. Yea, Paul said: *And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh, with the passions and the lusts thereof;* and again, speaking of himself in words applicable to all men: *For I, through the Law, died unto the Law, that I might live unto God. I have been crucified with Christ: yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ lives in me.* And he exhorts also the Colossians: *Wherefore, if ye died from the world, why do ye behave yourselves as though living in the world?* For, by becoming dead unto worldly conversation, we are brought to the rudiments of conduct and

life in Christ. Therefore the crucifixion of the two robbers, side by side with Christ, signifies in a manner to us, through the medium of that event, the juxtaposition of the two nations, dying together, as it were, with the Savior Christ, by bidding farewell to worldly pleasures, and refusing any longer to live after the flesh, and preferring to live with their Lord, so far as may be, by fashioning their lives according to Him, and consecrating them in His service. And the meaning of the figure is in no way affected by the fact, that the men who hung by His side were malefactors; *for we were by nature children of wrath*, before we believed in Christ, and were all doomed to death, as we said before.”

“He took thought for His mother, paying no heed to His own bitter agony, for His sufferings affected Him not. He gave her into the charge of the beloved disciple (this was John, the writer of this book), and bade him take her home, and regard her as a mother; and enjoined His own mother to regard him as none other than her true son---by his tenderness, that is, and affection, fulfilling and stepping into the place of Him, Who was her Son by nature.

But as some misguided men have thought that Christ, when He thus spoke, gave way to mere fleshly affection ---away with such folly! to fall into so stupid an error is only worthy of a madman-- --what good purpose, then, did Christ hereby fulfill? First, we reply, that He wished to confirm the command on which the Law lays so much stress. For what says the Mosaic ordinance? *Honor thy father and thy mother, that it may be well with thee*. His commandment unto us did not cease with exhorting us to perform this duty, but threatened us with the extreme penalty of the Law, if we chose to disregard it, and has put sin against our parents after the flesh on a par with sin against God. For the Law which ordered that the blasphemer should undergo the sentence of death, saying: *Let him that blasphemes the Name of the Lord be put to death*, also subjected to the same penalty the man who employs his licentious and unruly tongue against his parents: *He that curses father or mother shall surely be put to death*. As, then, the Lawgiver hath ordained that we should pay such honor to our parents, surely it was right that the commandment thus proclaimed should be confirmed by the approval of the Savior; and as the perfect form of every excellence and virtue through Him first came into the world, why should not this virtue be put on the same footing as the rest? For, surely, honor to parents is a |635 very precious kind of virtue. And how could we learn that we ought not to lightly regard love toward them, even when we are overwhelmed by a flood of intolerable calamities, save by the example of Christ first of all, and through Him? For best of all, surely, is he who is mindful of the holy commandments, and is not diverted from the pursuit of duty in stormy and troublous times, and not in peace and quietness alone.

Besides, also, was not the Lord, I say, right to take thought for His mother, when she had fallen on a rock of offence, and when her mind was in a turmoil of perplexity? For, as He was truly God, and looked into the motions of the heart, and knew its secrets, how could He fail to know the thoughts about His crucifixion, which were then throwing her into sore distress? Knowing, then, what was passing in her heart, He commended her to the disciple, the best of guides, who was able to explain fully and adequately the profound mystery. For wise and learned in the things of God was he who received and took her away gladly, to fulfill all the Savior’s Will concerning her.”

“The blessed Evangelist John says that they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it on hyssop, and so brought it. Luke makes no mention of anything of the kind, but merely declares that they brought Him *vinegar*. Matthew and Mark say that the sponge was *put on a reed*. Some may perhaps think there is a discrepancy in the accounts of the holy Evangelists; but no one who is right-minded will be so persuaded. We must rather try to search, and see by every means in our power, in what way the act of impiety was effected. The inspired Luke, then, disregarding the way in which the vinegar was brought, says, in brief, that vinegar was brought to Him when He was athirst. And there can be no question, that the Evangelists would not have disagreed with each other in these trifling and unimportant details, when, in all essential matters, they are in such perfect harmony and concord. What, then, is the difference between them? and of what treatment is it susceptible? There is no doubt, that the officers who executed the impious crime against Christ were many in number, I mean the soldiers who brought Him to the Cross; several also of the Jews shared in their cruelty, some putting the sponge on a reed, others on a stick of what is called hyssop---for the hyssop is a kind of shrub---and gave Jesus to drink of it; doing this, purblind wretches that they were, to their own condemnation. For, unawares, they were proving themselves utterly [637 undeserving of compassion, when they thus altogether discarded mercy and humanity and with unparalleled audacity vied with each other in impiety alone. Therefore, by the mouth of the Prophet Ezekiel, God thus spoke unto the mother of the Jews, I mean Jerusalem: *As thou hast done, so shall it be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon your own head*; and by the mouth of Isaiah, to lawless Israel: *Woe unto the wicked! It shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him*. This completed the measure of all the crimes that had been committed against Christ; but here, too, we may find a lesson to our profit. For hereby we may know that those who are of a God-loving temper, and who are firmly rooted in the love of Christ, shall wage, as it were, a ceaseless war with those who are of a different spirit; who will not, even to their latest breath, desist from raging against them, preparing for them severe temptations from every quarter, and eagerly devising every sort of thing that may hurt them. But, just as the wicked cease not from troubling them, so also shall their courage be continually sustained; and just as their trials, and the tribulation of temptation, have no abatement, so also the blessedness of the Saints shall have no end, and the joy of their state of glory shall remain for evermore, and world without end.”

9th hour:

“When this indignity had been added to the rest, the Savior exclaimed, It is finished; meaning that the measure of the iniquity of the Jews, and of their furious rage against Him, was completed. For what had the Jews left untried, and what extremity of atrocity had they not practiced against Him? For what kind of insult was omitted, and what crowning act of outrage do they seem to have left undone? Therefore rightly did He exclaim, It is finished, the hour already summoning Him to preach to the spirits in hell. For He [638 visited them, that He might be Lord both of the living and the dead; and for our sake encountered death itself, and underwent the common lot of all humanity, that is, according to the flesh, though being as God by Nature Life, that He might despoil hell, and render return to life possible to human nature; being thus proved *the first fruits of them that are asleep*, and *the firstborn from the dead*, according to the Scriptures. He bowed His head, therefore; for as this generally befalls the dying, through the slackening of the sinews of the flesh, when the

spirit or soul that united and sustained it is fled, the Evangelist made use of this expression. The expression also, *He gave up His Spirit*, does not differ from language usually employed, for the vulgar use it as equivalent to "his life was extinguished, and he died." But it is probable that it was of set purpose, and advisedly, that the holy Evangelist, instead of saying simply, He died, said, *He gave up His Spirit*; gave it up, that is, into the hands of God the Father, according to the saying that He spoke: *Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit*; and for us, also, the meaning of the expression lays down a beginning and foundation of firm hope. For, I think, we ought to believe, and for this belief there is much ground, that the souls of Saints, when they quit their earthly bodies, are, by the bountiful mercy of God, almost, as it were, consigned into the hands of a most loving Father, and do not, as some infidels have pretended, haunt their sepulchers, waiting for funeral libations; nor yet are they, like the souls of sinful men, conveyed to the place of endless torment, that is, to hell. Rather, do they hasten into the hands of the Father of all, by the new way which our Savior Christ has prepared for us; for He consigned His Soul into the hands of His Father, that we also, making it our anchor, and being firmly rooted and grounded in this belief, might entertain the bright hope that when we undergo the death of the body, we shall be in God's hands; yea, in a far better condition than when we were in the flesh. Therefore, also, the wise Paul assures us that it is better to depart, and be with Christ.

And when He gave up the ghost, the veil of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom. The veil of the temple was of fine linen, let down to the floor of the centre of the temple, and shrouding the inner portion thereof, and allowing only the high priest to enter into the innermost shrine. For it was not in the power of any one at will to penetrate into the interior with unwashed feet, and carelessly to gaze upon the Holy of holies. How very necessary it was that this curtain should make this division, Paul shows us by his words in the Epistle to the Hebrews: *For there was a tabernacle prepared; the first, which is called the Holy place. And after the second veil, the tabernacle, which is called the Holy of holies, having a golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot holding the manna, and the tables of the covenant, and Aaron's rod that budded.* But into the first tabernacle, he says, *the priests go in, accomplishing the services; but into the second, the high priest alone, once in the year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the Holy place hath not yet been made manifest, while as the first tabernacle is yet standing.* For there can be no question, that a veil was let down at the very entrance of the temple. And so there came into his mind the first tabernacle, which he called holy; for no one could affirm that any part of the temple was not holy, or, if he did so, he would lie, for it was all holy. And after the first tabernacle came the veil which was betwixt, which is the second veil, separating the innermost portion, that is, the Holy of holies. But, as the blessed Paul said, the Spirit signified, by figures and types, that the more fitting way in which the Saints should tread had not yet been made manifest; for the people were still kept at a distance, and the first tabernacle was yet standing. For there had not, as yet, in fact, appeared unto men the manner of the life that Christ gave unto those who were called by the Spirit unto sanctification; and not yet had the mystery concerning Him been made manifest, for the written commandment of the Law was still in force. Therefore, also, the Law placed the Jews in the outer court. For the dispensation of the Law was, as it were, a porch and vestibule leading unto the teaching and life of the Gospel.

For the one is but a type, the other is the truth itself. The first tabernacle was, indeed, holy, for *the Law is holy, and the commandment righteous and good*; but the innermost portion of the temple was the Holy of holies, for though the men who partook of the righteousness of the Law were holy, they became yet holier when they accepted the faith that is in Christ, and were anointed with the Holy Spirit of God. The righteousness of faith, therefore, is greater than the righteousness of the Law; and by faith we are far more abundantly sanctified. Therefore, also, the wise Paul says, that he gladly and readily endured the loss of the righteousness that is of the Law, that he might *gain Christ, and might be found in Him, not having a righteousness of mine own, even that which is of the Law, but that which is through faith in Jesus Christ*. And some fell backwards, and, after running well for a time, were bewitched; and the Galatians were of this class: after pursuing the righteousness which is of faith, turning back to the commandment of the Law, and recurring to the state of life shadowed forth by types and figures; and to these Paul administered the well-merited reproof: *If ye receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing. Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the Law; ye are fallen away from grace*. But (to bring our explanation of the passage to a good and proper conclusion) we will simply repeat, that *the veil of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom*; to signify, as it were, that God was in the very act of revealing the Holy of holies, and making the way into the inmost shrine open henceforth to those who believe on Christ. For the knowledge of the Divine mysteries is now laid bare before us; no longer shrouded in the obscurity of the letter of the Law, as it were a curtain, nor hidden by any covering from our quest, nor defended against the intrusion of the eye of the mind by types through which we could see but dimly. Rather are these mysteries now seen in simplicity of faith; yea, but few words suffice to explain them. For *the word is nigh thee, says Paul, in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach: because, if thou shall say with thy mouth, Jesus is Lord, and shall believe in thy heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shall be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation*. Herein is seen in its completeness the mystery of piety towards God. But, while Christ had not as yet waged the conflict for our salvation, nor undergone the death of the flesh, the veil was still spread out, for the power of the commandment of the Law still prevailed. But when the iniquitous Jews, in their presumption, had wreaked to the utmost their malice upon Christ, and He had given up the ghost for our sake, and the sufferings of Emmanuel were accomplished, the time had then come that the broad veil, that had so long been spread out, should from henceforth be rent asunder---that is, the protection of the letter of the Law---and that the fair vision of the truth should lie bare and open before those who had been sanctified in Christ by faith. The veil was torn throughout; for what other meaning can be put upon the words: *From the top to the bottom*? And why was this? It was because the revelation of the message of salvation was not partial, but our enlightenment concerning the Divine mysteries was perfected thereby. Therefore, also, the Psalmist said unto God, in the person of His new people: *The hidden secrets of Thy wisdom hast Thou, revealed unto me*; and, furthermore, the inspired Paul thus addresses believers on Christ: *I thank my God always concerning you, for the grace which was given you in Christ Jesus; that in every thing ye were enriched in Him, in all utterance, and all wisdom, and all knowledge*. The rending of the veil, then, not in part, but entirely throughout, signified then, that the worshippers of the Savior were about to be enriched in all wisdom, and in all knowledge, and in all utterance, manifestly receiving the

knowledge of the mystery concerning Him, undefiled and unclouded by blot or shadow. For this is what is meant by the words: *From the top to the bottom*. We say, then, that the most appropriate and fitting time for the revelation of the Divine mysteries was the occasion on which the Savior laid down His life for us, when Israel spurned His grace, and wholly started aside from the love of God, in his frenzy against Him, and headstrong impiety. For any one may see that the measure of their iniquities was complete, when he learns that they persecuted, even unto death, the Giver of Life.

I think, therefore, that we have said enough on this subject, and that our explanation of the Divine purpose does not fall short of the mark. But, as we find the inspired Evangelist is very diligent to say: *When He gave up the ghost, the veil of the temple was rent*, thereby almost signifying as essential for us to know the occasion of that event, let us supplement our remarks by a further consideration, which savors, I think, of the spirit of pious research. For it is a thought which will be found in no way abhorrent to those fundamental doctrines, which are at once a blessing and a necessity to us. To proceed, then: the following custom was in vogue, both among the people and the rulers of the Jews. When they saw anything being done which they thought would especially offend the |643 Giver of the Law, or when they heard any outrageous or blasphemous utterance, they tore their garments, and put on the appearance of mourners; thereby, in a manner, taking up the defiance of God, and by the intolerance they displayed of such offences, passing sentence of condemnation on the madness of the transgressors, and acquitting themselves of complicity therein. Moreover, the disciples of the Savior, Barnabas and Paul, when certain of those who had not yet received the faith, thinking them to be gods (for *they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercury*), brought sacrifices and garlands, in company with the priests, and attempted to make sacrifices in their honor, leapt down from the platform on which they stood, because of the outrage that would be inflicted upon the glory of God, if any sacrifice were offered to men, and *rent their garments*, as is recorded, and by fitting words prevented the ignorant endeavor of the worshippers of idols. Also, when our Savior Christ was on His trial before the rulers of the Jews, and was required to say Who He was, and whence He came, and said plainly in reply: *Verily, I say unto you, henceforth ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven*, Caiaphas leapt up out of his seat, and *rent his garments, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy*. The temple of God, then, followed, so to say, the custom that prevailed among the Jews, and rent its veil, as it had been clothes, at the moment when our Savior gave up the ghost. For it condemned the impiety of the Jews as an insult against itself. And the accomplishment of this was God's work, that He might show unto us the temple itself bewailing Israel's guilt"

"In pursuance of the request of the Jews, men afflicted with a madness akin to their cruelty----I mean the soldiers of Pilate----break the legs of the two robbers, |645 as they were still numbered among the living, intensifying the bitter pang of their last agony, and finally dispatching them by the most grievous act of violence. But when they found Jesus with His Head bowed down, and saw that He had already given up the ghost, they thought it lost labor to break His Legs; but, as they still had a faint suspicion that He might not be actually dead, they *with a spear pierced His Side*, which sent forth Blood, mingled with Water; God presenting us thereby with a type, as it were, and foreshadowing of the mystery of the Eucharist, and Holy Baptism. For Holy Baptism is of Christ, and Christ's institution; and the power of the mystery of the Eucharist grew up for us out of His Holy Flesh.

By his account of what took place, the wise Evangelist confirms his hearers in the belief that He was the Christ long ago foretold by Holy Writ; for the events of His life harmonized with what was written concerning Him. For not a bone of Him was broken, and He was pierced with the spear of the soldier, according to the Scripture. He says himself, that the disciple that bare record of these things was a spectator and eye-witness of what took place, and knew, in fact, that his testimony was true; and the disciple to whom he thus alludes is none other than himself. For he shrank from speaking more openly, putting away from himself the assumption of love of glory, as an unholy thing, and as a grievous infirmity."

11th hour:

"38 And after these things, Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked of Pilate that he might take away the Body of Jesus: and, Pilate gave him leave. He came, therefore, and took away His Body.

This saying is indeed fraught with a grievous charge against the Jews, as it shows that to become a disciple of Christ was dangerous, and exposed a man to penalties; for he plainly introduces this most excellent young man----I mean Joseph----to our notice, as most especially anxious to escape the notice of the Jews, though he had been induced by Christ's teaching to choose that worship which was the reality itself, and better and more pleasing to the God Who loves virtue than the commandment of the Law, and at the same time gives us a proof necessary to confirm our faith. For it was necessary for us to believe that Christ laid down His Life for us. And is it not an inevitable consequence that, when a man is entombed, we must have a firm conviction that he also died? And we may well condemn, as guilty of gross brutality, the presumption, hard-heartedness, and merciless temper of the Jews, who did not even pay unto Christ the respect due to the dead, nor honor Him with burial rites, when they saw Him lying before them an inanimate corpse; though they knew that He was the Christ, and had often been amazed by the marvelous works that He did, even though their bitter hatred might never have allowed them to profit by His miraculous power. The disciple of Arimathaea, therefore, passes judgment on the inhumanity of the Jews, and condemns the men of Jerusalem, when he goes and tends with fitting care the Body of Him Whom he did not as yet honor by an open confession of faith, but still believed on Him in secret, *for fear of the Jews*, as says the blessed Evangelist.

39 And there came also Nicodemus, he who at the first came to Him by night, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pound weight.

He says that this disciple was not alone in taking counsel wisely, as well as in fervent zeal, to go to dress the sacred Body for burial, but he makes mention of a second along with the first. This was Nicodemus, who completed the body of testimony to the event that is respected by the Law. For, says the Law: *In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.* The men who laid Jesus in the tomb were two in [647 number, Joseph and Nicodemus; men who received the faith inwardly in their hearts, but were still scared by a foolish fear, and did not yet prefer to the honour and glory of the world that which is of God. For then they would have dismissed all fear of the Jews, and, paying slight heed to any danger from that quarter, would have indulged their faith fearlessly and freely, and thus have proved themselves holy, and good keepers of the commandment of our Savior."

12th hour:

40, 41 *So they took the Body of Jesus, and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new tomb, wherein was never man yet laid.*

Christ was numbered among the dead, Who for our sake became dead, according to the Flesh, but Whom we conceive to be, and Who is, in fact, Life, of Himself, and through His Father. And, that He might fulfill all righteousness, that is, all that was appropriate to the form of man, He of His own Will subjected the Temple of His Body not merely to death, but also to what follows after death, that is, burial and being laid in the tomb. The writer of the Gospel says that this sepulcher in the garden was a new one; this fact signifying to us, as it were, by a type and figure, that Christ's death is the harbinger and pioneer of our entry into Paradise. For He *entered as a Forerunner for us*. What other signification than this can be intended by the carrying over of the Body of Jesus in the garden? And by the newness of the sepulcher is meant the untrodden and strange pathway whereby we return from death unto life, and the renewing of our souls, that Christ has invented for us, whereby we baffle corruption. For henceforth, by the death of Christ, death for us has been transformed, in a manner, into sleep, with like power and functions. For we are *alive unto God*, and shall live for evermore, |648 to the Scriptures. Therefore, also, the blessed Paul, in a variety of places, calls those asleep who have died in Christ. For in the times of old the dread presence of death held human nature in awe. For death *reigned from Adam until Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression*; and we bore *the image of the earthy* in his likeness, and underwent the death that was inflicted by the Divine curse. But when the Second Adam appeared among us, the Divine Man from heaven, and, contending for the salvation of the world, purchased by His death the life of all men, and, destroying the power of corruption, rose again to life, we were transformed into His Image, and undergo, as it were, a different kind of death, that does not dissolve us in eternal corruption, but casts upon us a slumber which is laden with fair hope, after the Likeness of Him Who has made this new path for us, that is, Christ.

And if any one choose to give an additional meaning to the saying that the sepulcher was a new one, and that no man had been lain therein, be it so. He says, then, we may suppose, that the sepulcher was new, and that no one had been ever laid therein, that no one might be thought to have arisen from the sleep of death save Jesus only.

42 *There, then, because of the Jews' preparation {for the tomb was nigh at hand}, they laid Jesus.*

He not only says plainly that Christ's Body was dressed for burial, and that there was a garden nigh unto the cross, and that there was a new sepulcher in it, but he also explains that He was laid therein, not leaving the least of the things which were done untold. For most essential truly to any creed or system of the mystery of our faith is the confession and the knowledge that Christ died. Therefore, also, the wise Paul, defining our rule of faith, speaks as follows: *The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which preach: because, if thou shall say with thy mouth, Jesus is Lord, and shall believe in thy heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shall be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.* And in another passage also: *For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried; and that He hath been raised on the third day, according to the Scriptures.* Very essential, then, for us is

the narrative which the writer of the book gives us on these points. For it was our bounden duty to believe that He died and was buried; after that will easily follow the true belief, that He burst asunder the bonds of death, and returned as God to the life that was His own. For *it was not possible that He should be held by death*. For, being by Nature Life, how could He have undergone corruption? And how could He in Whom *we live, and move, and have our being*, have been subjected to the laws to which our human nature is subject? Could He not rather, as God, have easily quickened that which lacked life?

St. Cyril of Alexandria, Commentary on St. John's Gospel

REFLECTION:

The Holy Friday of Pascha is the day of the Cross, the day of the greatest and the fulfillment of all sacrifices. In all Christian Tradition, the church followed the Gospels in dividing it into hours. Of course, the hours follow the Hebrew bible timing, which divide the day into 12 night hours and 12 day hours. The day hours start at sunrise (around 6 am) by the first hour. For example; Pilot sentenced our Lord to be crucified on the third hour (9am), our Lord was crucified on the sixth hour (12 noon), gave up the spirit on the ninth hour, was taken down from the Cross on the eleventh hour (5 pm) and was buried on the twelfth hour (6 pm). For that reason the Agpeya is divided on the pattern of the hours of the suffering and resurrection of our Lord.

Friday accounts are very detailed in the Gospels and it's very difficult to tell all of it in 40 minutes. From a teaching point of view, the students should know the events according to the hours. For example, they ought to know that in the 1st hour our Lord was sent by the high priest to Pilot, in the 3rd hour He was sentenced to the crucifixion, etc. By laying a foundation of Friday accounts and hours, it will be linked later to the prayers of the Agpeya and the Pascha structure

PRAYER:

O' Lord Christ, You gave salvation to the whole world when You spread Your undefiled hands on the cross, for this all nations give You praise saying; "Glory be to You O' Lord".

From the Sixth hour of the Agpeya

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

Thok tetegom

VOCABULARY:

Gethsemane, High Priest, Blasphemed, Pontius Pilot, Barabbas, Golgotha

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	Christ was crucified for us under Pontius pilot, suffered and was buried
Liturgical:	Good Friday hours
Moral:	Love one another as Christ loved us
Spiritual:	Prayer times

INTRODUCTION:

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What was the name of the feast that our Lord celebrated?

A. *Passover*

Q. What does the feast of Passover celebrate?

A. *The deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt.*

Q. Where did our Lord Celebrate the Last Passover in His Life on earth?

A. *in the house of St. Mark's family*

Q. what would Judas do?

A. *betray our Lord*

Q. what dose betray mean.

A. *tell His secrets to His enemies*

Q. What is Lakan?

A. washing of the feet in the church

Q. when is it done?

A. 3 times every year: Holy Thursday, feast of the apostles, feast of Theophany (Baptism of our Lord)

Q. What did our lord do with the bread? And the wine?

A. took it gave thanks, blessed, sanctified and gave it to his disciples

Q. describe the icon of the Eucharist on our church iconostasis.

A. Our Lord is seated to a table with His disciples. Before Him is on cup full of wine and one plate with one loaf of bread in it.

VERSE TO REMEMBER

"I am the bread of life." John 6:48

CONNECTION POINT:

We have been learning how our Lord had come to Jerusalem as king on Palm Sunday and how He made the first Eucharist after washing His disciples feet. Today we will learn how He was nailed to the Cross and died and was buried in a tomb on Holy Friday of Pascha.

LESSON BODY:

PRAYER IN GETHSEMANE

After our Lord and the disciples finished the Passover and the first Eucharist, they left the upper room in St. Marks family's house. They went to a garden called **Gethsemane**. He asked His Holy disciples to stay up and pray, but they were very tired and they fell asleep. Our Lord was deeply saddened and asked His Good Father for help. An angel appeared to Him and gave Him strength.

CAPTURING JESUS

When He finished prayer, a big group of soldiers and men with sticks, candles, and swords came to the garden to **Gethsemane**. Our Lord went forward and met them. Judas, Our Lords disciple was with them. He had an agreement to show them where Jesus was and he gave them a sign. Judas

told them, “The one that I give a kiss to – is Jesus, catch him and take him away carefully.” When they came to the place, Judas greeted Our Lord with a kiss. Our Lord asked the soldiers “who do you want”. They said “Jesus of Nazareth”. He said “I Am Jesus of Nazareth, if you want to take Me, let my disciples go.” St. Peter tried to help our Lord. He took out his sword and hit one of the soldiers with it and cut his ear. Our Lord looked to St. Peter and said “put your sword back” Our Lord put His hand on the man’s ear and healed it. Then the soldiers held Him, they tied Him, and they took Him away.

IN THE HOUSE OF THE HIGH PRIEST

The soldiers and the servants brought Jesus to the house of the **high priest** (*The leader of all the Jewish priests*). All the Jewish leaders gathered together to try to kill our Lord. They spent the whole night trying to find a crime that would lead him to be killed, but they couldn’t because our Lord had not done anything evil. At the end, the high priest asked Him if He thinks that He is the Son of God. Our Lord said “Yes, I Am” The high priest tore off His garments and said “He **has Blasphemed**” (*Saying something bad about God or thinking of oneself as God.*) They all shouted angrily that he should die. The servants started to beat him up badly.

TRIAL BY PILOT AND HEROD

When the morning came, the high priest and the Jewish leaders, sent him tied up to the Roman governor, and his name was **Pontius Pilot**. They made up an accusation that our Lord called Himself a king. This is a bad charge because Caesar the king of the Roman Empire would be very upset if someone else would call himself a king without his permission. They tried to show our Lord as an evil person.

THE 3RD HOUR: THE SENTENCE

Pontius Pilot asked our Lord many questions, but our Lord answered none of them and remained silent. Pontius Pilot tried to set our Lord free. The more he tried, the more the Jewish leaders shouted out “Crucify Him, Crucify Him!” Pontius Pilot had the soldiers beat and whip our Lord badly. The soldiers took our Lord and whipped him many times and made a crown of thorns and put it on His head, they started to make fun of Him and embarrass Him. They also gave Him a stick in his hand and went through the actions of kneeling Pontius Pilot offered to release to them one person because it was a feast and he had a habit of setting free one prisoner every feast. Pontius Pilot gave the people a choice to release our Lord or to release **Barabbas**. They shouted out “Release Barabbas!” and when he asked what should I do with Jesus. They said “Crucify Him!” Pontius Pilot asked for water and washed his hands and said, “I am innocent of this man’s blood”, he gave our Lord up to the soldiers to crucify Him.

THE 6TH HOUR: THE CROSS

The Soldiers took our Lord and had Him carry a very heavy wooden cross all the way to **Golgotha**. There they nailed His Holy hands and feet to the cross and they put a sign over His Head that reads “The King of the Jews”. They crucified two thieves, one on his right side and one on his left side. The Jewish leaders and the two thieves were shouting at Him angrily and teasing Him big time. They said things like “You did many miracles, how come you can’t bring Yourself down from the Cross” and they said “ You said You are the Son of God, let’s see if He will save You” but our Lord answered to none of it.

THE 9TH HOUR: GIVING UP THE SPIRIT

When our Lord was nailed to the cross, there was a great darkness. The thief that was crucified on the right side, saw the darkness and also how our Lord was patient and not angry at all or even upset or afraid, so he turned to our Lord and said “Remember me O Lord, when You come into Your kingdom”. Our Lord told him, “Today you will be with Me in paradise”. At the foot of the cross, St. Mary, the mother of God and St. John the Apostle were standing together. Our Lord turned to St. Mary and said “Woman, look here is your son”, pointing with His face to St. John. And He turned to St. John and said “John, look here is your mother”, pointing again with His Holy face toward St. Mary. After that, our Lord said “I am thirsty”. One of the soldiers soaked a sponge in vinegar and put it on a long stick and raised it to our Lords mouth. After our Lord tasted the vinegar He said “It is finished”. Then our Lord gathered all His strength and shouted “Father, in Your hands I commit My spirit” Then He died. There was a big earthquake and rocks were cracking and tombs were opened. One of the soldiers saw all these things and believed that Jesus was the Son of God. Another soldier came with a big sword to break the legs of the two thieves so they would die quickly. When he came to our Lord, he found that He had died. To make sure that He was dead, he took a spear and stabbed Him in His side. Immediately came out, water and blood.

THE 11TH HOUR: BRINING THE BODY DOWN FROM THE CROSS

The disciples came and took permission from Pontius Pilot to take down the body of our Lord. They took off the nails and they brought the body down, they did it in a hurry because the day was about to end and the next day was a great day for the Jews and they were not supposed to do anything starting that evening.

THE 12TH HOUR: BURIAL IN THE NEW TOMB

The disciples anointed the body with special spices. They wrapped the body in a linen cloth and laid it in a new tomb carved in the rocks. They put a big stone on the tomb door.

PLAN & MATERIALS:

Plan a: use flat images of our Lord and a cross to act out the hours; what the soldiers did and what the disciples did with different items to help visualizing the hours, provide items like nails, sponge and spear, a box for the tomb, linen cloth, rose petals and perfume for the burial, etc.

Plan b: scrap booking: providing different small icons and items for each hour; a small colored icon for each hour and a piece of leather for the whip, a thorn for the crown and a piece of purple cloth for the third hour, three nails of foil and a piece of sponge for the sixth hour, a foil and paper spear for the ninth hour, a picture of ladder for the eleventh hour, piece of linen and a petal of rose for the twelfth hour

Coloring page, drawing,

CONCLUSION:

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What is the name of the garden that our Lord went to pray in?

A. Gethsemane

Q. What is the meaning of blaspheming?

A. Saying something bad about God or thinking of oneself as God

Q. What is the name of the Roman governor?

A. Pontius Pilot

Q. What happened on the 6th hour?

A. Our Lord was crucified

Q. what did the thief on the right hand of our Lord ask Him for?

A. he asked our Lord to remember him when our Lord comes in His kingdom

Q. Who was standing at the foot of the cross?

A. St. Mary the Holy Theotokos, St. John the beloved disciple and other women who followed our Lord.

Q. What happened on the 9th hour?

A. Our Lord gave up His spirit

Q. What happened on the 11th hour?

A. the holy body of our Lord was taken down from the cross.

Q. What happened on the 12th hour?

A. Our Lord's body was buried in the tomb

VERSE TO MEMORIZE

"Remember me O Lord, when You come into Your kingdom" Luke 23:42

DAILY READINGS

Shadows of the Cross

1. The fall and the promise Genesis 3
 2. The offering of Isaac – Genesis 22
 3. Jacob bless the sons of Joseph in Egypt and adopt them by the cross – Genesis 48
 4. The water from the rock Exodus 17: 1-7
 5. Victory over the Amalekites by the cross Exodus 17: 8-13
 6. The bronze serpent Numbers 21:4- 9
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God Reveal Himself to Us

UNIT VI: OUR LORD, JESUS CHRIST ROSE FROM THE DEAD AND ASCENDED TO THE HEAVEN (6 LESSONS)

Purpose: our Lord took our nature and accepted death in it to abolish the power of death in Him. His Resurrection is given to us through sharing in His flesh and His blood in the Holy Eucharist. He showed Himself to His disciples for them to become witnesses of His resurrection. He ascended to the heaven and sat on the right side of His Father as a first fruit of humanity and as a high priest for us in the heavenly Temple.

Lesson 29: Our Lord is raised from the dead on Sunday of Resurrection.

Lesson 30: Our Lord appears after His resurrection I: Thomas Sunday

Lesson 31: Our Lord appears after His resurrection II: Two disciples on the road to Emmaus

Lesson 32: Our Lord appears after His resurrection III: by the sea of Tiberius

Lesson 33: Our Lord ascended to the heaven

Lesson 34: Unit Review

Unit VI

Purpose: our Lord took our nature and accepted death in it to abolish the power of death in Him. His Resurrection is given to us through sharing in His flesh and His blood in the Holy Eucharist. He showed Himself to His disciples for them to become witnesses of His resurrection. He ascended to the heaven and sat on the right side of His Father as a first fruit of humanity and as a high priest for us in the heavenly Temple.

LESSON 29: OUR LORD IS RISEN ON THE HOLY SUNDAY OF RESURRECTION

I. SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

St. Matthew 28:1-15

"Now after the Sabbath, as the first *day* of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. 2And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. 3His countenance was like lightning and his clothing as white as snow. 4And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead *men*. 5But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. 6He is not here; for He is risen, as He said: come, see the place where the Lord lay. 7And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you." 8So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word. 9And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, "Rejoice!" So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him. 10Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go *and* tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me." 11Now while they were going, behold, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests all the things that had happened. 12When they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, 13saying, "Tell them, "His disciples came at night and stole Him *away* while we slept." 14And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will appease him and make you secure." 15So they took the money and did as they were instructed; and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day."

St. Luke 24:1-13 and 36-49

¹ Now on the first *day* of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain *other women* with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. ² But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. ³ Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. ⁵ Then, as they were afraid and bowed *their* faces to the earth, they said to them, “Why do you seek the living among the dead? ⁶ He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, ⁷ saying, ‘The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.’” ⁸ And they remembered His words. ⁹ Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. ¹⁰ It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary *the mother* of James, and the other *women* with them, who told these things to the apostles. ¹¹ And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them. ¹² But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened. ¹³

Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, “Peace to you.” ³⁷ But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. ³⁸ And He said to them, “Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹ Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.” ⁴⁰ When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. ⁴¹ But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, “Have you any food here?” ⁴² So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. ⁴³ And He took *it* and ate in their presence. ⁴⁴ Then He said to them, “These *are* the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and *the* Prophets and *the* Psalms concerning Me.” ⁴⁵ And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ Then He said to them, “Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, ⁴⁷ and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ And you are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.”

CREED:

He was crucified for us at the time of Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried;

CHURCH FATHERS

"But in the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulcher. And behold there was a great earthquake. For an angel of the Lord descended from Heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door of the tomb, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow."

After the resurrection came the angel. Wherefore then came he, and took away the stone? Because of the women, for they themselves had seen Him then in the sepulcher. Therefore that they might believe that He was risen again, they see the sepulcher void of the body. For this cause he removed the stone, for this cause also an earthquake took place, that they might be thoroughly aroused and awakened. For they were come to pour oil on Him, and these things were done at night, and it is likely that some also had become drowsy. And for what intent and cause did he say, *"Do not be afraid?"* First he delivers them from the dread, and then tells them of the resurrection. And the address is of one showing them great honor, and indicating, that extreme punishment (fear) awaits them that had dared to do, what the others had dared, except they repented. For to be afraid is not for you, he means, but for them that crucified Him. Having delivered them then from the fear both by his words, and by his appearance (for his form he showed bright, as bearing such good tidings), he went on to say, *"I know that you seek Jesus the Crucified."* And he is not ashamed to call Him *"crucified;"* for this is the chief of the blessings. *"He is risen."* Whence is it evident? *"As He said."* So that if you refuse to believe me, he would say, remember His words, and neither will you disbelieve me. Then also another proof, *"Come and see the place where He lay."* For this he had lifted up the stone, in order that from this too they might receive the proof. *"And tell His disciples, that you shall see Him in Galilee."* And he prepares them to bear good tidings to others, which thing most of all made them believe. And He said well *"in Galilee,"* freeing them from troubles and dangers, so that fear should not hinder their faith. *"And they departed from the sepulcher with fear and joy."* Why could this be? They had seen a thing amazing, and beyond expectation, a tomb empty, where they had before seen Him laid. Wherefore also He had led them to the sight, that they might become witnesses of both things, both of His tomb, and of His resurrection. For they considered that no man could have taken Him, when so many soldiers were sitting by Him, unless He raised up Himself. For this cause also they rejoice and wonder, and receive the reward of so much continuance with Him, that they should first see and gladly declare, not what had been said only, but also what they beheld.

3. Therefore after then they had departed with fear and joy, *"Behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail."* But *"they held Him by the feet,"* and with exceeding joy and gladness ran unto Him, and received by the touch also, an infallible proof, and full assurance of the resurrection. *"And they worshipped Him."* What then did He say? *"Be not afraid."* Again, He Himself casts out their fear, making way for faith, *"But go, tell my brethren, that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me."* Mark how He Himself sends good tidings to His disciples by these women, bringing to honor, as I have often said, that sex, which was most dishonored, and to good hopes; and healing that which was diseased. Perchance some one of you would wish to be like them, to hold the feet of Jesus; you can even now, and not His feet and His hands only, but even lay hold on that sacred head, receiving the awful mysteries with a pure conscience. But not here only, but also in that day you shall see Him, coming with that unspeakable glory, and the multitude of the angels, if you are disposed to be humane; and you shall hear not these words only, *"All hail!"* but also those others,

"Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world." Be you therefore humane, that you may hear these things; and you women, that wear gold, who have looked on the running of these women, at last, though late. lay aside the disease of the desire for golden ornaments. So that if you emulate of these women, change the ornaments-which you wear, and clothe yourselves instead with almsgiving. What is the use, I pray you, of these precious stones, and of the garments spangled with gold? *"My soul,"* you say, *"is glad, and is pleased with these things."* I asked you the profit, but you tell me the hurt. For nothing is worse than being taken up with these things, and delighting in them, and being riveted to them. For more bitter is this grievous slavery, when any one finds delight even in being a slave. For in what spiritual matter will she ever be diligent as she ought; when will she laugh to scorn, as she should, the things of this world, who thinks it a worthy matter for joy, that she has been chained in gold? For he that continues in prison, and is pleased, will never desire to be set free; as indeed neither will this woman; but as having become a kind of captive to this wicked desire, she will not endure so much as to hear spiritual language with appropriate desire and diligence, much less to engage in such work. What then is the profit of these ornaments and this luxury? I pray thee. *"I am pleased with them,"* you say. Again you have told of the hurt and the ruin. *"But I enjoy also,"* you say, *"much honor from the beholders."* And what is this? This is the occasion of another destruction, when you are lifted up to haughtiness, to arrogance. Come now, since you has not told me of the profit, bear with me while I tell you of the mischief's. What then are the mischief's resulting from? Anxiety, which is greater than the pleasure. Wherefore many of the beholders, these I mean of the grossest sort, derive more pleasure from it than she who wears the gold. For you indeed knock down yourself with anxiety, but they, without this, feast their eyes.

Moreover, there are other things again, the debasing of the soul, the being looked upon with envy on all sides. For the neighboring women stung by it, arm themselves against their own husbands, and stir up against you grievous wars. Together with these things, the fact that all one's leisure and anxiety are spent on this object, that one does not apply one's self earnestly to spiritual achievements; that one is filled with haughtiness, arrogance, and vainglory; that one is riveted to the earth, and loses one's wings, and instead of an eagle, becomes a dog or a swine. For having given up looking up into Heaven, and flying towards it, you bend down to the earth like the swine, being curious about mines and caverns, and having an unmanly and base soul. But do you, when you appear, turn towards you the eyes of them at the market-place? Well then; for this very reason, you should not wear gold, that you may not become a common gazing stock, and open the mouths of many accusers. For none of those whose eyes are toward you admire you, but they jeer at you, as fond of dress, as boastful, as a carnal woman. And should you enter into a church, you leave, without getting anything but countless leers, and reviling, and curses, not from the beholders only, but also from the prophet. For straightway Isaiah, that hath the fullest voice of all, as soon as he has seen you, will cry out, *"These things, the Lord said against the princely daughters of Zion; because they walked with a lofty neck, and with winking of the eyes, and in their walking, trailing their garments, and mincing at the same time with their feet; the Lord shall take off their bravery, and instead of a sweet smell there shall be dust, and instead of a stomacher, you shall gird yourself with a cord."*

These things for your gorgeous array. For not to them only are these words addressed, but to every woman that does like them. And Paul again with him stands as an accuser, telling Timothy to charge the women, *“not to adorn themselves with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array.”* So that everywhere the wearing of gold is hurtful, but especially when you are entering into a church, when you pass through the poor. For if you were exceedingly anxious to bring an accusation against yourself, you could not put on any other array than this facade of cruelty and inhumanity.

4. Consider at any rate how many hungry bellies you pass by with this array, how many naked bodies with this satanical display. How much better to feed hungry souls, than to make holes through the lobes of your ears, and to hang from them the food of countless poor for no purpose or profit. What? is to be rich a commendation? What? is to wear gold a praise? Though it be from honest earnings that these things are put on you, even so what you do is a very heavy charge against you; but when it is moreover from dishonesty, consider the exceeding greatness of it. But do you love praises and honor? Strip yourself therefore of this ridiculous clothing, and then all will admire you; then you shall enjoy both honor and pure pleasure; since now at any rate you are overwhelmed with jeers, working for yourself many causes of aggravation arising out of these things. For should any of these things be missing, consider how many are the evils that will come from their absence, how many maidservants are beaten, how many men put to trouble, how many led to execution, how many cast into prison. And trials arise hence, and actions, and countless curses and accusations against the wife from the husband, against the husband from her friends, against the soul from itself. *“But it will not be lost.”* In the first place, this is not-easy to secure, but even if it be kept safe constantly, yet by being kept, it occasions much anxiety and care and discomfort, and no advantage. For what kind of profit arises from hence to the house? What advantage to the woman herself who wears it? No advantage indeed, but much rudeness, and accusation from every quarter? How will you be able to kiss Christ’s feet, and cling to them, when thus dressed? From this adorning He turns away. For this cause He vouchsafed to be born in the house of the carpenter, or rather not even in that house, but in a shed, and a manger. How then wilt you be able to behold Him, not having beauty that is desirable in His eyes, not wearing the array that is lovely before Him, but what is hateful. For he that comes unto Him must not adorn himself out with such garments, but be clothed with virtue. Consider what after all these jewels are Nothing else than earth and ashes. Mix water with them, and they are clay. Consider and be ashamed to make clay your master, forsaking all, and abiding by it, and carrying and bearing it about, even when you enter into a church, when most of all you ought to flee from it. For neither for this cause was the church built, that you should display therein these riches, but spiritual riches. But you, as though you were entering into a pompous procession, thus decorate yourself out on every side, imitating the women on the stage, even so do you carry about in profusion that ridiculous mass. Therefore, I tell you, you come for mischief to many, and when the congregation is dismissed, in their houses, at their tables, one may hear the more part describing these things. For they have left off saying, thus, and thus said the prophet and the apostle, and they describe the costliness of your garments, the size of your precious stones, and all the other unseemliness of them that wear these things. This makes you backward in almsgiving, and your husbands. For one of you would not readily consent to break up one of these ornaments to feed a poor man. For when you would choose even yourself to be in distress rather than to behold these things broken to

pieces, how should you feed another at the cost of them? For most women feel towards these things, as to some living beings, and not less than towards their children. *"God forbid,"* you say. Prove me this then, prove it by your works, as now at least I see the contrary. For whoever of those that are completely taken captive, by melting down these things, would rescue a child's soul from death? And why do I say a child's? Who hath redeemed his own soul thereby, when perishing? Nay, on the contrary, the more part even set it to sale for these things every day. And should any bodily infirmity take place, they do everything, but if they see their soul depraved, they take no such pains, but are careless both about their children's soul, and their own soul, in order that these things may remain to rust with time. And while you are wearing jewels worth ten thousand talents, the member of Christ has not the enjoyment so much as of necessary food. And whereas the common Lord of all has imparted to all alike of heaven, and of the things in Heaven, and of the spiritual table, you do not impart to Him even of perishing things, on purpose that you may continue perpetually bound with these grievous chains. Hence the countless evils, hence the fornications of the men, when you prepare them to cast off self-restraint, when you teach them to take delight in these things with which the harlot women adorn themselves. For this cause they are so quickly taken captive. For if you had instructed him to look down upon these things, and to take delight in chastity, godly fear and humility, he would not have been so easily taken by the shafts of fornication. For the harlot is able to adorn herself in this way even to a greater degree than this, but with those other ornaments (virtues) not so. Accustom him then to take delight in these ornaments, which he cannot see placed on the harlot. And how will you bring him into this habit? If you take off these, and put on those others, so shall both your husband be in safety, and you in honor, and God will be favorable to you, and all men will admire you, and you will attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might, world without end. Amen.

HOMILY 90

MATTHEW 28:11-14

"Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and declared unto the chief priests all the things that were done. And when they had assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole Him away while we slept. And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you."

FOR the sake of these soldiers that earthquake took place, in order to shock them, and that the testimony might come from them, which accordingly was the result. For the report was thus free from suspicion, as proceeding from the guards themselves. For of the signs some were displayed publicly to the world, others privately to those present on the spot; publicly for the world was the darkness, privately the appearance of the angel, the earthquake. When then they came and showed it (for truth shines forth, being proclaimed by its adversaries), they again gave money, that they might say, as it is expressed, *"that His disciples came and stole Him."* How did they steal Him? O most foolish of all men! For because of the clearness and conspicuousness of the truth, they are not even able to make up a falsehood. For indeed what they said was highly incredible, and the falsehood had not even speciousness. For how, I ask, did the disciples steal Him, men poor and

unlearned, and not venturing so much as to show themselves? What? was not a seal put upon it? What? were there not so many watchmen, and soldiers, and Jews stationed round it? What? did not those men suspect this very thing, and take thought, and break their rest, and continue anxious about it? And wherefore moreover did they steal it? That they might feign the doctrine of the resurrection? And how should it enter their minds to feign such a thing, men who were well content to be hidden and to live? And how could they remove the stone that was made sure? how could they have escaped the observation of so many? Nay, though they had despised death, they would not have attempted without purpose, and fruitlessly to venture in defiance of so many who were on the watch. And that moreover they were timorous, what they had done before showed clearly, at least, when they saw Him seized, all rushed away from Him. If then at that time they did not dare so much as to stand their ground when they saw Him alive, how when He was dead could they but have feared such a number of soldiers? What? was it to burst open a door? Was it that one should escape notice? A great stone lay upon it, needing many hands to move it. They were right in saying, *"So the last error shall be worse than the first,"* making this declaration against themselves, for that, when after so much mad conduct they ought to have repented, they rather strive to outdo their former acts, feigning absurd fictions, and as, when He was alive, they purchased His blood, so when He was dead and risen again, they again by money were striving to undermine the evidence of His resurrection. But do you mark, I ask you, how by their own doings they are caught everywhere. For if they had not come to Pilate, nor asked for the guard, they would have been more able to act thus impudently, but as it was, not so. For indeed, as though they were laboring to stop their own mouths, even so they did all things. For if the disciples had not strength to watch with Him, and that, though upbraided by Him, how could they have ventured upon these things? And wherefore did they not steal Him before this, but when ye were come? For if they had been minded to do this, they would have done it, when the tomb was not yet guarded on the first night, when it was to be done without danger, and in security. For it was on the Sabbath that they came and begged of Pilate to have the watch, and kept guard, but during the first night none of these was present by the sepulcher.

2. And what mean also the napkins that were stuck on with the myrrh; for Peter saw these lying. For if they had been disposed to steal, they would not have stolen the body naked, not because of dishonoring it only, but in order not to delay and lose time in stripping it, and not to give them that were so disposed opportunity to awake and seize them. Especially when it was myrrh, a drug that adheres so to the body, and cleaves to the clothes, whence it was not easy to take the clothes off the body, but they that did this needed much time, so that from this again, the tale of the theft is improbable. What? did they not know the rage of the Jews? and that they would vent their anger on them? And what profit was it at all to them, if He had not risen again? So these men, being conscious that they had made up all this tale, gave money, and said, *"Say ye these things, and we will persuade the governor."* For they desire that the report should be published, fighting in vain against the truth; and by their endeavor: to obscure it, by these even against their will they occasioned it to appear clearly. For indeed even this establishes the resurrection, the fact I mean of their saying, that the disciples stole Him. For this is the language of men confessing, that the body was not there. When therefore they confess the body was not there, but the stealing it is shown to be false and incredible, by their watching by it, and by the seals, and by the timidity of the disciples,

the proof of the resurrection even hence appears incontrovertible. Nevertheless, these shameless and audacious men, although there were so many things to stop their mouths, *"you say,"* these are their words, *"and we will persuade, and will secure you."* did you see all depraved? Pilate. for he was persuaded? the soldiers? the Jewish people? But marvel not, if money prevailed over soldiers. For if with His disciple it showed its might to be so great, much more with these. *"And this saying is commonly reported,"* it is said, *"until this day."* did you see again the disciples' love of truth, how they are not ashamed of saying even this, that such a report prevailed against them. *"Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, and some worshipped, and some when they saw Him doubted."* This seems to me to be the last appearance in Galilee, when He sent them forth to baptize. And if *"some doubted,"* herein again admire their truthfulness, how they conceal not even their shortcomings up to the last day. Nevertheless, even these are assured by their sight. What then did He say unto them, when He saw them? *"All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth."* Again He spoke to them more after the manner of man, for they had not yet received the spirit, which was able to raise them on high. *"Go ye, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you;"* giving the one charge with a view to doctrine, the other concerning commandments. And of the Jews He makes no mention, neither brings forward what had been done, nor upbraids Peter with his denial, nor any one of the others with their flight, but having put into their hands a summary of the doctrine, that expressed by the form of baptism, commands them to pour forth over the whole world. After that, because he had enjoined on them great things, to raise their courage, He says, *"Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."* did you see His own proper power again? do you see how those other things also were spoken for condescension? And not with those men only did He promise to be, but also with all that believe after them. For plainly the apostles were not to remain here unto *"the end of the world;"* but he speaks to the believers as to one body. For tell me not, said He, of the difficulty of the things: for *"I am with you,"* who make all things easy. This He said to the prophets also in the Old Testament continually, as well to Jeremiah objecting his youth, as to Moses and Ezekiel shrinking from the office, *"I am with you,"* this here also to these men. And mark, I ask you, the excellence of these, for the others, when sent to one nation, often excused themselves, but these said nothing of the sort, though sent to the world. And He reminds them also of the consummation, that He may draw them on more, and that they may look not at the present dangers only, but also at the good things to come that are without end. *"For the irksome things, said He, that you will undergo are finished together with the present life, since at least even this world itself shall come to an end, but the good things which you shall enjoy remain immortal, as I have often told you before."* Thus having invigorated and roused their minds, by the remembrance of that day, He sent them forth. For that day to them that live in good works is to be desired, even as on the other hand to those in sin, it is terrible as to the condemned. But let us not fear only, and shudder, but let us change too, while there is opportunity, and let us rise out of our wickedness, for we can, if we be willing. For if before grace many did this, much more after grace.

3. For what grievous things are we enjoined? to cleave mountains asunder? to fly into the air? or to cross the Tuscan sea? By no means, but a way of life so easy, as not so much as to want any instruments, but a soul and purpose only. For what instruments had these apostles, who effected

such things? Did they not go about with one vestment and unshod? and they got the better of all. For what is difficult of the commandments? Have no enemy. Hate no man. Speak ill of no man. Nay, the opposites of these things are the greater hardships. But He said, you reply, Throw away your money. Is this then the grievous thing? In the first place, He did not command, but advised it. Yet even if it were a command, what is it grievous not to carry about burdens and unseasonable cares? But oh covetousness! All things are become money; for this cause all things are turned upside down. If anyone declares another happy, he mentions this; should he pronounce him wretched, hence is derived the description of wretchedness. And all reckonings are made on this account, how such an one gets rich, how such an one gets poor. Should it be military service, should it be marriage, should it be a trade, should it be what you will that any man takes in hand, he does not apply to what is proposed, until he see these riches are coming in rapidly upon him. After this shall we not meet together and consult how we shall drive away this pest? Shall we not regard with shame the good deeds of our fathers? of the three thousand, of the five thousand, who had all things common? What is the profit of this present life, when we do not use it for our future gain? How long do you not enslave the mammon that has enslaved you? How long are you slaves of money? How long have ye no love for liberty, and do not rend in pieces the bargains of covetousness? But while, if ye should have become slaves of men, you do all things, if any one should promise you liberty; yet being captives of covetousness, you do not so much as consider how you may be delivered from this bitter bondage. And yet the one were nothing terrible, the other is the most bitter tyranny. Consider how great a price Christ paid for us. He shed His own blood; He gave up Himself. But you, even after all this, are grown lazy; and the most grievous thing of all is, that you even take delight in the slavery, you luxuriate in the dishonor, and that, from which you ought to flee, is become an object of desire to you. But since it is right not only to lament and to blame, but also to correct, let us see from what cause this passion and this evil have become an object of desire to you. Whence then, whence has this come to be an object of desire? Because, you say, it makes me to be in honor and in security. In what kind of security, I ask you? In the confidence, not to suffer hunger, nor cold, not to be harmed, not to be despised. Will you then, if we promise you this security, refrain from being rich? For if it is for this that riches are an object of desire, if it be in your power to have security without these, what need do you have of these anymore? *"And how is it possible,"* you say, *"for one who is not rich to attain to this?"* Nay, how is it possible (for I say the opposite thing) if one is rich? For it is necessary to flatter many, both rulers and subjects, and to entreat countless numbers, and to be a base slave, and to be in fear and trembling, and to regard with suspicion the eyes of the envious, and to fear the tongues of false accusers, and the desires of other covetous men. But poverty is not like this, but altogether the contrary. It is a place of refuge and security, a calm harbor, a wrestling ground, and school of exercise to learn self-command, an imitation of the life of angels. Hear these things, as many as are poor; or rather also, as many as desire to be rich. It is not poverty that is the thing to be feared, but the not being willing to be poor. Account poverty to be nothing to fear, and it will not be to you a matter for fear. For neither is this fear in the nature of the thing, but in the judgment of feeble-minded men. Or rather. I am even ashamed that I have occasion to say so much concerning poverty, to show that it is nothing to be feared. For if you practice self-command, it is even a fountain to you of countless blessings. And if any one were to offer you sovereignty, and political power, and

wealth, and luxury, and then having set against them poverty, were to give you your choice to take which you like, you would straightway seize upon poverty, if indeed you knew the its beauty.

4. And I know that many laugh, when these things are said; but we are not troubled but we require you to stay, and soon you will give judgment with us. For to me poverty seems like some comely, fair, and well-favored damsel, but covetousness like some monster shaped woman. some Scylla or Hydra, or some other like prodigies feigned by fabulous writers. For bring not forward, I ask you, them that accuse poverty, but them that have shone with it. Nurtured in this, Elias was caught up in that blessed assumption. With this Eliseus shone; with this John; with this all the apostles; but with the other, Ahab, Jezebel, Gehazi, Judas, Nero, Caiaphas, were condemned. But if it please you, let us not look to those only that have been glorious in poverty, but let us observe the beauty itself of this damsel. For indeed her eye is clear and piercing, having nothing turbid in it, like the eye of covetousness, which is at one time full of anger, at another sated with pleasure, at another troubled by incontinence. But the eye of poverty is not like this, but mild, calm, looking kindly on all, meek, gentle, hating no man, shunning no man. For where there are riches, there is matter for enmity, and for countless wars. The mouth again of the other is full of insults, of a certain haughtiness, of much boasting, cursing, deceit; but the mouth and the tongue of this are sound, filled with continual thanksgiving, blessing, words of gentleness. of affection, of courtesy, of praise, of commendation. And if you would see also the proportion of her members, she is of a goodly height, and far loftier than wealth. And if many flee from her, marvel not at it, for indeed so do fools from the rest of virtue. But the poor man, you will say, is insulted by him that is rich. Again you are declaring to me the praise of poverty. For who, I ask you, is blessed, the insulter, or the insulted? It is manifest that it is the insulted person. But then, the one, covetousness, urges to insult the other; poverty persuades to endure. *"But the poor man suffers hunger,"* you will say. Paul also suffered hunger, and was in famine. *"But he has no rest."* Neither *"had the Son of Man where to lay His head."* Do you see how far the praises of poverty have proceeded, and where it places you, to what men it leads you on, and how it makes you a follower of the Lord? If it were good to have gold, Christ, who have the unutterable blessings, would have given this to His disciples. But now so far from giving it them, He forbid them to have it. Wherefore Peter also, so far from being ashamed of poverty, even glories in it, saying, *"Silver and gold have I none; but what I have give I you."* And who of you would not have desired to utter this saying? Nay, we all would extremely, perhaps some one may say. Then throw away your silver, throw away your gold. *"And if I throw it away, you will say, shall I receive the power of Peter?"* Why, what made Peter blessed, tell me? Was it indeed to have lifted up the lame man? By no means, but the not having these riches, this procured him Heaven. For of those that wrought these miracles, many fell into hell, but they, who did those good things, attained a kingdom. And this you may learn even of Peter himself. For there were two things that he said, *"Silver and gold have I none;"* and, *"In the name of Jesus Christ rise up and walk."* Which sort of thing then made Him glorious and blessed, the raising up the lame man, or the casting away his money? And this you may learn from the Master of the conflicts Himself. What then does He Himself say to the rich man seeking eternal life? He said not, *"raise up the lame,"* but, *"Sell thy goods, and give to the poor, and come and follow me, and you shall have treasure in Heaven."* And Peter again said not, *"Behold, in Your name we cast out devils;"* although he was

casting them out, but, *"Behold, we have forsaken all and followed Thee what shall we have?"* And Christ again, in answering this apostle, said not, *"If any man raise up the lame,"* but, *"Whosoever has forsaken houses or lands, shall receive an hundredfold in this world, and shall inherit everlasting life."* Let us also then emulate this man, that we may not be confounded, but may with confidence stand at the judgment seat of Christ; that we may win Him to be with us, even as He was with His disciples. For He will be with us, like as He was with them, if we are willing to follow them, and to be imitators of their life and conversation. For in consequence of these things God crowns, and commends men, not requiring of you to raise the dead, or to cure the lame. For not these things make one to be like Peter, but the casting away one's goods, for this was the apostles' achievement. But do you not find it possible to cast them away? In the first place, I say, it is possible; but I do not compel you, if you are not willing, nor constrain you to it; but this I entreat, to spend at least a part on the needy, and to seek for yourself nothing more than is necessary. For thus shall we both live our life here without trouble, and in security, and enjoy eternal life; unto which God grant we all may attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might, together with the Father and the Holy Ghost, now and always, and world without end. Amen.

REFLECTION:

The Resurrection of Christ is the highest joy of our church. In the west, it is Christmas season that makes the highest celebration. It is not a mere theological liturgical or even social difference. The celebration of Christmas is the celebration of God becoming man, it is the joy of being humans in which we say yes to the first creation and celebrate it. But when we are very excited for the resurrection, we celebrate our new creation, for man to be perfectly recreated in the likeness of God. It is the highest expression of the life of the church. For this reason all care should be taken to share in the joy of the resurrection, which means that the servants should prepare well in the holy week by personal repentance and a good confession as well as spending amble time in the pascha prayers.

PRAYER:

O' True Light, that enlightens every man, that comes into the world. You came to the world because of Your love to mankind, and all the creation rejoiced at Your coming. You saved our forefather Adam from temptation and our mother Eve from the pangs of death and granted us the spirit to be Your children - we praise You, we bless You saying; **(Thok-sa-patri Ke ey-you Ke agiyou ep-nevmaty.**

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia Jesus Christ the king of glory is risen from the dead.

VOCABULARY:

Witness, Disciple

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	Christ is risen from the dead
Liturgical:	The resurrection greeting
Moral:	Loving others as Christ loved us
Spiritual:	Morning prayer as a commemoration of Christ resurrection

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Q. What is the name of the garden that our Lord went to pray in?

A. *Gethsemane*

Q. What is the meaning of blaspheming?

A. *Saying something bad about God or thinking of oneself as God*

Q. What is the name of the Roman governor?

A. *Pontius Pilot*

Q. What happened in the 6th hour?

A. *Our Lord was crucified*

Q. What happened in the 9th hour?

A. *Our Lord gave up His spirit*

Q. What happened in the 12th hour?

A. Our Lord's body was buried in the tomb

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER

"Remember me O Lord, when You come into Your kingdom" Luke 23:42

CONNECTION POINT

We have been learning how our Lord had come to Jerusalem as king on Palm Sunday and how He made the first Eucharist after washing His disciples feet. How He was nailed to the Cross and died and was buried in a tomb on Holy Friday of Pascha. Today we remember the resurrection story.

LESSON BODY

THE WOMEN AT THE TOMB

Now on the first day of the week, Sunday, as the sun was just beginning to think about rising, Mary Magdalene and a few other women came to the tomb where our Lord was buried. They were bringing with them spices that they had prepared to put on our Lord's body. This was something that Jewish people did whenever somebody died. The women were wondering about how they would be able to get inside the tomb; there was a huge stone in front of the door and they knew they would not be able to push it away.

THE ARCHANGEL

But when they arrived at the tomb, all of a sudden, there was a great earthquake, because an angel of God came down from heaven and rolled back the huge stone that was in front of the door of the tomb, and then sat down on top of it. If you could have looked at the angel's face, you would have seen that it was as bright as lightening and his clothes were as white as snow, and the guards that were standing at the tomb began to shake from fear of him, and could not move. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; He is risen! He is alive! Remember, how He told you that He would rise on the third day?" Then the women remembered how our Lord had told them that He would be crucified and then would rise on the third day. Then the angel spoke again, "Come in here, see the place where the Lord used to lay. You will see that He is not here anymore, for this is a place for people who are dead, but He is alive! And then go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and that He will go to Galilee before you all and that you will see Him there."

OUR LORD MEETS THE WOMEN

So the women ran out of the tomb, very amazed, and so joyful, and afraid. And they ran the whole way to the disciples, so they could tell them. But all of a sudden, while they were on the way, Jesus Himself came and met them on the road, and He said to them, "Rejoice!" So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go *and* tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and they will see Me there."

THE WOMEN TOLD THE DISCIPLES

Then the women returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven disciples and to all the rest who were with them. But the disciples thought the women were telling fairy tales, and they did not believe them. But two of the disciples, Peter and John, arose and ran to the tomb; and they stooped down and looked inside. They saw the linen cloths which had wrapped our Lord lying by themselves; and they departed, amazed about what had happened. And St. John believed that He was risen.

OUR LORD VISITS THE DISCIPLES:

Later that night, while the disciples and the women were gathered together talking about the things that had happened that day and how some of them had seen our Lord alive, Jesus Himself stood in the middle of them, and said to them, "Peace to you." But they were terrified and frightened, and thought they were seeing a spirit. And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And how come you do not believe that it is Me? Look at My hands and My feet, see it is I Myself and no one else. Touch Me and see, for a spirit would not have flesh and bones like I have." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet, where His scars were. But they thought it was too good, too great, too amazing to be true, and still could not believe! Our Lord wanted to help them believe, so He asked them, "Do you have any food here?" So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. And He took *it* and ate in front of them. Then He said to them, "This is what I had been telling you before I was crucified, that these things would happen, and there are prophecies written about Me foretelling that I would be crucified and then rise from the dead. And you are **witnesses (one who had seen something very important, and comes to tell us about it)** of all these things." And He explained to them the prophecies that were written in the books. Then He said to them, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 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 how to follow the commandments I gave you. and I am with you always, I will never leave you, *even* until the end of time."

THE RESPONSE OF THE JEWS:

Only one more thing needs to be told: the guards who had been at the tomb and who had seen the angel and been scared by him, reported to the chief priests what had happened. The chief priests then met with the elders and the wise men of the people and talked together about how they should deal with this. They did not want the people to know that Jesus had risen from the dead. They decided that they would pay the guards money, and they asked them to say a lie instead of the truth; they wanted them to say that His disciples came at night while they slept and stole Him away. So the guards took the money and told everyone who asked them this lie. And it is still believed by some of the Jews until today.

CONCLUSION

1. REVIEW QUESTIONS

Q. On which day did our Lord resurrect?

A. *Sunday*

Q. How was the stone in front of the door of the tomb moved?

A. *An angel came down from heaven and rolled it away*

Q. What did the women do after they left the tomb?

A. *They went to tell the disciples that our Lord is risen*

Q. What did the disciples think after the women told them about our Lord?

A. *They did not believe them and thought they were making up stories*

Q. What did our Lord say to the disciples when He came to them later that night?

A. *Peace to you*

Q. What did our Lord command the disciples to do before He ascended?

A. *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*

VERSE TO REMEMBER

Christ is Risen, Truly He is risen

Khristos Anesti, Alithos anesti

Khristos Aftonfo, khi omethmi aftonf

III DAILY READINGS

Our Lord Is Risen from the Dead

1. First Corinthians 15
2. Mark 16
3. John 20
4. Luke 24
- 5.

Unit VI

Purpose: our Lord took our nature and accepted death in it to abolish the power of death in Him. His Resurrection is given to us through sharing in His flesh and His blood in the Holy Eucharist. He showed Himself to His disciples for them to become witnesses of His resurrection. He ascended to the heaven and sat on the right side of His Father as a first fruit of humanity and as a high priest for us in the heavenly Temple.

LESSON 30: OUR LORD IS RISEN ON SUNDAY OF RESURRECTION

I. SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

St. John:

"²⁴ Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." ²⁶ And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!" ²⁷ Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing." ²⁸ And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹ Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." ³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ 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."

CREED:

He rose from the dead on the third day according to the scriptures.

CHURCH FATHERS

24, 25 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall

see in His Hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His Side, I will not believe.

The greatest marvels are always attended by disbelief, and any action which seems to exceed the measure of probability is ill-received by those who hear of it. But the sight of the eyes succeeds in banishing these doubts, and, as it were, compels a man by force to assent to the evidence before him. This was the state of mind of the wise Thomas, who did not readily accept the true testimony of the other disciples to our Savior's Resurrection, although, according to the Mosaic Law, in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established. I think, however, that it was not so much that the disciple discredited what was told him, but rather that he was distracted with the utmost grief, because he had not been thought worthy to see our Savior with his own eyes. For he, perhaps, thought that he would never receive that blessing. He knew that the Lord was by Nature Life, and that He was able to escape death itself, and to destroy the power of corruption; for surely He "Who released others from its trammels could deliver His own Flesh. In his exceeding great joy he affected incredulity, and though he well-nigh leapt in his ecstasy of delight, he longed to see Him before his very sight, and to be perfectly satisfied that He had risen again to life according to His promise. For our Savior said: *Children, a little while and ye behold Me no more; and again a little while, and ye shall see Me, and your heart shall rejoice.* I think that the disciple's want of faith was extremely opportune and well-timed, in order that, through the satisfaction of his mind, we also who come after him might be unshaken in our faith that the very Body that hung upon the Cross and suffered death was quickened by the Father through the Son. Therefore, also, Paul said: *Because if you shall say with thy mouth, Jesus is Lord, and shall believe in thy heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shall be saved.* For since it was not the nature of flesh itself which brought back life, but the deed was rather accomplished by the working of the ineffable Nature of God, in which naturally abides a quickening power, the Father through the Son manifested His power upon the Temple of Christ's Body; not as though the Word was powerless to raise His own Body, but because the Father does whatsoever He does through the Son, for He is His Power, and whatsoever the Son brings to effect proceeds also of a surety from the Father. We, therefore, are taught, through the slight want of faith shown by the blessed Thomas, that the mystery of the Resurrection is effected upon our earthly bodies, and in Christ as the Firstfruits of the race; and that He was no phantom or ghost, fashioned in human shape, and simulating the features of humanity, nor yet, as others have foolishly surmised, a spiritual body that is compounded of a subtle and ethereal substance different from the flesh. For some attach this meaning to the expression "spiritual body." For since all our expectation and the significance of our irrefutable faith, after the confession of the Holy and Consubstantial Trinity, centers in the mystery concerning the flesh, the blessed Evangelist has very pertinently put this saying of Thomas side by side with the summary of what preceded. For observe that Thomas does not desire simply to see the Lord, but looks for the marks of the nails, that is, the wounds upon His Body. For he affirmed that then, indeed, he would believe and agree with the rest that Christ had indeed risen again, and risen again in the flesh. For that which is dead may rightly be said to return to life, and the Resurrection surely was concerned with that which was subject unto death.

26, 27 *And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Jesus cometh, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then He said to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and see My Hands; and reach hither your hand, and put it into My Side: and be not faithless, but believing.*

Christ appeared once more unto His disciples miraculously by His Divine power. For He did not, like unto us, bid them open the doors for Him to enter in, but disdaining, as it were, the natural sequence of events, passed within the doors, and unexpectedly appeared in the middle of the room, presenting the same kind of miracle before the sight of the blessed Thomas as He had performed on the former occasion. For he that was most deficient in faith had need of healing medicine. He made use of the greeting so often on His Lips, and solemnly gave them the blessed assurance of peace, as a pattern unto us, as we have said before. One may well be amazed at the minuteness of detail shown in this passage. For such was the extreme accuracy that the compiler of this book took pains to observe, that he is not content with simply saying that Christ manifested Himself to the holy disciples, but explains that it was after eight days, and that they were gathered together. For what else can their being all brought together in one house mean? We say this to point out the diligent care that the Apostle so admirably displays, and because Christ hereby has made clear unto us the occasion of our assembling, and gathering ourselves together on His account. For He visits, and in some sort dwells with, those assembled together for His sake, especially on the eighth day, that is, the Lord's day. Let us reckon it up, if you so please: On the one occasion He appeared unto the other disciples; on the other, He manifested Himself to them, when Thomas was also present. It is written in the preceding passage: *When therefore it was evening, on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut, He stood in the midst.* Note, that it was on the first day of the week, that is, the Lord's day, when the disciples were gathered together, that He was seen of them, and that likewise also He appeared unto them on the eighth day following. And we must not, because he says eight days after, suppose that he means the ninth day, but that when he says this he includes the eighth day itself, on which He appeared, in the number given.

With good reason, then, are we accustomed to have sacred meetings in churches on the eighth day. And, to adopt the language of allegory, as the idea necessarily demands, we indeed close the doors, but yet Christ visits us and appears unto us all, both invisibly and also visibly; invisibly as God, but also visibly in the Body. He suffers us to touch His holy Flesh, and gives us thereof. For through the grace of God we are admitted to partake of the blessed Eucharist, receiving Christ into our hands, to the intent that we may firmly believe that He did in truth raise up the Temple of His Body. For that the partaking of the blessed Eucharist is a confession of the Resurrection of Christ is clearly proved by His own Words, which He spoke when He Himself performed the type of the mystery; for He broke bread, as it is written, and gave it to them, saying: *This is My Body, which is given for you unto remission of sins: this do in remembrance of Me.* Participation, then, in the Divine mysteries, in addition to filling us with Divine blessedness, is a true confession and memorial of Christ's dying and rising again for us and for our sake. Let us, therefore, after touching Christ's Body, shrink back from unbelief in Him as utter ruin, and rather be found well grounded in the full assurance of faith.

Let the attentive reader call to mind that our Lord repulsed Mary Magdalene from touching Him, saying plainly: *Touch Me not, for I am not yet ascended unto the Father*. Yet He allows Thomas to touch His Side, and to feel with his fingers *the print of the nails*. We have already explained why our Lord did this, but none the less will we call back to mind the reason, briefly recapitulating what we said. For not yet had the time arrived for Mary to touch Him, because she had not yet been sanctified by the grace of the Holy Spirit; for while Christ was yet in our midst, and had not yet ascended to the Father in heaven, it was impossible to see the descent of the Comforter fully accomplished among men. It was meet, however, for Thomas to touch Him, as he, as well as the rest, had been enriched with the Spirit. For, as we said before, he was not on account of his absence without his share in the Spirit. For the generosity of the Giver reached unto him also, when the gift was granted to the entire company of the holy disciples.

I think we ought also to investigate the following question. Thomas felt our Savior's Side, and found the wounds made by the soldier's spear, and saw the *print of the nails*. Then how was it, someone may inquire, that the marks of corruption were apparent in an incorruptible Body? For the abiding trace of the holes bored through the Hands and Side, and the marks of wounds and punctures made by steel, affords proof of physical corruption, though the true and incontrovertible fact that Christ's Body was transformed into incorruption points to a necessary discarding of all the results of corruption, together with corruption itself. For, will any man who is lame, at the Resurrection have a maimed foot or limb? And if any man have lost the sight of his eyes in this life, will he be raised again blind? How then, someone may say, can we have shaken off the yoke of corruption, if its results still remain and rule over our members? It is essential, I think, to inquire into this question; and this we say, with reference to the difficulties raised by the passage. We are as far as possible anxious to assent to the contention that at the time of the resurrection there will be no remnant of adventitious corruption left in us, but, as the wise Paul said concerning this body of ours, that which *is sown in weakness is raised in power*, and that which *is sown in dishonor is raised in glory*. And what can we expect the resurrection of this body in power and glory to be, if it does not imply that it will cast off all the weakness and dishonor of corruption and disease, and return to its original purity? For the human body was not made for death and corruption. But, inasmuch as Thomas required this proof for his perfect satisfaction, our Lord Jesus Christ, of necessity, therefore, in order to leave no excuse for our want of faith, appears even as he sought to see Him; for even when He ascended into heaven itself, and made known the meaning of the mystery concerning Himself to the rulers, principalities, and powers above, and to those who commanded the legions of angels, He appeared also unto them in this same guise that they might believe that in very truth the Word That was of the Father, and in the Father, became Man for our sake, and that they might know that such was His care for His creatures that He died for our salvation. And, in order to make the meaning of my explanation clearer to my hearers, I will add the very words spoken by the mouth of Isaiah on this subject. He said: *Who is This That comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bosra?* They who raise this shout, I mean the cry: *Who is This That comes from Edom?* that is, from the earth, are angels and rational powers, for they are marveling at the Lord ascending into heaven. And, seeing Him almost, as it were, dyed in His own Blood, they say unto Him, not yet apprehending the mystery: *Why is Your apparel red, and why are Your garments like him that tread in the wine-vats?*

For they compare the color of the blood to new wine, lately trodden in the press. And what Christ said unto them? First, in order that He may be known to be the living God, He said: *I speak righteousness*; using the word *speak*, instead of "teach." And most assuredly. He that teach righteousness must be a Lawgiver, and if a Lawgiver, surely also God. Then say the angels unto Him, as Christ showed them the marks of the nails: *What are these wounds in Your Hands?* and the Lord answered: *Those with which I was wounded in the house of My beloved.* For Israel was the house that the Lord loved, and Israel smote Him with nails and spear. For the outrages of the soldiers may justly be ascribed unto the Jews, for they brought the Lord to His death. Therefore, when He wished to satisfy the holy angels that He was, in fact, a Man, and that He had undergone the Cross for us, and that He was risen again to life from the dead, Christ was not content with mere words, but showed unto them the marks of His suffering. What is there to astonish us in the fact, that when He desired to rid the blessed Thomas of his unbelief He showed the print of the nails, appearing unto him, contrary to expectation, for the advantage of all men, and to the intent that we might believe without question that the mystery of the Resurrection was actually accomplished, no other body being raised but that which suffered death?

28 Thomas answered Him, and said unto Him, My Lord and my God.

He that had shortly before been slack in the duty of faith was now eager to confess it. and in a short time his fault was wholly cured. For after an interval of only eight days the hindrances to his faith were removed by Christ, Who showed unto him the print of the nails and His wounded Side. But, perhaps, someone will ask the question: "Tell me why did the minds of the holy disciples carry out so rigid an inquiry, and so careful a scrutiny? For would not the sight of the Lord's Body, the features of His Face, and the measure of His Stature, have sufficed to prove that He had indeed risen from the dead, and to secure His recognition?" What do we reply? The inspired disciples were not free from doubt, although they had seen the Lord. For, they thought that He was not in very truth the same as He Who of old had lived and dwelt among them, and had hung upon the Cross, but rather that He was a Spirit, cunningly fashioned like unto our Savior's Image, and simulating the features of the form which they knew. For they fell into this delusion not without some apparent excuse, as He miraculously entered when the doors were closed; in spite of the fact that a body of coarse earthy mould requires a hole through which it can pass, and necessitates the opening of the door to correspond in width with the size of the body. For this cause our Lord Jesus Christ, greatly to our profit, laid bare His Side to Thomas, and exposed the wounds on His Person, through his agency giving adequate proof to all. For though of Thomas alone is recorded the saying: *Except I shall put my hands and see the prints of the nails, and put my hand into His Side, I will not believe*, yet was the charge of lack of faith common to them all; and we shall find that the minds of the other disciples were not free from perplexity, though they said unto the holy Thomas: *We have seen the Lord.* And that what we say does not err from the truth we may easily perceive by what the Divine Luke tells us: *As they spoke these things, He stood in the midst of them, that is, of course, Christ, and said unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they beheld a spirit. And He said unto them, Why are you troubled? and wherefore do reasoning's arise in your hearts? See My Hands and My Feet, that it is I Myself: handle Me, and see;*

for a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you behold Me having. And when He had said this, He showed them His Hands and His Feet. And while they still disbelieved for joy, and wondered, He said unto them, do you Have here anything to eat? And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And He took it, and did eat before them. You see how the thought of unbelief is found lurking, not in the blessed Thomas alone, but that the minds of the other disciples were afflicted with a kindred disease. For, lo and behold! seeing that their faith wavered even after the sight of the wounds upon the Cross, He thought it right to convince them by another act, in nowise suited to a spirit, but specially appropriate to earthly bodies and the nature of flesh. For He ate the fish that was brought unto Him, or the portion of one. For when no mark at all of corruption any longer remained after the Resurrection of His holy Flesh, because He lived again to incorruption, and when it was incredible that His Body stood in need of food as heretofore, He yet showed unto them the print of the nails, and did not refuse to partake of food, in order that He might establish the great mystery of the Resurrection, and cause faith in it to spring up in the souls of us all. He does acts wholly alien to the nature of spirits. For how, and in what way, could the prints of nails, and the traces of wounds, and participation in bodily food, be found to exist in a naked spirit unconnected with flesh, to which all these things are suitable by the law of its being and the conditions under which it exists? In order, then, that none might think that Christ rose again a mere spirit, or an impalpable body, shadowy and ethereal, to which some give the name of spiritual, but that the selfsame body that was *sown in corruption*, as Paul said, might be believed to have risen again, He openly did acts suitable to a palpable human form. What we said at first, however, namely, that the blessed disciple did not so much lack faith owing to infirmity of judgment, but rather was affected in this way by excess of joy, will not be wide of the mark. For we have heard the saying of the blessed Luke concerning all the others: *And while they disbelieved for joy and wondered.* It was wonder, therefore, that made the disciples slow to be convinced. But as henceforward there was no excuse for unbelief, as they saw with their own eyes, the blessed Thomas accordingly unflinchingly confessed his faith in Him, saying: *My Lord and my God.* For we must all confess that it follows of a surety that He That is Lord by Nature and Ruler over all is also God, just as also universal dominion and the glory of sovereignty is clearly seen to appertain to the living God.

Observe, too, that when he says *My Lord and my God*, he uses the article to show that there was One Lord and One God. For he does not say without the qualification of the article, *My Lord and my God*, to prevent anyone from imagining that he called Him Lord or God as he might have done one of ourselves or of the holy angels. For *there are gods many and lords many*, in this sense, in *heaven and on earth*, as the wise Paul has taught us; but rather he recognizes Him as, in a special sense, the One Lord and God, as begotten of the Father, Who is by Nature Lord and God, when he says, *My Lord and my God*; and, what is a still greater indication of the truth, the Savior heard His disciple saying this, and saw that he rested in the firm conviction that He was, in fact, the Lord and God, and thought it not right to rebuke him. Christ, then, approved his faith, and with justice. And you may easily see that what I say is true. For to him that was possessed of this faith He says, at the end of the Gospel, as unto the rest: *Go ye and make disciples of all the nations.* And if He bids him who was thus minded teach all nations, and appointed him to instruct the world in His mysteries, He wishes us to have a like faith. For He is, in fact, Lord and God by Nature, even when Incarnate Man. For

observe that the disciple, when he had touched His Hands, and Feet, and Side, made unto Him this confession of faith, not severing Emmanuel into a duality of Sons, but recognizing Him as one and the same in the Flesh, for Jesus Christ is One Lord, according to the Scripture.

29 Jesus said unto him, Because you have seen Me, you have believed: Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed.

This saying of the Savior is very pertinent and we may derive the greatest profit therefrom. For hereby He showed His great care for our souls; for He is good, and *wills that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth*, according to the Scripture. What is here said may not unlikely excite surprise. It was, indeed, necessary for Him to be long-suffering, as was His wont, with Thomas, who uttered that saying, and also with the other disciples with him, who thought that He was a spirit or apparition; and also to exhibit, as He very readily did for universal satisfaction, the print of the nails and His pierced Side; and also, contrary to use and need, to partake of food, that no plea for their unbelief might be left to those who sought to gain the benefits of His death. But it was also essential to have regard to the security of our faith. It was necessary also to have another end in view, namely, that those who should come at the last times should not easily be drawn into unbelief. For it was likely that some should err from the straight path, and from ignorance, practicing a spurious kind of caution, refuse to accept the resurrection of the dead, and put themselves forward, and say unto us, like that unbelieving disciple: *Except I shall see in His Hands the print of the nails, and put my hand into His Side, I will not believe.* What sufficient means of satisfying them would there have been, Christ being no longer on earth but having ascended into heaven? And would they not have been, at times, thought to be justified in thus speaking, when they appeared to be imitating therein the disciple of the Savior, and, considering it a noble thing not to believe off-hand, but rather to require more for their complete assurance, claimed for themselves the sight that was shown to the holy disciples? Christ, therefore, restrains men from such an inclination, and keeps them from falling. For being truly God, He knew well the malicious designs of the devil and his practice to deceive. And, therefore, He declares that blessed are they who believe without seeing, for they are surely worthy of admiration. And why? Because unquestioning belief is due to what lies before our eyes, for there is nothing at all to raise doubt in us. But if a man accept what he has not seen, and believe that to be true which the words of his instructor in mysteries have brought to his ears, then he honors with praiseworthy faith Him that is preached. Blessed, therefore, shall be the lot of every man that believeth through the voice of the holy Apostles, *which were eye-witnesses of Christ's actions, and ministers of the Word*, as Luke says. To them must we hearken if we are enamored of life eternal, and cherish in our hearts the desire to abide in the mansions above.

REFLECTION:

After the resurrection, our Lord showed Himself to His disciples in the upper room on Sunday (the first day of the week). His apparitions outside the upper room were obscured. He was readily recognizable whenever appeared in the first church on Sunday, but not recognized outside the church. It seems that the gospel of St. John, through the story of St. Thomas doubt is conveying this message: if we are not in the church on Sunday regularly, we can fall prey to doubts.

PRAYER:

When the morning hour approaches, O' Christ our God the True Light, let the senses and the thoughts of the light shine upon us, and let us not be covered by the darkness of pain that we may deeply praise You with David, saying: "My eyes are awake through the night, that I may meditate on Your word". Listen to our voices according to Your great mercy, and save us, O' Lord our God, through Your compassion. **Keneen Ke-a-ee Ke-is-touse E-onas ton E-onon. Amen.**

II. LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia Jesus Christ the king of glory is risen from the dead.

VOCABULARY:

The day of the Lord

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	Christ is risen from the dead
Liturgical:	The Day of the Lord - Sunday
Moral:	Witnessing for the resurrection
Spiritual:	Morning prayer as a commemoration of Christ resurrection

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Q. On which day did our Lord resurrected?

A. Sunday

Q. How was the stone in front of the door of the tomb moved?

A. An angel came down from heaven and rolled it away

Q. What did the women do after they left the tomb?

A. They went to tell the disciples that our Lord is risen

Q. What did the disciples think after the women told them about our Lord?

A. They did not believe them and thought they were making up stories

Q. What did our Lord say to the disciples when He came to them later that night?

A. Peace to you

Q. What did our Lord command the disciples to do before He ascended?

A. 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

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

Christ is Risen, Truly He is risen

Khristos Anesti, Alithos anesti

Khristos Aftonfo, khi omethmi aftonf

LESSON BODY

THE DISCIPLES ARE VISITED BY THE RISEN LORD

Then, the same day (Sunday) at evening, when the doors were shut where the disciples were together, hiding for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has

sent Me, I also send you.” And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

ST. THOMAS

St. Thomas, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples said to him, “We have seen the Lord.” So he said to them, “Unless I see in His hands the place of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.” And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and St. Thomas with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came, and stood in the midst, and said, “Peace to you!” Then He said to Thomas, “Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.” And Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus said to him, “Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

SUNDAY IS THE DAY OF THE LORD

In both times when our Lord Jesus appeared to His disciples, it was on Sunday. After our Lord ascended to heavens, the disciples will meet every Sunday to pray and take communion. Our Lord had made Sunday a very special day, a holy day. That is why we call Sunday **The Day of The Lord**

WE REMEMBER THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD WHEN WE PRAY IN THE MORNING

Every morning when we pray before we go to school we remember the resurrection of our Lord who rose very early in the morning before sunrise. We are very excited about the resurrection of our Lord and we are proud of Him who resurrected from the dead early Sunday morning.

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Q. When did our Lord rise from the dead?

A. *Sunday very early morning.*

Q. What did St. Thomas say to the disciples?

A. St. Thomas said he would not believe them unless he sees the Lord and put his hands in the places of the nails and the spear.

Q. When did St. Thomas believe that our Lord is risen from the dead?

A. On the next Sunday, eight days from the resurrection.

Q. What do we call Sunday?

A. The Day of the Lord

Q. What do we remember when we pray early morning?

A. The Resurrection of our Lord

VERSE TO REMEMBER

"Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed" John 20:29

Unit VI

Purpose: our Lord took our nature and accepted death in it to abolish the power of death in Him. His Resurrection is given to us through sharing in His flesh and His blood in the Holy Eucharist. He showed Himself to His disciples for them to become witnesses of His resurrection. He ascended to the heaven and sat on the right side of His Father as a first fruit of humanity and as a high priest for us in the heavenly Temple.

LESSON 31: OUR LORD APPEARS TO THE TWO DISCIPLES ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

I. SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Luke 24

¹³ Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And they talked together of all these things which had happened. ¹⁵ So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶ But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him. ¹⁷ And He said to them, "What kind of conversation *is* this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?" ¹⁸ Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?" ¹⁹ And He said to them, "What things?" So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. ²¹ But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. ²² Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. ²³ When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. ²⁴ And certain of those *who were* with us went to the tomb and found *it* just as the women had said; but Him they did not see." ²⁵ Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" ²⁷ And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. ²⁸ Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. ²⁹ But they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And He went in to stay with them. ³⁰ Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took

bread, blessed and broke *it*, and gave it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. ³² And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?" ³³ So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those *who were* with them gathered together, ³⁴ saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" ³⁵ And they told about the things *that had happened* on the road and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.

CREED:

He rose from the dead on the third day according to the scriptures.

CHURCH FATHERS

St Cyril of Alexandria Commentary on St Luke's Gospel:

24:13. *Behold two of them went that same day to a village.*

As two of the disciples walk to a village called Emmaus, they conversed with one another concerning Christ, regarding Him as no longer living, but mourning Him as dead. And as they conversed, Jesus Himself drew near and went with them, without being recognized by them, "for their eyes were held that they should not know Him. And He says to them, "What is it, I pray, of which you converse with one another as you walk thus mournfully? And one of them whose name was Cleopas answered and said, Are You only a stranger in Jerusalem," &c. And then they tell Him of the rumors of the resurrection brought by the women, and of that by Peter, but believe them not. For by saying, "And women also astonished us, who found not the body," they show that they had not been induced to believe the news, nor regard it as true tidings, but as a cause of trouble and astonishment: and Peter's testimony, who had seen only the linen bandages at the sepulcher, they did not consider as a trustworthy proof of the resurrection, because he did not say that he had seen Him, but inferred that He had risen from His being no longer there. And you must know that those two belonged to the number of the seventy, and that Cleopas' companion was Simon,----not Peter, nor he of Cana,----but another of the seventy.

24:27. *Having begun from Moses and from all the prophets.*

In this discourse the Lord shows that the law was necessary to make ready the way, and the ministry of the prophets to prepare men for faith in this marvelous act, that so when the resurrection really took place, those who were troubled at its greatness might remember what was said of old, and be induced to believe. He brings forward therefore Moses and the prophets, interpreting their hidden meaning, and making plain to the worthy what to the unworthy was obscure, so settling in them that ancient and hereditary faith taught them by the sacred books

which they possessed. For nothing which comes from God is without its use, but all and several of them have their appointed place and service. In their due place servants were sent before to make ready for the presence of the Master, by bringing in beforehand prophecy as the necessary preparative for faith, that, like some royal treasure, what had been foretold might in due season be brought forward from the concealment of its former obscurity, being unveiled and made plain by the clearness of the interpretation. Having thus then stirred up their minds by the writings of the law and the prophets, He afterwards more plainly sets Himself before them, when, having consented to their request to go with them to the village, He took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and divided it among them. " For their eyes, it says, "were held that they might not know Him," until namely the word had entered stirring up their heart to faith, and then, rendering what they had before heard and believed visible, He offered them the sight seasonably after the hearing. He does not, however, continue with them, for "He vanished, it says, out of their sight." For our Lord's relation to men after His resurrection does not continue the same as before, for they too have need of renovation, and a second life in Christ, that the renewed may associate with the renewed, and the incorruptible approach the incorruptible. For which reason, as John tells us, He did not permit Mary to touch Him, until He should go away and return again.

24:33. *They rose up that same hour.*

Cleopas, it says, and his companions, rose up that same hour, the same of course in which Jesus had vanished out of their sight, and returned to Jerusalem: but it does not say that they found the eleven gathered together that same hour, and told them what had happened concerning Jesus, but this took place on the fortieth day after His resurrection, on which day He was also taken up. This evangelist therefore has omitted the events which took place in the intervening time, and which Cleopas and his companions found the eleven discussing in private, and saying, that "the Lord is risen, and has been seen by Simon:" and of him he has not mentioned either where, or when, or how this took place. It was during these days that those events also took place which were done in Galilee, and which Matthew has recorded.

REFLECTION:

This chapter is important as it relates the resurrection of the Lord to the Eucharist and the church. First, it is an application of "if two or three are gathered in My name, I will be in their midst." Second, it shows our Lord's kind care as a shepherd, going after the straying sheep of His own flock. The two disciples were going away from Jerusalem and He needed all the disciples to be together. Later on, He is going to have to come another time and show Himself to Thomas who was not with them that night. Third, it almost represents a full liturgy. The journey on the road is the liturgy of the word, where our Lord opens our minds to understand the Scripture, leading our hearts to burn with yearning for Him, yet our eyes are still held back. Then He sits at the table, gives thanks, blesses, and breaks, which is the

liturgy of the faithful. The whole process is meant for us to perceive the Lord in His glory and to take Him back with us to Jerusalem, to tell everyone that He is risen indeed.

C. PRAYER:

"You came to the slaughter as a lamb, even to the cross.
You revealed the great extent of Your care for me.
You put to death my sin in Your tomb.
You raised my first fruits up to heaven"

Anaphora of St. Gregory the Theologian Liturgy

II. LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia Jesus Christ the king of glory is risen from the dead.

VOCABULARY:

Emmaus, Cleopas, glory, prophecies

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	Christ is risen from the dead
Liturgical:	Liturgy of the word before liturgy of the faithful
Moral:	Witnessing for the resurrection
Spiritual:	We stay in the presence of the Lord all day long

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Q. When did our Lord rise from the dead?

A. *Sunday very early morning.*

Q. What did St. Thomas say to the disciples?

A. *St. Thomas said he would not believe them unless he sees the Lord and put his hands in the places of the nails and the spear.*

Q. When did St. Thomas believe that our Lord is risen from the dead?

A. *On the next Sunday, eight days from the resurrection.*

Q. What do we call Sunday?

A. *The Day of the Lord*

Q. What do we remember when we pray early morning?

A. *The Resurrection of our Lord*

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed" John 20:29

LESSON BODY

THE TWO DISCIPLES

That Sunday on which our Lord was resurrected two of the disciples were traveling that same day to a village called **Emmaus**. They were walking and talking. They talked together of all that had happened. So it was, while they talked and reasoned that Jesus Himself drew near and started walking with them. But they could not recognize Him. Why they couldn't recognize Him? Because they did not expect to see Him alive. They needed Him to do something to help them see Him. What is that thing? You will find out at the end of the story.

THE CONVERSATION

And Jesus said to them, “What are you talking about with each other, and why are you sad?” Then one of them, whose name was **Cleopas**, answered and said to Him, “How could You not know what had happened last week? Nobody told You? And He said to them, “What had happened?” So they said to Him, “What happened to Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet. He spoke great things and did great miracles, and the chief priests and our rulers crucified Him. But we were hoping that He would be the savior of Israel. Not only that, but also today is the third day since these things had happened. Yes, and certain women from our group, who arrived at the tomb where He was buried early in the morning, astonished us. When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen angels who said He was alive. And certain of those *who were* with us went to the tomb and found *it* just as the women had said; but they did not see Him.” Then Jesus said to them, “You don’t get it because you have little faith. Didn’t you know what the prophets had said about the Christ, that He had to suffer all these things and by this He would receive His **glory?**” (**to be lifted up and honored**). And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He explained to them in all the books the **prophecies (words inspired by God about events in the future)** foretold about Himself. In the Old Testament there are a lot of prophecies about our Lord’s life, crucifixion, and resurrection. When they came closer to the village **Emmaus**, He told them that He needed to keep going and not stay in Emmaus. But they stopped Him from leaving, saying, “Stay with us, for it is almost evening, and the day is almost over.” And He went in to stay with them.

WE LEARN THE WORD OF GOD IN THE LITURGY

It is by listening to the readings and the sermon that we are prepared to the reception of communion in the Eucharist

THE MEAL

Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed it and broke *it*, and gave it to them. (Does this sound familiar?) Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished (disappeared suddenly) from their sight. And they said to one another, “Didn’t we feel our hearts burning (an expression when someone sees another person whom he loves very much after a long time) while He was talking with us and when He was telling us about the explanation of the **prophecies?**” So they rose up right away and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven disciples and those *who were* with them gathered together, saying, “The Lord is truly risen, and has appeared to Simon!” And the two disciples told the rest of the disciples about the things *that had happened* on the road to Emmaus and how they knew Him when He broke the bread.

WE RECIEVE OUR LORD IN THE COMMUNION

As the two disciples were able to know our Lord when He broke the bread with them, we too receive Him when we take receive His broken body in communion.

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Q. What is the name of the village they were going to?

A. *Emmaus*

Q. Do you know the name of one of the two disciples?

A. *Cleopas*

Q. What is the meaning of “glory”?

A. *to lift up and honor*

Q. What is a prophecy?

A. *it is words inspired by God about things that would happen in the future.*

Q. When did the two disciples know that it was our Lord? Is it before, or when, or after He broke the bread?

A. *When He broke the bread*

Q. How do we receive our Lord?

A. *When we take His body in communion*

VERSE TO REMEMBER

“Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road?” Luke 24:32

Unit VI

Purpose: our Lord took our nature and accepted death in it to abolish the power of death in Him. His Resurrection is given to us through sharing in His flesh and His blood in the Holy Eucharist. He showed Himself to His disciples for them to become witnesses of His resurrection. He ascended to the heaven and sat on the right side of His Father as a first fruit of humanity and as a high priest for us in the heavenly Temple.

LESSON 32: OUR LORD APPEARS AFTER HIS RESURRECTION III: BY THE SEA OF TIBERIUS

I. SERVANT PREPARATION:

A. Verse & References:

St. John:

¹ After these things Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberius, and in this way He showed Himself: ² Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together. ³ Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We are going with you also." They went out and immediately got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing. ⁴ But when the morning had now come, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. ⁵ Then Jesus said to them, "Children, have you any food?" They answered Him, "No." ⁶ And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast, and now they were not able to draw it in because of the multitude of fish. ⁷ Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment (for he had removed it), and plunged into the sea. ⁸ But the other disciples came in the little boat (for they were not far from land, but about two hundred cubits), dragging the net with fish. ⁹ Then, as soon as they had come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid on it, and bread. ¹⁰ Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish which you have just caught." ¹¹ Simon Peter went up and dragged the net to land, full of large fish, one hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not broken. ¹² Jesus said to them, "Come and eat breakfast." Yet none of the disciples dared ask Him, "Who are You?"—knowing that it was the Lord. ¹³ Jesus then came and took the bread and gave it to them, and likewise the fish. ¹⁴ This is now the third time Jesus showed Himself to His disciples after He was raised from the dead. ¹⁵ So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me

more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Feed My lambs." ¹⁶ He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep." ¹⁷ He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep. ¹⁸ Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish." ¹⁹ This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me." ²⁰ Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?" ²¹ Peter, seeing him, said to Jesus, "But Lord, what about this man?" ²² Jesus said to him, "If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me." ²³ Then this saying went out among the brethren that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, "If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you?" ²⁴ This is the disciple who testifies of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true. ²⁵ And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.

CREED:

He rose from the dead on the third day according to the scriptures.

CHURCH FATHERS

St. Cyril of Alexandria commentary on St. John's Gospel:

John 21:1-7

Our Lord Jesus Christ once more gladdens His disciples with the enjoyment of the sight of Himself, Whom they so greatly longed to see, and vouchsafes unto them a third visit, in addition to the other two, in order that He might confirm their minds, and render them unchangeably steadfast in faith towards Him. For how after they had seen Him not once, but now for the third time, could they fail to have their minds released from all wavering in the faith, and to become faithful instructors of the rest of mankind in the doctrines of the religion of Christ? Peter then goes forth with the others a fishing. For when he was bound on this errand they hurried with him, and doubtless our Savior Christ is here seen working for their good. For He once said to them, when He put upon them the yoke of their discipleship, and called them to the dignity of apostleship: *Come ye after Me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.* In order, then, that He might convince them by a palpable sign that every Word that He had spoken would surely come to pass, and that His promise would result in complete fulfillment, He draws a convincing proof from the trade at which they were at work. For

the blessed disciples were practicing their art, and were fishing, but yet had they caught nothing, though they had toiled all the night. And when it was already early morning, and the dawn was beginning to break, and the sun's rays to appear, *Jesus stood on the beach*. And they knew not that it was Jesus. And when He questioned them whether they had any fish fit for the table in their nets, they said they had taken nothing at all. Then He bids them cast down the *net on the right side of the boat*. And they, although all the night they had spent their toil in vain, replied: "At Thy word we will cast down the net." And when this was done, the weight of the fish that were caught overpowered the strength of the fishermen who were hauling it up.

Such is the narrative of the inspired Evangelist. As we have just observed, the Savior, by the actual performance of a palpable miracle, satisfied the holy disciples that they were destined to be, as He had said, fishers of men. Come, then, let us convert, so far as in us lies, that which was fulfilled in type into the truth of which it is symbolical; and let us bear witness to the truth of the Savior's Words, and, according to our ability, unfolding the meaning of everything that took place, let us put before those who may light on these pages what may serve in some measure, I think, to start a spiritual train of thought. For, *give instruction to a wise man, and, he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning*. I think, then, that the fact of the disciples fishing all the night, and taking nothing, but spending their labor in vain, signifies that no one, as we shall find, or very few, would be wholly won over by the teaching of the first instructors of old, and caught into their net to do God's pleasure in all things. We may regard what is very small in amount as equivalent to nothing, especially when it is taken out of a great multitude. And, surely, we must regard the number of mankind scattered throughout the whole world as exceedingly great. What hindrance, then, or obstacle was there in the way which rendered the labor of the pioneers of the faith fruitless? And why did their preaching fail to bear fruit? There was still night and darkness, and a kind of mental mist and devilish deceit brooding over the eyes of the mind, not suffering men to perceive the true light of God. For there was *no man that doeth good*, as said the Psalmist; *yea, not one; but all had gone astray and become abominable*. And though the Israelites had been, in a manner, caught in the net by Moses, yet were they as though they had not been caught at all, and were devoted to the worship of types and shadows, and had no instruction in the law that brings to perfection. For that we shall find that the worship of types was abominable, and displeasing to God, it is easy to see, from His rejection of bloody sacrifices, and every kind of earthly and physical offering. *To what purpose*, He says, *bring ye to Me incense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? Your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto Me*.

This we say not wishing to disparage the first commandment given of old, nor with the intent to accuse the Law, but rather desiring to suggest to our hearers that as God the Lord of all have regard only to the beauty of the Gospel life, even those who were caught in the net by the Law, and brought to the barren worship of shadows and types, were but on a par with those who had not been caught at all until the *time of reformation dawned*, Christ saying clearly, when He became Man, *I am the Truth*. And if it be necessary to add any further words, I shall not shrink from doing so, if it be for our profit. They who were called by Moses to learn the Law, spurned the Law given unto them, and, as it were, opened their mouth wide and gaped upon the holy ordinance, and

made the *precepts of men* their code of instruction, and relapsed into such stubbornness and perversity of heart that even the word of the holy prophets lost its power. Therefore, also, they cried: *Lord, who have believed our report?* Jeremiah also exclaims: *Woe is me, my mother, that you had borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth: I have not helped any man, nor had any man helped me. My strength have failed me because of them that curse me.* Surely, then, one is constrained to admit that the disobedient and unruly Israelites were on a par with those who had not been caught at all, when they trampled underfoot even the Law that Moses had laid down. And it needs no demonstration to show that the great multitude of the Gentiles was still un-captured, and remained altogether outside the net. Darkness, then, and devilish night was in their hearts, driving out the light of true knowledge of God. Therefore they toiled, so to say, during the whole night, and still had their spiritual net barren of fish before Christ's coming; but when early morning came, that is, when the mist of the devil was dispersed, and the true light dawned, that is, Christ, and when Christ inquired of the toilers, Have you anything within your nets which may serve as food for God, Who thirsts, as it were, for the salvation of us all (for the Scripture called the conversion of the Samaritans His food), and when they gave His question the plain answer that they had nothing, then Christ bade them cast down the net again *on the right side of the boat*. For the blessed Moses also let down the line of instruction, that is, by the letter of the Law; but this was fishing on the left side, the commandment of Christ unto us being on the right. For incomparably greater, then, and far exceeding in honor and glory the commandments of the Law, is the teaching of Christ; for the reality greatly surpasses the type, and the Master the servant, and the grace of the Spirit, which justifies, surpasses the letter, which condemns. Christ's teaching, therefore, is placed on the right, the right hand signifying to us its superiority over the Law and the prophets.

The inspired disciples, then, without hesitation, obeyed the bidding of our Savior, and let down the net. And the meaning of this is, that they did not seize for themselves the grace of apostleship, but at His bidding went forth to capture the souls of men. *Go ye, He said, and make disciples of all the nations.* The disciples themselves say, that at the Word of Christ they let down the net. For they fish for men only by the Savior's Words and commandments in the Gospels. And great was the, multitude of fish within the net, so that the disciples, were no longer able to haul it up. For they who have been caught, and believed, are innumerable, and the marvel thereof seems in truth to surpass, and be out of all proportion to the strength of the holy Apostles. For it is the working of Christ, Who gather by His own power the multitude of the saved into the Church on earth, as into the net of the Apostles.

John 21:7-14

Again, in this passage, the writer of this book calls himself the beloved disciple----and he would seem to have been thus well beloved on account of his great discernment and purity of mind, and the keenness of his mental vision, and a disposition which enabled him readily to grasp the truth. And, in fact, he seized the meaning of the sign before the rest, and perceived Christ's Presence, and told the rest, entertaining not a shadow of doubt, but crying out to them with a very confident voice, *It is the Lord*. The inspired Peter leapt into the sea, thinking that to go by the ship would cause delay, for he was always fervent in zeal, and easily stirred up to confidence and love of Christ.

The rest followed his lead, with the ship, dragging the net. Then they see *a fire of coals*, for the Savior had kindled a fire miraculously, and put a fish upon it that He had caught by His ineffable power; and this too He had done of design. For it was not the hand of the holy Apostles, or the preaching of these spiritual fishermen among men, but the power of the Savior that started the work. For He first caught one as the Firstfruits of those who were to come (not that we mean one precisely, for by one is signified a small number), then afterwards the disciples caught the multitude in their nets, being enabled by His Divine bidding to take something of what they sought. Peter then hauls up the net; by which it was to be understood, that the labor of the holy Apostles would not be without its effect. For they put the mass of captured fish before Him Who had commanded them to be caught; and the quantity of the fish is indicated by the number 153. The number 100, to the best of my judgment, signifies the complement of the nations, for the number 100 is a very perfect number, being compounded of 10 times 10; and for this reason our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, in one place, speaks in the parable of having 100 *sheep* belonging to Him, signifying the complete sum of rational creatures, and in another place declares that the best ground will bring forth *a hundredfold*, meaning thereby the perfect fertility of the righteous soul. The number 50, on the other hand, betokens the elect remnant of the Israelites, saved by grace; for 50 is half 100, and falls short of the perfect number in amount. And by the three, reference is made to the Holy and Consubstantial Trinity, the number alone showing this; for to the glory and ceaseless praise of the Trinity the life of those who have been taken captive through faith is consecrated, and implies connection with the Godhead. For God is in all those who believe in Him, and keeps nigh unto Him, by means of sanctification, those who have been won over by the teaching of the Gospel. And when the net had been drawn up, our Lord said again to the holy disciples: *Come and break your fast*; thereby teaching them, that after their pain and tribulation in gathering in those who were called and saved, they should sit down with Him, as the Savior Himself said, and their table would be spread with food such as no tongue can name, the spiritual, that is, and Divine, and that passes man's understanding. Christ also wishes to imply that which is said by the Psalmist: *Thou shalt eat the fruit of the labors of thy hands*. They did not take food for themselves, and eat thereof, but Christ gave to them of it; that we might learn, as in a type, that on that day Christ will Himself provide us with Divine blessings, and apportion unto us those things which may be profitable unto us as our Lord.

John 21:15, 16, 17

Peter started to reach Jesus before the rest, disdaining, as it appears, to go by boat, because of the incomparable fervor and admirable zeal of his love towards Christ. Therefore He comes first to land, and draws up *the net*; for he was always an impressionable man, easily excited to enthusiasm both in speech and action. Therefore, also, he first made confession of faith when the Savior put to them the inquiry in *the parts of Caesarea Philippi*, saying: *Who do men say that I the Son of Man am?* And of the other disciples *some* said *Elijah*, and *others* *Jeremiah*, or *one of the prophets*. But when Christ put the further question to them: *But Who say ye that I am?* Peter took the lead, and becoming spokesman for the rest, hastened to reply: *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God*. Moreover, when the band of soldiers came, together with the officers of the Jews, to take Jesus away to the rulers, the rest *all left Him and fled*, but Peter struck off Malkhos' ear with a sword. For he thought

it right by every means in his power to defend his Master, though the attack that he made was in fact altogether displeasing to Him. As, therefore, he came more impetuously than the rest, Christ puts to him the question whether he loved Him more than they, and repeated it three times; and Peter answers in the affirmative, and confesses his love for Him, saying that Christ Himself was a witness to his state of mind. And, after each confession, he heard Christ telling him in different words to take thought of His sheep, as He calls mankind in the parable.

And I think (for I say that we ought to search out the hidden meaning that is here implied) that these words were not written without a purpose, but the saying is pregnant with meaning, and the sense of the passage contains something more than meets the eye. May not someone reasonably ask, Why is it that Christ only asks Simon, though the other disciples were present? And what is the meaning of the words, *Feed My lambs*, and the like? We reply, that the inspired Peter had indeed already been elected, together with the other disciples, to be an Apostle of God (for our Lord Jesus Christ Himself *named* them *Apostles*, according to the Scripture), but, when the events connected with the plot of the Jews against Him came to pass, his fall came betwixt; for the inspired Peter was seized with uncontrollable fear, and thrice denied the Lord. Christ succors His erring disciple, and elicits by divers questions his thrice-repeated confession, counterbalancing, as it were, his error thereby, and making his recovery as signal as his fall. For a transgression which was verbal, and only in mere words supplied ground of accusation against him, could surely be wiped out in the same fashion as it was committed. He requires him to say whether he loved Him more than the rest. For in truth, as he had enjoyed a greater measure of forgiveness, and received from a more bountiful Hand the remission of his transgression, surely he would be likely to feel greater love than the rest, and requite his Benefactor with the extremity of affection. For although all the holy disciples alike betook themselves to flight, the inhumanity of the Jews inspiring them with a terror that they could not overcome, and the ferocity of the soldiers threatening them with cruel death when they came to take Jesus, still Peter's transgression by his thrice-repeated denial was special and peculiar to him.

Therefore, as he had received a greater measure of forgiveness than the rest, he is asked to tell Christ whether he loved Him more; for, as the Savior Himself said, he to whom most is forgiven will also love much. Herein, also, is a type given to the Churches, that they ought thrice to ask for a confession of Christ from those who have chosen to love Him by coming to Him in Holy Baptism. And, by dwelling on this passage, instructors in religion may arrive at the knowledge that they cannot please *the Chief Shepherd*, that is Christ, unless they take thought for the health of the sheep of His fold, and their continuance in well-being. Such was the inspired Paul, who shared the infirmities of his weak brethren, and called those who through him believed, and chose to gain repute by the glory of their deeds, the boast, and *joy, and crown* of his apostleship. For he knew that this was the visible fruit of love for Christ. And this, if he reason well and justly, any one may perceive. For if He died for us, surely He must esteem the salvation and life of us all as deserving of all care. And if they who sin *against the brethren, and wound their conscience when it is weak*, in truth *sin against Christ*; surely it is true to say, that they are doing the Lord Himself service who take, as it were, by the hand the mind of those who have been admitted to the faith, and who are

expected to be called to perfection therein, and are eager to establish them firmly in the faith, by every help that they can offer. Therefore, by his thrice-repeated confession the thrice-repeated denial of the blessed Peter was done away, and by the saying of our Lord, "Feed my lambs," we must understand a renewal as it were of the apostleship, already given unto him, washing away the disgrace of his fall that came betwixt, and obliterating his faint-heartedness, that arose from human infirmity.

John 21:18, 19

With great kindness and tenderness our Lord Jesus Christ testifies to the fervor of the love which His disciple bore unto Him, and the high honor of his piety and endurance, tried to the uttermost. For He tells him clearly what would be the issue of his apostleship, and what would be the end of his life. For He foretold unto him, that one would take him to a place whither he would not go; that is, in which his persecutors, or those who condemned him to the penalty of death, had fixed the cross. He says, that the place of his crucifixion would be a place whither Peter would not go. For no one of the Saints suffers death of his own free choice. But though death be bitter, and though it come upon them sorely against their will, yet do they who yearn for the glory that God gives disdain earthly life. Therefore Christ foretold, that the blessed Peter would be taken to a place to die in, sore displeasing and hateful unto him. But he would never have attained to so glorious a death, nor have been crucified for Christ, had he not followed His injunction to take charge of the sheep of His fold, and, having the power of the love of Christ firmly rooted in his heart, called to obedience those who have been ensnared into error by the wiles of the devil. For they who ventured on this crime, and slew the blessed Peter, had no other accusation to charge him withal, save only his zeal in Christ's service. We may see then hereby, that our Lord Jesus Christ well, and of necessity, foretold Peter's end, that by the doom that he was destined to suffer he might in a manner put the seal of truth upon the words he spoke unto Him: *Yea, Lord; You know that I love You*. For that he met his death at all on account of preaching the Gospel was surely a plain and incontrovertible proof of affection, and showed that he was in no way lacking in perfect love towards Christ. Christ, then, adds to what He had said, the words "Follow Me," which bear the signification they so commonly have of following Him as a disciple, and also hinting darkly, as I think, at something else; or meaning, Tread in the track of the perils through which I have passed, and walk in the same path, by deed and word succoring the souls of those who are called, and hesitate not to encounter death itself upon the cross, which, Christ says, will be your lot when you reach old age; not suffering Peter to be alarmed before the time, but deferring for a long season the approach of the king of terrors.

John 21:20-23

The inspired Evangelist points to himself obscurely, but still sufficiently to indicate who is meant. For he it was who was the beloved disciple, and who leaned upon Christ's Breast at the last Supper, and asked who it was that should betray Him. Peter, then, observing him, longed for information, and sought to know in what perils he would be involved in the time to come, and in what way his life would end. But the question seemed unseemly, and it appeared to savor rather of a meddlesome and inquisitive spirit, that, after having learnt what was to happen unto himself, he should seek to know the future fate of others. For this cause, then, I think the Lord makes no direct

reply to his question or inquiry, but, diverting the aim of the questioner, does not say that John will not die, but, *If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?* That is to say, Thou hast heard, O Peter, the things concerning yourself, what need is there for you to ask questions about others, and to seek to fathom out of season the knowledge of the Divine decrees. For if he never die at all, He says, what consolation will this be to your heart? The man who is wise and prudent, then, if he is doomed to die, will not trouble himself as to whether another will be saved alive or not; for it will be enough for him to suffer his own doom, and he will receive no comfort at all from the misfortune or good cheer of another. The passage is fraught with some such meaning as this. Peter's speech here seems to imply that the blessed Peter anxiously desired to know what was destined to be John's fate, as he would have considered it a consolation in his own sufferings if John were surely fated to, die by torture, either of the same or of some other kind. And do not be amazed at this, but rather take the following thought into consideration. It is common to us, however profitless it be, to like at times not to be seen to be the only ones who are suffering, or who are destined to undergo some dreadful fate, but to prefer to hear that others have either suffered it already or are expected to suffer it in the future.

John21:24

I think no wise man will doubt that the Lord would not have loved John if he had not been specially remarkable for virtue, and apt and perfectly equipped for every good work. For God can never be found to be inclined by any irrational leanings to those unworthy of His love, for such affections are more worthy of men. And He that was wholly proof against every assault and inroad of passion, and trod firmly in the path of every virtue, nay rather, was Virtue itself in all its forms, most | 707 assuredly would act in this, too, with judgment, and have His inclination free from all reproach----I mean, the inclination which led Him to deem him to whom this boon was due worthy of His love. After this admirable preface, then, and after having said that he was beloved, he modestly and with great humility says that he testified of these things; well and admirably inviting his hearers, as a necessary consequence, to assent to the things which he had written, and of which he had testified; for the preacher of truth cannot lie. Therefore, also, he says: *We know that His witness is true.* Dangerous, then, and awful is it assuredly, to lie at all; for man knows not how to bridle his tongue, and the Truth cannot love him that sins against truth.

John21:25

Very great, then, says the Apostle, will the number of the miracles that God hath wrought, and altogether without number will the list of His deeds be seen to be, and out of many thousands have these that are recorded been taken, as not being inadequate to profit to the uttermost those who read them. And let no one who is of a teachable spirit and loves instruction, S. John implies, blame him that wrote this book because he has not recorded the rest. For if *the things that* He did *had been written* every one, without any omission, then would the immeasurable number of the books have filled the world. We maintain that, even as it is, the power of the Word has been displayed more than abundantly. For it is open to everyone to observe, that a thousand miracles were performed by the power of our Savior. The preachers of the Gospels, however,, have recorded the more remarkable of them, in all probability, and such that their hearers could best be confirmed by

them in incorruptible faith, and receive instruction in morality and doctrine; so that, conspicuous for the orthodoxy of their faith, and glorified by manifold works that make for righteousness, they might meet at the very gates of the city above, and being joined unto the Church of the firstborn in the faith, might at length attain unto the Kingdom of Heaven in Christ; through Whom and with Whom be glory to God the Father, with the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. Amen.

REFLECTION:

This appearance of the resurrected Lord also relates to the Church. The apostles are fishing in the sea (the world) for *big fish* (fishers of men). Their work is not fruitful without the commission of the Lord (in the creed, one of the four titles of the Church is Apostolic, which means that the church is founded on the commissioned apostles). They are invited to a meal prepared by the Lord (the Eucharist) in it they offer what they caught. This was foretold by Isaiah (*Then they shall bring all your brethren for an offering to the LORD out of all nations, on horses and in chariots and in litters, on mules and on camels, to My holy mountain Jerusalem,*" says the LORD, *"as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the LORD. And I will also take some of them for priests and Levites,"* says the LORD' Isaiah 66:20-22. In the offertory part of the Eucharist we first offer ourselves, then we offer everything else. The Lord Himself serves them, and in the feeding of the five thousand men and their families, they in turn served the multitude as in "feed my sheep". Our Lord healed the wounds of St. Peter and refreshes St. Peter calling. There is a prophecy about St. Peter crucifixion: "*when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish.*" The images of this story relates to the ones in Ezekiel 47: 8-10 and Isaiah 66:20

A suggested interpretation of the number 153 is made of two square numbers (perfect numbers) which is 144 +9. The 144 is the number of the perfect revelation of the Church (12). The 9 is the perfect revelation of God 3 (the Trinity). The fact that the two numbers are combined says that the perfect revelation of God is within the perfect revelation of the Church.

C. PRAYER:

"O Christ our God, the chief priest of everlasting goodness, the King of ages who is immortal and eternal, the Word of God who is above all.

You are He who descended into Hades and ended death and freed the captives, gave the people honor, uplifted His saints with Him and offered them as an offering to His Father.

By tasting death on our behalf, You saved those who are alive and gave repose to those who have died.

We also who were sitting in darkness, You graced us with the light of Your resurrection through Your pure incarnation.

Let Your true knowledgeable light shine upon us so that we may shine by Your life-giving image"

Resurrection fraction prayer to the Son

II. LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia Jesus Christ the king of glory is risen from the dead.

VOCABULARY:

Net

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	Christ is risen from the dead
Liturgical:	Confession of Christ is made in threes
Moral:	Witnessing for the resurrection
Spiritual:	We do all things for the love of Christ

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Q. What is the name of the village they were going to?

A. *Emmaus*

Q. Do you know the name of one of the two disciples?

A. *Cleopas*

Q. What is the meaning of "glory"?

A. to lift up and honor

Q. What is a prophecy?

A. it is words inspired by God about things that would happen in the future.

Q. When did the two disciples know that it was our Lord? Is it before, or when, or after He broke the bread?

A. When He broke the bread

Q. How do we receive our Lord?

A. When we take His body in communion

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER

“Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road?” Luke 24:32

LESSON BODY

THE DISCIPLES WENT FISHING

One evening, St. Peter said to the other disciples: “I am going fishing.” Five other disciples said to him: “we are going with you also.” They were St. John and his brother St. James also Nathaniel and two other disciples. They took the boat and went fishing. Our Lord had made them very close friends. They tried to catch fish with their nets all night long, but they caught nothing.

OUR LORD HELPS THE DISCIPLES

When the morning came, our Lord Jesus stood on the shore, but they did not know it was Him. Our Lord shouted: “Children, do you have any food?” They answered: “no.” He said: “cast the net to the right side of the ship and you will catch fish”. They cast the net and now they were not able to draw it because there were way too many fish in the net.

ST. PETER OVERBOARD

Now, St. John knew it was the Lord and he said to St. Peter: “it is the Lord.” St. Peter put on his coat and threw himself in the sea (because he took it off when he was busy fishing). St. Peter swam to the shore to where our Lord was standing.

THE BREAKFAST

The other disciples came in the little boat, because they were not far away from the shore. When they came to where our Lord was, they saw fire of coals and fish being cooked on it and also bread. Our Lord said: "bring some of the fish that you have just caught." St. Peter went and hauled the net from the boat to the shore. The net was filled with big fish. There were 153 big fish in that net. Then our Lord said: "come and eat breakfast." Our Lord served them and they sat and ate with Him.

SIMON DO YOU LOVE ME?

When they had finished eating, our Lord asked St. Peter: "'Simon (St. Peter original name before our Lord gave him the name Peter), son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these (the rest of the disciples)?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Feed My lambs (people)." He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Take care of My sheep (people)." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was sad because our Lord said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" St. Peter remembered how he denied our Lord three times before the servants. And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep. Then our Lord said: "follow me." Both St. Peter and St. John followed our Lord.

WE CONFESS OUR FAITH THREE TIMES

our Lord asked Peter three times "do you love me". We in the Baptism and the liturgy repeat "Amen" three times (Amen Amen Amen, Your death O Lord...), because our Lord taught us to do so.

WE DO ALL THINGS FOR THE LOVE OF OUR LORD

Everything we do at home, in school, in the church or anywhere else we do because we love our Lord Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Q. How many disciples went fishing?

A. *six*

Q. How long did they try to fish?

A. *The whole night*

Q. What did our Lord tell them to do to catch fish?

A. *To cast the net on the right side of the boat.*

Q. How many fish they caught?

A. *153*

Q. What was the breakfast made of?

A. *Barbequed fish and bread*

Q. How many times did our Lord ask St. Peter “do you love me?”

A. *Three times*

VERSE TO REMEMBER

“Lord You know all things; You know that I love You” John 21:17

Unit VI

Purpose: our Lord took our nature and accepted death in it to abolish the power of death in Him. His Resurrection is given to us through sharing in His flesh and His blood in the Holy Eucharist. He showed Himself to His disciples for them to become witnesses of His resurrection. He ascended to the heaven and sat on the right side of His Father as a first fruit of humanity and as a high priest for us in the heavenly Temple.

LESSON 33: OUR LORD ASCENDED TO THE HEAVENS

I. SERVANT PREPARATION:

Verse & References:

Mark 16:19-20

So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with *them* and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.

Luke 20:50-53

And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. Amen.

Acts 1:9-26

Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven." Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey. And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James *the son* of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas *the son* of James. 14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers. And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples (altogether the

number of names was about a hundred and twenty), and said, 16"Men *and* brethren, this Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus; 17for he was numbered with us and obtained a part in this ministry." 18(Now this man purchased a field with the wages of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his entrails gushed out. 19And it became known to all those dwelling in Jerusalem; so that field is called in their own language, Akel Dama, that is, Field of Blood.) "For it is written in the Book of Psalms: "Let his dwelling place be desolate, And let no one live in it'; and, "Let another take his office.'" "Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection." And they proposed two: Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. 24And they prayed and said, "You, O Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen 25to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place." 26And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

1 Cor 15:3-8

For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, 5and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.

CREED:

He rose from the dead on the third day according to the scriptures. He ascended to the heavens and sat on the right hand of the Father

CHURCH FATHERS

St Cyril of Alexandria commentary on St. Luke's Gospel:

The Savior promises the disciples the descent of the Holy Spirit, which God had announced of old by Joel, and power from above, that they might be strong and invincible, and without all fear preach to men everywhere the divine mystery.

He says to them now that they had received the Spirit after the resurrection, "Receive you the Holy Spirit," and adds, "But tarry you at Jerusalem, and wait for the promise of the Father, which you have heard of Me. For John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit;" in water no longer, for that they had received, but with the Holy Spirit: He does not add water to water, but completes that which was deficient by adding what was wanting to it.

Having blessed them, and gone a little in advance, He was carried up to heaven, that He might share the Father's throne even with the flesh that was united to Him. And this new pathway the Word made for us when He appeared in human form: and hereafter in due time He will come again in the glory of His Father with the angels, and will take us up to be with Him.

Let us glorify therefore Him Who being God the Word became man for our sakes: Who suffered willingly in the flesh, and arose from the dead, and abolished corruption: Who was taken up, and hereafter shall come with great glory to judge the living and the dead, and to give to everyone according to his deeds: by Whom and with Whom to God the Father be glory and power with the Spirit forever and ever. Amen.

St. John Chrysostom commentary on the Book of Acts Chapter 1:

But just as when we see a child crying, and pertinacious wishing to get something from us that is not expedient for him, we hide the thing, and show him our empty hands, and say, "See, we have it not:" the like has Christ here done with the Apostles. But as the child, even when we show a him [our empty hands], persists with his crying, conscious he has been deceived, and then we leave him, and depart, saying, "Such an one calls me:" and we give him something else instead, in order to divert him from his desire, telling him it is a much liner thing than the other, and then hasten away; in like manner Christ acted. The disciples asked to have something, and He said He had it not. And on the first occasion he frightened them. Then again they asked to have it now: He said He had it not; and He did not frighten them now, but after having shown [the empty hands], He has done this, and gives them a plausible reason: "Which the Father," He says, "hath put in his own power." What? Thou not know the things of the Father! You know Him, and not what belongs to Him! And yet You have said, "No one knows the Father but the Son" (Luke 10:25); and, "The Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Corinthians 2:10); and Thou not know this! But they feared to ask Him again, lest they should hear Him say, "Are ye also without understanding?" (Matthew 15:26.) For they feared Him now much more than before. "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." As in the former instance He had not answered their question (for it is the part of a teacher to teach not what the disciple chooses, but what is expedient for him to learn), so in this, He tells them beforehand, for this reason, what they ought to know, that they may not be troubled. In truth, they were yet weak. But to inspire them with confidence, He raised up their souls, and concealed what was grievous. Since he was about to leave them very shortly, therefore in this discourse He says nothing painful. But how? He extols as great the things which would be painful: all but saying, "'Fear not': for ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and

in Samaria." For since he had said, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not" (Matthew 10:5), what there He left unsaid, He here adds "And to the uttermost part of the earth;" and having spoken this, which was more fearful than all the rest, then that they may not again question Him, He held His peace. "And having this said, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight" (v. 9). do you See that they did preach and fulfill the Gospel? For great was the gift He had bestowed on them. In the very place, He says, where ye are afraid, that is, in Jerusalem, there preach ye first, and afterwards unto the uttermost part of the earth. Then for assurance of what He had said, "While they beheld, He was taken up." Not "while they beheld" did He rise from the dead, but "while they beheld, He was taken up." Inasmuch, however, as the sight of their eyes even here was not all-sufficient; for in the Resurrection they saw the end, but not the beginning, and in the Ascension they saw the beginning, but not the end: because in the former it had been superfluous to have seen the beginning, the Lord Himself Who spoke these things being present, and the sepulcher showing clearly that He is not there; but in the latter, they needed to be informed of the sequel by word of others: inasmuch then as their eyes do not suffice to show them the height above, nor to inform them whether He is actually gone up into heaven, or only seemingly into heaven, see then what follows. That it was Jesus Himself they knew from the fact that He had been conversing with them (for had they seen only from a distance, they could not have recognized Him by sight), but that He is taken up into Heaven the Angels themselves inform them. Observe how it is ordered, that not all is done by the Spirit, but the eyes also do their part. But why did "a cloud receive Him?" This too was a sure sign that He went up to Heaven. Not fire, as in the case of Elijah, nor fiery chariot but "a cloud received Him;" which was a symbol of Heaven, as the Prophet says; "Who makes the clouds His chariot" (Psalm 104:3); it is of the Father Himself that this is said. Therefore he says, "on a cloud;" in the symbol, he would say, of the Divine power, for no other Power is seen to appear on a cloud. For hear again what another Prophet says: "The Lord sits upon a light cloud" (Isaiah 19:1). For it was while they were listening with great attention to what He was saying, and this in answer to a very interesting question, and with their minds fully aroused and quite awake, that this thing took place. Also on the mount [Sinai] the cloud was because of Him: since Moses also entered into the darkness, but the cloud there was not because of Moses.

And He did not merely say, "I go," lest they should again grieve, but He said, "I send the Spirit" (John 16:5, 7); and that He was going away into heaven they saw with their eyes. O what a sight they were granted! "And while they looked steadfastly," it is said, "toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven" — they used the expression "This" demonstratively, saying, "this Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall thus" — demonstratively, "in this way" — "come in like manner as ye have seen Him going into heaven." (v. 10, 11.) Again, the outward appearance is cheering ["in white apparel"]. They were Angels, in the form of men. And they say, "Ye men of Galilee:" they showed themselves to be trusted by the disciples, by saying, "Ye men of Galilee."

For this was the meaning: else, what needed they to be told of their country, who knew it well enough? By their appearance also they attracted their regard, and showed that they were from heaven. But wherefore does not Christ Himself tell them these things, instead of the Angels? He had

beforehand told them all things; [“What if ye shall see the Son of Man] going up where He was before?” (John 6:62). Moreover the Angels did not say, ‘whom you have seen taken up,’ but, “going into heaven:” ascension is the word, not assumption; the expression “taken up,” belongs to the flesh. For the same reason they say, “He which is taken up from you shall thus come,” not, “shall be sent,” but, “shall come. He that ascended, the same is he also that descended” (Ephesians 4:10). So again the expression, “a cloud received Him:” for He Himself mounted upon the cloud. Of the expressions, some are adapted to the conceptions of the disciples, some agreeable with the Divine Majesty. Now, as they behold, their conceptions are elevated: He has given them no slight hint of the nature of His second coming. For this, “Shall *thus* come,” means, with the body; which thing they desired to hear; and, that he shall come again to judgment “thus” upon a cloud. “And, behold, two men stood by them.” Why is it said, “men?” Because they had fashioned themselves completely as such, that the beholders might not be overpowered. “Which also said:” their words moreover were calculated for soothing: “Why stand ye gazing up into heaven?” They would not let them any longer wait there for Him. Here again, these tell what is greater, and leave the less unsaid. That “He will thus come,” they say, and that “ye must look for Him from heaven.” For the rest, they called them off from that spectacle to their saying, that they might not, because they could not see Him, imagine that He was not ascended, but even while they are conversing, would be present ere they were aware. For if they said on a former occasion, “Where do you go?” (John 13:36) much more would they have said it now. “Wilt Thou at this time,” say they, “restore the kingdom to Israel?” (Recapitulation). They so well knew his mildness, that after His Passion also they ask Him, “Wilt thou restore?” And yet He had before said to them, “Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars, but the end is not yet,” nor shall Jerusalem be taken. But now they ask Him about the kingdom, not about the end. And besides, He does not speak at great length with them after the Resurrection. They address then this question, as thinking that they themselves would be in high honor, if this should come to pass. But He (for as touching this restoration, that it was not to be, He did not openly declare; for what needed they to learn this? hence they do not again ask, “What is the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?” for they are afraid to say that: but, “Wilt Thou restore the kingdom to Israel?” for they thought there was such a kingdom), but He, I say, both in parables had shown that the time was not near, and here where they asked, and He answered thereto, “Ye shall receive power,” says He, “when the Holy Ghost is come upon you. Is come upon you,” not, “is sent,” [to show the Spirit’s coequal Majesty. How then dare you, O opponent of the Spirit, to call Him a creature?]. “And ye shall be witnesses to Me.” He hinted at the Ascension. [“And when he had spoken these things.] Which they had heard before, and He now reminds them of. [“He was taken up.”] Already it has been shown, that He went up into heaven. [“And a cloud, etc.”] “Clouds and darkness are under His feet,” (Psalm 18:9; 97:2) says the Scripture: for this is declared by the expression, “And a cloud received Him:” the Lord of heaven, it means. For as a king is shown by the royal chariot, so was the royal chariot sent for Him. [“Behold, two men, etc.”] That they may vent no sorrowful exclamations, and that it might not be with them as it was with Elisha, (2 Kings 2:12) who, when his master was taken up, rent his mantle. And what say they? “This Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall thus come.” And, “Behold, two men stood by them.” (Matthew 18:16.) With good reason: for “in the mouth of two witnesses shall every word be established” (Deuteronomy 17:6): and these utter the same things. And it is said, that they were “in white

apparel." In the same manner as they had already seen an Angel at the sepulcher, who had even told them their own thoughts; so here also an Angel is the preacher of His Ascension; although indeed the Prophets had frequently foretold it, as well as the Resurrection. Everywhere it is Angels as at the Nativity, "for that which is conceived in her," said one, "is by the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 1:20): and again to Mary, "Fear not, Mary." (Luke 1:30.) And at the Resurrection: "He is not here; He is risen, and goes before you." (ib. 24:6.) "Come, and see!" (Matthew 28:6.) And at the Second Coming. For that they may not be utterly in amaze, therefore it is added, "Shall thus come." (ib. 25:31.) They recover their breath a little; if indeed He shall come again, if also thus come, and not be unapproachable! And that expression also, that it is "from them" He is taken up, is not idly added. And of the Resurrection indeed Christ Himself bears witness (because of all things this is, next to the Nativity, nay even above the Nativity, the most wonderful: His raising Himself to life again): for, "Destroy," He says, "this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up." (John 2:19.) "Shall thus come," say they. If any therefore desires to see Christ; if any grieves that he has not seen Him: having this heard, let him show forth an admirable life, and certainly he shall see Him, and shall not be disappointed. For Christ will come with greater glory, though "thus," in this manner, with a body; and much more wondrous will it be, to see Him descending from heaven. But for what He will come, they do not add. ["Shall thus come," etc.] This is a confirmation of the Resurrection; for if he was taken up with a body, much rather must He have risen again with a body. Where are those who disbelieve the Resurrection? Who are they, I pray? Are they Gentiles, or Christians? for I am ignorant. But no, I know well: they are Gentiles, who also disbelieve the work of Creation. For the two denials go together: the denial that God creates anything from nothing, and the denial that He raises up what has been buried. But then, being ashamed to be thought such as "know not the power of God" (Matthew 22:29), that we may not impute this to them, they allege: We do not say it with this meaning, but because there is no need of the body. Truly it may be seasonably said, "The fool will speak foolishness." (Isaiah 32:6.) Are you not ashamed not to grant, that God can create from nothing? If he creates from matter already existing, wherein does He differ from men? But whence, you demand, are evils? Though you should not know whence, ought you for that to introduce another evil in the knowledge of evils? Hereupon two absurdities follow. For if you do not grant, that from things which are not, God made the things which are, much more shall you be ignorant whence are evils: and then, again, you introduce another evil, the affirming that Evil is uncreated. Consider now what a thing it is, when you wish to find the source of evils, to be both ignorant of it, and to add another to it. Search after the origin of evils, and do not blaspheme God. And how do I blaspheme? says he. When you make out that evils have a power equal to God's; a power uncreated. For, observe what Paul says; "For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made." (Romans 1:20.) But the devil would have both to be of matter, that there may be nothing left from which we may come to the knowledge of God. For tell me, whether is harder: to take that which is by nature evil (if indeed there be ought such; for I speak upon your principles, since there is no such thing as evil by nature), and make it either good, or even coefficient of good? or, to make of nothing? Whether is easier (I speak of quality); to induce the non-existent quality; or to take the existing quality, and change it into its contrary? where there is no house, to make the house; or where it is utterly destroyed, to make it identically exist again? Why, as this is impossible, so is that: to make a thing into its

opposite. Tell me, whether is harder; to make a perfume, or to make filth have the effect of perfume? Say, whether of these is easier (since we subject God to our reasoning's: nay, not we, but ye); to form eyes, or to make a blind man to see continuing blind, and yet more sharp sighted, than one who does see? To make blindness into sight, and deafness into hearing? To me the other seems easier. Say then do you grant God that which is harder, and not grant the easier? But souls also they affirm to be of His substance. Do you see what a number of impieties and absurdities are here! In the first place, wishing to show that evils are from God, they bring in another thing more impious than this, that they are equal with Him in majesty, and God prior in existence to none of them, assigning this great prerogative even to them! In the next place, they affirm evil to be indestructible: for if that which is uncreated can be destroyed, ye see the blasphemy! So that it comes to this, either that nothing is of God if not these; or that these are God! Thirdly, what I have before spoken of, in this point they defeat themselves, and prepare against themselves fresh indignation. Fourthly, they affirm unordered matter to possess such inherent power. Fifthly, that evil is the cause of the goodness of God, and that without this the Good had not been good. Sixthly, they bar against us the ways of attaining unto the knowledge of God. Seventhly, they bring God down into men, yea plants and logs. For if our soul be of the substance of God, but the process of its transmigration into new bodies brings it at last into cucumbers, and melons, and onions, why then the substance of God will pass into cucumbers! And if we say, that the Holy Ghost fashioned the Temple For our Lord's body] in the Virgin, they laugh us to scorn: and if, that He dwelt in that spiritual Temple, again they laugh; while they themselves are not ashamed to bring down God's substance into cucumbers, and melons, and flies, and caterpillars, and asses, thus excogitating a new fashion of idolatry: for let it not be as the Egyptians have it, "The onion is God;" but let it be, "God in the onion"! Why dost thou shrink from the notion of God's entering into a body? 'It is shocking,' says he. Why then this is much more shocking. But, a forsooth, it is not shocking — how should it be? — this same thing which is so, if it be into us! 'But thy notion is indeed shocking.' Do ye see the filthiness of their impiety? — But why do they not wish the body to be raised? And why do they say the body is evil? By what then, tell me, dost thou know God? by what hast thou the knowledge of existing things? The philosopher too: by means of what is he a philosopher, if the body does nothing towards it? Deaden the senses, and then learn something of the things one needs to know! What would be more foolish than a soul, if from the first it had the senses deadened? If the deadening of but a single part, I mean of the brain, becomes a marring of it altogether; if all the rest should be deadened, what would it be good for? Show me a soul without a body. Do you not hear physicians say, The presence of disease sadly enfeebles the soul? How long will you put off hanging yourselves? Is the body material? tell me. "To be sure, it is." Then you ought to hate it. Why do you feed, why cherish it? You ought to get quit of this prison. But besides: "God cannot overcome matter, unless he implicate himself with it: for he cannot issue orders to it (feebleness!) until he close with it, and take his stand (say you) through the whole of it!" And a king indeed does all by commanding; but God, not by commanding the evil! In short, if it were un-participant of all good, it could not subsist at all. For Evil cannot subsist, unless it lay hold upon somewhat of the accidents of Virtue: so that if it had been heretofore all unmixed with virtue, it would have perished long ago: for such is the condition of evils. Let there be a profligate man, let him put upon himself no restraint whatever, will he live ten days? Let there be a robber, and devoid

of all conscience in his dealings with every one, let him be such even to his fellow-robbers, will he be able to live? Let there be a thief, void of all shame, who knows not what blushing is, but steals openly in public.

It is not in the nature of evils to subsist, unless they get some small share at least in good. So that hereupon, according to these men, God gave them their subsistence. Let there be a city of wicked men; will it stand? But let them be wicked, not only with regard to the good, but towards each other.

Why, it is impossible such a city should stand. Truly, "professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." (Romans 1:22.) If bodily substance be evil, then all things visible exist idly, and in vain, both water and earth, and sun, and air; for air is also body, though not solid. It is in point then to say, "The wicked have told me foolish things." (Psalm 119:85.) But let not us endure them, let us block up our ears against them. For there is, yea, there is, a resurrection of bodies. This the sepulcher which is at Jerusalem declares, this the pillar to which He was bound, when He was scourged. For, "We did eat and drink with Him," it is said.

Let us then believe in the Resurrection, and do things worthy of it, that we may attain to the good things which are to come, through Christ Jesus our Lord, with Whom to the Father, and the Holy Ghost together, be power, honor, now and forever, world Without end. Amen.

REFLECTION:

The Ascension of our Lord is the enthronement of the church on the right hand of the Father *"and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."* Ephesians 2:6,7. It is in the ascension, that the church is recognized in the heavenly places as the bride of the Son and the heiress of God

C. PRAYER:

"O our Master and Lord, the Almighty God, the Father of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ, who descended into Hades through the cross to bring back our father Adam and his sons to Paradise.

He buried us with Him, and by His death He abolished the roots of our death.

On the third day He rose again from the dead and appeared to Mary Magdalene. He spoke to her and said, 'Go and tell My brothers that they must leave for Galilee. They will see Me there.'

The archangel descended from Heaven and rolled away the stone from the tomb's entrance, and proclaimed the good news to the women carrying the spices saying, 'Christ is risen from the dead.'

He crushed death through His death, and granted eternal life to those who were lying in graves.

He breathed on His saintly disciples and pure apostles and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit, for those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven, and those whose sins you retain, they are retained.'

And after forty days he ascended to Heaven and sat by the right hand of His gracious Father, and sent unto us the comforter, the Spirit of truth, as cloven tongues of fire."

Resurrection fraction prayer to the Father

II. LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia Christ is risen from the dead and ascended to the heavens.

VOCABULARY:

Ascend (go up), Betray, Witness,

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	Christ is risen from the dead and ascended to the heavens and sat on the right hand of the Father
Liturgical:	The choosing of a Patriarch
Moral:	Witnessing for the resurrection
Spiritual:	We do all things for the love of Christ

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Q. How many disciples went fishing?

A. *six*

Q. How long did they try to fish?

A. *The whole night*

Q. What did our Lord tell them to do to catch fish?

A. *To cast the net on the right side of the boat.*

Q. How many fish they caught?

A. 153

Q. What was the breakfast made of?

A. *Barbequed fish and bread*

Q. How many times did our Lord ask St. Peter “do you love me?”

A. *Three times*

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER

“Lord You know all things; You know that I love You” John 21:17

LESSON BODY

THE ASCENSION

After all these things, our Lord led the disciples to the town called Bethany. And He lifted up His hands and blessed them. And it happened that while He blessed them, He was parted from them and carried up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God the Father. And while they were looking very hard toward heaven as He went up, all of a sudden, two men stood by them in white clothes. These men said to them, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come again in this same way.” And they worshiped our Lord, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy.

REPLACING JUDAS

When they arrived back in Jerusalem, they went together to the upper room where they stayed together. The disciples who followed our Lord spent most of their time together, and did not like to leave each other. They had become like a very close family. St. Peter said to all of them, “It is time for us to choose another disciple to take the place of Judas, who **betrayed** our Lord.” (**telling secrets to an enemy**) There needed to be 12 disciples, and now they were only 11 because Judas was not with them any longer. After Judas had betrayed our Lord, he felt very sad but he did not trust that our Lord is good enough to forgive him and he did not believe that our Lord will rise again, nor did he believe that our Lord is the Son of God. He was very desperate, so he went and killed himself. The disciples needed to choose one person who had been with them from the beginning of our Lord’s service so that he would be able to **witness (one who had seen something very important, and comes to tell us about**

it) about the things He had done. They suggested two people: Joseph called Barsabas, and Matthias. And they prayed together and said, "You, O Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen to take part in this ministry and apostleship which Judas fell from because of sin." They wrote the two names on two pieces of paper, and the youngest one of them chose one of the names without looking. And Matthias was the one chosen, so he became one of the 12 apostles.

THE CHURCH USES THE LOT TO FIND GOD'S WILL IN CHOOSING A PATRIARCH

When the church chose a new Patriarch for the church, the final step is to make a lot among three persons. When a young deacon picks the name from a jar that has the names in three pieces of folded paper. They do the picking after praying a liturgy.

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Q. What does betray mean?

A. *To tell secrets to an enemy*

Q. What is a witness?

A. *One who had seen something very important, and comes to tell us about it*

Q. What did the two angels say to the disciples after our Lord ascended into Heaven?

A. *Jesus will come again in the same way that you saw Him go up into heaven*

Q. What did the disciples need to do when they came back to Jerusalem?

A. *Choose another person to take the place of Judas*

Q. What was needed for that person to be able to become one of the 12 apostles?

A. *To have been with them from the beginning so that he would be able to witness about the work of salvation Jesus had done*

Q. What was the name of the man chosen?

A. *Matthias*

Q. Does the church today do the same thing? and when?

A. *Yes. The church does use the lot to know the will of God in choosing a Patriarch.*

VERSE TO REMEMBER

“I am with you always, even to the end of the age” Matthew 28:20

UNIT REVIEW LESSON 34

God Reveal Himself to Us

UNIT VII: OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST SENT US THE HOLY SPIRIT FROM THE FATHER (6 LESSONS)

Purpose: In This unit, the revelation of God is completed with the revelation of the Holy Spirit in the Church. We continue the gospel story, to cover the beginning of the “Age of the Church.” It is the work of the Holy Spirit in the “New Body of Christ.” In all the lessons of this unit, the teacher needs to present the Holy Spirit acting in the disciples according to what our Lord had previously said to them: *“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 thing that I said to you”* John 14:26. *“When the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.”* John 15:26-27. How that the Spirit will strengthens the disciples and encourage them to “witness” for Christ and fill them with joy and peace.

Lesson 35: Our Lord sends the Holy Spirit on His disciples on Pentecost, The Birthday of the Church

Lesson 36: The Holy Spirit continued the work of our Lord in the Church I: Healing the lame man

Lesson 37: The Holy Spirit continued the work of our Lord in the Church II: Deacon Philip’s mission

Lesson 38: The Holy Spirit continued the work of our Lord in the Church III: Saul of Tarsus

Lesson 39: The Holy Spirit continued the work of our Lord in the Church IV: St. Mark

Lesson 40: Unit review Lesson

Unit VII

Purpose: In This unit, the revelation of God is completed with the revelation of the Holy Spirit in the Church. We continue the gospel story, to cover the beginning of the “Age of the Church.” It is the work of the Holy Spirit in the “New Body of Christ.” In all the lessons of this unit, the teacher needs to present the Holy Spirit acting in the disciples according to what our Lord had previously said to them: *“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 thing that I said to you”* John 14:26. *“When the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.”* John 15:26-27. How that the Spirit will strengthens the disciples and encourage them to “witness” for Christ and fill them with joy and peace.

LESSON 35: OUR LORD SENT THE HOLY SPIRIT TO THE CHURCH ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

ACTS 2

“When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and *one* sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. 5 And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. 6 And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. 7 Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, “Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? 8 And how *is it that* we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? 9 Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretans and Arabs--we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God.” 12 So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “Whatever could this mean?” 13 Others mocking said, “They are full of new wine.” 14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to

them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. 15For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is *only* the third hour of the day. 16But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 17 " And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. 18 And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy. 19 I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. 21 And it shall come to pass *That* whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.' 22 "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know—23 Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; 24 whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. 25For David says concerning Him: " I foresaw the LORD always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. 26 Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope. 27 For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. 28 You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.' 29"Men *and* brethren, let *me* speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, 31he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. 32 This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. 33Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. 34"For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: "The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, 35 till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'" 36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." 37Now when they heard *this*, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?" 38Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." 40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." 41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added *to them*. 42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. 44 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in

common, 45and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. 46So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”

CREED:

Yes we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father. Who is worshiped and glorified with the Father and the Son. Who spoke through the prophets.

CHURCH FATHERS:

St John Chrysostom Commentary on the book of Acts Homily 4

ACTS 2:1, 2

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven.”

Do you perceive the type? What is this Pentecost? The time when the sickle was to be put to the harvest, and the ingathering was made. See now the reality, when the time was come to put in the sickle of the word: for here, as the sickle, keen-edged, came the Spirit down. For hear the words of Christ: “Lift up your eyes,” He said, “and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest.” (John 4:35.) And again, “The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few.” (Matthew 9:38.) But as the first-fruits of this harvest, He himself took [our nature], and bore it up on high. Himself first put in the sickle. Therefore also He calls the Word the Seed. “When,” it says, “the day of Pentecost was fully come” (Luke 8:5, 11): that is, when at the Pentecost, while about it, in short. For it was essential that the present events likewise should take place during the feast, that those who had witnessed the crucifixion of Christ, might also behold these. “And suddenly there came a sound from heaven.” (v. 2.) Why did this not come to pass without sensible tokens? For this reason. If even when the fact was such, men said, “They are full of new wine,” what would they not have said, had it been otherwise? And it is not merely, “there came a sound,” but, “from heaven.” And the suddenness also startled them, and brought all together to the spot. “As of a rushing mighty wind:” this betokens the exceeding intensity of the Spirit. “And it filled all the house:” insomuch that those present both believed, and in this manner were shown to be worthy. Nor is this all; but what is more awful still, “And there appeared unto them,” it says, “cloven tongues like as of fire.” (v. 3.) Observe how it is always, “like as;” and rightly: that you may have no gross sensible notions of the Spirit. Also, “as it were of a blast:” therefore it was not a wind. “Like as of fire.” For when the Spirit was to be made known to John, then it came upon the head of Christ as in the form of a dove: but now, when a whole multitude was to be converted, it is “like as of fire. And it sat upon each of them.” This means, that it remained and rested upon them.” For the sitting is significant of setlines

and continuance. Was it upon the twelve that it came? Not so; but upon the hundred and twenty. For Peter would not have quoted to no purpose the testimony of the prophet, saying, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, says the Lord God, I will pour out of My spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams." (Joel 2:28.) "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." (v. 4.) For, that the effect may not be to frighten only, therefore is it both "with the Holy Ghost, and with fire. And began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Matthew 3:11.) They receive no other sign, but this first; for it was new to them, and there was no need of any other sign. "And it sat upon each of them," says the writer. Observe now, how there is no longer any occasion for that person to grieve, who was not elected as was Matthias, "And they were all filled," he says; not merely received the grace of the Spirit, but "were filled. And began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." It would not have been said, *All*, the Apostles also being there present, unless the rest also were partakers. For were it not so having above made mention of the Apostles distinctively and by name, he would not now have put them all in one with the rest. For if, where it was only to be mentioned that they were present, he makes mention of the Apostles apart, much more would he have done so in the case here supposed. Observe, how when one is *continuing in prayer*, when one is in charity, then it is that the Spirit draws near. It put them in mind also of another vision: for as fire did He appear also in the bush. "As the Spirit gave them utterance, (Exodus 2:2.) For the things spoken by them were profound utterances. "And," it says, "there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men." (v. 5.) The fact of their dwelling there was a sign of piety: that being of so many nations they should have left country, and home, and relations, and be abiding there. For, it says, "There were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded. (v. 6.) Since the event had taken place in a house, of course they came together from without. The multitude *was confounded*: was all in commotion. They marveled; "Because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were amazed," it says, "and marveled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans?" (v. 7-13.) They immediately turned their eyes towards the Apostles. "And how" (it follows) "hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene:" mark how they run from east to west: "and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. And, they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What does this mean? Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine." O the excessive folly! O the excessive malignity! Why it was not even the season for that; for it was Pentecost. For this was what made it worse: that when those were confessing — men that were Jews, that were Romans, that were proselytes, yea perhaps that had crucified Him — yet these, after so great signs, say, "They are full of new wine!" But let us look over what has been said from the beginning. (Recapitulation.) "And when the day of Pentecost," etc. "It filled," he says, "the house." That wind a very pool of water. This prefigured the abundance, as the fire did the intensity. This nowhere happened in the case of the Prophets: for to un-inebriated souls such accesses are not attended with much disturbance; but "when they have well drunken," then indeed it is as here, but with the

Prophets it is otherwise. (Ezekiel 3:3.) The roll of a book is given him, and Ezekiel ate what he was about to utter. "And it became in his mouth," is said, "as honey for sweetness." (And again the hand of God touches the tongue of another Prophet; but here it is the Holy Ghost Himself: (Jeremiah 1:9) so equal is He in honor with the Father and the Son.) And again, on the other hand, Ezekiel calls it "Lamentations, and mourning, and woe." (Ezekiel 2:10.) To them it might well be in the form of a book; for they still needed similitude's. Those had to deal with only one nation, and with their own people; but these with the whole world, and with men whom they never knew. Also Elisha receives the grace through the medium of a mantle (2 Kings 13); another by oil, as David (2 Samuel 16:13); and Moses by fire, as we read of him at the bush. (Exodus 3:2.) But in the present case it is not so; for the fire itself sat upon them. (But wherefore did the fire not appear so as to fill the house? Because they would have been terrified.) But the story shows, that it is the same here as there. For you are not to stop at this, that "there appeared unto them cloven tongues" but note that they were "of fire." Such a fire as this is able to kindle infinite fuel. Also, it is well said, *Cloven*, for they were from one root; that you may learn, that it was an operation sent from the Comforter. But observe how those men also were first shown to be worthy, and then received the Spirit as worthy. Thus, for instance, David: what he did among the sheepfolds, the same he did after his victory and trophy; that it might be shown how simple and absolute was his faith. Again, see Moses despising royalty, and forsaking all, and after forty years taking the lead of the people (Exodus 2:11); and Samuel occupied there in the temple (1 Samuel 3:3); Elisha leaving all (1 Kings 19:21); Ezekiel again, made manifest by what happened thereafter. In this manner, you see, did these also leave all that they had. They learnt also what human infirmity is, by what they suffered; they learnt that it was not in vain they had done these good works. (1 Samuel 9: and 11:6.) Even Saul, having first obtained witness that he was good, thereafter received the Spirit. But in the same manner as here did none of them receive. Thus Moses was the greatest of the Prophets, yet he, when others were to receive the Spirit, himself suffered diminution. But here it is not so; but just as fire kindles as many flames as it will, so here the largeness of the Spirit was shown, in that each one received a fountain of the Spirit; as indeed He Himself had foretold, that those who believe in Him, should have "a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (John 4:14.) And good reason that it should be so. For they did not go forth to argue with Pharaoh, but to wrestle with the devil. But the wonder is this, that when sent they made no objections; they said not, they were "weak in voice, and of a slow tongue." (Exodus 4:10.) For Moses had taught them better. They said not, they were too young. (Jeremiah 1:6.) Jeremiah had made them wise. And yet they had heard of many fearful things, and much greater than were theirs of old time; but they feared to object. — And because they were angels of light, and ministers of things above ["Suddenly there came from heaven," etc.] To them of old, no one "from heaven" appears, while they as yet follow after a vocation on earth; but now that Man has gone up on high, the Spirit also descends mightily from on high. "As it were a rushing mighty wind;" making it manifest by this, that nothing shall be able to withstand them, but they shall blow away all adversaries like a heap of dust. "And it filled all the house." The house also was a symbol of the world. "And it sat upon each of them," [etc.] and "the multitude came together, and were confounded." Observe their piety; they pronounce no hasty judgment, but are perplexed: whereas those reckless ones pronounce at once, saying, "These men are full of new wine." Now it was in order that they might have it in their power, in compliance with the Law, to

appear thrice in the year in the Temple, that they dwelt there, these “devout men from all nations.” Observe here, the writer has no intention of flattering them. For he does not say that they pronounced any opinion: but what? “Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded.” And well they might be; for they supposed the matter was now coming to an issue against them, on account of the outrage committed against Christ. Conscience also agitated their souls, the very blood being yet upon their hands, and everything alarmed them. “Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans?” For indeed this was confessed. [“And how hear we”] so much did the sound alarm them. [“Every man in our own tongue,” etc.] for it found the greater part of the world assembled there. [“Parthians and Medes,” etc.] This nerved the Apostles: for, what it was to speak in the Parthian tongue, they knew not but now learnt from what those said. Here is mention made of nations that were hostile to them, Cretans, Arabians, Egyptians, Persians: and that they would conquer them all was here made manifest. But as to their being in those countries, they were there in captivity, many of them: or else, the doctrines of the Law had become disseminated [among] the Gentiles in those countries. So then the testimony comes from all quarters: from citizens, from foreigners, from proselytes. “We do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.” For it was not only that they spoke (in their tongues), but the things they spoke were wonderful. Well then might they be in doubt: for never had the like occurred. Observe the ingenuousness of these men. They were amazed and were in doubt, saying, “What does this mean?” But others mocking said, ‘These men are full of new wine’” (John 8:48), and therefore mocked. O the effrontery! And what wonder is it? Since even of the Lord Himself, when casting out devils, they said that He had a devil! For so it is; wherever impudent assurance exists, it has but one object in view, to speak at all hazards, it cares not what; not that the man should say something real and relevant to the matter of discourse, but that he should speak no matter what. [“They are full of new wine.”] Quite a thing of course (is no, it?), a that men in the midst of such dangers, and dreading the worst, and in such despondency, have the courage to utter such things! And observe: since this was unlikely; because they Would not have been drinking much [at that early hour], they ascribe the whole matter to the quality (of the wine), and say, “They are full” of it. “But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them.” In a former place you saw his provident forethought, here you see his manly courage. For if they were astonished and amazed, was it not as wonderful that he should be able in the midst of such a multitude to find language, he, an unlettered and ignorant man? If a man is troubled when he speaks among friends, much more might he be troubled among enemies and bloodthirsty men. That they are not drunken, he shows immediately by his very voice, that they are not beside themselves, as the soothsayers: and this too, that they were not constrained by some compulsory force. What is meant by, “with the eleven?” They expressed themselves through one common voice, and he was the mouth of all. The eleven stood by as witnesses to what he said. “He lifted up his voice,” it is said. That is, he spoke with great confidence, that they might perceive the grace of the Spirit. He who had not endured the questioning of a poor girl, now in the midst of the people, all breathing murder, discourses with such confidence, that this very thing becomes an unquestionable proof of the Resurrection: in the midst of men who could deride and make a joke of such things as these! What effrontery, think you, must go to that! what impiety, what shamelessness!

For wherever the Holy Spirit is present, He makes' men of gold out of men of clay. Look, I pray you, at Peter now examine well that timid one, and devoid of understanding; as Christ said, "Are ye also yet without understanding?" (Matthew 15:16) the man, who after that marvelous confession was called "Satan." (Ib. 16:23.) Consider also the unanimity of the Apostles. They themselves ceded to him the office of speaking; for it was not necessary that all should speak. "And he lifted up his voice," and spoke out to them with great boldness. Such a thing it is to be a spiritual man I Only let us also bring ourselves into a state meet for the grace from above, and all becomes easy. For as a man of fire falling into the midst of straw would take no harm, but do it to others: not he could take any harm, but they, in assailing him, destroy themselves. For the case here was just as if one carrying hay should attack one bearing fire: even so did the apostles encounter these their adversaries with great boldness. For what did it harm them, though they were so great a multitude? Did they not spend all their rage? did they not turn the distress upon themselves? Of all mankind were ever any so possessed with both rage and terror, as those became possessed? Were they not in an agony, and were dismayed, and trembled? For hear what they say, "Do ye wish to bring this man's blood upon us?" (Acts 5:28.) Did they (the Apostles) not fight against poverty and hunger: against ignominy and infamy (for they were accounted deceivers): did they not fight. against ridicule and wrath and mockery? — for in their case the contraries met: some laughed at them, others punished them; — were they not made a mark for the wrathful passions, and for the merriment, of whole cities? exposed to factions and conspiracies: to fire, and sword, and wild beasts? Did not war beset them from every quarter, in ten thousand forms? And were they any more affected in their minds by all these things, than they would have been at seeing them in a dream or in a picture? With bare body they took the field against all the armed, though against them all men had arbitrary power [against them, were]: terrors of rulers, force of arms, in cities and strong walls: without experience, without skill of the tongue, and in the condition of quite ordinary men, matched against juggling conjurers, against impostors, against the whole throng of sophists, of rhetoricians, of philosophers grown moldy in the Academy and the walks of the traveling, against all these they fought the battle out. And the man whose occupation had been about lakes, so mastered them, as if it cost him not so much ado as even a contest with dumb fishes: for just as if the opponents he had to outwit were indeed more mute than fishes, so easily did he get the better of them! And Plato, that talked a deal of nonsense in his day, is silent now, while this man utters his voice everywhere; not among his own countrymen alone, but also among Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and in India, and in every part of the earth, and to the extremities of the world. Where now is Greece, with her big pretentions? Where the name of Athens? Where the ravings of the philosophers? He of Galilee, he of Bethsaida, he, the uncouth rustic, has overcome them all. Are you not ashamed — confess it — at the very name of the country of him who has defeated you? But if you hear his own name too, and learn that he was called Cephas, much more will you hide your faces. This, this has undone you quite; because you esteem this a reproach, and account glibness of tongue a praise, and want of glibness a disgrace. You have not followed the road you ought to have chosen, but leaving the royal road, so easy, so smooth, you have trodden one rough, and steep, and laborious.

And therefore you have not attained unto the kingdom of heaven. Why then, it is asked, did not Christ exercise His influence upon Plato, and upon Pythagoras? Because the mind of Peter was

much more philosophical than their minds. They were in truth children shifted about on all sides by vain glory'; but this man was a philosopher, one apt to receive grace. If you laugh at these words, it is no wonder; for those aforetime laughed, and said, the men were full of new wine. But afterwards, when they suffered those bitter Calamities, exceeding all others in misery; when they saw their city falling in ruins, and the fire blazing, and the walls hurled to the ground, and those manifold frantic horrors, which no one can find words to express, they did not laugh then. And you will laugh then, if you have the mind to laugh, when the time of hell is close at hand, when the fire is kindled for your souls. But why do I speak of the future? Shall I show you. what Peter is, and what Plato, the philosopher? Let us for the present examine their respective habits, let us see what were the pursuits of each. The one wasted his time about a set of idle and useless dogmas, and philosophical, as he says, that we may learn that the soul of our philosopher becomes a fly. Most truly said, a fly! not indeed changed into one, burn up a fly must have entered upon possession of the soul which dwelt in Plato; for what but a fly is worthy of such ideas! The man was full of irony, and of jealous feelings against everyone else, as if he made it his ambition to introduce nothing useful, either out of his own head or other people's. Thus he adopted the metempsychosis from another, and from himself produced the Republic, in which he enacted those laws full of gross turpitude. Let the women, he says, be in common, and let the virgins go naked, and let them wrestle before the eyes of their lovers, and let there also be common fathers, and let the children begotten be common. But with us, not nature makes common fathers, but the philosophy of Peter does this; as for that other, it made away with all paternity. For Plato's system only tended to make the real father next to unknown, while the false one was introduced. It plunged the soul into a kind of intoxication and filthy wallowing. Let all, he says, have intercourse with the women without fear. The reason why I do not examine the maxims of poets, is, that I may not be charged with ripping up fables. And yet I am speaking of fables much more ridiculous than even those. Where have the poets devised aught so portentous as this? But (not to enter into the discussion of his other maxims), what say you to these — when he equips the females with arms, and helmets, and greaves, and says that the human race has no occasion to differ from the canine! Since dogs, he says, the female and the male, do just the same things in common, so let the women do the same works as the men, and let all be turned upside down. For the devil has always endeavored by their means to show that our race is not more honorable than that of brutes; and, in fact, some have gone to such a pitch of absurdity, as to affirm that the irrational creatures are endued with reason. And see in how many various ways he has run riot in the minds of those men! For whereas their leading men affirmed that our soul passes into flies, and dogs, and brute creatures; those who came after them, being ashamed of this, fell into another kind of turpitude, and invested the brute creatures with all rational science, and made out that the creatures — which were called into existence on our account — are in all respects more honorable than we! They even attribute to them foreknowledge and piety. The crow, they say, knows God, and the raven likewise, and they possess gifts of prophecy, and foretell the future; there is justice among them, and polity, and laws. Perhaps you do not credit the things I am telling you. And well may you not, nurtured as you have been with sound doctrine; since also, if a man were fed with this fare, he would never believe that there exists a human being who finds pleasure in eating dung. The dog also among them is jealous, according to Plato. But when we tell them that these things are fables, and are full of absurdity,

‘You do not enter into the higher meaning,’ say they. No, we do not enter into this your surpassing nonsense, and may we never do so: for it requires (of course!) an excessively profound mind, to inform me, what all this impiety and confusion would be at. Are you talking, senseless men, in the language of crows, as the children are wont (in play)? For you are in very deed children, even as they. But Peter never thought of saying any of these things: he uttered a voice, like a great light shining out in the dark, a voice which scattered the mist and darkness of the whole world. Again, his deportment, how gentle it was, how considerate; how far above all vainglory; how he looked towards heaven without all self-elation, and this, even when raising up the dead! But if it had come to be in the power of any one of those senseless people (in mere fantasy of course) to do anything like it, would he not straightway have looked for an altar and a temple to be reared to him, and have wanted to be equal with the gods? since in fact when no such sign is forthcoming, they are forever indulging such fantastic conceits. And what, pray you, is that Minerva of theirs, and Apollo, and Juno? They are different kinds of demons among them. And there is a king of theirs, who thinks fit to die for the mere purpose of being accounted equal with the gods. But not so the men here: no, just the contrary. Hear how they speak on the occasion of the lame man’s cure. “Ye men of Israel, why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made him to walk? (ch. 3:12.) We also are men of like passions with you. (Ibid. 14:14.) But with those, great is the self-elation, great the bragging; all for the sake of men’s honors, nothing for the pure love of truth and virtue. For where an action is done for glory, all is worthless. For though a man possess all, yet if he have not the mastery over this (lust), he forfeits all claim to true philosophy, he is in bondage to the more tyrannical and shameful passion. Contempt of glory; this it is that is sufficient to teach all that is good, and to banish from the soul every pernicious passion. I exhort you therefore to use the most strenuous endeavors to pluck out this passion by the very roots; by no other means can you have good esteem with God, and draw down upon you the benevolent regard of that Eye which never sleep. Wherefore, let us use all earnestness to obtain the enjoyment of that heavenly influence, and thus both escape the trial of present evils, and attain unto the future blessings, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, power, honor, now and ever, and to all ages. Amen.

REFLECTION:

The events of Acts 2, are very rich and detailed. The feast of Pentecost (fifty days) is the feast of harvest of wheat and barley. It is calculated by counting fifty days from the feast of the first fruit. In the feast of first fruit, the community brings the first sheaf of grain to the Temple to be offered on the Altar. They go to the fields to bring it. While on the feast of Pentecost they bring baked bread from their homes to offer to the Temple. The first fruit refers to the resurrected Christ. The resurrection happened in the garden. The Risen Lord should be taken up to heaven and offered to the Father. The offering of Pentecost refers to the descent of the Holy Spirit. It happens in a house, bringing a whole church to God. This fulfills the image of the grain of wheat that our Lord gave in John 12:24

PRAYER:

O' Heavenly King, the Spirit of truth, the comforter, who is everywhere and fills everybody. You are the treasure of goodness and giver of life, we ask You to graciously come and dwell within us, purify us from iniquity and save our souls. **Thok-sa-patriKe ey-you Ke agiyou ep-nevmaty.**

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG

Asomento Kerio..

He ascended to the heavens..

VOCABULARY:

Paraclete, Pentecost , filled with The Holy Spirit, Praise, Prophets

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	Yes we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life
Liturgical:	Epiclesis
Moral:	Loving Christ and the Father by the Holy Spirit
Spiritual:	Being filled with the Holy Spirit

INTRODUCTION:

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What happened on Holy Palm Sunday?

A. Our Lord entered Jerusalem and cleansed the temple

Q. What happened on Holy Thursday of Pascha?

A. Our Lord made the first Eucharist

Q. What happened on Holy Friday of Pascha?

A. Our Lord was crucified and was buried

Q. What happened on the day of ascension?

A. OUR lord ascended to the heavens

VERSE TO REMEMBER

Christ is risen. He is truly risen

Khristos anisti. Alithos anisti

Pi EKhristos aftonf. Khen Omethmi aftonf

CONNECTION POINT:

For the last few weeks we have been learning about the appearances of our Lord to His disciples after His resurrection. Before His ascension to the heavens, He told His disciples to wait for the Holy Spirit.

LESSON BODY:

THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

There is a very important feast for the Jews. It came once every year. It is called the feast of **Pentecost (the feast of harvest for the Jews)**. It came ten days after the ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ, which means fifty days after His resurrection. The disciples of our Lord were all together in the house of St. Mark's family. It was nine O'clock in the morning when something very strange and exciting happened. Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, like when you hear the wind outside your house during a storm (play recording now and keep it playing until you put out all the candles). But the strange thing about this special wind was that it came *inside* the house and filled the whole house, it did not stay outside. Then there appeared to the disciples what looked like flames of fire. (Light candles here) The flames started to move slowly

(pass out candles here), each flame moved to sit on top of the head of one of them. And they were all **filled with the Holy Spirit (the Holy Spirit filled their heart, mind and body)** because the flame went inside each one of their hearts (put out the candles now). They began to be very happy and excited and started to **praise God (to sing to God because we love Him and because God Gives us things)**.

PEOPLE GATHERED

What was very strange is that they began speaking different languages. Each of them spoke different language when they tried to **praise** God. The disciples were very excited, and full of joy and were talking without fear.

Because of this feast of Pentecost that we talked about at the beginning, many people came to Jerusalem from all surrounding countries, Egypt, Libya, Algeria, Rome and many other countries to celebrate together in Jerusalem. Each one came to Jerusalem and would speak in his own language, from his country. Like in America when you hear Egyptians speaking Arabic, Chinese people speaking Chinese, Indians speaking Indian... When they heard the sound of the wind, it was a very loud sound, they came to the street where St. Mark's family house was. The people came together, and were confused, because everyone heard the apostles speak in his own language from his country. Then they were all surprised and said to each other, "Aren't the disciples all from Galilee? Shouldn't they be speaking the Jewish language? How come they are speaking in our different languages? We hear them speaking in our own language the wonderful works of God." So they were all amazed and confused, saying to one another, "what does all this mean?" Other people said, "They are drunk." They said this because they could not understand the languages.

ST. PETER'S SERMON

When St. Peter heard what they said, he spoke to them and told them that the disciples are not drunk because it is nine O'clock in the morning, and no one drinks wine in the morning. I am going to explain to all of you what is going on. The great wind, the flames and the different languages that you hear the disciples of our Lord speaking is because God the Father had sent upon us the Holy Spirit. And you know how the **prophets (servants of old who were inspired by the spirit of God to tell what will happen in the future)** had written about that from before. Do you want to know why God the Father had sent His Holy Spirit? It is because of what our Lord Jesus Christ had done. He was with us and all of you saw the miracles He had done. But you wanted Him dead and you shouted to Pontius Pilot to crucify Him. I want to tell you all, that He is risen from the dead and ascended to the heavens and sits at the right hand of His Father. He sent to us the Holy Spirit, who came and made us strong and very Happy.

THREE THOUSAND GET BAPTIZED

When the people heard that, they felt very sorry because of what they did to our Lord Jesus. They asked St. Peter: What should we do now? St. Peter said: ""Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise of the Father to get the Holy Spirit is to you and to your children." Three thousand were baptized that day. St. Peter told them to not be friends with those who do not love our Lord and are not Baptized. From that time all the people continued to be with the disciples in the church every day. They spent their time in prayer and learning from the disciples about our Lord and how to live for God.

FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit in us filling us with the Love of God the Father and of his Son our lord Jesus and gets us very excited to pray and serve.

ABOUNA CALLS FOR THE DESCENT OF THE SPIRIT ON US AND ON THE BREAD AND WINE

During the Holy Liturgy, Abouna asks the Father to send the Holy Spirit on us like He did to the disciples. Although we do not see the tongue of fire we know that the Spirit comes down on us every time when we kneel down after the deacon calls out: "worship God in fear and trembling."

PLAN & MATERIALS:

Plan a:

- Recording of strong wind blowing***
- Many candles according to the number of the children and the servants in the class. Then light all of them together and keep them in one group, then pass one out to each person.***
- Icon of the Pentecost***

CONCLUSION:

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What is the feast of Pentecost?

A. *The Jewish feast of harvest*

Q. What happened in the house of St. Mark's family on the feast of Pentecost?

A. *The descent of the Holy Spirit on the disciples. A sound of mighty wind and the appearance of tongues of fire upon each of them*

Q. What is the meaning of praise?

A. *Singing to God for Himself and not for what He does*

Q. Who are the prophets?

A. *servants of God who were inspired by the Holy Spirit to tell about events in the future.*

VERSE TO REMEMBER

"Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ" Acts 2:38.

CREED RECITATION:

III. DAILY READINGS

Unit VII

Purpose: In This unit, the revelation of God is completed with the revelation of the Holy Spirit in the Church. We continue the gospel story, to cover the beginning of the “Age of the Church.” It is the work of the Holy Spirit in the “New Body of Christ.” In all the lessons of this unit, the teacher needs to present the Holy Spirit acting in the disciples according to what our Lord had previously said to them: *“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 thing that I said to you”* John 14:26. *“When the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.”* John 15:26-27. How that the Spirit will strengthens the disciples and encourage them to “witness” for Christ and fill them with joy and peace.

LESSON 36: THE HOLY SPIRIT CONTINUED THE WORK OF OUR LORD IN THE CHURCH I: HEALING OF THE LAME MAN IN THE NAME OF CHRIST

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

ACTS 3:1-4:31

Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth *hour*. 2And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms from those who entered the temple; 3who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms. 4And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, "Look at us." 5So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. 6Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." 7And he took him by the right hand and lifted *him* up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. 8So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them-- walking, leaping, and praising God. 9And all the people saw him walking and praising God. 10Then they knew that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. 11Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch which is called Solomon's, greatly amazed. 12So when Peter saw *it*, he responded to the people: "Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? 13The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His

Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let *Him* go. 14But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, 15and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses. 16And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which *comes* through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. 17"Yet now, brethren, I know that you did *it* in ignorance, as *did* also your rulers. 18But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled. 19Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, 20and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, 21whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. 22For Moses truly said to the fathers, "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you. 23And it shall be *that* every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.' 24Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days. 25You are sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, "And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' 26To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one *of you* from your iniquities." Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, 2being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. 3And they laid hands on them, and put *them* in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. 4However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand. 5And it came to pass, on the next day, that their rulers, elders, and scribes, 6as well as Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the family of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. 7And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, "By what power or by what name have you done this?" 8Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel: 9If we this day are judged for a good deed *done* to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well, 10let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. 11This is the "stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.' 12Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." 13Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus. 14And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. 15But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, 16saying, "What shall we do to these men? For, indeed, that a notable miracle has been done through them *is* evident

to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny *it*. 17But so that it spreads no further among the people, let us severely threaten them, that from now on they speak to no man in this name." 18So they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. 19But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. 20For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." 21So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way of punishing them, because of the people, since they all glorified God for what had been done. 22For the man was over forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed. 23And being let go, they went to their own *companions* and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. 24So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: "Lord, You *are* God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them, 25who by the mouth of Your servant David have said: " Why did the nations rage, And the people plot vain things? 26 The kings of the earth took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the LORD and against His Christ.' 27"For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together 28to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done. 29Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, 30by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus." 31And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness."

CREED:

Yes we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father. Who is worshiped and glorified with the Father and the Son. Who spoke through the prophets.

CHURCH FATHERS:

HOMILY 8

ACTS 3:1

"Now Peter and John went up together into the temple, at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour."

EVERYWHERE we find these two Apostles in great harmony together. "To him Simon Peter beckoned." (John 13:24.) These two also "came together to the sepulcher. (Ib. 20:3 *et seq.*) And concerning John, Peter said unto Christ, "And what shall this man do?" (Ib. 21:21.) Now as for the other miracles, the writer of this book omits them; but he mentions the miracle by which they were

all put in commotion. Observe again that they do not come to them purposely; so clear were they of ambition, so closely did they imitate their Master. Why now did they go up to the temple? Did they still live as Jews? No, but for expediency. A miraculous sign again takes place, which both confirms the converts, and draws over the rest; and such, as they were a sign for having wrought. The disease was in the nature of the man, and baffled the art of medicine. He had been forty years lame (ch. 4:20), as the writer says afterwards, and no one during all that time had cured him. And the most obstinate diseases are those which are born with men. It was a great calamity, insomuch that even to provide for himself his necessary sustenance was impossible for him. The man was conspicuous both from the place, and from his malady. Hear how the matter is related. "And a certain man, lame from his mother's womb, was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple." (v. 2.) He sought to receive alms, and he did not know who the men were. "Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked an alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him, with John, said, Look on us." (v. 3, 4.) Yet, not even so were the man's thoughts elevated, but he persisted in his importunity. For such is poverty; upon a refusal, it compels people still to persist. Let this put us to shame who fall back in our prayers. But observe, I pray you, Peter's gentleness: for he said, "Look on us." So truly did their very bearing, of itself, betoken their character. "And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have I give thee." (v. 5, 6.) He did not say, I give thee something much better than silver or gold: but what? "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up." (v. 7.) Such was also the way of Christ. Often He healed by word, often by an act, often also He stretched forth the hand, where men were somewhat weak in faith, that the cure might not appear to be spontaneous. "And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up." This act made manifest the Resurrection, for it was an image of the Resurrection. "And immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked." (v. 8.) Perhaps it was by way of trying himself that he put it thus to further proof, whether perchance the thing done might not be to no purpose. His feet were weak; it was not that he had lost them. Some say that he did not even know how to walk. "And entered with them into the temple." Of a truth it was marvelous. The Apostles do not urge him; but of his own accord he follows, by the act of following pointing out his benefactors. "And leaping and praising God;" not admiring them, but God that wrought by them. The man was grateful. ["Now Peter and John went up together into the temple," etc.] You observe how they continued in prayer. "The ninth hour:" there they prayed together. ["And a certain man," etc.] The man was in the act of being carried at that instant. ["Whom they laid daily:"] (his bearers carried him away:) ["at the gate," etc.] just when people went into the temple. And that you may not suppose that they carried him for some other purpose, but that it was in order that he might receive alms, hear what the writer says: "so that he might receive alms of those entering into the temple." (Recapitulation of vv. 1-8.) And this is the reason why he also makes mention of the places, to give evidence of what he relates. "And how was it," you may ask, "that they did not present him to Christ?" Perhaps they were certain unbelieving men, that haunted the temple, as in fact neither did they present him to the Apostles, when they saw them entering, after having done such great miracles. "He asked," it is written, "to receive an alms." (v. 3.) Their bearing marked them as certain devout and righteous men. ["And Peter fastening his

eyes upon him, with John, said," etc.] (v. 4, 5.) And observe how John is everywhere silent, while Peter makes excuse for him also; "Silver and gold," he says, "have I none." (v. 6.) He does not say, I have none here, as we are wont to speak, but absolutely, I have none. "What then?" he might say, "do you take no notice of me, your suppliant?" Not so, but of what I have, receive you.

Do you remark how unassuming Peter is, how he makes no display even to the object of his beneficence? ["In the name," etc. "And he took him by the hand," etc.] (v. 7.) And the mouth and the hand did all. Such sort of persons were the Jews; lame, and the right thing being to ask for health, these same ask for money, groveling on the ground: for this it was that they beset the temple — to get money. What then does Peter? He did not despise him; he did not look about for some rich subject; he did not say, If the miracle is not done to some great one, nothing great is done: he did not look for some honor from him, no, nor heal him in the presence of people; for the man was at the entrance, not where the multitude were, that is, within. But Peter sought no such object; nor upon entering did he proclaim the matter: no, it was by his bearing that he attracted the lame man to ask. And the wonder is, that he believed so readily. For those who are set free from diseases of long standing, hardly believe their very eyesight. Once healed, he remains with the Apostles, giving thanks to God. "And he entered," it is said, "with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God." (v. 8.) Observe how restless he is, in the eagerness of his delight, at the same time shutting the mouths of the Jews. Also, that he leaped, was to prevent the suspicion of hypocrisy; for after all, this was beyond the possibility of deception. For if previously he was totally unable to walk, even when hunger pressed hard (and indeed he would not have chosen to share with his bearers the proceeds of his begging, if he had been able to manage for himself), this holds still more in the present ease. And how should he have feigned in behalf of those who had given him no alms? But the man was grateful, even after his recovery. And thus on either side his faith is shown, both by his thankfulness, and by the recent event. He was so well known to all, that "they recognized him. And all the people," it says, "saw him walking and praising God; and they recognized that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple." (v. 9.) It is well said, "they recognized," inasmuch as he was one unknown now by reason of what had happened: for we use this term with regard to objects, which we find a difficulty in recognizing. ["And they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him."] Needs must it be believed that the name of Christ remits sins, seeing it produces even such effects as this. ("And as he held Peter and John, all the people came together at the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering." (v. 11.) From his good feelings and love towards the Apostles, the lame man would not leave them; perhaps he was thanking them openly, and praising them. "And all the people," it is said, "ran together unto them. And when Peter saw them, he answered." (v. 12.) Again it is he who acts, and addresses the people. And in the former instance, it was the circumstance of the tongues that aroused them to hearing, now it was this miracle; then, he took occasion to speak from their accusations now, from their supposition. Let us then consider, in what this address differs from the former, and in what it agrees with that. The former was held in a house, before any one has come over, and before they themselves have wrought anything; this, when all are wondering, and the healed man is standing by; when none doubt, as in the other case where some said "These men are full of new wine." (Acts 12:13.) At the one, he was surrounded by all the Apostles as he spoke; but at this, he has John alone; for by this time he is bold, and become more energetic. Such is the

nature of virtue; once started, it advances, and never stops. Observe also how it was divinely ordered, that the miracle should take place in the temple, that others also might wax bold, while the Apostles work not in holes and corners, and in secret: though not in the interior of the temple either, where the greater number were. How then, I pray you, was it believed? The man himself who was healed proclaimed the benefit. For there was no reason why he should lie, nor why he should have joined a different set of people. Either then it was because of the spaciousness of the place, that he there wrought the miracle, or because the spot was retired. And observe the event. They went up for one object, and they accomplished another. Thus also did Cornelius: he prayed and fasted. But hitherto they always call Him, "of Nazareth." "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth," said Peter, *walk*. For in the first instance, the thing required was, that He should be believed in.

Let us not, I pray you, give over at the beginning of the story: and if one has named some particular achievement of virtue, and then has dropped it for awhile, let us begin over again. If we get into the right mood we shall soon arrive at the end, soon reach the summit. For earnestness, it is said, begets earnestness, and dullness begets dullness. He who has effected some little reformation, thereby receives encouragement to approach greater things, and thence again to go on something more than that; and just as it is with fire, the more wood it lays hold on, the more vehement it becomes, so likewise zeal, the more pious reflections it kindles, the more effectually is it armed against their opposites. As, for example: There are set in us, like so many thorns, perjury, falsehood, hypocrisy, deceit, dishonesty, abusiveness, scoffing, buffoonery, indecency, scurrility; again under another head, covetousness, rapacity, injustice, calumny, insidiousness; again, wicked lust, uncleanness, lewdness, fornication, adultery; again, envy, emulation, anger, wrath, rancor, revenge, blasphemy, and numberless others. If we effect a reformation in the first instances, not only in them will the success have been achieved, but through them in the following cases also. For reason has then gained more strength to overthrow those other vices. For instance, if he, who has frequently sworn, once extirpates that satanic habit, he has not only gained this point, but a habit of piety in other respects will have been brought in. For no one, I suppose, averse to swearing would easily consent to do any other wicked act; he will feel a reverence for the virtue already acquired. Just as the man who wears a beautiful robe, will blush to roll himself in the mire; so is it also here. From this beginning he will come to learn not to be angry, not to strike, not to insult. For if once he has come right in little matters, the whole affair is done. Often, however, something of this sort takes place, that a person has once reformed, and then again through carelessness falls back into the old sins but too readily, so that the case becomes irremediable. For instance, we have made it a law to ourselves not to swear; we have got on well, for some three, or even four days; after that being hard put to it, we scattered away the whole of our collected gain; we then fall into indolence and recklessness. Still it is not right to give over; one must set to work zealously again. For it is said, he that has built up a house, and then sees his building pulled down, will have less spirit for building again. Yes, but for all this, one must not be dispirited, but must once more set to work zealously. Let us then lay down daily laws for ourselves. For a time let us begin with the easier. Let us retrench all that superfluity of paths, and put a bridle on our tongues; let no one swear by God. Here is no outlay, here is no fatigue, here is no cost of time. It is sufficient to will, and all is done. It is a matter of habit. I beseech and entreat you, let us contribute thus much of zeal.

Tell me, if I had bid you contribute your money, would not each one of you readily cast in according to his ability? If you saw me in extreme danger, would you not, if it had been possible, have cut off your own flesh to give me? Well, I am in danger now, and in great danger, such indeed that, were I withal confined to a dungeon, or had I received ten thousand stripes, or were a convict in the mines, I could not suffer more. Reach me then the hand. Consider how great is the danger, that I should not have been able to reform this which is least: I say "least" in regard to the labor required. What shall I have to say hereafter, when thus called to account? "Why did you not remonstrate? why did you not enjoin? why did you not lay the law before them? why did you not cheek the disobedient?" It will not be enough for me to say, that I did admonish. It will be answered, "You ought to have used more vehement rebuke; since Eli also admonished." (1 Samuel 2:24.) But God forbid I should compare you with Eli's sons. Indeed, he did admonish them and say, "Nay, my sons, do not so; evil is the report that I hear of you." (1 Samuel 3:13.) But subsequently the Scripture says, that he did not admonish his sons: since he did not admonish them severely, or with threats. For is it not strange indeed, that in the synagogues of the Jews the laws are in such force, and whatever the teacher enjoins is performed; while here we are thus despised and rejected? It is not my own glory that I care for (my glory is your good report), but it is for your salvation. Every day we lift up our voice, and shout in your ears. But there is none to hear. Still we take no strong measures. I fear we shall have to give an account at the coming Day of this excessive and un-seasonable leniency.

Wherefore, with a loud and clear voice, I proclaim to all and testify, that those who are notorious for this transgression, who utter words which come "of the evil one," (Matthew 5:37.) (for such is swearing,) shall not step over the threshold of the Church. Let this present month be the time allowed you for reforming in this matter. Talk not to me, "Necessity of business compels me to use oaths, else people do not believe me." To begin with this, retrench those oaths which come merely of habit. I know many will laugh, but it is better to be laughed at now, than wept for hereafter. They will laugh, who are mad. For who, I ask, in his right mind would laugh at the keeping of the commandment? But suppose they do; why, it will not be at us, but at Christ, that such men will laugh. You shudder at the word! I knew you would. Now if this law were of my making, at me would be the laughing; but if Another be the Lawgiver, the jeering passes over to Him. Yes, and Christ was once spit upon, and smitten with the palm, smitten upon the face. Now also He bears with this, and it is no wonder! For this, hell is prepared; for this, the worm that do not die. Behold, again I say and testify; let him laugh that will, let him scoff that list. Hereunto are we set, to be laughed at and mocked, to suffer all things. We are "the off-scouring" (1 Corinthians 4:13) or the world, as blessed Paul says. If any man refuse to conform to this order, that man I, by my word, as with a trumpet's blast, do prohibit to set foot over the Church's threshold, be he prince, be he even the crowned head. Either depose me from this station, or if I am to remain, expose me not to danger. I cannot bear to ascend this throne, without effecting Some great reformation. For if this be impossible, it is better to stand below. Nothing more wretched than a ruler who does his people no good. Do exert yourselves, and attend to this, I entreat you; and let us strive, and of a surety more will come of it. Fast, entreat God (and we will do the same with you) that this pernicious habit may be eradicated. It is no great matter, to become teachers to the world; no small honor to have it said everywhere, that really in this city there is not a man that swears. If this come to pass, you will receive the

reward not only of your own good works; indeed what I am to you, this you will become to the world. Assuredly others also will emulate you; assuredly you will be a candle set upon a candlestick. And is this, you will say, the whole matter? No, this is not all, but this is a beginning of other virtues. He who swears not, will certainly attain unto piety in other respects, whether he will or not, by dint of self-respect and awe. But you will urge that most men do not keep to it, but fall away. Well, better one man that doeth the will of the Lord, than ten thousand transgressors. In fact, hereby is everything subverted, everything turned upside down, I mean, because after the fashion of the Theater we desire numbers not a select number. For what indeed will a multitude be able to profit? Would you learn that it is the saints, not the numbers, which make the multitude? Lead out to war ten hundred thousand men, and one saint, and let us see who achieves the most? Joshua the son of Nun went out to war, and alone achieved all; the rest were of no use. Would you see, beloved, that the great multitude, when it does not the will of God, is no better than a thing of naught? I wish indeed, and desire, and with pleasure would be torn in pieces, to adorn the Church with a multitude, yea, but a select multitude; yet if this be impossible, that the few should be select, is my desire. Do you not see, that it is better to possess one precious stone, than ten thousand farthing pieces? Do you not see that it is better to have the eye sound, than to be loaded with flesh, and yet deprived of sight? Do you not see that it is better to have one healthy sheep, than ten thousand with the murrain; that fine children, though few, are better than many children diseased withal; that in the Kingdom there will be few, but in hell many? What have I to do with a multitude? what profit therein? None. Rather they are a plague to the rest. It is as if one who had the option of ten healthy persons of ten thousand sick folks, should take to himself the latter in addition to the ten. The many who do nothing well, will avail us only for punishment hereafter, and disgrace for the time being. For no one will urge it as a point in our favor that we are many; we shall be blamed for being unprofitable. In fact, this is what men always tell us, when we say, We are many; “aye, but bad,” they answer. Behold again: I give warning, and proclaim with a loud voice, let no one think it a laughing matter: I will exclude and prohibit the disobedient; and as long as I sit on this throne, I will give up not one of its rights. If anyone depose me from it, then I am no longer responsible; as long as I am responsible, I cannot disregard them; on account not of my own punishment, but of your salvation. For I do exceedingly long for your salvation. To advance it, I endure pain and vexation. But yield your obedience, that both here and hereafter you may receive a plentiful reward, and that we may in common reap eternal blessings; through the grace and mercy of the only-begotten Son of God; to Whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, power, and honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

REFLECTION:

The focus of this lesson is the power of the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. How the Holy Spirit follows the name of Christ and grants salvation to those who call on the Name with all reverence and honor. God the Father had made the name of Christ above all names: *“9Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11and that every*

tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Phil 2:9-11. Therefore, the church honors the name of Christ in all its prayers addressed to the Father we end with the name of Christ. Also specific Psalms are dedicated to the Name of Christ.

PRAYER:

O’ God of all mercies and Lord of all comfort, at all times, You bring us comfort with Your Holy Spirit. We give You thanks for raising us up for prayer at this holy hour. At this hour You poured the rich grace of Your Holy Spirit in the shape of tongues of fire on Your blessed and honorable disciples. We ask You, O’ Lover of mankind to accept our prayers, forgive our sins and bestow on us the grace of Your Holy Spirit. Purify us from the iniquities of the body and soul, lead us to a spiritual life so that we may seek *The Prayer of the Third Hour* 46 righteousness and make us worthy to serve You with purity and goodness, through all the days of our lives, for You are worthy of glory, honor and power with the Holy Spirit now and forever. **Amen.**

Absolution prayer- Third hour

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG

He ascended to the heavens..

VOCABULARY:

Lame, faith, miracles, alms

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	Yes we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life
Liturgical:	The Name of Christ in Liturgy
Moral:	Loving Christ and the Father by the Holy Spirit
Spiritual:	Praying with the Name of Christ

INTRODUCTION:

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What is the feast of Pentecost?

A. The Jewish feast of harvest

Q. What happened in the house of St. Mark's family on the feast of Pentecost?

A. The descent of the Holy Spirit on the disciples. A sound of mighty wind and the appearance of tongues of fire upon each of them

Q. What is the meaning of praise?

A. Singing to God for Himself and not for what He does

Q. Who are the prophets?

A. servants of God who were inspired by the Holy Spirit to tell about events in the future

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ" Acts 2:38

CONNECTION POINT:

Last week we remembered the descent of the holy Spirit on the disciples. This week and the following weeks we will learn how the Holy Spirit continued the work of our Lord in His church.

LESSON BODY:

THE LAME MAN

There was a **lame** man (**his legs could not hold him**). He could not walk his whole life. Can you imagine what that would have felt like? He was never able to run and play with his friends or walks where he wanted to walk, or when he got older, he was not able to ride a donkey to get from one place to another. He depended on other people for help for a lot of things. His friends used to carry

him to the gate of the temple in Jerusalem, which is called Beautiful. He used to sit at the gate of the Temple. He asked for money from those who came to the temple to pray. He was not able to work, and this was the only way for him to have any money to eat. He was a beggar

THE MIRACLE

One afternoon, St. Peter and St. John went to the Temple to pray. The **lame** man saw St. Peter and St. John about to go in the temple, and he asked them for **alms (money given to the poor)**. St. Peter looked at him, and said to him, "Look at us." So the man was looking to the hand of St. Peter, expecting to receive some money from him. Then Peter said, "I do not have Silver or gold, but what I will give you what I have: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." St. Peter meant to give him a much more important gift: the name of our Lord, which is a very precious secret. The Holy Spirit honors the name of Christ, if we use His name with honor with and respect, the Holy Spirit will come and do a miracle. Like with this lame man, after St. Peter said the name of our Lord, he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately the Holy Spirit made his legs strong and he could stand! And he, *jumping* up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them-- walking, jumping, and praising God. He was very happy and excited. it was like he was a brand new person, he could do things he had never been able to do before. And all the people around them saw him walking and praising God. They realized that it was the same man, who sat begging **alms** at the Beautiful Gate of the temple. Can you imagine how surprised they would be? Someone they had known for a very long time, and he had never been able to walk. All of a sudden they see him not only walking, but jumping too! Because St. Peter called the name of Christ on him. Now the lame man did not want to leave St. Peter and St. John, he loved them.

ST. PETER'S SERMON

St. Peter started talking to all the people who were there; let me tell you something about these people: they had been the ones who wanted to crucify our Lord. So, St. Peter wanted them to know about how wonderful our Lord really is. This is what St. Peter said, "Men of Israel, why are you so surprised by this **miracle? (wonderful works of God that cannot be explained except by faith)** I will tell you what happened: the Holy Spirit gave health to this man and made his legs strong when we called the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. This happened because we have **faith (perfect trust)** in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ who loved us and gave Himself to us. God the Father loves His Son and honors those who honor His Son's name." While St. Peter was speaking, the Jewish leaders came; they were very angry and upset that St. Peter and St. John were teaching the people about the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and about how He had resurrected from the dead. (Remember, they had paid the guards money to say that His disciples stole His body away in the night? They did not want people to know the real story). They wanted to do anything to make them be quiet, so

they took St. Peter and St. John and put them in prison. But, something very good came from the things that St. Peter said: the Holy Spirit used the talk of St. Peter to bring two thousand people to the church! On the next day, the Jewish leaders were gathered together in Jerusalem. They brought St. Peter and St. John in the middle of them, and they asked them, "Who gave you the right to do this?" Then the Holy Spirit gave St. Peter a lot of courage and he said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel: If you are judging us for doing a good thing to a poor man, I want you to know that it is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, remember Him? The One you crucified? He was raised from the dead, and it is by Him the man who was lame stands here before you healed. And I want to tell you, not only does the name of Christ heal any sickness, but also nothing good happens in the whole world without His name. And even going to heaven can never happen without His name.

THE LEADERS GET ANGRY

Now when the rulers saw how brave St. Peter and St. John were to be able to say all these things and they were not afraid of the leaders killing them, they were shocked. And they understood that St. Peter and St. John had been with Jesus, because they were very brave like He was. And because the man who had been healed was standing with them, they could not say anything against the miracle and they could not make up any lie about how he had been healed. But, they decided to give them a hard time about talking about Jesus, thinking that this would scare them enough not to speak about our Lord anymore to anyone. So they told them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said to them (they still were not scared), "Do you think it is right to listen to you more than to listen to God?" After the leaders finished giving them a hard time, they let them go, finding no way of punishing them, because of the people, since all the people knew that St. Peter and St. John are godly people because of the miracle that happened to the lame man.

DISCIPLES PRAYING

And after they were let go, St. Peter and St. John went back to their own friends and reported all that the leaders had said to them. So when they heard that, they prayed together to God and said: "Lord, You *are* God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them, and You spoke in the past about how the rulers would crucify Your Christ. Now, Lord give your servants all courage they may speak Your word, by healing and **miracles (wonderful works of God that cannot be explained except by faith)** may be done through the name of Jesus." And when they had prayed, the building where they were together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with courage.

PLAN & MATERIALS:

Acting, storytelling, puppets, coloring.

CONCLUSION:

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What is a miracle?

A. A wonderful work of God that cannot be explained

Q. What is faith?

A. Perfect trust in God

Q. What did the lame man used to do before he was healed?

A. He used to sit outside the gate of the temple and beg for money

Q. What happened when he asked St. Peter and St. John for money?

A. They fixed their eyes on him, and said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but I will give you what I do have: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." And he was healed right then.

Q. What did St. Peter tell all the people who were so surprised by what had happened to the lame man?

A. Faith in the name of the Jesus Christ is what healed this man

Q. Why did the Jewish leaders get angry with St. Peter and St. John?

A. They did not want them to teach the people about our Lord and about how He had risen from the dead. They wanted to keep the attention on themselves instead of on Jesus.

Q. What did the leaders do to try to keep the disciples from preaching anymore?

A. They ordered them not to preach and they threatened them

Q. What did the disciples say and do after this?

A. They said that it would be better to listen to God than to listen to the rulers, and they went back to the rest of their companions and they all prayed together for strength to continue preaching Christ's name. God heard their prayer and the place where they were shook.

VERSE TO REMEMBER

"Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." Acts 3:6

III. DAILY READINGS

Unit VII

Purpose: In This unit, the revelation of God is completed with the revelation of the Holy Spirit in the Church. We continue the gospel story, to cover the beginning of the “Age of the Church.” It is the work of the Holy Spirit in the “New Body of Christ.” In all the lessons of this unit, the teacher needs to present the Holy Spirit acting in the disciples according to what our Lord had previously said to them: *“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 thing that I said to you”* John 14:26. *“When the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.”* John 15:26-27. How that the Spirit will strengthens the disciples and encourage them to “witness” for Christ and fill them with joy and peace.

LESSON 37: THE HOLY SPIRIT CONTINUED THE WORK OF OUR LORD IN THE CHURCH II: DEACON PHILIP’S MISSION

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

ACTS 8

Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. 6And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. 7For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. 8And there was great joy in that city. 9But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great, 10to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the great power of God." 11And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries for a long time. 12But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized. 13Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done. 14Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, 15who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. 16For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 17Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. 18And when Simon saw that

through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, 19saying, "Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit." 20But Peter said to him, "Your money perishes with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money! 21You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God. 22Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. 23For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity." 24Then Simon answered and said, "Pray to the Lord for me, that none of the things which you have spoken may come upon me." 25So when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.

CREED:

Yes we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father. Who is worshiped and glorified with the Father and the Son. Who spoke through the prophets.

CHURCH FATHERS:

Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spoke, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city. But there was a certain man, called Simon, which before time in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria." (v. 4-9.) Observe another trial, this affair of Simon. "Giving out," it says, "that he was himself some great one. To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries. But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. Now when the Apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit." (v. 10-15.) And (yet) great signs had been done: how then had they not received the Spirit? They had received the Spirit, namely, of remission of sins: but the Spirit of miracles they had not received. "For as yet He was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit." (v. 16, 17.) For, to show that this was the case, and that it was the Spirit of miracles they had not received, observe how, having seen the result, Simon came and asked for this. "And when Simon saw that through laying on of the Apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered

them money, saying. Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit." (v. 18, 19.) "The persecution," you say, "gained strength." True, but at that very time to men possessed before (by a hostile power) it brought deliverance. For it planted the miracles like a stronghold, in the heart of the enemy's' country. — Not even the death of Stephen quenched their rage, nay, increased it rather: it scattered wide the teachers, so that the greater became the discipleship. — "And there was joy." And yet there had been "great lamentation:" true; but mark again the good — "Of a long time" was the deliverance. — And how came he to baptize Simon also? Just as Christ chose Judas. — And "beholding the signs" which he did, forasmuch as the others did not receive the (power of working) signs he durst not ask for it. — How was it then that they did not strike him dead, as they did Ananias and Sapphira? Because even in the old times, he that gathered sticks (on the Sabbath-day) was put to death as a warning to others (Numbers 15:32) and in no other instance did any suffer the same fate. So too on the present occasion, "Peter said to him, Thy money perish, because you have imagined that the gift of God is to be purchased with money." — (v. 20.) Why had not these received the Holy Spirit, when baptized? Either because Philip kept this honor for the Apostles; or, because he had not this gift (to impart); or, he was one of the Seven: which is rather to be said. Whence, I take it, this Philip was one of the Apostle. But observe; those went not forth: it was Providentially ordered that these should go forth and those be lacking, because of the Holy Spirit: for they had received power to work miracles, but not also to impart the Spirit to others: this was the prerogative of the Apostles. And observe (how they sent) the chief ones: not any others, but Peter [and John]. "And when Simon," it says, "saw that through laying on of the Apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given." He would "Then laid they their hands on them," etc. Just as Paul also did, when they spoke with tongues. (ch. 19:6) Observe the very bad conduct of Simon. "He offered money," with what object? And yet he did not see Peter doing this for money. And it was not of ignorance that he acted thus; it was because he would tempt them, because he wished to get matter of accusation against them. And therefore also Peter says, "you have no part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God "because you have thought," etc. (v. 21.) Once more he brings to light what was in the thoughts, because Simon thought to escape detection. "Repent therefore of this your wickedness and pray God, if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. For I perceive the bond of iniquity. Then answered Simon, and said, you pray to the Lord for me, that none of these things which you have spoken come upon me." (v. 22-24.) Even this he did only formally, as words of course, when he ought to have wept and mourned as a penitent. "If perchance it may be forgiven you." Not as though it would not have been pardoned, had he wept, but this is the manner of the Prophet also, to denounce absolutely, and not to say, "Howbeit, if you do this, thy sin shall be forgiven," but that in any wise the punishment shall take effect.

(a) "Therefore they that were scattered abroad, went everywhere, preaching the word." But I would have you admire how even in a season of calamity they neglected not the preaching. "Hearing and seeing the miracles which he did." (Recapitulation, 5:4-6.) Just as in the case of Moses by contrast (with the magicians) the miracles were evident miracles, so here also. There was magic, and so these signs were manifest.

(b) "For unclean spirits came out of many that were possessed with them" (v. 7); for this was a manifest miracle: — not as the magicians did: for the other (Simon), it is likely, bound (men with spells); — "and many," it says, "that were palsied and lame were healed." There was no deceit here: for it needed but that they should walk and work. "And to him they all gave heed, saying, This (man) is the Power of God." (v. 10.) And that was fulfilled which was spoken by Christ, "There shall come false Christs and false Prophets in My name." — (Matthew 24:24.) "And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries." (v. 11.) (a) And yet there ought to have been not one demoniac there, seeing that of a long time he had been bewitching them with sorceries: but if there were many demoniacs, many palsied, these pretenses were not truth. But Philip here by his word also won them over, discoursing concerning the kingdom of Christ. (v. 12.) "And Simon," it says, "being baptized, continued with Philip (v. 13): not for faith's sake, but in order that he might become such (as he). (b) But why did they not correct him instantly? They were content with his condemning himself. For this too belonged to their work of teaching. But when he had not power to resist, he plays the hypocrite, just as did the magicians, who said, "This is the finger of God." And indeed that he might not be driven away again, therefore he "continued with Philip," and did not part from him. "And when the Apostles which were at Jerusalem," etc. (v. 13, 14.)

See how many things are brought about by God's Providence through the death of Stephen! (a) "But they," it says, "having come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost: for as yet He was fallen upon none of them. Then laid they their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost." (v. 15-17.) do you see that it was not to be done in any ordinary manner, but it needed great power to give the Holy Spirit?

For it is not all one, to obtain remission of sins, and to receive such a power. (b) By degrees it is, that those receive the gift. It was a twofold sign: both the giving to those, and the not giving to this man. Whereas then this man ought, on the contrary, to have asked to receive the Holy Spirit, he, because he cared not for this, asks power to give It to others. And yet those received not this power to give: but this man wished to be more illustrious than Philip, he being among the disciples! (a) "He offered them money." (v. 18, 19.) What? had he seen the others doing this? had he seen Philip? Did he imagine they did not know with what mind he came to them? (b) "Thy money with you to perdition" (v. 20): since you have not used it as it ought to be used. These are not words of cursing, but of chastisement. "To you," he says, be it (to you): being such. As if one should say, Let it perish along with your purpose. have you so mean conceptions of the gift of God, that you have imagined it to be altogether a thing of man? It is not this. (a) Wherefore also Peter well calls the affair a gift: "have you thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money." Do you observe how on all occasions they are clean from money? "For your heart is not right in the sight of God." (v. 21.) Do you see how he does all of malice? To be simple, however, was the thing needed. (b) For had it been done with simplicity, he would have even welcomed his willing mind. Do you that to have mean conceptions of great things is to sin doubly? Accordingly, two things he bids him: "Repent and pray, if haply the thought of your heart may be forgiven you." (v. 22.) Do you see it was a wicked thought he had entertained?

Therefore he says, "If haply it may be forgiven you:" because he knew him to be incurable. (a) "For I perceive that you are in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity." (v. 23.) Words of

exceeding wrath! But otherwise he did not punish him: that faith may not thereafter be of compulsion; that the matter may not seem to be carried ruthlessly; that he may introduce the subject of repentance: or also, because it suffices for correction to have convicted him, to have told him what was in his heart, to have brought him to confess himself overcome. For that he says, "you pray for me," is a confession that he has done wrong. Observe him, what a wrongdoer he is; when he was convicted, then he believed: when again he was convicted, then he became humble. "Seeing his miracles," ["he was amazed," and came over.] He thought to be able to escape detection: he thought the thing was an art: but when he had not power to defeat the Apostles, (b) Again, he fears the multitude, and is afraid to deny it; and yet he might have said, "I did not know: I did it in simplicity: but he was struck with dismay first by the former circumstance, that he was overcome, by the miracles and secondly by this, that his thoughts are made manifest. Therefore he now takes himself a long way off, to Rome, thinking the Apostle would not soon come there.

"And they, when they had terrified, and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem. (v. 25.) "Testified," probably because of him (Simon), that they may not be deceived; that thenceforth they may be safe. "Hating preached," it says, "the word of the Lord, the), returned to Jerusalem." Why do they go thither again where was the tyranny of the bad, where were those most bent upon killing them? Just as generals do in wars, they occupy that part of the scene of war which is most distressed.

"And preached the Gospel in many villages of the Samaritans." Observe them again, how they do not of set purpose come to Samaria, but driven by stress of persecution, just as it was in the case of Christ; and how when the Apostles go thither, it is to men now believers, no longer Samaritans. "But when the Apostles," it says, "which were at Jerusalem heard this, they sent unto them Peter and John. Sent" them, again, to rid them of magic. And besides, (the Lord) had given them a pattern at the time when the Samaritans believed. "And in many villages," it says, "of the Samaritans, they preached the Gospel." (John 4:39.) Observe how actively employed even their journeys were, how they do nothing without a purpose. Such travels should we also make. And why do I speak of travels? Many possess villages and lands, and give themselves no concern, nor make any account of this. That baths may be provided, their revenues increased, courts and buildings erected, for this they take plenty of pains: but for the care of souls, not so. When you see thorns — answer me — you cut them up, you burn, you utterly destroy them, to rid your land of the hurt thence arising. And do you the laborers themselves overrun with thorns, and dost not cut them up, and are you not afraid of the Owner Who shall call you to account? For ought not each individual believer to build a Church, to get a Teacher, to cooperate (with him), to make this above all his object, that all may be Christians? Say, how is it likely your laborer should be a Christian, when he sees you so regardless of his salvation? you cannot work miracles, and so convert him. By the means which are in your power, convert him; by kindness, by good offices, by gentleness, by courting indeed, and baths, the most do provide; but him, by all other means. Market — places, indeed, and baths, the most do provide; but no Churches: nay, sooner everything than this! Wherefore I beseech and implore, as a favor I entreat, you as a law I lay it down, that there be no estate to be seen destitute of a Church. Tell not me, There is one hard by; there is one in the neighboring properties; the expense is great, the income not great. If you have anything to expend upon the poor, expend it there: better there than here. Maintain a Teacher, maintain a Deacon, and a sacerdotal body

complete. As by a bride, whether a wife whom you takes, or a daughter whom you give in marriage, so act by the Church: give her a dowry. So shall your estate be filled with blessing. For what shall not be there of all that is good? Is it a small thing, tell me, that your wine-press should be blessed; a small thing, tell me, that of your fruits God is the first to taste, and that the first fruits are there (with Him)? And then even for the peace of the laboring people this is profitable. Then as one whom they must respect, there will be the presbyter among them and this will contribute to the security of the estate. There will be constant prayers there through you (*infra*, note, p. 119) hymns and Communions through you; the Oblation on each Lord's Day. For only consider what a praise it will be, that, whereas others have built splendid tombs, to have it said hereafter: "Such a one butt this," you have reared Churches! Remember that even until the coming of Christ you shall have your reward, who hast reared up the altars of God. Suppose an Emperor had ordered thee to build an house that he might lodge there, would you not have done everything to please him? And here now it is palace of Christ, the Church, the Church which you build. Look not at the cost, but calculate the profit. Your people there cultivate your field: cultivate you their souls: they bring to you your fruits, you raise them to heaven. He that makes the beginning is the cause of all the rest: and you will be the cause that the people are brought under Christian teaching both there, and in the neighboring estates. Your baths do but make the peasants less hardy, your taverns give them a taste for luxury, and yet you provide these for credit's sake. Your markets and fairs, on the other hand, promote covetousness. But think now what a thing it would be to see a presbyter, the moving picture of Abraham, gray-headed, girded up, digging and working with his own hands? What more pleasant than such a field! Their virtue thrives. No overindulgence there, no, it is driven away: no drunkenness and wantonness, no, it is cast out: no vanity, no, it is extinguished. All benevolent tempers shine out the brighter through the simplicity of manners. How pleasant to go forth and enter into the House of God, and to know that one built it himself: to fling himself on his back in his litter, and after the bodily benefit of his pleasant airing, be present both at the evening and the morning hymns, have the priest as a guest at his table, in associating with him enjoy his benediction, see others also coming in that direction! This is a wall for his field, this in security. This is the field of which it is said," The smell of a full field which the Lord have blessed." (Genesis 27:27.) If, even without this, the country is pleasant, because it is so quiet, so free from distraction of business, what will it not be when this is added to it? The country with a Church is like the Paradise of God.

No clamor there, no turmoil, no enemies at variance, no heresies: there you shall see all friends, holding the same doctrines in common. The very quiet shall lead you to higher views, and receiving you thus prepared by philosophy, the presbyter shall give you an excellent cure. For here, whatever we may speak, the noise of the market drives it all out: but there, what you shall hear, you will keep fixed in your mind. You will be quite another man in the country through him: and moreover to the people there he will be director, he will watch over them both by his presence and by his influence in forming their manners. And what, I ask, would be the cost? Make for a beginning a small house to serve as temple. Your successor will build a porch, his successor will make other additions, and the whole shall be put to thy account. You give little, and receive the reward for the whole. At any rate, make a beginning: lay a foundation.

Exhort one another, fight one with another in this matter. But now, where there is straw and grain and such like to be stored, you make no difficulty of building: but for a place where the fruits of souls may be gathered in, we below not a thought; and the people are forced to go miles and miles, and to make long journeys, that they may get to Church! Think, how good it is, when with all quietness the priest presents himself in the Church, that he may draw near unto God, and say prayers for the village, day by day, and for its owner! Say, is it a small matter, that even in the Holy Oblations evermore your name is included in the prayers, and that for the village day by day prayers are made unto God? — How greatly this profits you for all else! It chanceth that certain (great) persons dwell in the neighborhood, and have overseers: now to you, being poor, one of them will not agree even to pay a visit: but the presbyter, it is likely, he will invite, and make him sit at his table. How much good results from this! The village will in the first place be free from all evil suspicion. None will charge it with murder, with theft: none will suspect anything of the kind. — They have also another comfort, if sickness befall, if death. — Then again the friendships formed there by people as they go side by side (to and from the Church) are not struck up at random and confusedly: and the meetings there are far more pleasant than those which take place in marts and fairs. The people themselves also will be more respectable, because of their presbyter. How is it you hear that Jerusalem was had in honor in the old times above all other cities? Why was this? Because of the then prevailing religion. Therefore it is that where God is honored, there is nothing evil: as, on the contrary, where He is not honored, there is nothing good. It will be great security both with God and with men. Only, I beseech you, that you be not careless: only may you put your hand to this work. For if he who brings out “the precious from the vile,” shall be “as the mouth of God” (Jeremiah 15:19); he who benefits and recovers so many souls, both that now are and that shall be even until the coming of Christ, what favor shall not that person reap from God! Raise you a garrison against the devil: for that is what the Church is. Therefore as from headquarters let the hands go forth to work: first let the people hold them up for prayers, and then go their way to work. So shall there be vigor of body; so shall the tillage be abundant; so shall all evil be kept aloof. It is not possible to represent in words the pleasure that arise from there, until it be realized. Look not to this, that it brings in no revenue: if you do not do it in this spirit, then do it not at all; if you account not the revenue you get from there greater than from the whole estate beside; if you be not thus affected, then let it alone; if you do not account this work to stand you more instead than any work beside. What can be greater than this revenue, the gathering in of souls into the threshing-floor which is in heaven! unfortunately, that you do not know how much it is, to gain souls! Hear what Christ says to Peter, “Feed My sheep.” (John 21:15-17.) If, seeing the emperors sheep, or herd of horses, by reason of having no fold or stable, exposed to damage, you were to take them in hand, and build a fold or stables, or also provide a shepherd or herdsman to take charge of them, what would not the emperor do for you in return? Now, you gather the flock of Christ, and putt a shepherd over them, and you think it is no great gain you are earning? But, if for offending even one, a man shall incur so great a punishment, how can he that saves so many, ever be punished? What sin will he have from then on? for, though he have it, does not this blot it out? From the punishment threatened to him that offends, learn the reward of him that saves. Were not the salvation of even one soul a matter of great importance, to offend would not move God to so great anger Knowing these things, let us apply ourselves without delay to this spiritual work. And let

each invite me, and we will together help to the best of our ability. If there be three joint-owners, let them do it by each beating his part: if but one, he will induce the others also that are near. Only be earnest to achieve this, I beseech you, that in every way being well-pleasing unto God, we may attain unto the eternal blessings, by the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ with Whom to the Father and the Holy Spirit together be glory, dominion, and honor, now and ever world without end. Amen.

REFLECTION:

In this chapter from the book of Acts of the apostles, there is a clear distinction in the role and abilities that the Holy Spirit has given to the different members of the body of Christ. Although St. Phillip is a deacon who could preach and baptize, he could not give the gift of the Holy Spirit. This was the office of the apostles. Today this office is held by the bishops who have the full priesthood of Christ. The priests are the helpers and delegates of the bishops. The deacons are the helpers of the priests.

PRAYER:

O' Good Lord, do not take Your Holy Spirit away from us, this which You sent upon Your holy disciples and honorable apostles at the third hour. Create a pure heart in me, O' God and put a new and loyal Spirit within me, do not banish me from Your presence and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. **Zoksa-patri Ke ey-you Ke agiyou ep-nevmaty.**

litany after the gospel- Third hour- Agpeya

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG

He ascended to the heavens..

VOCABULARY:

persecute, deacon, Samaria, Samaritans, sorcery, testified

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	Yes we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life
Liturgical:	The bishops are the successors of the apostles
Moral:	Loving Christ and the Father by the Holy Spirit
Spiritual:	Being filled with the Holy Spirit

INTRODUCTION:

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What is a miracle?

A. a wonderful work of God that cannot be explained

Q. What is faith?

A. Perfect trust in God

Q. What did the lame man used to do before he was healed?

A. He used to sit outside the gate of the temple and beg for money

Q. What happened when he asked St. Peter and St. John for money?

A. They fixed their eyes on him, and said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but I will give you what I do have: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." And he was healed right then.

Q. What did St. Peter tell all the people who were so surprised by what had happened to the lame man?

A. Faith in the name of the Jesus Christ is what healed this man

Q. Why did the Jewish leaders get angry with St. Peter and St. John?

A. They did not want them to teach the people about our Lord and about how He had risen from the dead. They wanted to keep the attention on themselves instead of on Jesus.

Q. What did the leaders do to try to keep the disciples from preaching anymore?

A. They ordered them not to preach and they threatened them

Q. What did the disciples say and do after this?

A. They said that it would be better to listen to God than to listen to the rulers, and they went back to the rest of their companions and they all prayed together for strength to continue preaching Christ's name. God heard their prayer and the place where they were shook

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." Acts 3:6

CONNECTION POINT:

Our Lord had ascended to the heavens and sent to us the Holy Spirit from the Father. The Holy Spirit Came on the disciples as tongues of fire and dwelt in their hearts and made them brave to tell everyone about the Holy Trinity, our God. they baptized people in the name of the Father and of The Son and of the Holy Spirit. In this lesson we shall see how the apostles had the power to give the Holy Spirit to others.

LESSON BODY:

PHILIP GOES TO SAMARIA

There came a time, after these things happened, that people who did not love God began to **persecute (hurt the believers in Jesus to force them to leave Him)** Christ's friends who were in Jerusalem. So, our Lord's friends started to go separately to different places and leave Jerusalem; they wanted to escape danger. One of them, whose name was Phillip, was a **deacon (servant of the church)**. The Holy Spirit told St. Philip to go to **Samaria** to tell the people there about Christ, how He was the Son of God and how He had died for them on the cross, and how He rose from the dead. (Show them the picture of a village from that time). So he went to Samaria and told the people all these things. The Holy Spirit also did many miracles through St. Philip the deacon: people who were paralyzed and lame were healed, and the sick were cured. All the people of Samaria were so joyful and so excited because they saw their friends and family members getting better, and they believed the things that St. Philip told them about our Lord when they saw all the wonderful miracles happening around them. The Holy Spirit made them feel that our Lord Jesus Christ was right there with them and with St. Philip, and they saw how much power our Lord had over the things that made people sad, like sickness and disease. Whenever St. Philip says the name of our Lord Jesus Christ over sicknesses or diseases, people would be cured.

SIMON'S CONVERSION

There was one man, whose name was Simon, who used to practice **sorcery (magic)** in Samaria. The devil used him to trick people with magic tricks, and fool all the people into believing that he was someone great, when he really was not. But when the people heard St. Philip speaking, and believed what he said about the Kingdom of God and about the Name of Jesus Christ, and got baptized, this man also believed and got baptized. A great change happened inside him. He was very amazed when he saw all the miracles that Philip was doing, and he followed him so that he could learn from him. He saw that Philip was stronger than he was.

ST. PETER AND ST. JOHN GO TO SAMARIA

Remember how we said in the beginning that most of our Lord's friends had gone to different towns and cities and left Jerusalem? The apostles did not leave but stayed in Jerusalem, and they heard about how the people in Samaria had received the word of God. Then St. Peter and St. John went to them, and prayed for them so that they would receive the Holy Spirit. And they put their hands on them, and the people received the Holy Spirit. They were now part of the church!

THE BISHOPS ARE THE SUCCESSORS OF THE APOSTLES

St Phillip was a deacon. At that time deacon could baptize people. Deacons can baptize people today, only in emergency, in case of somebody wanting to be baptized and is dying and cannot have a priest. But a deacon and even a priest cannot give the Holy Spirit to anyone, only the bishop can. In the orthodox church, the priest uses the holy Myron as a representative of the bishop's hand.

SIMON'S SIN

Now a problem happened with Simon when he saw this: when he saw how the apostles only had to put their hands on the peoples' heads and they would receive the Holy Spirit, and that no one else could do that, even Philip. And how the apostles are very special people, now the bishops are in the place of the apostles, are very special. He tried to offer them money so that he would be able to do this. He wanted to be able to put his hands on someone and let them receive the Holy Spirit. He did not know that it was not something that could be bought with money! Money has nothing to do with the gifts of God. St. Peter said to him in a strong voice, "If you act this way, you can go away, you and your money! Your heart is not right in God's eyes. Repent from your bad thoughts, and pray that God can forgive you. For I see that there is some evil in your heart." Then Simon answered and said, "I'm sorry. Pray to the Lord for me, that He will forgive me."

ST PETER AND ST JOHN WENT BACK TO JERUSALEM:

So when St. Peter and St. John had witnessed and taught the word of the Lord, they went back to Jerusalem, teaching the gospel in many villages of the **Samaritans (people of Samaria)**.

PLAN & MATERIALS:

Acting, storytelling, puppets, coloring.

CONCLUSION:

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What is sorcery?

A. Magic

Q. What did Philip do in Samaria?

A. He told the people about Christ, and he made many miracles, and the people believed in Christ the Son of God

Q. Who is Simon?

A. He was a sorcerer who used to trick the Samaritans (people of Samaria) into believing that he was from God and that he could do great things. When he heard Philip preaching, he got baptized and began to follow him.

Q. What did St. Peter and St. John do when they came to Samaria?

A. They laid their hands on the people so that they could receive the Holy Spirit

Q. What did Simon try to do when he saw the apostles doing this?

A. He tried to buy the gifts of God with money, St. Peter spoke to him harshly, and he asked St. Peter to pray for him so that he could repent.

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

O' Heavenly King, the Spirit of truth, the comforter, who is everywhere and fills everybody. You are the treasure of goodness and giver of life, we ask You to graciously come and dwell within us, purify us from iniquity and save our souls.

III. DAILY READINGS

Unit VII

Purpose: In This unit, the revelation of God is completed with the revelation of the Holy Spirit in the Church. We continue the gospel story, to cover the beginning of the "Age of the Church." It is the work of the Holy Spirit in the "New Body of Christ." In all the lessons of this unit, the teacher needs to present the Holy Spirit acting in the disciples according to what our Lord had previously said to them: *"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 thing that I said to you"* John 14:26. *"When the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning."* John 15:26-27. How that the Spirit will strengthens the disciples and encourage them to "witness" for Christ and fill them with joy and peace.

LESSON 38: THE HOLY SPIRIT CONTINUED THE WORK OF OUR LORD IN THE CHURCH III: CONVERSION OF SAUL OF TARSUS

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

ACTS 9:1-30

Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest 2and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. 3As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. 4Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" 5And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It *is* hard for you to kick against the goads." 6So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord *said* to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." 7And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no one. 8Then Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw no one. But they led him by the hand and brought *him* into Damascus. 9And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

10Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and to him the Lord said in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." 11So the Lord *said* to him, "Arise and go to the

street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for *one* called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying. 12And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting *his* hand on him, so that he might receive his sight." 13Then Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. 14And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name." 15But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. 16For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake." 17And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." 18Immediately there fell from his eyes *something* like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized. 19So when he had received food, he was strengthened. Then Saul spent some days with the disciples at Damascus.

20Immediately he preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God. 21Then all who heard were amazed, and said, "Is this not he who destroyed those who called on this name in Jerusalem, and has come here for that purpose, so that he might bring them bound to the chief priests?" 22But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who dwelt in Damascus, proving that this *Jesus* is the Christ.

23Now after many days were past, the Jews plotted to kill him. 24But their plot became known to Saul. And they watched the gates day and night, to kill him. 25Then the disciples took him by night and let *him* down through the wall in a large basket. 26And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple. 27But Barnabas took him and brought *him* to the apostles. And he declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. 28So he was with them at Jerusalem, coming in and going out. 29And he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus and disputed against the Hellenists, but they attempted to kill him. 30When the brethren found out, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him out to Tarsus.

CREED:

Yes we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father. Who is worshiped and glorified with the Father and the Son. Who spoke through the prophets.

St John Chrysostom Commentary on the book of Acts Homily 19

“And Saul, yet breathing out threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.” (ch. 9:1, 2.) He fitly mentions Paul’s zeal, and shows that in the very midst of his zeal he is drawn. “Yet breathing out threatening and slaughter,” and not yet sated with the murder of Stephen, he was not yet glutted with the persecution of the Church, and the dispersion. Lo, this was fulfilled which was spoken by Christ, that “they which kill you shall think they offer worship to God.” (John 16:2.) He then in this wise did it, not as the Jews: God forbid! For that he did it through zeal, is manifest from his going abroad even to strange cities: whereas they would not have cared even for those in Jerusalem; they were for one thing only, to enjoy honor. But why went he to Damascus? It was a great city, a royal city: he was afraid lest that should be lost in thought. And observe his strong desire and ardor (and), how strictly according to the Law he went to work: he goes not to the governor, but “to the priest. That if he found any of this way:” for so the believers were called, probably because of their taking the direct way that leads to heaven. And why did he not receive authority to have them punished there, but brings them to Jerusalem! He did these things here with more authority. And mark on what a peril he casts himself. He was not afraid lest he should take any harm, but (yet) he took others also with him, “that if,” it says, “he found any of this way, whether they were men or women” — Oh, the ruthlessness! — “he might bring them bound.” By this journey of his, he wished to show them all (how he would act): so far were they from being earnest in this matter. Observe him also casting (people) into prison before this. The others therefore did not prevail: but this man did prevail, by reason of his ardent mind. “And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?” (v. 3, 4.) Why not in Jerusalem? why not in Damascus? That there might be no opening for different persons to relate the occurrence in different ways, but that he alone should be the authentic narrator, he that went for this purpose. In fact, he says this [both in his oration on the stairs], and when pleading before Agrippa. “Fell to the earth”: (ch. 22:6; 26:12) for excess of light is wont to shock, because the eyes have their measure: it is said also that excess of sound makes people deaf and stunned (as in a fit). But him it only blinded, and extinguished his passion by fear, so that he should hear what was spoken. “Saul, Saul,” said He, “why do you persecute me?” And He tells him nothing: does not say, Believe, nor anything whatever of the kind: but expresses disagreement with him, all but saying, What wrong, great or small, have you suffered from Me, that you do these things? “And he said, Who are you Lord?” (v. 5) thus in the first place confessing

himself His servant. "And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom you persecute:" think not your warring is with men. And they which were with him heard the voice of Paul, but saw no person to whom he answered — for (the Lord) suffered them to be hearers of what was less important. Had they heard the other Voice, they would not have believed; but perceiving Paul answering (some person), they marveled. "But arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." (v. 6.) Observe, how He does not immediately add all, but first softens his mind. In the same way He called the disciples also a second time. "It shall be told thee," etc.: He gives him good hopes, and (intimates) that he shall recover his sight also. "And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus" (v. 7, 8): — the spoils of the devil, "his goods" (Matthew 13:29), as from some city, yea, some metropolis which has been taken. And the wonder of it is, the enemies and foes themselves brought him in, in the sight of all! "And for three days he neither did eat nor drink, being blinded." (v. 9.) What could equal this? To compensate the discouragement in the matter of Stephen, here is encouragement, in the bringing in of Paul: though that sadness had its consolation in the fact of Stephen's making such an end, yet it also received this further consolation: moreover, the bringing in of the villages of the Samaritans afforded very great comfort. — But why did this take place not at the very first, but after these things? That it might be shown that Christ was indeed risen. This furious assailant of Christ, the man who would not believe in His death and resurrection, the persecutor of His disciples, how should this man have become a believer, had not the power of His resurrection been great indeed? Be it so, that the other Apostles favored (His pretensions): what say you to this man? Why then not immediately after His resurrection? That his hostility might be more clearly shown as open war. The man who is so frantic as even to shed blood and cast men into prisons, all at once believes! It was not enough that he had never been in Christ's company: the believers must be warred upon by him with vehement hostility: he left to none the possibility of going beyond him in fury: none of them all could be so violent. But when he was blinded, then he saw the proofs of His sovereignty and loving kindness: then he answers, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" that none may say that he played the hypocrite, he that was even eager for blood, and went to the priests, and flung himself upon such dangers, in persecuting and bringing to punishment even them that were in foreign parts — under these circumstances he now acknowledges His sovereignty. And why was he shone upon by that light not within the city, but before it? The many would not have believed, since even there (at Jerusalem when the people heard the voice which came from above, they said that "it thundered" (John 12:29, *supra*, note, p. 123); but this man was authority enough in reporting what was his own affair. And bound he was brought in, though not with bonds upon him: and they drew him, who had expected to draw the others. "And he eat not, neither drank:" he condemned himself for the past, he confessed, prayed, besought God. But should any say, This was the effect of compulsion: (we answer) The same thing happened to Elymas: then how came it that he was not changed? (ch. 13. *de Laud. Pauli Hom.* 4: 1, t. 2:p. 491.) What (evidence) could be more compulsory than the earthquake at the Resurrection, the report of the soldiers, the other miracles, the seeing Himself risen? But these things do not compel (belief) they are calculated to teach (it).

Why did not the Jews believe when they were told of these things? That he spoke truth was manifest: for he would not have been changed, had this not happened; so that all were bound to believe. He was not inferior to them that preached the Resurrection, and was more credible, by being all at once converted. He had no intercourse with any of the believers; it was at Damascus that he was converted, or rather before he came to Damascus that this happened to him. I ask the Jew: Say, by what was Paul converted? He saw so many signs, and was not converted: his teacher (Gamaliel, *supra*, p. 87, note) was converted, and he remained unconverted. Who convinced him — and not only convinced, but all at once inspired him with such ardent zeal? Wherefore was it, that he wished even to go into hell itself for Christ's sake? The truth of the facts is manifest. But, as I said, for the present let us take: shame to ourselves (when we think of) the eunuch, both in his baptism and his reading. Do ye mark how he was in a station of great authority, how he was in possession of wealth, and even on his journey allowed himself no rest? What must he have been at home, in his leisure hours, this man who rested not even on his travels? What must he have been at night? Ye that are in stations of dignity, hear: imitate his freedom from pride, (*de Lazaro, Conc.* 3: 3, t. 1:p. 748. c) his piety. Though about to return home, he did not say to himself: "I am going back to my country, there let me receive baptism;" those cold words which most men use! No need had he of signs, no need of miracles: from the Prophet merely, he believed. (b) But why is it (so ordered) that he sees (Philip) not before he goes to Jerusalem, but after he has been there? It was not meet that he should see the Apostles under persecution. Because he was yet weak, the Prophet was not easy; (but yet the Prophet) catechized him. For even now, if any of you would apply himself to the study of the Prophets, he would need no miracles. And, if you please, let us take in hand the prophecy itself. "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened He not His mouth: in His humiliation His judgment was taken away: and who shall declare His generation? for His life is taken from the earth. (v. 22, 23.) It is likely he had heard that He was crucified, [and now he learns], that "His life is taken away from the earth," and the rest that "He did no sin, nor deceit in His mouth:" that He prevailed to save others also: [and] who He is, Whose generation is unutterable. It is likely he had seen the river rocks there (on the spot), and (had heard) how the veil was rent, and how there was darkness, and so forth: and all these things Philip mentioned, merely taking his text from the Prophet. It is a great thing, this reading of the Scriptures! That was fulfilled which was spoken by Moses, "Sitting, lying down, rising up, and walking, remember the Lord thy God." (Deuteronomy 6:7.) For the roads, especially when they are lonely, give us opportunity for reflection, there being none to disturb us. Both this man is on the road and Paul on the road: howbeit the latter no than draws, but Christ alone. This was too great a work for the Apostles: and, greater still, in that, the Apostles being at Jerusalem, and no person of authority at Damascus, he nevertheless returned thence converted: yet those at Damascus knew that he did not come from Jerusalem converted, for he brought letters, that he might put the believers in bonds. Like a consummate Physician, when the fever was at its height, Christ brought help to him: for it was needful that he should be quelled in the midst of his frenzy. For then most of all would he be brought down, and condemn himself as one guilty of dreadful audacity. (a) For these things Paul deplores himself, saying, "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all His long suffering. (1 Timothy 1:13-16.) Verily one has reason to admire this eunuch. He did not see Christ, he saw no miracle: he beheld Jerusalem standing yet entire: he

believed Philippians How came he to behave thus? His soul was earnest Yet the thief (on the cross) had seen miracles: the wise men had seen a star; but this man, nothing of the kind. So great a thing is the careful reading of the Scriptures

What of Paul then! did he not study the law? But he, it seems to me, was specially reserved, for the purpose which I have already mentioned by anticipation, because Christ would happily draw to Himself the Jews by inducements from every quarter. For had they been in their right mind, nothing was so likely to do them good as this; for this, more than miracles and all else, was calculated to attract them: as, on the other hand, nothing is so apt to prove a stumbling block to men of duller minds. See then how, after the Apostle, we have God also doing miracles. They accused the Apostles after these [miracles of theirs]; they cast them into prison: see at that point God doing the miracles. For instance, the bringing them out of prison, was His miracle: the bringing Philip, His miracle: the bringing Paul over, was His—Observe in what way Paul is honored, in what way the eunuch. There, Christ appears, probably because of his hardness, and because Ananias would not (else) have been persuaded. Familiar with these wonders, let us show ourselves worthy. But many in these times, even when they come to church, do not know what is read; whereas the eunuch, even in public and riding in his chariot, applied himself to the reading of the Scriptures. Not so you: none takes the Bible in hand: nay, everything rather than the Bible. Say, what are the Scriptures for? For as much as in you lies, it is all undone. What is the Church for? Tie up the Bibles: perhaps the judgment would not be such, not such the punishment: if one were to bury them in dung, that he might not hear them, he would not so insult them as you do now. For say, what is the insult there? That the man has buried them. And what here? That we do not hear them. Say, when is a person most insulted — when he is silent, and one makes no answer, or, when he does speak (and is unheeded)? So that the, insult is greater in the present case, when He does speak and you will not hear: greater the contempt. “Speak not to us” (Isaiah 30:10), we read, they said of old to the Prophets: but you do worse, saying, Speak: we will not do. For there they turned them away that they should not even speak, as feeling that from the voice itself they got some sort of awe and obligation; whereas you, in the excess of your contempt, do not even this. Believe me, if you stopped our mouths by putting your hands over them, the insult would not be so great as it is now. For say, whether shows greater contempt, he that hears, even when hindering by this action, or, he that will not even hear? Say — if we shall look at it as a case of an insult offered — suppose one person to check the party insulting him, and to stop his mouth, as being hurt by the insults, and another person to show no concern, but pretend not even to hear them: whether will show most contempt? Would you not say the latter? For the former shows that he feels himself hit: the latter all but stops the mouth of God. Did you shudder at what was said? Why, the mouth by which God speaks, is the mouth of God. Just as our mouth is the mouth of our soul, though the soul has no mouth, so the mouth of the Prophets is the mouth of God. Hear, and shudder. There, common (to the whole congregation) stands the deacon crying aloud, and saying, “Let us attend to the reading.” It is the common voice of the whole Church, the voice which he utters, and yet none does attend. After him begins the Reader, “The Prophecy of Isaiah,” and still none attends, although Prophecy has nothing of man in it. Then after this, he says, “Thus says the Lord, and still none attends. Then after this punishments and vengeance, and still even then none attends. But what is the common excuse? “It is always the same things over again.” This it is most of all, that ruins you. Suppose you

knew the things, even so you certainly ought not to turn away: since in the theatres also, is it not always the same things acted over again, and still you take no disgust? How dare you talk about “the same things,” you who know not so much as the names of the Prophets? Are you not ashamed to say, that this is why you do not listen, because it is “the same things over again,” while you do not know the names of those who are read, and this, though always hearing the same things? You have yourself confessed that the same things are said. Were I to say this as a reason for finding fault with you, you would need to have way out to quite a different excuse, instead of this which is the very thing you find fault with. — Do not you exhort your son? Now if he should say, “Always the same things!” would not you count it an insult? It would be time enough to talk of “the same things,” when we both knew the things, and exhibited them in our practice. Or rather, even then, the reading of them would not be superfluous. What equal to Timothy? tell me that: and yet to him says Paul, “Give attention to reading, to exhortation. (Timothy 4:13.) For it is not possible, I say not possible, ever to exhaust the mind of the Scriptures. It is a well which has no bottom. “I said,” said the Preacher, “I am become wise: and then it departed from me.” — (Ecclesiastes 7:24.) Shall I show you that the things are not “the same?” How many persons, do you suppose, have spoken upon the Gospels? And yet all have spoken in a way which was new and fresh. For the more one dwells on them, the more insight does he get, the more does he behold the pure light. Look, what a number of things I am going to speak of: — say, what is narrative? what is prophecy? what is parable? what is type? what is allegory? what is symbol? what are Gospels? Answer me only to this one point, which is plain: why are they called Gospels, “good tidings?” And yet ye have often heard that good news ought to have nothing sad in it: yet this “good news” has abundance of sadness in it. “Their fire,” it says, “shall never be quenched: their worm shall not die:” (Mark 9:44.) “Shall appoint his portion,” it says, “with the hypocrites,” with them that are “cut asunder: then shall He say, I know you not: Depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.” (Matthew 24:51; 7:23.) Surely, we do not deceive ourselves, when we imagine that we tell you in your own mother-tongue these good tidings? *You* look downcast; you are stunned; *you* are struck all of a heap, unable to hold up your heads. “Good news” should have nothing in it of a duty to be done, but rather should counsel what is good: whereas these “Gospels” have endless duties to be done. And again, to mention other things, as for instance, Except a man hate father and mother, he is not worthy of Me” (Luke 14:26): and “I am not come to bring peace upon earth, but a sword” (Matthew 10:34; Luke 12:51): and “In the world ye shall have tribulation — (John 16:33.) excellent a good tidings these, are they not! For good news is such as this — “You shall have this and that good thing:” as uncommon life men say one to another, “What shall I have for my good news? Your father is coming, or, your mother:” he does not say, “You must do this or that.” — Again, tell me, how do the Gospels differ from the Prophets? Why are not the Prophecies also called Gospels, good tidings? For they tell the same things: for instance, “The lame shall leap as an hart.” (Isaiah 35:6.) “The Lord shall give the word to them that preach the Gospel” (Psalm 68:11): and, “A new heaven and a new earth.” (Isaiah 65:17.) Why are not those also called Gospels? But if, while you do not so much as know what “Gospels” mean, you so despise the reading of the Scriptures, what shall I say to you? — Let me speak of something else.

Why four Gospels? why not, ten? why not twenty? If “many have taken in hand to set forth a narrative” (Luke 1:1), why not one person? Why they that were disciples (i.e. Apostles)? why they

that were not disciples? But why any Scriptures at all? And yet, on the contrary, the Old Testament says, "I will give you a New Testament." (Jeremiah 31:31.) Where are they that say, "Always the same things?" If ye knew these, that, though a man should live thousands of years, they are not "the same things," ye would not say this. Believe me, I will not tell you the answers to any of these questions; not in private, not in public: only, if any find them out, I will nod assent. For this is the way we have made you good for- nothing, by always telling you the things ready to your hands, and not refusing when we ought. Look, you have questions enough: consider them, tell me the reasons. Why Gospels? Why not Prophecies? Why duties, to be done, in the Gospels? If one is at a loss, let another seek the answer, and contribute each to the others from what he has: but now we will hold our peace. For if what has been spoken has done you no good, much less would it, should we add more. We only pour water into a vessel full of holes. And the punishment too is all the greater for you. Therefore, we will hold our peace. Which that we may not have to do, it rests with yourselves. For if we shall see your diligence, perhaps we will again speak, that both ye may be more approved, and we may rejoice over you, in all things giving glory to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: to Him be glory and dominion now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

HOMILY 20

ACTS 9:10, 12

"And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he is pray, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight."

WHAT may be the reason that He neither drew any one of high authority and importance, nor caused such to be forthcoming for the purpose of instructing Paul? It was, because it was not meet that he should be induced by men, but only by Christ Himself as in fact this man taught him nothing, but merely baptized him; for, as soon as baptized, he was to draw upon himself the grace of the Spirit, by his zeal and exceeding earnestness. And that Ananias was no very distinguished person, is plain. For, "the Lord," it says, "spoke unto him in a vision, and Ananias answered and said, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he had done to your saints at Jerusalem." (v. 13.) For if he spoke in objection to Him, much more would he have done so, had He sent an angel. And this is why, in the former instance, neither is Philip told what the matter is; but he sees the Angel, and then the Spirit bids him go near to the chariot. But observe here how the Lord. relieves him of his fear: "He is blind," said He, "and prays, and are you afraid?" In the same way Moses also is afraid: so that the words betokened that he was afraid, and shrunk from the task not that he did not believe. He said, "I have heard from many concerning this man." What do say? God speaks, and you hesitates? They, did not yet well know the power of Christ. "And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on your name." (v. 14.) How was that known? It is likely that they, being in fear, made minute enquiries. He does not say this, as thinking that Christ does not know the fact, but, "such being the case, how," says he, "can these things be?" As in fact those (in the Gospel) say, "Who can be saved?" — (Mark 10:26.) This is done, in order that Paul may believe him that shall come to him: "he has seen in a vision:" it has showed him beforehand: "he is praying," said (the Lord): fear not. And observe, He speaks not to him of the success achieved: teaching us

not to speak of our achievements. And, though He saw him afraid, for all this He said it not. "you shall not be disbelieved:" "he has seen," said He, "in a vision a man (named) Ananias:" for this is why it was "in a vision," namely, because he was blind. And not even the exceeding wonderfulness of the thing took possession of the disciple's mind, so greatly was he afraid But observe: Paul being blind, in this way He restored to sight. "But the Lord said unto him, Go your way: for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: for I will show him bow great things he must suffer for My name's sake." (v. 15, 16.)

"Not only," said He, "shall he be a believer, but even a teacher, and great boldness shall he show: before Gentiles and kings' — such shall be the spread of the doctrine! — that just as He astonished (him) by the former, so He may (startle him even more) by the latter. "And Ananias went, and entered into the house, and laid his hands upon him, and said, Brother Saul" — he straightway addresses him as a friend by that name — "Jesus, Who appeared to you in the way in which you came" — and yet Christ had not told him this, but he learnt it from the Spirit — " have sent me to you, that you may receive your sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit." (v. 17.) As he said this, he laid his hands upon him. "And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales." (v. 18.) Some say this was a sign of his blindness. Why did he not blind his eyes (entirely)? This was more wonderful, that, with his eyes open, he did not see: (v. 8) which was just his case in respect of the Law, until the Name of Jesus was put on him. "And he received sight immediately, and arose, and was baptized. And having taken food, he recovered strength." (v. 19.) He was faint, therefore, both from his journey and from his fear; both from hunger, and from sadness of mind. Wishing therefore to deepen his sadness, He made the man blind until the coming of Ananias: and, that he might not imagine the blindness to be (only) fancy, this is the reason of the scales. He needed no other teaching: that which had befallen was made teaching (to him). "And he was with the disciples which were at Damascus certain days. And straightway in the synagogues he preached Jesus, that He is the Son of God." (v. 20.) See, straightway he was: a teacher in the synagogues. He was not a ashamed of the change, was not afraid while the very things in which he was glorious before, the same he destroyed. Even from his first appearance on the stage here was a man, death-dealing, ready for deeds of blood: do you sees what a manifest sign (was here)? And with this very thing, he put all in fear: for, said they, here also is he come for this very thing. "But all that heard him were amazed, and said: Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came here for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests? But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ." (v. 21, 22.) As one learned in the Law, he stopped their mouths, and suffered them not to speak. They thought they were rid of disputation in such matters, in getting rid of Stephen, and they found another, more vehement than Stephen.

(Recapitulation.) But let us look at what relates to Ananias. The Lord said not to him, Converse with him, and catechize him. For if, when He said, "He prays, and has seen a man laying his hands upon him." (v. 11, 12.)

He did not persuade him, much less had He said this. So that he shall not disbelieve you, "he has seen in a vision." Observe how in the former instance neither is Philip told all immediately. Fear not, He said: "for this man is a chosen vessel for Me. (v. 15.) He more than sufficiently released him of

his fear, if the case be so that this man shall be so zealous in our cause, as even to suffer many things. And justly he is called “a vessel” (or, instrument) — for reason shows that evil is not a physical quality: “a vessel of election” (or, chosen instrument), He said; for we choose that which is approved. And let not any imagine, that (Ananias) speaks in unbelief of what was told him, as imagining that Christ was deceived: far from it! but affrighted and trembling, he did not even attend to what was said, at hearing the name of Paul. Moreover, the Lord does not tell that He has blinded him: at the mention of his name fear had prepossessed his soul: “see,” he says, “to whom are you betraying me: ‘and here for this very purpose is he come, to bind all that call upon Your Name.’ I fear, lest he take me to Jerusalem: why do You cast me into the mouth of the lion?” He is terrified, even while he speaks these words; that from every quarter we may learn the energetic character of the man. For that these things should be spoken by Jews, were nothing wonderful: but that these (the believers) are so terrified, it is a most mighty proof of the power of God. Both the fear is shown, and the obedience greater after the fear.

For there was indeed need of strength. Since He says, “‘a vessel of election,” that you may not imagine that God is to do all, He adds, “to bear My Name before Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel. Ananias has heard what he most desired — that against the Jews also he will take his stand: this above all gave him courage. “For I,” said He, “will show him how great things he must suffer for My Name’s sake.” At the same time also this is said by way of putting Ananias to the blush: If he, that was so frantic, shall suffer all things, and you not willing even to baptize him! “It is well,” said he: “let him continue blind” (this is why he says these words): “he is blind: why do you at all bid me open his eyes, that he may bind (men) again?” Fear not the future: for that opening of his eyes he will use not against you, but for you (with reference to that saying, “That he may receive his sight” (v. 12), these words are spoken): for not only will he do you no harm, but he “will suffer many things.” And what is wonderful indeed is, that he shall first know “how great things he shall suffer,” and then shall take the field against the perils. — “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus” — he said not, “Who made you blind,” but, “Who appeared to you in the way, has sent me to you that you may receive your sight” (v. 17): observe this man also, how he utters nothing boastful, but just as Peter said in the case of the lame man, “Why do you look on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made him to walk,” (ch. 3:12) so here also he said, “Jesus, Who appeared unto thee.” (b) Or, (he said it) that the other may believe: and he said not, He that was crucified, the Son of God, He that does wonders: but what? “He that appeared to you:” (speaking) from what the other knew: as Christ also added no more, neither said, I am Jesus, the Crucified, the Risen: but what? “Whom you persecute.” Ananias said not, “The persecuted,” that he may not seem as it were to rave over him, to deride him, “Who appeared to you in the way:” and yet He did not (visibly) appear, but was seen by the things done. And immediately he added, wishing to draw a veil over the accusation: “That you may receive your sight.” I came not to reprove the past, but to bestow the gift: “that you may receive your sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit.”

(a) With hands laid on, he spoke these words. “And immediately there fell from his eyes,” etc. (v. 18: a double blindness is removed. — And why said it, “Having taken food, he was strengthened?” (v. 19.) Because they that are in such case become relaxed: he had no heart to partake of food before, until he obtained the mighty gifts. (c) It seems to me, that both Paul and Cornelius, at the very instant when the words were spoken, received the Spirit. And yet (in this case) the giver was

no great one. So true is it, that there was naught of man's in the things done, nor anything was done by man, but God was present, the Doer of these things. And at the same time (the Lord) both teaches him to think modestly of himself, in that He does not bring him to the Apostles who were so admired, and shows that there is nothing of man here. He was not filled, however, with the Spirit which works signs: that in this way also his faith might be shown; for he wrought no miracles. "And straightway," it says, "in the synagogues he preached Jesus" — (v. 20) not that He is risen — not this: no, nor that He lives: but what? immediately he strictly expounded the doctrine — "that this is the Son of God. And all that heard him were amazed," etc. (v. 21.) They were reduced to utter astonishment. And yet they ought not to have wondered only, but to worship and reverence. "Is not this he," etc. He had not merely been a persecutor, but "destroyed them which called on this Name" — they did not say, "on Jesus;" for hatred, they could not bear even to hear His name — and what is more marvelous still, "and came here for this purpose," etc. "We cannot say, that he associated with the Apostles before." See by how many (witnesses) he is confessed to have been of the number of the enemies!

But Paul not only was not confounded by these things, nor hid his face for shame, but "increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews" (v. 22), i.e. put them to silence, left them nothing to say for themselves, "proving, that this is very Christ." "Teaching," it says: for this man was a teacher. "And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him." (v. 23.) The Jews again resort to that valid argument of theirs, not now seeking false-accusers and false witnesses; they cannot wait for these now: but what do they? They set about it by themselves. For as they see the affair on the increase, they do not even use the form of a trial. "But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him." (v. 24.) For this was more intolerable to them than the miracles which had taken place — than the five thousand, the three thousand, than everything, in short. And observe him, how he is delivered, not by (miraculous) grace, but by man's wisdom — not as the apostles were — (ch. v. 19) that you may learn the energetic character of the man, how he shines even without miracles. "Then the disciples took him by night," that the affair might not be suspected, "and let him down by the wall in a basket." (v. 25.) What then? having escaped such a danger, does he flee? By no means, but goes where he kindled them to greater rage.

(Recapitulation, 5:20, 21.) "And straightway in the synagogues he preached Jesus" — for he was accurate in the faith — "that this is the Son of God. But all that heard him were amazed," etc., for indeed it was incredible. "But Saul increased," etc. Therefore "after many days" this happens: viz. the Jews "took counsel to kill him. And their laying await was known of Saul." (v. 22-24.)

What does this mean? It is likely that for awhile he did not choose to depart thence, though many, perhaps, besought him; but when he learnt it, then he permitted his disciples: for he had disciples immediately. "Then the disciples," etc. (v. 25.) Of this occurrence he says: "The ethnarch of Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to apprehend me." (2 Corinthians 11:32.) But observe the Writer here, that he does not tell the story ambitiously, and so as to show what an important person Paul was, saying, "For they stirred up the king," and so forth: but only, "Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall — in a basket:" for they sent him out alone, and none with him. And it was well they did this: the consequence being, that he showed himself to the Apostles in Jerusalem. Now they sent him out, as bound to provide for his

safety by flight: but he did just the contrary — he leaped into the midst of those who were mad against him. This it is to be on fire, this to be fervent indeed! From that day forth he knew all the commands which the Apostles had heard: “Except a man take up his cross, and follow Me.” (Matthew 10:38.) The very fact that he had been slower to come than the rest made him more zealous: for “to whom much is forgiven” (Luke 7:47) the same will love more, so that the later he came, the more he loved: and having done ten thousand wrongs, he thought he could never do enough to cast the former deeds into the shade. “Proving” (v. 22), it says: i.e. with mildness teaching. And observe, they did not say to him, you are he that destroyed: why are you changed? for they were ashamed: but they said it to themselves. For he would have said to them, This very thing ought to teach you, as in fact he does thus plead in his speech before Agrippa. Let us imitate this, man: let us bear our souls in our hands ready to confront all dangers. — (That he fled from Damascus) this was no cowardice: he preserved himself for the preaching. Had he been a coward, he would not have gone to Jerusalem, would not immediately have commenced teaching: he would have reduced somewhat of his vehemence: for bad he been taught by the fate of Stephen. He was no coward, but he was also prudent (in husbanding himself). Wherefore he thought it no great thing to die for the Gospel’s sake, unless he should do this to great advantage: willing not even to see Christ, Whom most of all he longed to see, while the work of his stewardship among men was not yet complete. (Philippians 1:23, 24). Such ought to be the soul of a Christian. From his first appearance from the very outset, the character of Paul declared itself: nay even before this, even in the things which he did “not according to knowledge” (Romans 10:2), it was not by man’s reasoning that he was moved to act as he did. For if, so long afterwards, he was content not to depart, much more at the beginning of his trading voyage, when he had but just left the harbor! Many things Christ leaves to be done by (ordinary) human wisdom, that we may learn that (his disciples) were men, that it was not all everywhere to be done by grace: for otherwise they would have been mere motionless logs: but in many things they managed matters themselves. This is not less than martyrdom, — to shrink from no suffering for the sake of the salvation of the many. Nothing so delights God. Again will I repeat what I have often said: and I repeat it, because I do exceedingly desire it: as Christ also did the same, when discoursing concerning forgiveness: “When you pray, forgive if ye have anything against any man:” (Mark 11:25.) and again to Peter He said, “I do not say to you, Forgive until seven times, but until seventy-times seven.” (Matthew 18:22.) And Himself in fact forgives the transgressions against Him. So do we also, because we know that this is the very goal of Christianity, continually talk of that. Nothing is more frigid than a Christian, who cares not for the salvation of others. You cannot here plead poverty: for she that cast down the two mites, shall be your accuser. (Luke 21:1.) And Peter said, “Silver and gold I do not have.” (Acts 3:6.) And Paul was so poor, that he was often hungered, and wanted necessary food. You cannot plead lowness of birth: for they too were men of no honorable descent, and of ignoble parents. You cannot allege want of education: for they too were “unlearned men.” (Acts 4:13.) Even if you be a slave therefore and a runaway slave, you can perform your part: for such was Onesimus: yet see to what Paul calls him, and to how great honor he advances him: “that he may communicate with me,” he says, “in my bonds.” (Philemon 5:13.) You cannot plead infirmity, for such was Timothy, having many infirmities; for, says the apostle, “Use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake, and your many infirmities.” (1 Timothy 5:23.) Every one can profit his neighbor, if he will fulfill his part. See ye

not the unfruitful trees, how strong they are, how fair, how large also, and smooth, and of great height? But if we had a garden; we should much rather have pomegranates, or fruitful olive trees: for the others are for delight to the eye, not for profit, which in them is but small. Such are those men who only consider their own interest: nay, not such even since these persons are fit only for burning: whereas those trees are useful both for building and for the safety of those within. Such too were those Virgins, chaste indeed, and decent, and modest, but profitable to none (Matthew 25:1) wherefore they are burned. Such are they who have not nourished Christ. For observe that none of those are charged with particular sins of their own, with fornication, for instance, or with perjury; in short, with no sin but the having been of no use to another. Such was he who buried his talent, showing indeed a blameless life, but not being useful to another. (ib. 25.) How can such an one be a Christian? Say, if the leaven being mixed up with the flour did not change the whole into its own nature, would such a thing be leaven? Again, if a perfume shed no sweet odor on those who approach it, could we call it a perfume? Say not, "It is impossible for me to induce others (to become Christians)" — for if you are a Christian, it is impossible but that it should be so. For as the natural properties of things cannot be contradicting itself, so it is here: the thing is part of the very nature of the Christian. Do not insult God. To say, that the sun cannot shine, would be to insult Him: to say that a Christian cannot do good, is to insult God, and call Him a liar. For it is easier for the sun not to give heat, nor to shine, than for the Christian not to send forth light: it is easier for the light to be darkness, than for this to be so. Tell me not that it is impossible: the contrary is the impossible. Do not insult God. If we once get our own affairs in a right state, the other will certainly follow as a natural and necessary consequence. It is not possible for the light of a Christian to be hid; not possible for a lamp so noticeable as that to be concealed. Let us not be careless. For, as the profit from virtue reaches both to ourselves, and to those who are benefited by it: so from vice there is a twofold loss, reaching both to ourselves, and to those who are injured by it. Let there be (if you will) some private man, who has suffered numerous harms from someone, and let no one take his part, yet let that man still return good works; what teaching so mighty as this? What words, or what exhortations could equal it? What wrath were it not enough to extinguish and soften? Knowing therefore these things, let us hold fast to virtue, as knowing that it is not possible to be saved otherwise, than by passing through this present life in doing these good works, that we may also obtain the good things which are to come, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom to the Father together with the Holy Spirit be glory, might, honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

REFLECTION:

St. Paul's conversion is a story of the work of both the Son and the Holy Spirit. Our Lord continued to appear to St. Paul to instruct him on many things, while the Spirit strengthened him from within, granted him understanding of things and performed miracles on his hands. The Lord took from him the old sight; the Spirit granted him new sight. We can see the stages of the baptism of Saul: the

“Sermon’s Oil” on the road, the “Oil of Joy” in the house with opening the eyes, then the Emersion in the water.

PRAYER:

O’ Lord, who sent Your Holy Spirit upon the holy disciples and honourable apostles at the third hour, do not take this away from us, O righteous Lord. We ask You our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God the Logos, renew with in us a right and life giving spirit, a filial spirit of chastity, holiness, justice and authority. Our Almighty God, the light of our souls, illuminating every person who comes into this world, have mercy upon us.

Litany of the Third hour - Agpeya

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG

He ascended to the heavens..

VOCABULARY:

Saul Damascus, persecute, gauds, Ananias

INTRODUCTION:

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What did the lame man used to do before he was healed?

A. He used to sit outside the gate of the temple and beg for money

Q. What happened when he asked St. Peter and St. John for money?

A. They fixed their eyes on him, and said, “Silver and gold I do not have, but I will give you what I do have: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.” And he was healed right then.

Q. What did St. Peter tell all the people who were so surprised by what had happened to the lame man?

A. Faith in the name of the Jesus Christ is what healed this man

Q. Why did the Jewish leaders get angry with St. Peter and St. John?

A. They did not want them to teach the people about our Lord and about how He had risen from the dead. They wanted to keep the attention on themselves instead of on Jesus.

Q. What did the leaders do to try to keep the disciples from preaching anymore?

A. They ordered them not to preach and they threatened them

Q. What did the disciples say and do after this?

A. They said that it would be better to listen to God than to listen to the rulers, and they went back to the rest of their companions and they all prayed together for strength to continue preaching Christ's name. God heard their prayer and the place where they were shook.

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." Acts 3:6

CONNECTION POINT

The Holy Spirit who came on the disciples on the day of Pentecost, had made many miracles through the disciples and this week, will see how Our Lord is going to meet Saul on the way to Damascus and lead him to know Him as the True God. We shall see how the Holy Spirit works inside the heart to transform the person to become Christ like.

LESSON BODY:

SAUL OF TARSAUS

At around this same time, there was a man named Saul who lived in the same area where St. Peter and St. John were. He was from the Jews. As a matter of fact, he was one of the best Jews – he did everything he was supposed to do, and he was even a teacher for other Jews. There is one

important thing about this man that we need to know: he was very angry at the Christians because they followed our Lord Jesus. He wanted to hurt them if they do not stop praying to our Lord and talking about Him to others. Saul was so angry at the Christians that he used to travel to different cities especially to find them and put them in prison. It was something very important for him to do. One day he wanted to go all the way to **Damascus (a big city in Syria)** to find the Christians there and put them in prison. Before he left, he took with him some letters from the leaders of the Jews that said if Saul was to find any man, woman or child who believes in our Lord, he would tie them up and bring them tied up to Jerusalem as a prisoner. Even children!

ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS

As Saul was going to Damascus, making plans in his head the whole time about where he was going to look for the Christians and how he wanted to make sure to find as many as possible, something happened. It was about noon, when all of a sudden, a very bright light from heaven shone all around him. It was brighter than the sun. Right away, he fell down to the ground. The next thing that happened was that he heard a voice, saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" And Saul said, "Who are You, Lord?" He was very afraid. Of course, we know who it was – it was our Lord Jesus Christ. Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are **persecuting (giving hard time for the wrong reasons)**. It is hard for you to kick against the **goads (the little nails in the shoes of the horse rider, when the rider uses it the horse would have to run)**." Our Lord meant two things by this: First, Saul thought he was hurting the Christians, but really – *he* (Saul) was the one being hurt! All of his anger and all of his worries were hurting him from the inside. The second thing our Lord meant was that by hurting the Christians, Saul was hurting Christ Himself! Can you believe this? When someone hurts us, our Lord also feels the hurt with us. Saul was very afraid when he heard this and he started to shake and was shocked. The Holy Spirit told him in his heart that **persecuting** Christians was not the right thing to do, and he felt bad about it. He knew he was doing something wrong. He said to our Lord, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord *said* to him, "Get up and go into the city, and someone will tell you what you need to do." Saul stood up, but something was different in him: he was blind and people had to lead him by the hand because he couldn't see where he was going. He stayed blind for three days and he did not eat or drink anything.

ANANIAS VISION

In the city of **Damascus** there was a holy man, his name was Ananias. Our Lord appeared to him and told him to go to Saul, and that he was blind. He told Ananias to put his hand on him so that he can see again. Ananias did not know what to think. He knew that Saul was someone who hurt the Christians, what would he do to him if he went to him? Ananias said to our Lord: "Lord, I have heard from many people about this man, how much harm he has done to Your people in Jerusalem. And

here he has letters from the leaders to tie up all who call on Your name." But the Lord said to him, "Go, for I have chosen him, and he will bear My name before other countries, kings, and the Jews. And he will go through hard times for Me."

SAUL'S BAPTISM

Ananias believed our Lord and listened to Him. He went to the house where Saul was; he put his hands on Saul. Ananias said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Immediately something fell down from his eyes – it looked like flakes – and he could see. The Holy Spirit healed his eyes. He stood up and was baptized and the Holy Spirit came and lived in his heart. In that moment he became the child of God. Then he ate something, and felt better. Then Saul spent some days with the church at Damascus. Do you see how much our Lord changed him from inside? One day he was looking for the Christians to hurt them, the next day he was a Christian himself!

SAUL'S ESCAPE

Not only did Saul become Christian, but also the Holy Spirit who was in St. Paul's heart gave him courage to teach the other Jews about our Lord Jesus. This made so many people very surprised. They knew how he used to hurt the Christians, so they were confused about how he would be teaching about Christ! But Saul talked even more about Jesus our Lord. Now he loved Him. The Jews then started to get angry at Saul and they even planned to kill him. But Saul found out about it, and the Christians in **Damascus** took him and helped him escape in a big basket over the wall of the city. They lowered him down in the basket, so that no one would be able to see him leaving. Saul went to stay with St. Peter in Jerusalem, and he had a new name now: St. Paul.

PLAN & MATERIALS:

Storytelling, Acting, coloring, scrap book, singing

CONCLUSION:

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What was Saul going to Damascus to do?

A. *to find Christians and tie them up and bring them to Jerusalem*

Q. Who appeared to Saul on the road?

A. *Our Lord Jesus appeared to him.*

Q. What did our Lord tell him to do?

A. *To enter the city*

Q. What did Saul see on the road?

A. *A great light.*

Q. What happened when Ananias put his hands on him?

A. *something like flakes came of his eyes and he was able to see again*

Q. How did Saul escape from Damascus?

A. *The disciples lowered him in a big basket from the walls of Damascus.*

Q. What is the new name of Saul?

A. *St. Paul*

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads." Acts 3:6

III. Daily Readings

Unit VII

Purpose: In This unit, the Revelation of God is completed with the revelation of the Holy Spirit in the Church. We continue the gospel story, to cover the beginning of the "Age of the Church." It is the work of the Holy Spirit in the "New Body of Christ." In all the lessons of this unit, the teacher needs to present the Holy Spirit acting in the disciples according to what our Lord had previously said to them: *"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 thing that I said to you"* John 14:26. *"When the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning."* John 15:26-27. How that the Spirit will strengthens the disciples and encourage them to "witness" for Christ and fill them with joy and peace.

LESSON 39: THE HOLY SPIRIT CONTINUED THE WORK OF OUR LORD IN THE CHURCH IV: ST. MARK'S MISSION TO EGYPT

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

SYNAXARIUM: THE 30TH DAY OF THE BLESSED MONTH OF BARAMOUDAH.

On this day, which coincided with the 26th of April 68 A.D., the great apostle St. Mark, the evangelist of the land of Egypt, was martyred. He was the first Pope of Alexandria and one of the Seventy Apostles. His name was John, as the Holy Bible says: "He came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying" (Acts 12:12). He was the one that the Lord Christ, to Whom is the glory, meant when He said: "Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, The Teacher says, My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at your house with My disciples" (Matthew 26:18). His house was the first Christian church, where they ate the Passover, hid after the death of the Lord Christ, and in its upper room the Holy Spirit came upon them.

This Saint was born in Cyrene (One of the Five Western cities, Pentapolis - in North Africa). His father's name was Aristopolus and his mother's name was Mary. They were Jewish in faith, rich and of great honor. They educated him with the Greek and Hebrew cultures. He was called Mark after they immigrated to Jerusalem, where St. Peter had become a disciple to the Lord Christ. St. Peter

was married to the cousin of Aristopolus. Mark visited St. Peter's house often, and from him he learned the Christian teachings. Once Aristopolus and his son Mark were walking near the Jordan River, close by the desert, they encountered a raving lion and a lioness. It was evident to Aristopolus that it would be his end and the end of his son, Mark. His compassion for his son compelled him to order him to escape to save himself. Mark answered, "Christ, in whose hands our lives are committed, will not let them prey on us." Saying this, he prayed, "O, Christ, Son of God protect us from the evil of these two beasts and terminate their offspring from this wilderness." Immediately, God granted this prayer, and the two beasts fell dead. His father marveled and asked his son to tell him about the Lord Christ. He believed in the Lord Christ at the hands of his son who baptized him.

After the ascension of the Lord Christ, he accompanied Paul and Barnabas to preach the Gospel in Antioch, Seleucia, Cyprus, Salamis, and Perga Pamphylia where he left them and returned to Jerusalem. After the Apostolic Council in Jerusalem, he went with Barnabas to Cyprus. After the departure of Barnabas, with the order of the Lord Christ, St. Mark went to Afrikia, Berka, and the Five Western cities. He preached the Gospel in these parts, and believed on his hands most of its people. From there, he went to Alexandria in the 1st of Bashans 61 A.D. When he entered the city, his shoe was torn because of the much walking in preaching and evangelism. He went to a cobbler in the city, called Anianus, to repair it. While he was repairing it the awl pierced his finger. Anianus shouted in Greek saying "EIS THEOS" which means "O, ONE GOD". When St. Mark heard these words his heart rejoiced exceedingly. He found it suitable to talk to him about the One God. The Apostle took some clay, spat on it and applied it to Anianus' finger, saying in the Name of Jesus Christ the Son of God, and the wound healed immediately, as if nothing happened to it. Anianus was exceedingly amazed from this miracle that happened in the Name of Jesus Christ, and his heart opened to the word of God. The Apostle asked him about who was the only God that he cried for when he was injured. Anianus replied "I heard about him, but I do not know him." St. Mark started explaining to him from the beginning, the creation of heaven and earth, the transgression and fall of Adam, the flood, how God sent Moses, who brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, and gave them the Law, the captivity of the children of Israel to Babylon, and the prophecies that foretold the coming of Christ. Anianus invited him to go to his house and brought to him his children. The Saint preached and baptized them in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. When the believers in the Name of Christ increased and the pagan people of the city heard that, they were raged with anger and thought of slaying St. Mark. The faithful advised him to get away for a short while for the sake of the safety of the church and its care. St. Mark ordained St. Anianus a Bishop for Alexandria, three priests and seven deacons. He went to the Five Western Cities, remained there for two years preaching, and ordained bishops, priests, and deacons. He returned to Alexandria where he found the believers had increased in number, and built a church for them in

the place known as Bokalia (The place of cows), east of Alexandria on the sea shore. It came to pass, when he was celebrating the feast of the Resurrection on the 29th day of Baramudah, year 68 A.D., the same day coincided with the great pagan Celebration for the feast of the god Syrabis, a multitude of them assembled and attacked the church at Bokalia and forced their way in. They seized St. Mark, bound him with a thick rope and dragged him in the roads and streets crying, "Drag the dragon to the place of Cows." They continued dragging him with severe cruelty. His flesh was torn and scattered everywhere, and the ground of the city was covered with his blood. They cast him that night into a dark prison. The angel of the Lord appeared to him and told him: "O Mark, the good servant, rejoice for your name has been written in the book of life, and you have been counted among the congregation of the saints." The angel disappeared, then the Lord Christ appeared to him, and gave him peace. His soul rejoiced and was glad. The next morning (30th of Baramudah), the pagans took St. Mark from the prison. They tied his neck with a thick rope and did the same as the day before, dragging him over the rocks and stones. Finally, St. Mark delivered up his pure soul in the hand of God, and received the crown of martyrdom, the apostolic crown, the crown of evangelism, and the crown of virginity. Nevertheless, St. Mark's death did not satisfy the rage of the pagans and their hatred. They gathered much firewood and prepared an inferno to burn him. A severe storm blew and heavy rains fell. The pagans became frightened, and they fled away in fear. The believers came and took the holy body, carried it to the church they built at Bokalia, wrapped it up, prayed over him and place it in a coffin. They laid it in a secret place in this church.

CREED:

Yes we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father. Who is worshiped and glorified with the Father and the Son. Who spoke through the prophets.

CHURCH FATHERS:

From HH Pope Shenouda's book on St Mark

INTRODUCTION

We are indebted to this great preacher, who came to our country to teach in the name of Christ. The Word of God reached us after his blood was shed on our land. We appreciate this Saint, the first to write the Gospel registering the life of Lord Christ and His Works, so humanity can be saved. We are grateful to the Saint whose name was given to the first church in our country, where his body was buried and after him our Patriarchs were chosen. Their first duty was to get blessed by his tomb and holding his skull and dressing it with a new garment.

The great Saint preached in the name of Christ in Egypt, Libya, Cyprus, some countries in Asia, Rome and other European countries. He is honored by Venice and other countries are seeking his blessings. That is the apostle, the preacher, the evangelist, the martyr, the beholder of God, whose home was the first church in the world [Acts 12 - 12]. In this home, God instituted the sacrament of the Eucharist and His disciples were with the Holy Spirit. He did many miracles and was symbolized by a lion. This lion is also the symbol of his Gospel and character. Alas. we neglected the Saint in the past ! Now we will try, from our hearts to honor him, as a father for all of us. We celebrated the return of his relics with enormous joy. A new cathedral was built and was given his name, so were other churches built everywhere carrying his name, in Egypt and in the lands of immigration, where our sons and daughters proudly feel, that they belong to this great preacher. His name was given to our first bishop in France. His works, evoke the deep and cordial feelings in our hearts, whenever we celebrate his feast. To follow his way, is the least to express our feelings towards this great preacher. It is nice to complete his work in preaching and teaching, and to remember his struggle for the faith. He took numerous trips, through the three continents, the ones known at his time. He walked along the long roads till his sandals were torn. Let his spirit be with us and by the Grace of God, we can proudly follow his path . This book is just a kind of expression of our gratitude towards the great teacher and to acquaint his sons and daughters all over the world, with his pure life, that suffered and struggled so the faith can reach us. This book was written in 1968 on the occasion of the return of the relics of St. Mark to Egypt and the establishment of the Saint Mark Great Cathedral at Anba Ruweis in Cairo. The book was reprinted to satisfy the demands from the public for their benefit .

Thanks to those who contributed in issuing this edition, particularly the staff at the Printing Shop at the Great Cathedral in Anba Ruweis.

Shenouda III

CHAPTER ONE

THE UPRAISING OF SAINT MARK

A Jew With A Gentile Character:

St. Mark was a Jew from the Levite Tribe, he preached both Jews and Gentiles, but mainly among the gentiles. He had two names, "John", is the Jewish name and "Mark", is the gentile one. Mark became his distinctive name. He was born a Jew in Africa, thus he is an African born Apostle. His birthplace was in Gyrène, one of the Five Western Cities in Libya, in a small village called Aberyatolos.

Two Names:

His Jewish name, "John", meant "The Kindness of God" and it was mentioned twice in the Book of Acts. [Acts 13:5, 13]. His Roman name was "Mark" which meant a "hammer", an unfamiliar name to the Jews. Josephus, in his book, mentioned that he was the cousin of Philo. Our Apostle was mentioned as Mark in all the epistles of St. Paul [Cor 4:10 ; Phi 24 ; II Tim 4:11] ; St. Peter in [1 Peter 5:13] and in the Book of Acts [Acts 15:39] On three occasions, his two names were mentioned together. It was either said, John who was named Mark, or John who was known as Mark.

A Religious Family :

Mark was raised in a religious family, many of its members were the acquaintance to Lord Christ Himself. His mother was one of the "Mary's" who followed Christ. The believers gathered and prayed at her house, at the time of the Apostles. [Acts 12:12] She was a reverend woman and highly regarded by the early Christians. His father was Artistopolos, a cousin of the wife of St. Peter the Apostle. St. Paul mentioned that he was also related to Barnabas, one of the seventy apostles. St. Paul told the Colossians, "Aristarchus my fellow prisoner salutes you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas." [Col 4:10]. However, some of the Greek, Latin and Coptic translations didn't mention the phrase "nephew of Barnabas", may be due to the fact that some of the Greek words had more than one meaning. Bishop Yousab of Fouwa, in his book, "The History of The Patriarchs", wrote that St. Mark was related to St. Thomas the Apostle. A religious family with such ties to the Lord Christ was a good environment for young Mark to grow up. Anba Severus Ben Al Mokafaa, the Bishop of Al Ashmouneen, wrote in his book, " The History of The Patriarchs of Alexandria", that St. Mark the Apostle was born in Gyréne to religious parents who knew the Law and the Prophets. His uncle Barnabas, or his cousin, was one of the first who sold property and lived a shared life with the Apostles, as mentioned in the Book, "And Joseph who by the Apostles was surnamed Barnabas, a Levite, from Cyprus", "Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the Apostles' feet " [Acts 4:36.37]. The Book of Acts testified , "For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith." The Holy Spirit chose him to preach with Paul, telling him, " Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" [Acts 13:2] With Barnabas, who was filled by the Holy Spirit and faith and with Paul , John and Mark, served as the Book described, "And they had also John to their minister". [Acts 13:5]

His Birth and Upraising:

He was born in Gyréne, in the Western Five Cities, where his father and uncle were rich. His mother was also rich and was capable of teaching him Greek, Latin and Hebrew. He excelled in them, and became well educated in religion. He studied The Law and the history of the prophets. Because of that wealth of knowledge, some thought he was a translator to Peter the Apostle during his missionary. It was mentioned that some barbaric tribes attacked the family's properties in Gyréne, at the time of Augustus Caesar, that forced them to emigrate to Palestine. By the time Lord Christ began His teaching, the family was already settled there. That was how Mark met The Lord and became one of his disciples. His mother Mary also hosted Him in her house and was among the women who served Him. It was mentioned that Mark was at the Wedding of Cana of Galilee, where God did His first miracle, changing the water into wine. [John 2} He was among those who tasted it.

ST. MARK'S HOME, THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

No home had more fame than St. Mark's home. It was there where Lord Jesus Christ observed the Passover with his pure disciples. There He washed their feet and gave them His Covenant, His Holy Body and Blood. That was where the disciples hid before the resurrection. In it, the Holy Spirit filled the disciples and they spoke in tongues. This great home was the first Christian Church and its most upper room was the famous Zion chamber. All these facts were mentioned in our Coptic references as well as in books of the Catholics, Protestants and other churches. In his book " Les Saints d'Egypte", Father Paul Dorliane Chineau testified that Mark was known as 'son of Mary', the neighbor and the hostess of Christ, and that Mary's home was where Christ celebrated the last

Passover, It was built on Mount Zion, on the big rock. Another distinctive testimony was what Cardinal Bareaunios, a Catholic scholar in the sixteenth century, referred to St. Mark's home, "It was a destination for the Lord Christ and His followers, where He celebrated the Passover with them and where they hid after His death. In its upper room, the Holy Spirit filled them, thus it became the first Christian church. The same was mentioned by Theodosius, a Sixth Century writer, in his book "The Holy Land", and was published by Gildemeister in *De Situ Terrae Sanctae* (43 p. 20) The British Encyclopedia mentioned that St. Mark's home was the center of the Christian life in Jerusalem. As The Lord Christ celebrated the Passover in St. Mark's home, all scholars concluded that he was the man who carried the water pitcher, Our God talked about to His disciples and said, " Go you into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him. And wheresoever's he shall go in, say you to the goodman of the house, The Master said, where is the guest chamber, where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples? " [Mark 14: 13-15] & [Luke 22: 10-12] Alexander pointed to this in his book " Landatio Barnaboe " 13 p. 440. The upper chamber in St. Mark's home, where the disciples of God assembled, was mentioned, "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brethren." [Acts 1: 14] In the same room where they were sitting, the Holy Spirit filled them, and it " Filled the house" ; "They began to speak with other tongues". [Acts 2:1-4] Accordingly, this house witnessed the establishment of the First Church. Thus it wasn't surprising to honor this house as the first church. When the angel freed St. Peter from the prison, he went directly to this house, "He came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark ; where many were gathered together praying". [Acts 12:12] What a person he would be in such amazing spiritual environment ? A person who served the Lord. ! A person who was raised in the arms of his righteous mother, among relatives of Christ's Apostles, in a house which God entered, where He gave His Body and His Blood and filled them with the Holy Spirit. Nobody within such an environment, would be, other than the Beholder of God, St. Mark the Evangelist, who joined His disciples, and became one of the selected Seventy Apostles.

ONE OF THE SEVENTY APOSTLES

A: Historian's Opinions:

Throughout the years, the Coptic historians professed that St. Mark was one of the seventy apostles, as mentioned by Luke the Evangelist. [Luke 10:1-12] Our contemporary writers, (19) as well as those in the Middle Ages. shared this fact. Severus Ben Al- Mokafaa, Bishop of Al-Ashmouneen, in the tenth century mentioned it in his book. (20) Ben Kabar included his name in both, the original Coptic and the Greek lists of the apostles (21) This was also reported by Al Maqrizi, a Muslim historian from the Middle Ages, saying that he was among the seventy. Describing Mark as the Evangelist whose name was John, who spoke three "tongues", Foreign, Hebrew and Greek. Ibn Al Salibi, Bishop of Amad, in 1149, included him among the seventy two. St. Epiphanius, Bishop of Cyprus mentioned this fact in his book. Before him, Origen, a scholar of the second and third centuries, reported this in his book the "Faith in God", saying that Mark was among the seventy, who were chosen by God to be His messengers. Among the non Orthodox, we find Al Mushreki in an introduction, explaining the Gospel of St. Mark, included him among the

seventy apostles and was named Theophoros, meaning the bearer of God. Chineau, who is a Catholic, in his book " Les Saints d' Egypte ", called Mark an apostle. [Apôtre]

In our Church's Ritual Books:

Mark the apostle, is the title given to this Saint, in all the prayers and praises. He has another title in the Doxologies, as in the song of Watus, referring to him as 'Christ's disciple'. That is the same title which is repeated in all the songs for the Saint, in the book for the Annual Praises. When we read his Gospel we say , "From the Book of St. Mark the preacher and the pure disciple" He is always mentioned as a disciple and an apostle of God. On his feast day 30, Baramoda, the readings are about the selection of the apostles, their work and their authority. Among the very distinctive testimonies that support this belief, are the readings of his Gospel during the "Cross and Palm Processions". In front of each icon, relevant readings are read. In front of the icon of the angels, the related readings are said, and so on for the icons of the martyrs. When the icon of St. Mark is reached, the verses from the Gospel according to St. Luke are read, beginning with, "After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also and sent them two and two before His face...". Our Catholic brethren confess his apostleship as an apostle, as shown in the Theotokion where it is said: a- "O Mark the apostle the evangelist... all earth's tribes are blessed by you. Your words reached everywhere." Probably the last phrase was taken from Psalms 18:4. that gives the idea that his service was more universal than regional. b- "Three heavenly names you were awarded O Mark, the theologian, the evangelist and the apostle. You had been awarded three crowns O beloved of God : the crown, you had as an apostle, the crown of martyrdom and the crown of evangelism." c- " Your fellow apostles are proud of you and we are proud of them and you." The words of his fellows made him on the same line of the apostles and that the fellowship bound them as equal. All scholars agree that Mark was the young man who followed Christ at the time He was arrested, "And there followed a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him: And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked." [Mark 14: 51- 52] The church, to protect her sons and daughters from any false assumption, insisted on calling Saint Mark with the title known to all of us, that is " The Beholder of God "

THE BEGINNING OF THE PREACHING OF SAINT MARK

His First Miracle:

Aristopolis, St. Mark's father, was the first to receive the faith through his son. On their way to Jordan they were faced by two beasts, a lion and lioness. The father realized that they would be eaten soon by the beasts. He urged his son to escape, and leave himself to the lions. Mark assured him that Christ would protect them and prayed saying, "O' Christ the Son of God, save us." Immediately the lions perished and they were saved. Arstopolis accepted Christ immediately through his son and confessed his faith The father died later as a believer.

St. Mark And The Lion:

The lion's event led the artists to insert a lion in all of his pictures. It is possible also that because of the beginning of his Gospel, he described a roar of a lion, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness." Or because that his Gospel represented Lord Christ in His Majesty and His Kingdom, as

He was " The lion of the tribe of Judea." Always it is referred to the four Evangelists, as the four beasts, mentioned in the Book of the Revelation, [4 : 7]. The lion symbolized St. Mark the first among them. We noticed that the people of Venice, took St. Mark as their Patron and intercessor, and adopted the lion as a symbol. They have a big statue for a winged lion in St. Mark Square in their city. The artists competed trying to show a tame lion with St. Mark as he extracted its cruelty and kept for it its courage.

Preaching With The Apostles:

St. Mark began his preaching at a very early age. At the beginning he accompanied other apostles. In the Book of Acts, it is mentioned that he worked with St. Paul and St. Barnabas the Apostles, but before that he worked with St. Peter in Jerusalem and Judea. Severus Ibn Al Mokafaa stated that after Christ's resurrection, Mark accompanied Peter, preaching the multitudes in Jerusalem and went from there to Bethany to preach the Word of God.

CHAPTER TWO

MARK THE EVANGELIST A UNIVERSAL PREACHER NOT FOR EGYPT ONLY.

1- A UNIVERSAL PREACHER

Although St. Mark was particularly the preacher for Egypt, yet he was a universal preacher for all humanity. St. Severus, Bishop of Nastora (from the ninth century) truly said that the great St. Mark, enlightened Egypt, and the world. He was one of the seventy apostles, who were sent by God to serve. He was one of the four who preached the world by the Gospels they wrote. The world still benefits from the books without limitation. They were meant for all the world and not for one particular church. With his holiness, all the world benefited. He established The Theological School of Alexandria which enlightened the world with knowledge. The only known continents at that time were limited to Asia, Africa and Europe. St. Mark preached in all of them to spread the Word of God.

2- HIS PREACHING IN ASIA AND EUROPE

St. Mark preached in Judea, Lebanon, Syria, Antioch and in Cyprus. He reached Paphos, Pamphylia, Rome, Colossi , Venice and Aquila.

Preaching in Judea:

He preached with St. Peter in Judia, Jerusalem, Bethany and other places.

Preaching in Antioch:

He accompanied St. Paul and St. Barnabas on their first trip. They went to Syria, and particularly to Antioch. [Acts 11 : 27 - 30] ; " And took with them John, whose surname was Mark." Thus he handled with them the Word of the Savior to Antioch about 45 AD. This was also mentioned by Josephus the famous historian. He went with them to Seleucia, [Acts 13 : 4] which was the port of Antioch. St. Mark came again to Antioch with Barnabas the apostle, [Acts 15 : 37] after the council of Jerusalem.

Preaching in Cyprus:

In his first trip with St. Paul and St. Barnabas, they preached together in Cyprus. "They departed to Seleucia then they sailed to Cyprus. And when they were in Salamis, they preached the word of God

in the synagogues of the Jews : and they had also John to their minister." [Acts 13 : 4-5] Hasting mentioned in his book the " Dictionary of the Bible " : that Mark was serving with them, meaning that he was assisting them in the preaching. This word was used with that meaning in Luke 4 : 20 . It is probable that Mark was known among his fellow Jews by the name of John, the servant [who was in the service of God] We hear about St. Mark after the council of Jerusalem in the year 50 or 51 AD, when he went again to Cyprus with St. Barnabas. "And so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus." [Acts 15 : 39]

Preaching in other places in Asia:

In his first trip with Saint Paul and Saint Barnabas, St. Mark preached with them in Paphos, then went together till Pamphylia. Later he left them and returned to Jerusalem. [Acts 13 : 13] We don't know the reason why he left them, but we know that his return saddened St. Paul the apostle, that he refused to take Mark with him when he returned to visit the believers in Syria and Selukia. Paul disputed with Barnabas that they left each other. Paul realized how important the service of St. Mark was, as we will see later. The Lebanese believe that St. Mark was one of their preachers and that he was the first bishop in Gobayel. His Holiness Mar Aghnatiou Yacoub, Patriarch of the Syrian Orthodox, said that Mount Gobayel is proud of her first bishop John Mark. In the book "Antioch the Great, the City of God ", by Dr. Assad Rostom, it is written that Mount Lebanon was reached by St. Mark. St. Mark's seat was in Alexandria, and the five Western Cities belonged to this See.

His Preaching in Rome:

St. Mark and St. Paul established the Church in Rome. The relation between St. Mark and St. Peter was written in Moraweg Al Akhyar book, [He traveled with him to the blessed city of Rome and shared with him the effort, also mentioned that when Peter left Rome for a long journey, he "ordered his dear disciple Mark to serve this church."

His Preaching in Colossi:

This was clear from the recommendation of St. Paul to the Colossians, "Aristarchus my fellow prisoner salutes you, and Marcus, son of Barnabas' sister, touching whom you received commandments: if he comes unto you, receive him." [Col. 4 : 10]

His Preaching In Venice and Aquila:

Other churches credited St. Mark for his preaching. The people of Venice stole the body of the Saint, took him as their intercessor and a Patron of their country. They claimed also that he preached them, before going to the Five Western Cities.... If he had gone to Italy and preached in Rome, nothing could have stopped him from preaching Venice. Aquila, is near Venice, was claimed to be within the area that belonged to the preaching of St. Mark. It was said that St. Mark preached his Gospel in Akopla and it had many antiquities. All the Italians appreciated his great services. Away from Asia and Europe, the preaching of St. Mark continued in the Five Western Cities, Alexandria, the Egyptian regions and later after his martyrdom it was extended to Nuba, Sudan and Ethiopia.. Saint Mark's preaching wasn't limited to Egypt. The Coptic Church was his main work although his contributions were universal.

His Preaching In Africa:

At the ordination of the Patriarchs in Egypt, they repeat, "The seat of St. Mark, the Evangelist, with the true knowledge that he called for in all the universe for the comfort and soul saving." His individual great work, was his Gospel, his Liturgy, and the establishment of the Theological School

of Alexandria. When we celebrate the feast of this Saint, the world shares the celebration with us , expressing the gratitude towards the Saint.

CHAPTER THREE

ST. MARK AND ST. PETER:

DID HE PREACH WITH HIM IN ROME?

It was proven in the history of the church and recorded in both the Orthodox and the Catholic books, even the Holy Bible, that Mark the apostle did preach in Rome.

CHAPTER FOUR

ST. MARK AND ST. PAUL

St. Mark accompanied St. Paul in his first journey, but he didn't finish the trip to the end. At the beginning St. Paul wasn't pleased that he left him, but later he realized the significance of his service and St. Mark became the closest person to St. Paul. He worked with St. Paul and his followers like Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas and other pillars of the church. St. Paul mentioned St. Mark in his epistle to Philemon as his "my fellow labor" (Philemon 24). He then went to Colosse at the request of St. Paul, where he met St. Timothy in Ephesus. St. Mark was called by St. Paul to come to Rome, as he was alone with St. Luke, to help in establishing the church there. He left Rome only after the martyrdom of St. Paul in about 67 AD, to return to Alexandria where he received his martyrdom, one year later.

ST. MARK AND THE CHURCH OF ROME

St. Mark contributed in the establishment of the church of Rome. The Catholics mentioned that St. Mark wrote his book for Rome and the Romans and it was written in Greek. St. Paul wrote while he was in Rome, in his epistle to the people of Colosse, "Aristarchus my fellow prisoner salutes you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas,(touching whom you received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him.) And Jesus who is called Justus, who are of the circumcision These only are my fellow workers unto the Kingdom of God" (Colosseans 4 : 10, 11) St. Paul wrote also to Philemon, while he was still in Rome, "There salute you Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus ; Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow laborers." (Philemon 24) Again St. Paul wrote from Rome in his second epistle to his disciple St. Timothy, "Only Luke is with me. Take Mark and bring him with you: for he is profitable to me for the ministry." (II Timothy 4 : 11) St. Paul found that his service with St. Luke in Rome needed St. Mark's help. St. Mark did go to Rome and stayed with St. Paul there and only returned to Alexandria after St. Paul was killed.

CHAPTER FIVE

ST. MARK & THE FIVE WESTERN CITIES - THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THESE CITIES:

- 1- St. Mark was born there before his family immigrated to Palestine.
- 2-He preached them the faith before coming to Egypt to preach in Alexandria in the name of Christ.
- 3- He went back and revisited them to ordain priests and deacons and to serve. Many miracles occurred through him.

4- These cities were represented at the time the disciples received the Holy Spirit on the Pentecost, "And in the parts of Libya about Cyrene." [Acts 2 : 10] These cities belonged to the see of St. Mark for a long time. We pray God that our church be blessed to be able to work in the Five Western Cities. We wouldn't be ashamed when we meet St. Mark, who may ask, what did we do with what he left us? As many don't know the names of these cities nor their history, we feel obliged to write concisely about them, as they represented an important role in St. Mark's preaching.

Introduction:

These cities are presently in Barka. It is one of the three present states of Libya. They were built by the Greeks between the seventh and the fifth centuries BC, and were called the "Pentapolis", but when it was conquered by the Arabs they were renamed as "Antapols". Father Chineau called them "La Pentapole de Libye" in his book, "The Saints of Egypt." "La Pentapole Libyque" means the Five Libyan Cities. La Rousse in his dictionary called them the same. These cities were called the western cities to differentiate them from the other Five Eastern Cities, in the eastern part of the Mediterranean Sea [in Lebanon]. These were, Sodom, Gammorraha, Adams, Segor and Seboim. (3) These cities were built by the Greeks to accommodate their people who left their country because of poverty. The Greeks lived peacefully with the natives and spread their culture, education and their religion to them. They got involved in agriculture and breeding sheep, beside trading. This area became under Alexander The Great in the fourth century BC., then under Ptolemy till it was considered a property of Egypt. In the year 56 BC, it was taken by the Romans. During this period, many Jews came to Barka and their number increased during the reign of Augustus Caesar and Octavius.

ST. MARK'S PREACHING:

After St. Mark served with St. Peter, St. Paul and Saint Barnabas, he went to preach the faith in his native country, the five western cities. The Saint didn't forget his place of birth or his own poor people and wanted to lead them to the light to save their souls. When he arrived there, about 58 AD, he noticed that there was a glimpse of light among the darkness. He met many acquaintances, from Libya and Cyrene. [Acts 2 : 10] who were present during the Pentecost at his home when the Holy Spirit filled them. Probably some of them returned back to Libya as believers. Another factor was, that the aristocrats were rejecting at that time the idea of having many Gods, and began to conceive a new idea of the presence of one god only. The history books didn't mention much about his service during that time, but God blessed him by performing many miracles that attracted many to the faith. Severus Ibn Al Mokafaa, Bishop of Al Ashmouneen wrote in his book, "The history of the Patriarchs" the following:- [When St. Mark returned from Rome, he went first to the five cities and preached the Word of God. He showed them many miracles, the sick were cured, those with leprosy were cleansed and those with evil spirits were freed from them. Many believed in Lord Christ and broke down their idols. He baptized them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.] Father Chineau confirmed these blessings in his book the "Saints of Egypt " where he wrote: [St. Mark began first with the Five Western Cities in Libya, he comforted the people during their suffering, and cured their sick. These miracles led them to accept Christianity.] Ibn Al Mokafaa, wrote that the Holy Spirit guided him to go to Egypt, so he left his fellow believers and prayed for them to stay in the faith till he would come back to share with them the Divine joy. They wished

him well and they prayed together and again prayed for those who knew the Holy Name. He left Libya heading towards Egypt and arrived to Alexandria in 61 AD.

THE RETURN OF ST. MARK TO THE WESTERN CITIES:

St. Mark left the Five Western Cities and went to Egypt, where he preached the faith. After he established the church in Egypt, he was advised by the believers to leave Egypt temporarily as they were concerned about his safety. The pagans were thinking of killing him. He accepted to leave and return after a while. The Apostle came back to the Five Western Cities in 63 AD and again met the believers and preached their people. He stayed in Libya two years preaching in the name of Christ, organizing the church, and ordaining bishops, priests and deacons. Then he left to go back to continue his universal ministry with St. Paul, before returning back to Egypt after the martyrdom of St. Paul.

THESE CITIES BELONGED TO ALEXANDRIA:

Through the Christian era, these five cities belonged spiritually to Alexandria. This was confirmed by the sixth canon of the council of Nicea in 325 AD where 318 bishops from all over the world assembled. This decision was based on " Let the ancient customs in Egypt, Libya and Pentapolis prevail that the Bishop of Alexandria has jurisdiction in all these."

CHAPTER SIX

ST. MARK AND THE CHURCH OF ALEXANDRIA

1-THE GREATNESS OF ALEXANDRIA THEN:

Alexandria was the cultural capital of the world when St. Mark arrived there. Its famous School was the centre of science and philosophy with a library filled with hundreds of thousands of books. The population of Alexandria was estimated to be from half to three quarters of a million, who were Egyptians, Greeks, Jews, Romans, Ethiopians, Nubians and other races.

2-ITS RELIGIOUS STATUS:

The people St. Mark faced were a complex of different religions. There was the old Pharaohic religion, that had many gods like Isis, Oziris, Hirus, Amun, Abis, Hathur etc., under the great god Ra. The Greeks had many gods under their supreme god Zius. At this period there was a movement calling to combine both the Egyptian and the Greek gods, as 'syncretism' to be under the god 'Sirabis', the great idol. The Romans too had many gods under Jupiter. There was also the Jews, with their prophets, laws and the scriptures and the heresies that the Pharisees introduced. Their number in the city was huge, that they occupied one out of the five districts of the city. At the same time some of the Jews who arrived recently from Jerusalem were already converted to Christianity before coming to Egypt. The name of Christ had already arrived to many individuals, through Apollo of Alexandria. Apollo was mentioned in the Book of Acts, "An eloquent man and mighty in scriptures... He was fervent in the spirit ... For he mightily convinced the Jews and that publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ." [Acts 18 : 24 -28] It might be possible that some of the Jews of Alexandria had received the Word of God through St. Simon of Cana or through "dear Theophilus" who was close to St. Luke. But all of these cases were limited to some individuals only. Beside all these religions, there were many wise men from India, Persia and Egyptian priests who were leaders in a pagan environment. Accordingly, the city was a mixture of idol religions with an atmosphere of philosophical arguments and discussions, particularly at the school of Alexandria and

its museum. St. Mark stood alone to face all these religions and philosophies, but he was capable in defeating them with the power of God. He entered Alexandria with a torn sandal from walking the long way.

3- WHEN DID HE ARRIVE TO ALEXANDRIA ? :

It is difficult to determine the exact dates for the journeys of the apostles. Usually calculated in relation to the events, and the time of the arrival of St. Mark was no exception. Josephus, the famous historian, mentioned that St. Mark came to Alexandria in 43 AD, while Mrs. Butler estimated it to be in 45 AD. Patriarch Maximos Mazloom suggested that it was in 49 AD. Selim Soliman, Francis Al Etre, Deacon Menassa Youhanna gave the date as 55 AD. For Ibn Akbar it was 58 AD and for Father Chineau it was 60 AD, when St. Mark was 50 years old. Abu Shaker Ibn Al Raheb, Anba Isedoros, Habib Guirgis, Kamel Saleh Nakhla and Iris Al Masri, said that his arrival was in 61 AD. With such variations in dates, most of the ancient historians preferred not to guess and rather to stress on the events themselves. That was what the Book of Acts almost did. We don't accept the earlier dates, as St. Mark was still a youth, in the company of other apostles. Certainly he didn't come before the Council of Jerusalem which was about 50 AD, as agreed by all the historians. After the Council of Jerusalem, he accompanied St. Barnabas to Cyprus where both preached together. Later, St. Paul, appreciating the importance of St. Mark in preaching, he called him to work with him. When St. Mark was alone on his own, he went to the Five Western Cities and stayed there for few years. He may have arrived there between 55-58 AD. It is most probable that he arrived in Alexandria about the year 60 or 61 AD and this was accepted by most of the Coptic historians who estimated his stay in Alexandria to be seven years or seven years and eight months.

4- ON THE WAY TO ALEXANDRIA:

On his way to Alexandria, the words of Isaiah might have been on his thought, "The burden of Egypt. Behold, the Lord rode upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt and the idols of Egypt shall be removed at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it." "And that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord...And it shall be a sign and for a witness unto the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt...And the Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation, yes, they shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and perform it..." "Blessed be Egypt my people." [Isaiah 19 : 1 , 19 -21 , 25] Also he might have been thinking about the journey of Christ with the Virgin St. Mary and the blessing they left to Egypt. It was said that he entered Alexandria, coming from the Five Western Cities, passing through the oasis to Upper Egypt and from there to Alexandria where he entered it east to the port where there was an obelisk.

5- THE PREACHING OF ANIANUS THE COBBLER:

He was praying before entering Alexandria to God, to provide him with the spiritual needs for the success of his mission. By the time he arrived, his sandal was already torn, so he went to Anianus, a cobbler, to repair it. While Anianus was holding the needle, it went through his finger and he screamed from pain and said, "O' the One God". St. Mark was delighted when he heard this phrase, which was an appropriate chance to begin talking to him about that One God. It was also appropriate to ease him from his pain first, so he took some mud and spat on it and put it on his wound, saying, "In the name of Jesus Christ, Son of God, heal this hand." It was healed on the spot as if nothing happened to it. Anianus was surprised at the miracle which was done in the name of

Jesus Christ and opened his heart to the Word of God. St. Mark asked him about the One God he called, but Anianus replied that he heard about Him, but didn't know Him. Then St. Mark began to talk to him spiritually. When his sandal was repaired he was invited to go to Anianus' home to talk more about that God. As St. Mark entered the house he made the sign of the cross and asked God's Blessing to fill it. He stayed with this family talking about Lord Christ. When Anianus asked to see The True God, St. Mark assured him that he will. He talked with him about the scriptures, the prophets, the incarnation, the miracles, the crucifixion and the great sacrifice He provided to the world. Anianus and his family became believers and St. Mark baptized them. This home was the first fruit in St. Mark's preaching in Egypt.

6- SPREAD OF THE FAITH IN EGYPT:

St. Mark who is considered the, First Bishop of Alexandria, found that his first responsibility was to continue preaching from one place to another, challenging all the difficulties that he met. With great enthusiasm he was able to convert many to the faith in God, in spite of the different numerous religions of the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Persians and the arguments of the Jews. The Catholic Jesuit, Father Frermaj reported in his book "Moraweg Al Akhyar" referring to St. Mark, that " God blessed him for his unique enthusiasm. The land which was full of darkness of the filth among the unbelievers, was changed by St. Mark the Evangelist to a heavenly paradise, with justice shinning over it." Maximos Mazloom, the Patriarch of the Greek Catholic Melchites, wrote about St. Mark, " He pulled the inhabitants to the faith in Christ, in grooves, with God's blessing and the marvelous miracles he did,.that Alexandria became a second Jerusalem, similar to what happened when the Holy Spirit descended in the Chamber of Zion . The Word of God flourished forcefully and very fast despite the encountered difficulties, which were overcome. We understand what St. Paul meant when he said about St. Mark, "For he is profitable to me in the ministry." [2 Titus 4 : 11]

7-ALEXANDRIA AFTER ST. MARK:

St. Mark had great impact on Alexandria. His success to convert large numbers to believe was due to his deep spirituality, and his strong relation with God. Eusebius the famous historian, referred to this as such, "There were multitudes of believers, men and women, who gathered from the beginning and lived the extraordinary simple life, that Philo noted to be worthy to describe. Their efforts, gatherings, and their comfort in all the ways of their lives were tremendous. Eusebius in a complete chapter in his book about the philosopher Philo admired the monastic life in Egypt. Father Chineau in his book " The Saints of Egypt " wrote, "Life became marvelous in Egypt after accepting the faith and Philo, the famous Jew, confirmed that Alexandria brought back the memory of the early days of the Church in Jerusalem. Let us find what the philosopher Philo said about the believers in Egypt as stated by Yousabius, "They left their properties, under the influence of their faith and followed the path of the prophets" ; "There was a holy place in every house, to practice their religion in, in complete isolation. They didn't permit into it any food, drink or anything for the need of the body" ; "All day long from the morning to the night they were praying, reading the Holy Books".; "They created songs and praises for God with different tunes and rhythms" ; "They ate only after sunset" ; "They enjoyed the wisdom, without limit, tremendously." He also referred to their purity and described their prayers, silence and services.

8- OTHER WORKS OF ST. MARK:

St. Mark established a Theological School to stand against the school for the pagans and to combat their ideas. He designated St. Justus to manage the school who later became the sixth bishop of Alexandria. He wrote the Holy Liturgy for St. Anianus and the priests to use in praying.

9- ANIANUS WAS ORDAINED A BISHOP FOR ALEXANDRIA AND ST. MARK'S TRAVEL:

With the tremendous success and achievement for the faith in Egypt, the unbelievers were very angry and they decided to kill St. Mark. The believers advised St. Mark to leave Egypt for a while for the safety of the church. St. Mark, who preached other cities in Egypt, agreed to leave, to return back to the Five Western Cities. He then ordained St. Anianus to be the Bishop of Alexandria in 62 AD. He also ordained three priests, Milius, Sabinus, Sardenus, and seven deacons. It is noticed that Anianus was ordained a bishop while St. Mark was still living, which indicates St. Mark's apostolic universal authority to ordain bishops wherever he went, as he did in the Five Western Cities. St. Jerome, mistakenly in his book, wrote that St. Mark was killed in 62 AD the year Anianus was ordained, assuming that his predecessor must have died before such an event could be possible.

10-THE RETURN OF ST. MARK TO ALEXANDRIA:

St. Mark stayed for a few years among the church in the Five Western Cities and with St. Paul preaching in Rome. Then the two great apostles St. Paul and St. Peter were killed and St. Mark returned to Alexandria. On his return, he found that the church he planted, grew and became prosperous and the number of the believers increased tremendously. and a church was built in the eastern part of Alexandria, known as Pokalia. - Pokalia meant place for the cows or place with plants for the cows to eat. It is the present site for St. Mark Cathedral in Alexandria. St. Mark kept watching his people grow and visited and preached other cities in Egypt. This annoyed the pagans to the extent that they named him as, " The exterminator of the idols".

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE MARTYRDOM OF THE SAINT

THE PAGANS HATING ST. MARK:

As the pagans watched the success of St. Mark, their hate towards him became profound. They were shaken by his success in preaching the name of Lord Christ. Even the Roman government saw him as a direct threat to them so they planned to kill him.

HE WAS ARRESTED AND TORTURED

In 68 AD, the 14 th. year of Niron's reign, on the 29 th. of Barmoda, while the Christians were celebrating Easter in the church in Pokalia, the Egyptians and the Greeks were also celebrating the national day for the idol god Sirabis. On this day the pagans gathered to kill St. Mark. It was too much for the pagans to see many of their own people were converting to Christianity as well as the fact that St. Mark himself was harsh in his criticism to the pagans. This increased their rage. The people together with authority moved swiftly against St. Mark. The crowd attacked the church at the time St. Mark just completed the Eucharist. They pushed away the congregation and arrested him and with a long strong rope they put around his neck, they pulled him along the streets and the roads of the city. With extreme cruelty they kept pulling him over the rough rocky surface of the streets that his flesh was cut into pieces with the blood all over the roads. The Saint thanked God who made him worthy to suffer in His name. By the end of the day, they got tired, and they threw him in a dark prison.

A VISION AND COMFORT IN THE JAIL:

St. Mark spent that night with his terribly lacerated body, with a high spirit, and was looking forward to meet the Lord in His Kingdom. God didn't leave him alone. At midnight, he saw an angel, who touched him and said, " O Mark, the good servant, the time has arrived to receive your award now ". " Be courageous, as your name has been written in book of life. " This comforted him and he raised his hand towards heaven and said, "Thank you my Savior Jesus, You never left me alone, You accepted me with whom You blessed with Your mercy." As the angel left, the Savior appeared to him and gave him the peace and said. " O Mark, my disciple and my evangelist, peace be with you." The disciple screamed and said, "O' my Lord Jesus." When the vision ended, he became cheerful and comfortable, as his heart was ready to meet the Lord.

THE MARTYRDOM OF THE SAINT AND HIS BURIAL:

The following morning, on 30 Barmoda, the idolaters came, to take him from the prison and again surrounded his neck with a thick rope and repeated what they did with him the pervious day. While he was pulled over the stones he prayed God to forgive them. His soul left him for its Creator, to receive the crown of martyrdom. As if his killing was not enough in the eyes of the killers, so they prepared a big fire to burn his body, but heavy stormy rain extinguished the fire and dispersed the crowds. Some courageous believers took the body of their father in the faith, and put him in a coffin and headed to the church in Pokalia. Anianus together with the clergy and the people prayed at this moment of their grieve. They dug a tomb under the church, in the east side and buried the Saint. The church was named after him, as St. Mark Church. Ironically in the year 310 AD, and at the same site, the Patriarch of Alexandria St. Peter, the last of the martyrs, was killed. The Holy Church celebrates his martyrdom on 30 Barmoda, while the Western Churches observe it on 25, April. [25 Nisan]. Chineau reported that St. Mark was 58 years old when he was martyred. Patriarch Maximos Mazloom in his book , "Al Kenz Al Thameen fi Akhbar Al Kidiseen" wrote, "His tomb became to the Christians the place of respect with reverence and esteem, that they came from distant places to visit, as far as Galatia, as St. Philoromis, the priest did."

REFLECTION:

St Mark carried the flames of the Holy Spirit to Egypt. In his book "St Mark the Evangelist" , our departed holy father pope Shenouda III, had made a beautiful portrait of this great torch bearer. The young students should keep the memory of St. Mark with gratitude and respect as to the great founder of our church.

PRAYER:

Lord, abide with us as You did with the apostles, when You gave them Your peace, we ask You to grant us Your peace, our Savior; save us and spare our souls.

Litany of the Third hour - Agpeya

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG

He ascended to the heavens..

VOCABULARY:

Alexandria, cobbler, Anianus, ordain, patron saint

INTRODUCTION:

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES WITH EGYPT

Ask the students the following questions: Who here has been to Egypt before? (If it comes up, clarify the differences between Cairo and Alexandria). Did you see any churches in Egypt? Did you see any crosses in Egypt? Let the students mention their experiences. Then tell them that today we are going to talk about the saint who brought the very first church and the very first cross to Egypt. Show the students the icon of St. Mark and ask them if they have ever seen this picture before and if they know what this saint's name is. Confirm that, yes, his name is St. Mark, and he was one of the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ, and he is the reason that Egypt has Christian people in it. Today we are going to hear his story.

LESSON BODY:

ST. MARK IN EGYPT

One day, St. Mark came to Egypt. He didn't have a car or a bike, so he was walking around the city of **Alexandria (a city in Egypt)**. He walked and he walked and he walked, looking at all the people and all the buildings and stores. He walked for such a long time that one of his sandals fell apart. He

didn't know what to do. This was his only pair of sandals, and he didn't know anyone in Egypt. God helped St. Mark, though, because God had a plan for him – there was something very important that God wanted St. Mark to do in Egypt (we will find out what this is).

ANIANUS

St. Mark found a man who fixes shoes. A man who fixes shoes is called a **cobbler**. This **cobbler's** name was **Anianus**. St. Mark showed Anianus his sandal and asked him if he could please fix it for him. Anianus was very good at fixing shoes, and he started to fix St. Mark's sandal right away. But then something happened. One of the tools that Anianus was using accidentally hit his finger very hard. It hurt a lot! Have you ever seen someone hit their finger with a hammer by accident? This is like what happened to Anianus. Anianus shouted very loudly when that happened because it hurt him a lot; he shouted, "O, God!" because he needed God to help him.

ST. MARK HEALS ANIANUS THROUGH THE NAME OF CHRIST AND THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

When St. Mark saw this, he felt bad for him. When he heard him say, "O God," he knew this would be a good time to start telling Anianus about our Lord Jesus Christ. St. Mark took some clay, spat on it and put it on Anianus' finger and this is what he said, "In the Name of Jesus Christ the Son of God." The Holy Spirit healed Anianus' finger right away! He did not feel any more pain, and it was like nothing had even happened to him. Anianus was so surprised by this miracle, which St. Mark had done by using the name of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. He had never seen anything this great before and he wanted to know all about God – the One who had healed him.

ST. MARK TEACHES ANIANUS ABOUT CHRIST

St. Mark was very excited to tell Anianus about our Lord. He started to ask Anianus if he knew about God, since he had cried out to Him when his finger got hurt. Anianus told him that he had heard about God, but did not know Him. St. Mark started explaining to him from the beginning: he told Anianus all about how God created heaven and earth, and how Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, and how many things had been prophesied about our Lord Christ coming to save the world. Anianus loved everything that he heard, and he invited St. Mark to come to his house. He wanted St. Mark to baptize himself and his whole family. St. Mark did this. Anianus kept learning about God until he became the first bishop in Egypt. St. Mark **ordained (the Holy Spirit chose some people to be priests and deacons by the laying hands of the bishops)** him a bishop. Many other people started coming to St. Mark and Anianus because they also wanted to learn about God. The Holy Spirit opened their hearts and helped them to understand how much God loves them. St. Mark **ordained** 3 priests and 7 deacons to be with Anianus the bishop and to help

him. There were a lot of Christians to take care of now. Many Egyptians continued to come to learn about our Lord Christ and how He had died to save them and how much He loved them.

ST. MARK PREACHES IN OTHER PLACES

After a while, St. Mark left St. Anianus to take care of the Christians in Egypt. The Holy Spirit wanted him to go to other places in Africa to preach the name of Christ. He taught many people, and the Holy Spirit opened their hearts to learn about our Lord. St. Mark **ordained** more bishops, priests, and deacons in those other places and they built churches. St. Mark worked very hard to help other people learn about God. Saul's Baptism

OUR CHURCH HONORS ST. MARK

St. Mark is a very important person in our church (the Coptic Orthodox Church). He is our **patron saint (the saint who takes care of a special country, job, person, or people)**. We can ask him for help when we need it, and we keep him in special place in our hearts. It is because of him that we know about God and that we are Christian, and because of this, we honor him very much and we respect him. Also, Egypt is special for another reason. Our Lord Jesus Christ went to Egypt with St. Mary and St. Joseph when He was a baby, and He spent time in Egypt. This makes Egypt very special.

PLAN & MATERIALS:

Storytelling, Acting, Scrap book, singing, coloring, interview with St Mark

CONCLUSION:

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What is Alexandria?

A. A city in Egypt. This is where St. Mark went when he came to Egypt.

Q. Who is Anianus?

A. He was a cobbler, someone who fixes shoes, and he was the first person that St. Mark preached to when he came to Egypt

Q. What does it mean to be ordained?

A. the Holy Spirit chose some people to be priests and deacons by the lying hands of the bishops

Q. Who is the patron saint of Egypt?

A. St. Mark – he takes care of Egypt

Q. Why is St. Mark so special to us?

A. He taught us about our Lord Jesus Christ.

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

“Blessed is Egypt My people.” Isaiah 19:25

III. DAILY READINGS

Unit VIII: Our Lord will come again

Purpose: In this single lesson unit, the completion of the work of Christ is remembered. The revelation of God is not complete until the second coming of Christ, when he is going to bring to fulfillment all that the prophets had previously foretold.

LESSON 40 : OUR LORD WILL COME AGAIN

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

MATTHEW 24:23-44

²³"Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it. ²⁴For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. ²⁵See, I have told you beforehand.

²⁶"Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it. ²⁷For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ²⁸For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.

²⁹"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ³⁰Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. ³¹And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. ³²"Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. ³³So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near--at the doors! ³⁴Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. ³⁵Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

³⁶"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. ³⁷But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ³⁸For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ⁴⁰Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. ⁴¹Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. ⁴²Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. ⁴³But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his

house to be broken into. ⁴⁴Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

MATTHEW 25:31-46

³¹"When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. ³²All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. ³³And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. ³⁴Then the King will say to those on His right hand, "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: ³⁵for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; ³⁶I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'

³⁷"Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, "Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? ³⁸When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? ³⁹Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' ⁴⁰And the King will answer and say to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

⁴¹"Then He will also say to those on the left hand, "Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: ⁴²for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.' ⁴⁴"Then they also will answer Him, saying, "Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?' ⁴⁵Then He will answer them, saying, "Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' ⁴⁶And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

JOHN 14:1-4

"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ²In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴And where I go you know, and the way you know."

1 THESSALONIANS 4:16-18, 5:1-11

¹⁶For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸Therefore comfort one another with these words.

But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. ²For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. ³For

when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. ⁴But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. ⁵You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. ⁶Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. ⁷For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. ⁸But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. ¹¹Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

REVELATIONS 1:7, 22:12

⁷Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him

¹²"And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to everyone according to his work. ¹³I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last."

CREED:

He is coming again in His glory to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom shall have no end.

CHURCH FATHERS:

CHRYSOSTOM: HOMILIES ON THE GOSPEL OF ST. MATTHEW

Homily 76

"Then, if any man shall say unto you, behold, here is Christ, or there; believe it not: for there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show signs and wonders, so as to deceive, if possible, the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the desert, go not forth: behold, He is in the secret chambers, believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shine even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For wheresoever's the carcass is, there shall the eagles be gathered together."

Having finished what concerned Jerusalem, He passes on to His own coming, and tells the signs of it, not for their use only, but for us also, and for all that shall come after us. *"Then."* When? Here, as I have often said, the word, *"then,"* relates not to the connection in order of time with the things before mentioned. At least, when He was minded to express the connection of time, He added, *"Immediately after the tribulation of those days,"* but here not so, but, *"then,"* not meaning what should follow straightway after these things, but what should be in the time, when these things were to be done, of which He was about to speak. So also when it is said, *"In those days came John the Baptist,"* he is not speaking of the time that should straightway follow, but that many years

after, and that in which these things were done, of which He was about to speak. For, in fact, having spoken of the birth of Jesus, and of the coming of the magi, and of the death of Herod, He at once said, *"In those days came John the Baptist;"* although thirty years had intervened. But this is customary in the Scripture, I mean, to use this manner of narration. So then here also, having passed over all the intermediate time from the taking of Jerusalem unto the preludes of the consummation, He spoke of the time just before the consummation. *"Then,"* He said therefore, *"if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there, believe it not."* Awhile He secures them by the place, mentioning the distinguishing marks of His second coming, and the indications of the deceivers. For not, as when at His former coming He appeared in Bethlehem, and in a small corner of the world, and no one knew Him at the beginning, so does He say it shall be then too; but openly and with all circumstance, and so as not to need one to tell these things. And this is no small sign that He will not come secretly. But mark how here He says nothing of war (for He is interpreting the doctrine concerning His advent), but of them that attempt to deceive. For some in the days of the apostles deceived the multitude, *"for they shall come,"* said He, *"and shall deceive many;"* and others shall do so before His second coming, who shall also be more grievous than the former. *"For they shall show,"* He said, *"signs and wonders, so as to deceive if possible the very elect:"* here He is speaking of Antichrist, and indicates that some also shall minister to him. Of him Paul too speaks on this wise. Having called him *"man of sin,"* and *"son of perdition,"* He added, *"Whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders; and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish."* And see how He secures them; *"Go not forth into the deserts, enter not into the secret chambers."* He did not say, *"Go, and do not believe;"* but, *"Go not forth, neither depart in that direction."* For great then will be the deceiving, because that even deceiving miracles are wrought.

3. Having told them how Antichrist cometh, as, for instance, that it will be in a place; He said how Himself also comes. How then does He Himself come? *"As the lightning comes out of the east, and shines even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For wheresoever's the carcass is, there also will the eagles be gathered together."* How then shines the lightning? It needs not one to talk of it, it needs not a herald, but even to them that sit in houses, and to them in chambers it shows itself in an instant of time throughout the whole world. So shall that coming be, showing itself at once everywhere by reason of the shining forth of His glory. But He mentions also another sign, *"where the carcass is, there also shall the eagles be;"* meaning the multitude of the angels, of the martyrs, of all the saints. Then He tells of fearful prodigies. What are these prodigies? *"Immediately after the tribulation of those days,"* said He, *"the sun shall be darkened."* Of the tribulation of what days does He speak? Of those of Antichrist and of the false prophets? For there shall be great tribulation, there being so many deceivers. But it is not protracted to a length of time. For if the Jewish war was shortened for the elect's sake, much more shall this temptation be limited for these same sake. Therefore, He said not, *"after the tribulation,"* but IMMEDIATELY *"after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened,"* for almost at the same time all things come to pass. For the false prophets and false Christs shall come and cause confusion, and immediately He Himself will be here. Because no small turmoil is then to prevail over the world. But how does He come? The very creation being then transfigured, for *"the sun shall be darkened,"* not destroyed, but overcome by the light of His presence; and the stars shall fall, for what shall be the need of

them thenceforth, there being no night? and *"the powers of Heaven shall be shaken,"* and in all likelihood, seeing so great a change come to pass. For if when the stars were made, they trembled and marveled (*"for when the stars were made, all angels,"* it is said, *"praised Me with a loud voice"*); much more seeing all things in course of change, and their fellow servants giving account, and the whole world standing by that awful judgment-seat, and those who have lived from Adam unto His coming, having an account demanded of them of all that they did, how shall they but tremble, and be shaken?

"Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven;" that is, the cross being brighter than the sun, since this last will be darkened, and hide himself, and that will appear when it would not appear, unless it were far brighter than the beams of the sun. But wherefore does the sign appear? In order that the shamelessness of the Jews may be more abundantly silenced. For having the cross as the greatest plea, Christ thus cometh to that judgment-seat, showing not His wounds only, but also the death of reproach. *"Then shall the tribes mourn,"* for there shall be no need of an accusation, when they see the cross; and they shall mourn, that by His death they are nothing benefited; because they crucified Him whom they ought to have adored. Seest thou how fearfully He has pictured His coming? how He has stirred up the spirits of His disciples? For this reason, let me add, He puts the mournful things first, and then the good things, that in this way also He may comfort and refresh them. And of His passion He suggests to them the remembrance, and of His resurrection, and with a display of glory, He mentions His cross, so that they may not be ashamed nor grieve, whereas indeed He cometh then setting it forth for His sign. And another saith, *"They shall look on Him whom they pierced."* Therefore it is that they shall mourn, when they see that this is He. And forasmuch as He had made mention of the cross, He added, *"They shall see the Son of Man coming,"* no longer on the cross, but *"in the clouds of Heaven, with power and great glory."* For think not, He means, because you hear of the cross, that it is again anything mournful, for He shall come with power and great glory. But He brings it, that their sin may be self-condemned, as if any one who had been struck by a stone, were to show the stone itself, or his garments stained with blood. And He cometh in a cloud as He was taken up, and the tribes seeing these things mourn. Not however that the terrors shall with them proceed no further than mourning's; but the mourning shall be, that they may bring forth their sentence from within, and condemn themselves. And then again, *"He will send His angels with a great trumpet, and they shall gather the elect from the four winds, from one end of Heaven to the other."* But when thou hast heard of this, consider the punishment of them that remain. For neither shall they suffer that former penalty only, but this too. And as above He said, that they should say, *"Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord,"* so here, that they shall mourn. For since He had spoken unto them of grievous wars, that they might learn, that together with the fearful things here, the torments there also await them, He brings them in mourning and separated from the elect, and consigned to hell; by this again rousing the disciples, and indicating from how many evils they should be delivered, and how many good things they shall enjoy.

5. And why now does He call them by angels, if He comes thus openly? To honor them in this way also. But Paul said, that they *"shall be caught up in clouds."* And He said this also, when He was speaking concerning a resurrection. *"For the Lord Himself,"* it is said, *"shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel."* So that when risen again, the angels shall gather them

together, when gathered together the clouds shall catch them up; and all these things are done in a moment, in an instant. For it is not that He abiding above called them, but He Himself comes with the sound of a trumpet. And what mean the trumpets and the sound? They are for arousing, for gladness, to set forth the amazing nature of the things then doing, for grief to them that are left. Woe is me for that fearful day! For though we ought to rejoice when we hear these things, we feel pain, and are dejected, and our countenance is sad. Or is it I only that feel thus, and do ye rejoice at hearing of these things? For upon me at least there comes a kind of shudder when these things are said, and I lament bitterly, and groan from the very depth of my heart. For I have no part in these things, but in those that are spoken afterwards, that are said unto the virgins, unto him that buried the talents he had received, unto the wicked servant. For this cause I weep, to think from what glory we are to be cast out, from what hope of blessings, and this perpetually, and forever, to spare ourselves a little labor. For if indeed this were a great toil, and a grievous law, we ought even so to do all things; nevertheless many of the remiss would seem to have at least some pretext, a poor pretext indeed, yet would they seem to have some, that the toil was great, and the time endless, and the burden intolerable; but now we can put forward no such objection; which circumstance most of all will gnaw us no less than hell at that time, when for want of a slight endeavor, and a little toil, we shall have lost Heaven, and the unspeakable blessings. For both the time is short, and the labor small, and yet we faint and are supine. You strive on earth, and the crown is in Heaven; thou art punished of men, and art honored of God; the race is for two days, and the reward for endless ages; the struggle is a corruptible body, and the rewards in an incorruptible. And apart from these things, we should consider another point also, that even if we do not choose to suffer any of the things that are painful for Christ's sake, we must in other ways most assuredly endure them. For neither, though thou should not have died for Christ, wilt thou be immortal; neither though thou should not have cast away thy riches for Christ, wilt thou go away hence with them. These things He requires of thee, which although He should not require them, thou wilt have to give up, because thou art mortal; He will thee to do these by thy choice, which thou must do by necessity. So much only He requires to be added, that it be done for His sake; since that these things befall men and pass away, cometh to pass of natural necessity. Do you see how easy the conflict? What it is altogether necessary for thee to suffer, that choose to suffer for my sake; let this only be added, and I have sufficient obedience.

The gold which you intend to lend to another, this lend to me, both at more profit, and in greater security. Thy body, wherewith thou art going to warfare for another, make it to war for me, for indeed I surpass thy toils with recompenses in the most abundant excess. Yet thou in all other matters prefer him that gives you more as well in loans, as in marketing and in warfare; but Christ alone, when giving more, and infinitely more than all, thou dost not receive. And what is this so great hostility? What is this so great enmity? Where will there be any excuse or defense left for thee, when the reasons for which you prefer man to man avail not to induce thee to prefer God to man?

Why dost thou commit thy treasure to the earth? *"Give it into my hand,"* He said. Does not the earth's Lord seem to thee more worthy of trust than the earth? This indeed restored that which you laid in it, though oftentimes not even this, but He gives thee also recompense for His keeping of it? For indeed He does exceedingly love us. Therefore if thou should wish to lend, He stands ready; or

to sow, He receives it; or if thou should wish to build, He draws thee unto Himself, saying, Build in my regions. Why do you run unto poor, unto beggarly men, who also for little gains occasion thee great trouble? Nevertheless, not even on hearing these things, do we make up our minds to it, but where are fighting and wars, and wild struggles, and trials and suits of law, and false accusations, thither do we hasten.

5. Doth He not justly turn away from us, and punish us, when He is giving up Himself unto us for all things, and we are resisting Him? It is surely plain to all. For whether thou art desirous to adorn thyself, *"Let it, He said, be with my ornaments;"* or to arm thyself, *"with my arms,"* or to clothe thyself, *"with my raiment;"* or to feed thyself, *"at my table;"* or to journey, *"on my way;"* or to inherit, *"my inheritance;"* or to enter into a country, *"the city of which I am builder and maker;"* or to build a house, *"amongst my tabernacles."* *"For I, so far from asking thee for a recompense of the things that I give thee, to even make myself owe thee a recompense for this very thing, if thou be willing to use all I have."* What can be equal to this munificence, *"I am Father, I am brother, I am bridegroom, I am dwelling place, I am food, I am raiment, I am root, I am foundation, all whatsoever thou wilt, I am."* *"Be thou in need of nothing, I will be even a servant, for I came to minister, not to be ministered unto; I am friend, and member, and head, and brother, and sister, and mother; I am all; only cling thou closely to me. I was poor for thee, and a wanderer for thee, on the cross for thee, in the tomb for thee, above I intercede for thee to the Father; on earth I am come for thy sake am ambassador from my Father. Thou art all things to me, brother, and joint heir, and friend, and member."* What would you more? Why dost thou turn away from Him, who loves you? Why does thou labor for the world? Why dost thou draw water into a broken cistern? For it is this to labor for the present life.

Why dost thou comb wool into the fire? Why dost thou *"beat the air?"* Why dost thou *"run in vain?"* Hath not every art an end? It is surely plain to everyone. Do thou also show the end of thy worldly eagerness. But thou canst not; for, *"vanity of vanities, all is vanity."* Let us go to the tombs; show me thy father; show me thy wife. Where is he that was clad in raiment of gold? he that rode in the chariot? he that had armies, that had the girdle, that had the heralds? He that was slaying these, and casting those into prison? he that put to death whom he would, and set free whom he was minded? I see nothing but bones, and a worm, and a spider's web; all those things are earth, all those a fable, all a dream, and a shadow, and a bare relation, and a picture, or rather not so much as a picture. For the picture we see at least in a likeness, but here not so much as a likeness. And would that the evils stop with this. For now the honor, and the luxury, and the distinction, end with a shadow, with words; but the consequences of them, are no longer limited to a shadow and to words, but continue, and will pass over with us elsewhere, and will be manifest to all, the rapine, the covetousness, the fornications, the adulteries, the dreadful things beyond number; these not in similitude, neither in ashes, but written above, both words and deeds.

With what eyes then shall we behold Christ? For if anyone could not bear to see his father, when conscious to himself that he had sinned against him, upon Him who infinitely exceeds a father in forbearance how shall we then look? how shall we bear it? For indeed we shall stand at Christ's judgment-seat, and there will be a strict inquiry into all things.

But if any man disbelieve the judgments to come, let him look at the things here, at those in the prisons, those in the mines, those on the dunghills, the possessed, the frantic, them that are

struggling with incurable diseases, those that are fighting against continual poverty, them that live in famine, them that are pierced with irremediable woes, those in captivity. For these persons would not suffer these things here, unless vengeance and punishments were to await all the others also that have committed such sins. And if the rest have undergone nothing here, you ought to regard this very fact as a sign that there is surely something to follow after our departure here. For the self-same God of all would not take vengeance on some, and leave others unpunished, who have committed the same or more grievous offenses, unless He designed to bring some punishments upon them there.

By these arguments then and these examples let us also humble ourselves; and let them who are obstinate unbelievers of the judgment believe it henceforth, and become better men; that having lived here in a manner worthy of the kingdom, we may attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

REFLECTION:

The true Christians rejoice in remembering the second coming of Christ. Although the events that precedes His coming are very disturbing, our Lord told us to lift up our heads when we see them happening. The greeting the first Christians exchanged was "the Lord is coming."

PRAYER:

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of our eternal God, enlighten our minds to understand Your life giving words. Raise us from the darkness of mortal sin, make us worthy to be steady in virtue. When You come to judge the world, grant us to hear the joyful call; "Come you that are blessed by My Father! Come and inherit the Kingdom that has been prepared for you since the creation of the world!" Lord grant us to attend at that hour without fear, anxiety or condemnation. Do not judge us according to our sins, because You alone, have such compassion, patience and mercy. May You accept these prayers through the pleadings of the Holy Mother of God, Virgin Mary and all the saints. Amen.

Litany First watch of midnight - Agpeya

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG

We await the resurrection of the dead..

VOCABULARY:

Maranatha

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	Christ shall come again
Liturgical:	We look to the east
Moral:	To Judge everyone according to his deeds
Spiritual:	We await Christ's second coming

INTRODUCTION:

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What is Alexandria?

A. A city in Egypt. This is where St. Mark went when he came to Egypt.

Q. Who is Anianus?

A. He was a cobbler, someone who fixes shoes, and he was the first person that St. Mark preached to when he came to Egypt

Q. What does it mean to be ordained?

A. the Holy Spirit chose some people to be priests and deacons by the laying hands of the bishops

Q. Who is the patron saint of Egypt?

A. St. Mark – he takes care of Egypt

Q. Why is St. Mark so special to us?

A. He taught us about our Lord Jesus Christ.

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"Blessed is Egypt My people." Isaiah 19:25

CONNECTION POINT:

This year we had learned how our Father in heaven loved us and created us and when we sinned in the garden, he planned our salvation. In the right time He sent His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who came and died for us and rose from the dead and ascended to the heavens and sent us the Holy Spirit from the Father. The Spirit came and dwelt in the disciples who carried the Spirit to the whole world and established the church. Christ promised us to come again to take us to the Father's mansions in heaven.

LESSON BODY:

CHRIST'S LIFE ON EARTH, THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION

You all know by now, after being in Sunday school this year, how our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was born of St. Mary and lived a life on earth. He gathered unto Himself disciples. He worked many miracles – feeding and healing people. At the end of His life on earth, He was crucified on the Cross so that He could save us from our sins, and after three days He rose again from the dead. [Have the students fill in details that they remember from throughout the course of the year about the life of Christ by asking such questions as, "who remembers something that He did? Or somewhere that He went?]

Now, who can tell me what our Lord did after He resurrected from the dead? [He ascended up to Heaven]. So that means that He left us here on earth, and He went to heaven to be with His Father and our Father – God.

CHRISTIANS LONG TO SEE OUR LORD

Let me tell you a little story. Once there was a princess who lived with her father, the King in a plain old house. They didn't live in a beautiful castle like most princesses and kings, but they had a regular house like you and me. Her father, the king, loved his daughter more than anything else in the whole world and he wanted to build for her and prepare for her a beautiful castle, a mansion, that she could live in one day. That she would love and enjoy thoroughly, filled with everything she loved

– wonderful things to eat and drink, and beautiful rivers and trees and birds all around it. But in order to do this, the king had to leave his daughter to be taken care of by his servants and go on a very far journey so that he could prepare this beautiful castle for her and get everything ready and perfect for her, just the way he knows she likes. So he left one day after saying goodbye to his daughter and both of them cried, because the princess also loved her father more than anything else in the world. And before he left, her father the king promised her that one day he would come back and take her to live in that beautiful castle.

Now of course the princess was very sad that her father had to leave her; how do you think she may spend her days while she is away from him, waiting for him to come back and get her? [she would think of him often and always make sure to keep everything that he had taught her in her heart and to do everything that would make him happy.] She knew that even though he was far away, he was still her father the king and she needed to obey him. And she wanted to obey him from all her heart. And she longed for the day when she would see him again and he would come back. She hoped, and tried very hard, that he would be pleased with her when he returned and that he would have no reason to reprimand her when he came.

Now just like the King in this story, our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of all, has gone up to Heaven to prepare mansions for us to live in one day, when we are with Him in heaven. So who is the princess in the story? [We are the princess – or prince!]. We are very sad that our Lord has gone from us and is not with us, and we long in our hearts to see Him again very soon! And just like in the story, our Lord did promise us that He will come again one day to take us [Christians who believe in Him and are waiting for Him] with Him to heaven. Now He didn't tell us when this day was going to come, and maybe it will be many, many, many years from now, when our lives have ended. But He will come. And at the sound of His voice, all the righteous and the good and holy people will rise up from their graves and be renewed, and have beautiful and strong bodies that are able to fly and go through walls and do anything! And they will all go with Him to their new beautiful homes – mansions – in heaven. And at the sound of His voice, all the people who lived wicked lives will also rise up out of their graves, but they will not have strong and beautiful bodies and they will not be happy, and they will go to the other place that is far away from Him.

And just like the princess in the story, we live our lives longing to see our Lord and Savior of our souls, and we want to do everything to please Him and nothing which would be against His words. And we pray for this, that when He comes, He will have no reason to reprimand us for anything but that we will be able to stand before Him, blameless and fearless and knowing that we are His.

MARANATHA

Since the very beginning of Christianity, Christians have been waiting for the day our Lord would come back and take us all to be with Him – if we have lived righteous lives and followed Him always and confessed when we didn't. A long time ago, they even had a certain way of greeting each other

when they met. Instead of saying “hello,” they would say, “Marantha” which means “the Lord is coming” or “our Lord, come!” They did this because they were so much looking forward to that day. And longing to be able to see Him again, the One who died for us and gave Himself for us. So we too should live like those first Christians and always think of the day our Lord is coming back and praying for Him to return. Every time we pray “Our Father” we pray for that. When we say, “Your Kingdom come,” that is what we mean – that we are asking Him to come back and establish His kingdom and take us to be there with Him always.

WE LOOK TO THE EAST

When we pray we look always to the east. By doing this we say that we await our Lord, because He is coming from the east. We also bury the dead with their feet to the east, so that they resurrect and stand looking to the east.

PLAN & MATERIALS:

Plan a:

- ***Read 1 Thes 4:16-17 and explain it to the children. Be sure to explain about the resurrected body that the righteous will inherit – a body that never feels fatigue, or fear, or hunger, or thirst, or sadness or loneliness; a body that will be able to fly or go through walls.***
- ***Have them draw a picture of what they imagine that moment being like.***

CONCLUSION:

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. How the old Christians used to greet one another?

A. *Maranatha*

Q. What is the meaning of maranatha?

A. *The Lord is coming again*

Q. Why would Christ our Lord come again?

A. *To take us with Him to His Father*

Q. Why do we pray looking to the east?

A. *To show that we are waiting for our Lord who shall come from east.*

VERSE TO REMEMBER

"Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him" Revelation 1:7

III. DAILY READINGS

First Grade Curriculum:

God Reveal Himself To Us

UNIT VIII: THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES US TO BE LIKE OUR LORD (7 LESSONS)

Purpose: In this unit, the student are exposed to the work of the Holy Spirit in Christ's body- the Church. The stories of the saints are told from this point (the work of the Holy Spirit in them). The stories in this unit are chosen to reflect different fruit of the Holy Spirit. His first action is to bring our Lord and savior into the heart and ignite the greatest love for Him. Through His work in the saints, the Holy Spirit shapes the Christians to be "like Christ". By doing this, the Holy Spirit witnesses for Christ in the world. "Let your light shine." Note: the stories of Martyrs (except that of St. Mark) were kept for older age groups

Lesson 42: The Holy spirit gave kindness and love to St. Bishoy

Lesson 43: The Holy Spirit gave patience and obedience to St. John the short

Lesson 44: The Holy spirit gave courage to St. Barsuma the Naked

Lesson 45: The holy spirit gave self control & meekness to St. Moses the strong

Lesson 46: The Holy Spirit gave Joy and kindness to St. Nicholas

Lesson 47: The Holy Spirit gave faith to St. Simon the coupler

Unit IX: The Holy Spirit Gives Us to be Like Our Lord

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LESSON 42: THE HOLY SPIRIT GAVE KINDNESS AND LOVE TO ST. BISHOY

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE AND REFERENCES:

ST. BISHOY: DEPARTED THE EIGHTH DAY OF ABIB

Saint Bishoy the Great is the founder of the Monastery of St. Bishoy in Wadi El-Natroun. The name "Bishoy" in Coptic means "just." In French, his name is St. Paisious, and the church mentions him in the liturgy as, "The Upright and Perfect Man, the Beloved of our Good Savior." He is also called, "The Star of the Wilderness."

St. Bishoy was born of two very pious parents in 320 A.D. in a village of the Nile Delta in Egypt. He was one of seven brothers whose faithful mother spent long nights taking care of them until their hearts glowed with the love of Jesus Christ. In a dream, St. Bishoy's mother saw the angel of the Lord asking for one of her children to serve our Lord God. She answered the angel and said, "They are all here to serve the Lord." The angel selected St. Bishoy who was not as strong as his brothers. St. Bishoy's mother did not esteem St. Bishoy fit for God's service due to his weakness; but the angel said that the Lord's power in imperfection is perfect. In 340 A.D., when St. Bishoy was 20 years old, he went to the Scetis wilderness and became a student of Saint Bimwa, who in turn was a student of Saint Abu Makar the Great. He joined the monastery of Scetis to devote all his life to worship our Lord Jesus. While in the monastery, Abba Bishoy became a spiritual friend to the saint who was famous for obedience, St. John the Short. Out of obedience to his teacher, St. Bimwa, St. John planted a dry stick, and it grew and became a fruitful tree through the blessing of his

obedience. When St. Bimwa departed, God's angel appeared to Abba Bishoy and informed him that our Lord wanted him to live in solitude in the neighboring region, east of Saint John's place. There, Abba Bishoy would be a father to many monks and guided them in their spiritual growth to our Lord. Abba Bishoy obeyed the angel and lived in a cave (which still exists until this day in Saint Mary's Monastery, El-Surian). The love Abba Bishoy had for our Good Savior made him want to continue his conversation with God through prayer as long as possible. One of the strategies he used to keep himself awake was to tie his hair with a rope attached to the ceiling of his cave, so that he would wake up every time he fell asleep in order to continue in prayer to his Beloved. For that reason he was called, "the Beloved by our Good Savior." Because of his devotion to God, Abba Bishoy would forget about his physical needs and would be filled with the spiritual food of prayer, meditation, and reading the living Word of God.

Every person that Abba Bishoy met was filled with peace, happiness, assurance, and went away content. As a result, he had twenty-four hundred followers who lived the life of continuous happiness under his guidance, and they lived in scattered caves in the mountain. They would gather around Abba Bishoy "like bees surrounding honey," as some of the old manuscripts stated. Abba Bishoy was also known for his sensitivity. When someone was once speaking during one of his sermons, Abba Bishoy chose not to hurt the feelings of that person, and when that person saw the capacity of Abba Bishoy's good heart, he stopped talking and apologized.

HIS SPIRITUAL STRIFE

After the death of St. Bimwa, his teacher, Abba Bishoy stayed with his companion St. John the Short. He was constantly watchful for the well-being of his spiritual life; he liked to pray, fast and read the Holy Scripture so much that he could recite most of the passages by heart. His favorite book was that of Jeremiah the Prophet in the Old Testament. He liked it so much that he was called Abba Bishoy the Jeremian.

Abba Bishoy was an energetic worker who ate directly from the fruit of his labor. He once said to his disciples, "I do not eat food provided by any person; my children, work with your hands to sustain yourselves and to make enough to give to charity." He was not only pleasant, humble, and sensitive to others' feelings, but he also respected everyone's humanity. His loving heart always listened to the poor and the needy. For his compassion, he was called "the upright and perfect man."

Abba Bishoy was spiritually detached from money and materialistic things. One day, he refused the gold and silver that one of the rich people brought him, because God informed the saint of the devil's trick to try to keep him away from worship by tempting him with riches. So Abba Bishoy advised the rich man to take his gold and silver and distribute it to the poor and the needy to win God's blessing. When the rich man left him, and Abba Bishoy returned to his cave, the devil cried out saying, "Oh, you, you always ruin my tricks with your modesty." Abba Bishoy answered him in meekness and vulnerability saying: "Since you fell, oh devil, God spoils all your tricks against His children."

Abba Bishoy loved his spiritual children and interacted with them as a loving father. He used to cry over his sins just like Jeremiah the Prophet did. He kept striving in prayer for one of his disciples who sinned until the disciple came back repenting to God.

THE LORD SHOWS HIMSELF TO ST. BISHOY

The monks could hear our Lord talking to him as he prayed. During one of his prayers, the Lord said to him, "Here I'll be with you, I have witnessed your toil, love and perseverance. I have granted that whoever prays asking through your intercession would be answered." The saint's heart fell within him and said, "But it is you, Jesus Christ my Lord, who suffered for me and for the whole world. You were crucified, died and resurrected for our salvation."

Another time, the Lord appeared to him and said, "My dear Bishoy, this mountain shall be with monks and be a tower of doves." Abba Bishoy's sweet aroma filled the wilderness, and multitudes of monks flocked to hear his teaching and advice. He became the father of approximately eight thousand monks. He taught them the fear of God and implanted the spirit of meekness in their souls, which is the essence of spiritual life.

While fasting, and with a humble heart, he used to carry all the troubles and weaknesses of his disciples, so that he could lead them to the life of righteousness. He used to pray continuously so that God would keep his disciples' souls in the faith.

ST. BISHOY CARRIES JESUS CHRIST

The monks longed to see the Lord through Abba Bishoy. They asked the saint to pray for their sake, so that He might bless them with an appearance. Abba Bishoy mentioned their desire to the Lord, and pleaded for them, saying that such an appearance would increase their enthusiasm and encourage them in their spiritual lives. The Lord promised to appear to them on the mountain on a certain day at a certain time.

On that day that the Lord promised to appear, the monks raced to get to the appointed spot. On their way, they saw a sick old man who wanted to join them, but none of the monks was willing to carry him, or even had enough patience or time to "waste" with him. Abba Bishoy passed by; he was very late but offered to take him. He lifted him up on his shoulders and carried him.

At the beginning of the climb, Abba Bishoy did not feel any weight, but gradually he felt that the old man was getting heavier and heavier until he could not continue. At that moment, he knew that this was the Lord. He cried, "My Lord Jesus Christ, the heavens are not spacious enough for You, the earth trembles in facing Your Holiness, how can a sinner like me carry You!" Then our Lord Jesus Christ answered and said, "Because you have carried Me, my dear Bishoy, your body shall never decay." When the monks discovered that the Lord revealed Himself to the saint while they had deprived themselves of seeing the Lord because of their carelessness, they were greatly grieved.

ST. BISHOY WASHES THE FEET OF OUR GOOD SAVIOR

One of Abba Bishoy's distinguished merits was his hospitality to strangers. One day while he was sitting outside his cell, he saw a stranger who was weary from walking. He invited the stranger to his cell and brought some water to wash his exhausted feet. While washing his feet, he heard the Lord's voice saying, "My chosen Bishoy! You are an honorable man." Realizing that he was washing the Lord's feet, he knelt down and worshiped Him. The Lord gave him peace and comforted him.

There was an aged monk living in a town called Epsi in Upper Egypt. Misled by the devil, he deviated from the Orthodox belief, denied the existence of the Holy Spirit, and started to spread his heresy openly. God wanted to save him, and so He told Abba Bishoy about this monk. St. Bishoy made some baskets with three handles each, and set off to the place where that monk was. When he arrived there, the old monk welcomed him with great hospitality. The other monks in the area gathered around him to receive his blessing. The three handles of the baskets attracted their attention and they asked the meaning of it. Abba Bishoy answered, "I always do my manual work after the example of the Holy Trinity." On hearing this, all the monks exclaimed, "So father, there is a Holy Spirit!" The saint started to teach them about the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity. As he quoted many verses from the Scriptures, they all believed and professed their faith in the Holy Spirit.

ST. BISHOY GOES TO ANSENA

After the Barbarians attacked Scetis in 408 A.D., Abba Bishoy went to Ansenia in Upper Egypt. There, he met a spiritual friend by the name of St. Paul of Tamouh. The Lord blessed the strong spiritual bond between them. St. Paul saw a vision and heard the Divine Voice promising that his body and St. Bishoy's body would always be together.

A VISIT OF ST. EPHRAIM

Many times, our Lord Jesus appeared to Abba Bishoy because of his great love for him. Abba Bishoy was informed of many matters because of his prophetic spirit. He knew of the coming of Saint Ephraim the Syrian before the saint actually came to visit him. Abba Bishoy asked God to let him speak with a Syrian tongue so that he would be able to speak with the Syrian guest, and the Lord granted it to him.

THE SAINT'S BODY

On July 15, 407 A.D., St. Bishoy committed his soul into the hands of the Savior. Three months later, St. Paul of Tamouh departed to the Lord, and his body was buried beside St. Bishoy. In 842 A.D., during the reign of His Holiness Pope Yousab, the fifty-second Patriarch of Alexandria, the two bodies of St. Bishoy and St. Paul were carried in a great celebration to the monastery of St. Bishoy in Wadi El-Natroun. When the monks uncovered St. Bishoy's body, they found it as if it had only recently deceased. It was just as our Lord Christ had promised the great saint, "Your body will never decay," because St. Bishoy carried the Lord on his shoulders. On the feast of Saint Bishoy's departure, July 15 (8 Abib) of each year, His Holiness Pope Shenouda III leads the celebration in honor of the great saint. His Holiness joins the monks of the monastery in joy for the feast of their intercessor. During a ten-day celebration, they prepare the spices and oil to scent the pure body of the saint, with much prayers, chants, and hymns. Thousands of people visit the monastery during this ten-day celebration (July 5-15) to join in the joyful celebration and to receive the blessing and prayer of the great saint. May the blessings and prayers of this great Saint Abba Bishoy be with us all. Amen

St. Mark's Coptic Orthodox Church website, Daily Bible Study homepage

THE EIGHTH DAY OF THE BLESSED MONTH OF ABIB

On this day, St. Bishoy, whose memorial is honorable, the star of the desert, departed. He was born in a town called Shansa in Egypt, and he had six brothers. His mother saw an angel in a vision saying to her, "The Lord says to you, 'Give Me one of your children to serve Me.'" She answered, "Lord, take whoever you want." The angel took the hand of Anba Bishoy, who was thin and his body was frail. His mother told the angel, "My Lord, take one who is strong to serve the Lord." "This is whom the Lord has chosen," answered the Angel.

Later on, St. Bishoy went to the wilderness of Shiheet and became a monk by the hand of Anba Bemwah (Bamouyah), who also ordained St. John "Yehness" the Short a monk. St. Bishoy struggled in much asceticism and many worships that made him worthy to see the Lord Christ.

Emperor Constantine appeared to him in a vision, saying, "Had I known how great is the honor of monks, I would have abandoned my kingdom and became a monk." St. Bishoy told him, "You have banished the heathen worship and exalted Christianity, and has not Christ given you anything?" Emperor Constantine answered him, "The Lord has given me many gifts, but none of them is like the honor of the monks."

During his days, an ascetic old man appeared in the mountain of Ansena, who was reputed for his righteousness and to whom many people gathered. But he deviated from the true faith and the devil led him astray. He taught that there is no Holy Spirit, and many were deceived by his sayings. Anba Bishoy heard about him, and he went to him and he had with him a woven basket with three ears. When he visited the old man and his followers, they asked him about the reason for making three ears for the basket. He answered, "I have a Trinity, and everything I do, is like the Trinity." They said to him, "Then, Is there a thing called the Holy Spirit?" Then he started to explain to them from the Holy Scriptures, from the Old and New Testaments. He indicated to them that the Holy Spirit is One of the three Persons of the Trinity. He convinced them, and they returned to the true faith. Then he returned to his monastery in the wilderness of Scete (Shiheet).

When the barbarians invaded the wilderness, he left it and dwelt on Mount Ansena, where he departed. After the time of persecution had ended, they brought his body with the body of St. Paul of Tamouh to his monastery in the wilderness of Shiheet. *May his prayers be with us. Amen.*

Synaxarium

CHURCH FATHERS:

REFLECTION:

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

Saint Bishoy, monk

INTRODUCTION

Tell the kids to imagine that St. Bishoy was like a flower. What does a flower need to grow? [Water!] The Holy Spirit was that “water,” causing him to grow and become so loving and kind to *everyone* around him. Just like a flower would grow and become taller and more beautiful because of the water it is drinking, so did St. Bishoy continue to grow and become more loving and more kind every time he was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Tell the kids that in this unit, they are going to be talking about many saints who were filled with the Holy Spirit – just like flowers are fed with water. Every saint we talk about, we will give him or her a flower. [The servant would have pictures of flowers to put up on the wall every week, with the name of the saint discussed that week taped above the flower. By the end of the unit, there would be a beautiful garden on the wall. Have the students choose which flower to assign to which saint every week.]

Throughout the story, continue to emphasize the fact that it was the Holy Spirit working in St. Bishoy and bringing forth in him all the Kindness and Love he showed to others.

LESSON BODY:

AN ANGEL CHOSE ST. BISHOY

A very long time ago, St. Bishoy was born to two very spiritual and holy parents in a village in Egypt. Guess how many brothers he had? He had 6 brothers! So his mother had 7 children! His faithful mother spent long nights taking care of all the brothers until their hearts glowed with the love of Jesus Christ. This was the first 'watering' that St. Bishoy received – it was from his mother. The Holy Spirit would come within him and give him such a great love for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Even when St. Bishoy was a little boy, he longed to be with our Lord and to spend time with Him and to pray to Him always. He loved God very much.

One night, St. Bishoy's mother had a dream. In the dream, she saw the angel of the Lord asking for one of her children to serve our Lord God. She answered the angel and said, "They are all here to serve the Lord." The angel selected St. Bishoy who was not as strong as his brothers. (He was weaker and smaller). St. Bishoy's mother did not think that St. Bishoy would be fit for God's service because of his weakness and because he was so small and maybe not as healthy as his brothers; but the angel said that the Lord's power is perfect in weakness. [Give the kids examples until they understand this point.]

ST. BISHOY BECOMES A MONK

When St. Bishoy was 20 years old, the Holy Spirit guided him to become a monk. He joined a monastery to devote all his life to worship our Lord Jesus because he loved him so much. The love that the Holy Spirit gave Abba Bishoy for our Good Savior made him want to continue his conversation with God through prayer as long as possible. But let me ask you a question – what usually happens to us at night? We all get what? [Tired!] This feeling of being tired would prevent St. Bishoy from being able to keep talking with our Lord. St. Bishoy loved our Lord so much that he would not want to sleep and be away from him, so do you know what he used to do? He would tie his hair with a rope attached to the ceiling of his cave, so that he would wake up every time he fell asleep in order to continue in prayer to his Beloved!

What do you think was happening to St. Bishoy whenever he would pray to our Lord? He was getting watered! Just like a flower grows and becomes more and more beautiful every time it is watered, he was being filled with the Holy Spirit and was becoming more and more kind and loving. And people would notice this about him. Every person that Abba Bishoy met left him filled with peace, happiness, assurance, and went away content. And then people started not wanting to leave him. Before long, many other people came to him, wanting to live near him and learn from him. He had hundreds of other monks who lived the life of continuous happiness under his guidance. They wanted to love our Lord the same way as St. Bishoy loved our Lord. They would gather around Abba Bishoy "like bees surrounding honey."

The Holy Spirit also gave to St. Bishoy sensitivity – he was always very careful not to hurt the feelings of others. One day he was giving a sermon in church, but someone started talking during his sermon. Abba Bishoy chose not to hurt the feelings of that person, and when that person saw how loving and good St. Bishoy's heart was, he stopped talking and apologized.

ST. BISHOY CARRIED OUR LORD AND WASHED HIS FEET

The monks that came to live near St. Bishoy would hear our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, Himself come and talk with St. Bishoy. They longed to see the Lord, too. They asked St. Bishoy to pray for them, so that they may see Him. St. Bishoy mentioned their desire to the Lord, and asked the Lord that He would come and visit the other monks. The Lord promised to appear to them on the mountain on a certain day at a certain time.

When the monks heard this, they were very excited! On that day that the Lord promised to appear, the monks raced to get to the appointed spot. On their way, they saw a sick old man who wanted to join them, but none of the monks was willing to carry him, because they were in such a rush to get to the place! A little bit later St. Bishoy passed by; he was very late but offered to take the old man. He lifted him up on his shoulders and carried him.

At the beginning of the climb, Abba Bishoy did not feel any weight from the old man, but little by little, he felt that the old man was getting heavier and heavier until he could not carry him anymore! At that moment, he realized that this was not a regular person – it was the Lord! He cried, “My Lord Jesus Christ, the heavens are not spacious enough for You, the earth trembles in facing Your Holiness, how can a sinner like me carry You!” Then our Lord Jesus Christ answered and said, “Because you have carried Me, My dear Bishoy, your body shall never decay.” When the monks discovered that the Lord revealed Himself to the saint while they had deprived themselves of seeing the Lord because of their carelessness, they were very upset.

One day while St. Bishoy was sitting outside his cell, he saw a stranger who was tired from walking and traveling. (Keep in mind, he lives in the desert!) He invited the stranger to his cell and brought some water to wash his exhausted feet. While washing his feet, he heard the Lord’s voice saying, “My chosen Bishoy! You are an honorable man.” Realizing that he was washing the Lord’s feet, he knelt down and worshiped Him. The Lord gave him peace and comforted him.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- **Flower pictures:** The servant would have pictures of flowers to put up on the wall every week, with the name of the saint discussed that week taped above the flower. By the end of the unit, there would be a beautiful garden on the wall. Have the students choose which flower to assign to which saint every week.
- **Acting:**
- **scrap book building**
- **Coloring**
- **Puppets**

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q: Who came and told St. Bishoy's mother that St. Bishoy was to serve the Lord?

A: An angel in a dream

Q: What would St. Bishoy do to stay awake so that he could spend time praying to our Lord?

A: He would tie his hair with a rope to the ceiling!

Q: Who would come and speak with St. Bishoy?

A: Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

Q: Name the two specific instances in which St. Bishoy met our Lord Jesus Christ.

A: St. Bishoy saw a sick old man who needed help reaching the top of the mountain and St. Bishoy carried the man only to discover that as he continued to walk the man got lighter and lighter and he realized that the man was not just any man but our Lord Jesus Christ.

St. Bishoy saw a tired stranger out in the desert near his cell and he offered to wash his feet during which he realized that he wasn't just any tired stranger but our Lord Jesus Christ.

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

DAILY READINGS

UNIT IX: THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES US GIFTS TO BE LIKE OUR LORD

Purpose: In this unit, the student are exposed to the work of the Holy Spirit in Christ's body- the Church. The stories of the saints are told from this point (the work of the Holy Spirit in them). The stories in this unit are chosen to reflect different fruit of the Holy Spirit. His first action is to bring our Lord and savior into the heart and ignite the greatest love for Him. Through His work in the saints, the Holy Spirit shapes the Christians to be "like Christ". By doing this, the Holy Spirit witnesses for Christ in the world. "Let your light shine." Note: the stories of Martyrs (except that of St. Mark) were kept for older age groups

LESSON 43. THE HOLY SPIRIT GAVE PATIENCE AND OBEDIENCE TO ST. JOHN THE SHORT

SERVANT PREPARATION:

Verse & References:

THE TWENTIETH DAY OF THE BLESSED MONTH OF BABAH

The Departure of the Great St. John Colobos (the Short)

On this day, the great light and saint, the hegumen Abba John (Yoannis) Colobos (the Short), departed. He was a native of Betsa in Upper Egypt and he had one brother. His parents were righteous and God-fearing people, rich in faith and good deeds.

When he was a young boy, his heart turned away from the futility of this world, its lusts and its glory, and he desired the monastic life. The grace of God moved him to go to the desert of Scete and there he came upon a tried and holy man whose name was Abba Pemwah from El-Bahnasa. John asked Abba Pemwah to allow him to stay with him. The old man answered, trying him, "My son, you cannot stay with us for this is a very hard desert and those who dwell in it eat from the work of their hands, besides observing many fasts, prayers, and sleeping on the floor and many other forms of asceticism. Go back to the world and live in the fear of God." Abba John told him, "Do not send me away, for God's sake, because I came to be in your obedience and prayers. If you accept me, I believe that God will make your heart well-pleased with me." Abba Pemwah was in the habit of not doing anything hastily. He asked the Lord Christ to reveal to him the matter of this young man. The angel of the Lord appeared to him and said, "Accept him, for he shall become a

chosen vessel." Abba Pemwah brought him and he shaved the hair of his head. He laid out the garb of the monk, and he prayed over it for three days and three nights and when he put the garb on him, he saw an angel making the sign of the Cross over it. Saint John started his monastic life with great asceticism and splendid works. One day Abba Pemwah wanted to test him, so he expelled him from his cell saying, "I cannot live with you." Abba John stayed out by the door of his cell for seven days. Every day Abba Pemwah went out and smote him with a palm branch and Abba John bowed down before him saying, "I have sinned." On the seventh day, the old man went out to go to the church and he saw seven angels with seven crowns placing them on the head of Abba John. Since that day, he was held by him in honor and reverence.

One day 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 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.

Abba Pemwah fell sick for 12 years and Abba John ministered unto him all this time during which he never heard from his teacher that he fell short in his service. Abba Pemwah was an experienced old man who had been tried much, and sickness had emaciated him until he became like a piece of dry wood, so that he would be a chosen offering. When Abba Pemwah was about to die, he gathered together the elder monks and he held the hand of Abba John and gave him to them saying, "Take him and keep him, for he is an angel, not a man." He commanded Abba John to stay in the place where he had planted the tree. After that Abba John's older brother came to the monastery and was ordained a monk with him. He also became an honorable monk. It happened when the father the Patriarch Abba Theophilus was ordaining Abba John hegumen and abbot over his church, and as he placed his hand over his head, a voice from heaven was heard by the people present saying, "Axios, Axios, Axios (That is to say he is worthy)." When this saint consecrated the offering, he was able to know those who were worthy to partake of it and those who were not worthy.

Abba Theophilus the Patriarch built a church for the Three Young Men in Alexandria, and he wished to bring their bodies and place them in it. He brought Abba John and asked him to travel to Babylon, and to bring the holy bodies. After much forbearing, Abba John accepted to go on this mission. When he left the Patriarch, a cloud carried him away to Babylon. He entered the city and saw its monuments, rivers, and palaces and found the bodies of the saints. When he started moving them from their place, a voice came out from the holy bodies and said to him, "This is the Will of God that we do not leave this place until the day of the Resurrection. Nevertheless, because of the love of Abba Theophilus the Patriarch, and your labor, too, you should inform the Patriarch to gather the people in the church and to put oil in the lamps without lighting them and we will appear in the church and a sign will be made manifest to you." Then Abba John left and went back to Alexandria and told the Patriarch what the saints had said. It happened when the Patriarch and the people were in the church; the lamps were lit up suddenly and they all glorified the Lord.

One day, a monk came into the cell of Abba John. He found him lying down with angels waving their wings over him.

Later on, the Berbers attacked the desert of Scete and he left it. When he was asked why he left, he replied that he did not leave because he was afraid of death, but because he feared a Berber would slay him and go to hell, for though he is against his worship, he is his brother in form. Then he went to the mountain of Abba Anthony on the Red Sea. There he dwelt by the side of a village and God sent him a believer who served him.

When the Lord wished to grant him rest and to end his strife in this world, He sent him His two righteous saints Abba Macarius and Abba Anthony to comfort him and to inform him about his departure. On the eve of Sunday, he fell sick and sent his attendant to bring him something from the village. The angels and the host of saints came and received his pure soul and took it up to heaven. At that time, his servant came back and saw the soul of the saint surrounded by the host of saints and angels singing before them. Before them all, there was one shining like the sun and singing. The servant marveled at this magnificent sight. An angel came to him and told him the name of each one of the saints. Then the servant asked the angel, "Who is this one in front of them all, who is shining like the sun?" The angel replied, "This is Abba Anthony, the father of all the monks." When the servant went into the cell, he found the body of the saint kneeling to the ground, as he had given up his soul while kneeling. The attendant wept sorrowfully over him and went in a hurry to the people of the village and told them what had happened. They came and carried his holy body with great honor. When they brought him into the village, great wonders and miracles were performed through his body.

His prayers be with us and Glory be to our God, forever. Amen

PRAYER

LESSON PREPARATION

SONG

VOCABULARY:

INTRODUCTION

1. REVIEW QUESTIONS

Q: Who came and told St. Bishoy's mother that St. Bishoy was to serve the Lord?

A: An angel in a dream

Q: What would St. Bishoy do to stay awake so that he could spend time praying to our Lord?

A: He would tie his hair with a rope to the ceiling!

Q: Who would come and speak with St. Bishoy?

A: Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

Q: Name the two specific instances in which St. Bishoy met our Lord Jesus Christ.

A: St. Bishoy saw a sick old man who needed help reaching the top of the mountain and St. Bishoy carried the man only to discover that as he continued to walk the man got lighter and lighter and he realized that the man was not just any man but our Lord Jesus Christ.

St. Bishoy saw a tired stranger out in the desert near his cell and he offered to wash his feet during which he realized that he wasn't just any tired stranger but our Lord Jesus Christ.

LESSON BODY:

THE HOLY SPIRIT FILLS ST. JOHN'S HEART WITH PEACE AND HE BECOMES A MONK

Once a long time ago, there was a boy named John who lived in Egypt. He had a mother and father and an older brother, and their family loved God and served Him. As St. John was growing up, he started to feel in his heart that he wanted to leave everything – his home, his family, his room, his clothes, his toys, all the stores, all the new things around him, and all the people that he knew – and give his life to our Lord. The Holy Spirit filled his heart with peace and love, so that he was brave enough to leave and go to the desert to become a monk. (Remember, a monk and a nun is a person who gives his life or her life completely to God in obedience, poverty, and purity. Monks are boys and Nuns are girls).

ST. JOHN MEETS ABBA BIMWAH

When he arrived at the desert, he met a holy man (remember, holy means very special and belongs to God). This man's name was Abba Bimwah. Do you remember Abba Bimwah? He was the one who helped St. Hilaria (Elaria) become a monk too and he kept her secret about her being a girl. Maybe St. John even saw St. Hilaria and didn't know that she was a girl! St. John asked Abba Bimwah if he could stay with him and learn how to live like a monk. Abba Bimwah did not like to make decisions quickly, he was **patient (patient means not doing things quickly, but taking your time)**. He wanted to ask God if it would be good for St. John to become a monk, so Abba Bimwah prayed to our Lord Jesus Christ and asked Him to show him what He wanted. An angel appeared to him and told him that God had chosen St. John and that he was special and should be a monk. So Abba Bimwah took St. John and brought the special clothes that monks wear for him. Before he put the clothes on St. John, Abba Bimwah prayed over the clothes for three days without stopping. After the three days, when he put the monks' clothes on St. John, he saw an angel making the sign of the Cross over it. Abba Bimwah knew that St. John would grow up to become a very holy person.

THE OBEDIENCE OF ST. JOHN

As St. John grew up, he came closer and closer to our Lord, and loved Him more and more. The Holy Spirit filled St. John's heart with obedience. He used to listen to every single thing Abba Bimwah told him to do, even if it did not make him feel good or if he did not like it. One day, Abba Bimwah wanted to test St. John to see how obedient he would be. He told him to leave the place where they were living - **the place where monks live is called a cell**. Abba Bimwah did not really want St. John to leave, but he told St. John, "I can't live with you anymore. You have to leave." He wanted to see if St. John would still listen to him, even though it was something very hard to do. St. John *did* listen, he left the **cell**, but he did not leave the monastery because this was the only place where he could pray to God and love Him. Listen to what St. John did: he stayed outside the door of the cell for 7 days, a whole week! Can you believe that? At the end of the 7 days, Abba Bimwah saw 7 angels placing 7 crowns on St. John's head, one for every day that he stayed outside the cell. The Holy Spirit filled St. John's heart with peace and patience, and he felt a lot of love from God while he was spending those days outside. From that day on, St. John was very much honored and Abba Bimwah knew he was a very holy person.

THE FRUITS OF OBEDIENCE

Ask the children, what does a tree start out as? Where does a tree come from? [They will say, 'a seed.' Show the children the dry piece of wood]. Could you plant something like this, and it would grow into a tree? [Let the children respond, and then tell them] No, because there is no life in this dry piece of wood, but there is life inside a seed. Well, one day, Abba Bimwah found a piece of dry wood just like this and gave it to St. John. He told him, "Take this wood, plant it, and water it every day." Even though this was a very strange thing to ask because St. John knew, just like you know, that even if he planted a dry piece of wood and watered it and took very good care of it, it would never grow or become a tree because it was dead! Even though St. John knew this, he still took the dry piece of wood, planted it and watered it two times every day. And, the place where he had to go to get the water was very, very far away, and he had to walk all the way to the water and back two times every day. He never complained to Abba Bimwah, or told him, "There is no point in doing

this! It will never grow to become a tree!” He never got angry, or upset, but he kept taking care of the tree every day and watering it. And do you want to know what happened to that dry piece of wood? God made a miracle from the obedience of St. John; the dry piece of wood started to grow into a healthy tree, that kept growing and growing until it was huge and very beautiful and it even grew fruit. And people could take the fruit from the tree and eat it. You can still see this tree if you go to Egypt today. It is still alive. [Show them the picture of the tree].

THE END OF ST. JOHN’S LIFE

There are many more things that St. John did, and there are many more stories about all the good things that happened because he was so obedient. The Holy Spirit continued to fill him inside with more and more obedience and patience, and everyone around him knew how holy he was and they learned many things from him about God and about how to serve Him. People used to see angels around St. John all the time, taking care of him and helping him. Being obedient is a very special thing, and it pleases God’s heart very much when He sees His children listening to their spiritual and physical parents. Who are your spiritual parents? (Abounas, bishops, and Sunday School teachers). Who are your physical parents? (Mom and dad at home). When we are obedient like St. John was, a lot of angels will love to be around and will be so joyful to help us all the time. Would you like to make the angels so joyful?

When St. John became a very old man, it was time for him to leave the Earth and go to Heaven. God told him the day that he was going to die. When that day came for him to leave to go to Heaven, which means to die, he knelt down and many saints and angels came to take him and bring him to heaven. The saints and angels were so bright and shining and they were so joyful, and they were singing very beautiful songs, and St. John was very joyful and excited to go with them.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- *Scrap book building*
- *Coloring:*

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q: When Abba Bimwah told St. John to leave because he could no longer live with him what did St. John do?

A: He was obedient. He stayed outside of his cell for 7 days.

Q: What did Abba Bimwah see after 7 days?

A: He saw 7 angels placing 7 crowns on St. Johns head, one for every day of obedience

Q: What did Abba Bimwah ask St. John to do with a dry piece of wood?

A: He told him to take this piece of wood, plant it and water it every day.

Q: What became of this dry piece of wood?

A: St. John was obedient. He planted and watered the plant twice a day. The dry piece of wood grew into a healthy tree that is still alive today in Egypt.

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

Unit VIII: The Holy Spirit Gives Us to be Like Our Lord

Purpose: In this unit, the student are exposed to the work of the Holy Spirit in Christ's body- the Church. The stories of the saints are told from this point (the work of the Holy Spirit in them). The stories in this unit are chosen to reflect different fruit of the Holy Spirit. His first action is to bring our Lord and savior into the heart and ignite the greatest love for Him. Through His work in the saints, the Holy Spirit shapes the Christians to be "like Christ". By doing this, the Holy Spirit witnesses for Christ in the world. "Let your light shine." Note: the stories of Martyrs (except that of St. Mark) were kept for older age groups.

LESSON 44: THE HOLY SPIRIT GAVE COURAGE TO ST. BARSUMA THE NAKED

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE AND REFERENCES:

ST. BARSUMA EL ERIAN

St. Barsuma was born in 1257 A.D. from pious parents. His father was the faithful scribe of Queen Shagaret El-Dor, who gave him the title of "preferred notable"; his mother was from the family of El-Taban. When his parents passed away, St. Barsuma inherited their great fortune and was placed under the care of his uncle, who coveted St. Barsuma's riches. St. Barsuma did not resist his uncle, for he remembered the words of Solomon the Wise, "Vanity of vanities! All is vanity . . . What profits a man of all his labor which he endures under the sun?" (Eccl. 1:2) Some of St. Barsuma's relatives tried to incite him to sue his uncle but he utterly refused. St. Barsuma lived outside of the city for five years, suffering the harshness of the summer heat and of the winter cold. He wore no clothing except a hairy sackcloth, following the example of the St. Paul, the first hermit. St. Barsuma then went to live as a hermit in a cave adjoining the church of Saint Mercurious in old Cairo. In the cave lived a large snake who prevented people from entering. When St. Barsuma tried to enter the cave, the church's people stopped him, for they feared for his life. Fearless, St. Barsuma raised his arms toward heaven, prayed, then crossed himself and proceeded saying, "O my Lord Christ, the Son of the Living God, who gave us the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions and every power of the enemy. You granted healing to the children of Israel, who were bitten by the serpents, when they looked to the brass serpent. Now, I look to You, O You who was hung on the Cross, so that You might grant me the power to be able to overcome this beast." Then St. Barsuma made the sign of the cross over himself, and moved toward the serpent saying, "You

trampled the serpent and the snakes, and You tread upon the lion and the dragon. The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?" Then he said to the serpent, "O blessed one, stand still in your place." He made the sign of the cross over the serpent. He prayed to God and asked Him to remove the beastly nature from the serpent. As St. Barsuma finished his prayer, the serpent changed its nature and became tame. The saint said to the serpent, "Henceforth, O blessed one, you shall not have power or might to harm any man, but rather you shall be subject and obedient to what I say to you." The serpent manifested signs of submission and obedience, and became with the saint as the lion was with Daniel, the prophet, in the den.

After St. Barsuma left the cave, he lived on the roof of the church, again enduring the summer heat and the winter cold for fifteen years. His skin became dark as he spent his time meditating, worshiping and serving his fellow man. His reputation of sanctity spread so far and wide that many people, Christian and Muslim alike, went to him seeking his blessings. Continuing to only wear the goatskin around his waist, St. Barsuma became known as "El-Erian," which means the naked or the disrobed. God granted St. Barsuma the gift of performing signs and miracles. St. Barsuma offered the comfort of the Holy Spirit to his people in a time of severe troubles and tribulations for Christians in Egypt. In addition to the closing of churches, the Christians in Egypt were forced to wear blue turbans, but St. Barsuma refused to replace his white turban. The rulers of that time visited him and saw his white turban, but no one dared to force him to wear a blue one for they knew that the power of God was with him. Eventually, however, Saint Barsuma was arrested with a number of Christians and thrown into prison. While in jail, he kept praying to our Heavenly Father on behalf of his harassed brothers. Relief came rapidly and the imprisoned were released and allowed to go in peace.

After that incident, Barsuma went to Turah, a town south of Cairo near Helwan, and there he lived in the roof of a church in the Shahrān monastery. One day the people who came to see the saint were so numerous that the abbot of the monastery was embarrassed because he did not have enough food for them. Noticing what was happening, St. Barsuma called one of the monks who worked in the kitchen and asked him to bring him a little of the soup they were cooking. The saint prayed over the food, made the sign of the cross and asked the monk to take it back to the kitchen and mix it with the rest of the soup. St. Barsuma then asked the monks to serve the food to everyone, and the Lord, who blessed the five loaves and the two fish, also blessed the food of the monastery and everybody had their fill. When the abbot saw what happened, he went to the saint confessing his weak faith.

It was told also, that while St. Barsuma was preaching to a group of people, he stopped talking unexpectedly. Then he looked up and said, "Please, Saint George, save him!" After a little while, a man entered the room panting and trembling. Saint Barsuma told him, "Thank God for your safety! Please tell us what happened." The man said, "On my way to the monastery, some men attacked me, so I cried, 'Save me Abba Barsuma!' Suddenly, I saw a man, dressed in white and mounting a beautiful horse, chasing the robbers. Then he accompanied me to the door of the monastery and disappeared." The people who were present glorified God, who answered the prayers of St.

Barsuma instantly and sent St. George to save the good man. A prominent Muslim judge called Sheik Zein was bed-ridden for nine months suffering terrible pain in his legs. One night he saw in a dream, a man dressed in rags asking him about his ailment. The Sheik said that he had weak legs and that the doctors could not help him. Then he asked the poor man about his name, and he replied, "My name is Barsuma El-Erian." In the morning, the Sheik sent his son to the Shahrān monastery with a basket of pears as a gift to Saint Barsuma. He told his son to ask the saint to pray so that God may heal him. When St. Barsuma saw the judge's son, he called him by his name, took one of the pears, blessed it and said, "Go back to your father and let him eat from this pear, and in the name of Jesus who raised Lazarus from the dead after four days, your father will be healed." The son hurried home and gave his father the pear, and told him what had happened. The sheik started to eat the pear, but before he finished it, he was able to stand on his feet. Completely cured, he cried, "Your blessing O holy Christian, your blessing my master Barsuma El-Erian!"

The miracles that happen through the prayers of Saint Barsuma El-Erian continue until today. A few years ago, a woman by the name of Hana said, "While we were renovating our apartment, a large snake appeared in a crack in the wall. My husband and I were startled, and we cried, 'St. Barsuma, save us!' Suddenly, the snake stopped moving and appeared to be dead. My husband picked the snake up with a stick and when he brought it outside, the snake ran across the street and disappeared. We realized that the saint froze the snake temporarily in order to save us."

The cave which St. Barsuma dwelt in still exists and can be found near the entrance of Saint Mercurios's church 10 meters under the ground with 18 steps leading to it. An altar has been built inside the cave. On September 27 of every year, the Liturgy of the Eucharist is chanted on this altar in St. Barsuma's honor. Many sick people attend the celebration to be healed by the prayers of St. Barsuma.

St. Barsuma El-Erian departed to the Lord on September 10, 1317 AD and was buried in the Shahrān monastery.

May the prayers and blessings of St. Barsuma be with us and glory be to God forever. Amen.

St. Mark's Coptic Orthodox Church website, Daily Bible Study homepage

PRAYER

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

Saint Barsuma the Naked

INTRODUCTION

What does a flower need to grow? [Water!] the saints of God are like flowers and the Holy Spirit is that “water,” causing them to grow, but each in their own way. Just like every flower is different from every other flower, God’s saints are each different from one another.

Tell the kids to imagine that St. Barsuma was like a flower, but a very different flower than St. Bishoy. Just like the Holy Spirit had given to St. Bishoy to be loving and kind, He had given to St. Barsuma to be courageous and brave. Just like a flower would grow and become taller and more beautiful because of the water it is drinking, so did St. Barsuma continue to grow and become braver every time he was filled with the Holy Spirit. And he needed this courage, as we will see in his story! Remind the kids that in this unit, they are going to be talking about many saints who were filled with the Holy Spirit – just like flowers are fed with water. Every saint we talk about, we will give him or her a flower. [The servant would have pictures of flowers to put up on the wall every week, with the name of the saint discussed that week taped above the flower. By the end of the unit, there would be a beautiful garden on the wall. Have the students choose which flower to assign to which saint every week.]

Throughout the story, continue to emphasize the fact that it was the Holy Spirit working in St. Barsuma and bringing forth in him the courage.

LESSON BODY:

Touch on the following points in the life story of St. Barsuma the Naked. Emphasis should be on the Holy Spirit giving him courage and helping him to be like our Lord, for Whom it is impossible to know fear:

1. Inheriting much money; his uncle wanting it
2. Leaving his uncle to keep the money (even though relatives told him to sue) and going to live as a hermit outside the city. Wearing only a hairy sackcloth [have a picture to show the kids]. Following the example of St. Paul the first hermit
3. Spending his time praying and worshiping God – the Holy Spirit was watering him and causing him to grow in courage (which he would need: with the snake and when he was

thrown in jail). Throughout his life, he would continue in prayer and worship and serving those around him; because he was always looking to God, The Holy Spirit would be able to come within him and give him courage and he was not afraid. When we go to God in prayer and worship, we are being filled with the Holy Spirit; it is like we are being watered like a flower and are then able to grow.

4. He wanted to move into a cave next to a church but there was a huge snake in there.
5. His prayer and God-given victory over the snake
6. The Holy Spirit continued to strengthen him in courage so that during the times of difficulty for the Christians, they looked to him for help. When he was thrown in jail with other Christians, he kept praying to our Heavenly Father on behalf of his harassed brothers. Relief came rapidly and the imprisoned were released and allowed to go in peace. Emphasis on the Holy Spirit
7. The many miracles God worked through him
8. Conclusion: ask the children how St. Barsuma was able to be so brave in the face of the snake. [Answer: the Holy Spirit within him; he prayed throughout his life and was therefore filled with the Spirit]

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- **Flower pictures:** The servant would have pictures of flowers to put up on the wall every week, with the name of the saint discussed that week taped above the flower. By the end of the unit, there would be a beautiful garden on the wall. Have the students choose which flower to assign to which saint every week.
- **Pictures of St. Barsuma**
- **Acting:**
- **scrap book building**
- **Coloring**
- **Puppets**

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q: St. Barsuma was rich but he didn't care about the money, he only cared for our Lord Jesus Christ, so what did he do with the money?

A: He let his uncle have it

Q: St. Barsuma became a hermit and wore what? Who first wore this?

A: a hairy sackcloth; St. Paul the first hermit

Q: When many people came to see St. Barsuma one day and they almost ran out of food what happened?

A: One day the people who came to see the saint were so numerous that the abbot of the monastery was embarrassed because he did not have enough food for them. Noticing what was happening, St. Barsuma called one of the monks who worked in the kitchen and asked him to bring him a little of the soup they were cooking. The saint prayed over the food, made the sign of the cross and asked the monk to take it back to the kitchen and mix it with the rest of the soup. St. Barsuma then asked the monks to serve the food to everyone, and the Lord, who blessed the five loaves and the two fish, also blessed the food of the monastery and everybody had their fill. When the abbot saw what happened, he went to the saint confessing his weak faith.

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"God, be merciful to me a sinner!" Luke 18:13

DAILY READINGS

Unit VIII: The Holy Spirit Gives Us to be Like Our Lord

Purpose: In this unit, the student are exposed to the work of the Holy Spirit in Christ's body- the Church. The stories of the saints are told from this point (the work of the Holy Spirit in them). The stories in this unit are chosen to reflect different fruit of the Holy Spirit. His first action is to bring our Lord and savior into the heart and ignite the greatest love for Him. Through His work in the saints, the Holy Spirit shapes the Christians to be "like Christ". By doing this, the Holy Spirit witnesses for Christ in the world. "Let your light shine." Note: the stories of Martyrs (except that of St. Mark) were kept for older age groups.

LESSON 45: THE HOLY SPIRIT GAVE SELF CONTROL & MEEKNESS TO ST. MOSES THE STRONG

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE AND REFERENCES:

ST. MOSES THE STRONG

Saint Moses the Strong was martyred on the twenty-fourth day of the Coptic month Baoonah. St. Moses was born about 332 AD. In his youth, he was the slave of a high government official who could not tolerate St. Moses' dishonesty and violence. It was even said that St. Moses went so far as to commit murder. Finally, his master drove him out of his house. St. Moses became the head of a gang of seventy robbers. He was a strong and fierce man of huge stature.

Once, as he was walking along the banks of the Nile, he spotted some sheep and a shepherd on the opposite side of the Nile. The Nile at that time was at full flood and more than a mile wide. St. Moses put his sword between his teeth and swam across the river. When the shepherd saw him, he ran away and buried himself in the sand. The sheep were left for St. Moses, who chose four of the best rams, slew them and tied them with a rope. He then carried them on his back and swam back across the river. He came to a small village where he skinned the rams, ate the best portions of them, and sold the rest for wine.

The specific circumstances regarding St. Moses conversion are not known. It was mentioned that St. Moses used to address the sun saying, If you are god let me know, and You the God whom I know not, lead me to You. St. Moses heard from someone that the monks in the wilderness of Scetis knew God, so he immediately girded himself with his sword and went to the wilderness.

When St. Moses was seen next, he was in Scetis in the western desert of Egypt. An elder found him and led him to St. Macarius the great at Petra in the northern end of Scetis. It was about 365 AD

when St. Moses arrived there. At that time, thousands of monks had followed St. Macarius after he came to that area in the year 340 AD.

St. Moses was received by one of the priests of Scetis, St. Isidore. He was fortunate enough to have such an experienced and pious elder as his spiritual guide and director. St. Isidore led St. Moses safely during a very turbulent time in his life. As a catechumen, St. Moses received the basic Christian teachings from St. Isidore. However, the Divine Light was too much for the newly converted St. Moses, who was heavily burdened with sin. Frequently, he exploded in tears, and had to find relief in kneeling before his guide, St. Isidore, and confessing his sins. When the time for his baptism came, St. Moses confessed all his past evil deeds publicly in the church. During his confession, St. Macarius saw a tablet that was all black representing the sins of St. Moses. An angel was seen wiping off every sin as it was confessed by St. Moses, until finally the tablet was completely white.

For St. Moses, the white robe he received after baptism, and the monastic lifestyle did not mean that he entered into the paradise of contemplation. On the contrary, he had in front of him many years of strife and fierce struggle with the flesh, the devil and the world. Although he was surrounded by giants of the spiritual life whose counsel he could seek at any time, and was aided by the church Mysteries and means of grace, yet it was with utmost difficulty that he won the long successive and violent battles of the flesh. After he came to the desert, St. Moses still enjoyed his former bodily strength, but his old evil passions were as powerful as before. Once, after St. Moses fasted seven days, he overpowered four thieves who entered his cell. He tied them all together with cords and lifted them up on his shoulders like a bag of straw. He brought them to the church and said to the monks, Since I have not the power to do evil to any man, what do you want me to do with these who rose up against me to slay me? When the thieves knew that St. Moses was a former robber, who had repented, they were quickly led to repentance. While fasting, and during times of prayer, the devil tempted St. Moses by bringing back to his mind his wicked habits of his past. St. Moses used to go to St. Isidore to ask for his advice on what to do. At first, St. Isidore advised him to stand firm and continue his fasting and prayers, and his temptations would finally subdue. St. Isidore told St. Moses that these temptations were only the beginning of a long battle.

St. Moses began to multiply his disciplines. He ate only ten ounces of dry bread daily and recited fifty prayers every day. Nevertheless, the more St. Moses dried up his body, the more he was vexed and consumed by dreams. On one occasion, it came to the point that St. Moses could no longer endure being in his cell. St. Isidore advised him to return to his cell, but St. Moses refused. St. Isidore took St. Moses to the roof of his cell, where they could see below them devils on one side, but innumerable angels on the other side. By seeing this, St. Moses was convinced that he had much more help from heaven as compared to the power of the enemy. He took courage from this and returned to his cell without fear.

St. Moses went to another one of the desert fathers and asked him What shall I do, for thoughts of lust which arise from my former habits are attacking me. St. Moses was advised to increase his prayers, vigils and fasting in order to dispel those images from his mind. St. Moses took the advice, went back to his cell, and for seven years, plunged himself into severe ascetic practices. St. Moses spent nights standing in prayer and would not lie down, or even bend his knees or close his eyes. After this, he would go in the middle of the night to the cells of the elder monks, take their water

pitchers, and fill them with water without their knowledge. The monks lived far from one another and those cells were two to five miles away from the water. St. Moses consumed his body doing this for years, with long vigils and strict fasts, until one night St. Moses lost his consciousness and fell beside the water well. The next morning he was found half dead by one of the brethren and was carried to church. During his sickness that lasted for one year, he was taken care of by St. Isidore. He advised St. Moses to give himself rest because, There is moderation in everything, even in the works of ascetic life.

Still, St. Moses disputed with his spiritual father and insisted on continuing to wage war with the devils until they departed from him. The wise and experience St. Isidore gave him this conclusive answer: In the name of Jesus Christ, from this point forward the devils shall cease from you. Draw near then and participate in the Holy Mysteries, and you shall be free from all impurity, both of the flesh and of the spirit. With this, St. Moses returned to his cell. St. Isidore came to him after two months and asked about his condition. St. Moses reported he no longer suffered from anything; moreover, he even had power over the demons.

St. Moses became very famous among the monks of Scetis because of his humility, his meekness and his love for strangers. His solitude was frequently interrupted by the influx of visitors. He went to St. Macarius and said, Father, I desire to live in silence, but the brethren never leave me. St. Macarius advised him to move to an isolated cell in Petra. Petra (literally rock) is the northern area of Scetis. It was a far area, difficult to reach, with scarce water. St. Moses lived in Petra for six years in a cave that he dug for himself in the rock. He became known as Abba Moses of Petra.

St. Moses was later chosen to become a priest in Scetis to assist St. Isidore. Pope Theophilus ordained him a priest, and after St. Moses was dressed in the white priestly garments, Pope Theophilus stated, Behold, Abba Moses, now you are entirely white, inside and out.

Like the other Desert Fathers, St. Moses based his spiritual life and teaching upon the Scriptures. One of his famous saying was Four virtues aid the young monk: continuous meditation on the word of God, watchfulness, fervent prayer and considering himself as nothing. One of his other sayings may summarize his spirituality: Humility of heart precedes all virtues, and the desire of the belly is the source of all passions. Pride is the basis of all vices and love is the origin of all goodness.

The grace of God worked in Moses to the extent that as much as he hated humankind before his conversion, in Scetis he came to love everybody. He received all visitors with joy. Once a brother came to visit St. Arsenius in the monastery. Offended by the cold reception he received, he then asked to see St. Moses who did not fail to welcome and refresh him. On another occasion, a private fast was declared in Scetis. During that week of fasting, some brethren came from Egypt to see St. Moses. While St. Moses was preparing some food for them, the neighboring monks saw the smoke of his fire rising up and wondered how St. Moses could not keep the fast. They went to the clergy and said Moses has broken the commandment and prepared food during a fast. The clergy promised to settle the matter with St. Moses in church. The clergy knew of the habits of St. Moses, and when he came to church, they spoke to him before the whole assembly of monks saying, O Abba Moses, truly you have sacrificed the commandment of people to fulfill the commandment of Christ: A new commandment that I give unto you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. (John 13:34)

Once the Fathers of the Scetis were holding a council to reprimand a monk who had committed a fault. St. Moses was invited, but he refused to attend. The priest went to him, and said, Come, for the people are expecting you. St. Moses arose, took a basket filled with sand that had a hole in the bottom of it, carried it on his shoulder and started walking towards the council. When the monks saw him coming with the bag of sand, with sand pouring out of the hole, they asked him the reason of his behavior. He said to them, The sand you see running from the bag represents my sins which are always following me, and yet, today I am coming to judge the errors of my brother. When they heard this, they left the council and every monk went to his own cell, as none could judge that monk.

About 370 AD, St Moses, St. Evagruis, St. Cronius, St. Pambo and three other Desert Fathers went to visit St. Macarius the great in the southern rock of Scetis. When St. Macarius saw them he said, My brethren, I see one of you worthy of the crown of martyrdom and he is going to shed his blood in the wilderness. St. Moses answered at once, Probably I am the one, in order to fulfill the words of the Lord all they that take by the sword shall perish with the sword.

The prophecy of St. Macarius was fulfilled in 407 AD, when the Berbers raided Scetis and destroyed its four churches. St. Moses was seventy-five years old and had under him seventy disciples. On the day of this raid, St. Moses was sitting with seven of his disciples, when he told them, Behold, today the barbarians are coming to Scetis, rise and escape. They asked him, Will you not escape with us father? He answered, The words of our Savior must be fulfilled: All who take by the sword will perish by the sword. (Matt 26:52). Therefore I am staying. The seven disciples also decided to stay with their father. Shortly thereafter, the Berbers entered the cell, and killed them. One of the monks was able to flee and hid behind a palm leaf, and saw seven crowns coming down and crowning them.

The monks of El Baramos monastery at Scetis have faithfully kept the body of St. Moses, which remains to this day beside the body of his spiritual father, St. Isidore inside the main church of the monastery.

St. Mary and St. Moses Abbey Website (<http://abbey.suscopts.org/index.php/About/saint-moses.html>)

PRAYER

Give me, Lord, fountains of many tears as You did in the past to the sinful woman. Make me worthy to shed my tears on Your feet which took me to the right path and offer You the best of perfumes. Grant me to live pure and repentant, so that I can hear a joyful voice: "Your faith has saved you".

Thok-sa-patri Ke ey-you Ke agiyou ep-nevmaty.

Litany of first watch of midnight - Agpeya

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

Have Mercy, O God, the Father, the Pantocrator

VOCABULARY:

Saint Moses the Strong, monks, St. Isidore, self-control, meekness (gentleness)

INTRODUCTION

Review the previous lessons and the gifts of each saint.

Review the main points of this unit: that it is the Holy Spirit that gives the saints to have certain characteristics. The Holy Spirit 'waters' us and helps us to grow, just like water helps a flower to grow and become more and more beautiful.

Throughout the story, continue to emphasize the fact that it was the Holy Spirit working in St. Moses and bringing forth in him the self-control and meekness.

LESSON BODY:

Tell the story of Saint Anba Moses the Black with the emphasis being on the Holy Spirit working in him. Points to mention:

- He grew up not knowing the true God
- He had been a slave, but because of his evil actions, his master kicked him out of the house. He became the leader of a band of thieves and did all kinds of wickedness: stealing, murdering, having relationships, eating very much food (he used to eat an entire lamb every day). He was famous for seeking vengeance and spreading violence.
- Even though he was living very freely and doing anything and everything he wanted, and not having regard for anyone, he was searching for God. But he didn't know where to look. Many times, he lifted up his eyes to look to the sun and to talk to it saying, "O Sun!! If you are God, let me know it." Then he said, "And you O God whom I do not know, let me know you."

One day, he heard a voice saying to him, "The monks know the real God. Go to them and they will tell you." *Instantly*, he rose up and went to the desert to search for the monks.

- When he arrived there, he met **St. Isidore** who at first was scared of him because of the way he looked. But St. Moses comforted him and told him that he was there to learn how to know God from the monks.
- After spending some time with the monks and learning from them about God, St. Moses wanted to confess all his sins from his old life; with many tears and a broken heart, he confessed his sins to the priest. While he was confessing, the monks saw a vision of a board with the list of all his sins on it. As he confessed each one, an angel wiped it off the board until it was completely clean and white at the end. St. Moses was baptized and accepted as a monk.

After St. Moses became a monk, he would spend very much time praying with tears to God. He knew that he needed the Holy Spirit to change him and help him become a gentle person instead of the hateful and violent person he had been. He also knew that he needed God to help him have self-control (he used to eat a whole lamb every day in his old life). He prayed and fasted and served the other monks in secret. He worshipped and served God very much so that he would not remember his old life and so that the only thing within his heart would be the love of God. During all of this effort that he was doing (all the prayers, all the serving), the Holy Spirit was coming into him, little by little, and bringing him back to life. Just like a flower that is very dry and very near death needs a lot of water before it is healthy again, St. Moses the Strong spent many nights in prayer and many days serving his brothers the monks. And the Holy Spirit, little by little, filled him up completely until he was not even recognizable to people who used to know him as the violent man of his old life. The Holy Spirit transformed him into a very gentle and kind man who fasted much (self-control). His father of confession (St. Isidore) also helped him every step of the way and he used to run to him and confess all the time, sometimes even in the middle of the night.

Eventually, after many years, and because of prayer, confession, and the help of his abouna, he found peace. He became ordained a priest and the peace and grace of our Lord rested on him. He became father to a group of monks. At the very end of his life, he was martyred and gained crowns in Heaven.

The Holy Spirit had brought this man to life in God, this man who had been dead on the inside, to know the living God and to become a blessing those around him.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- **Flower pictures:** The servant would have pictures of flowers to put up on the wall every week, with the name of the saint discussed that week taped above the flower. By the end of the unit, there would be a beautiful garden on the wall. Have the students choose which flower to assign to which saint every week.

- Acting:
- scrap book building
- Coloring
- Puppets

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q: When St. Moses started looking for the One True God, what did he hear a voice saying to him,?

A: He heard a voice saying to him, "The monks know the real God. Go to them and they will tell you."

Q: What did he do when he heard this?

A: He got up *instantly* and went to them.

Q: What happened when St. Moses confessed his sins with a broken heart and tears?

A: While he was confessing, the monks saw a vision of a board with the list of all his sins on it. As he confessed each one, an angel wiped it off the board until it was completely clean and white at the end.

Q: Who was St. Moses spiritual father?

A: St. Isidore

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

DAILY READINGS

Unit IX: the holy spirit gives us gifts to be like our lord

Purpose: In this unit, the student are exposed to the work of the Holy Spirit in Christ's body- the Church. The stories of the saints are told from this point (the work of the Holy Spirit in them). The stories in this unit are chosen to reflect different fruit of the Holy Spirit. His first action is to bring our Lord and savior into the heart and ignite the greatest love for Him. Through His work in the saints, the Holy Spirit shapes the Christians to be "like Christ". By doing this, the Holy Spirit witnesses for Christ in the world. "Let your light shine." Note: the stories of Martyrs (except that of St. Mark) were kept for older age groups.

LESSON 46: THE HOLY SPIRIT GAVE FAITH TO ST. SIMON THE COUPLER

SERVANT PREPARATION:

Verse & References:

THE DEPARTURE OF ST. ABRAAM (ABRAHAM), EBN-ZARAA, 62ND POPE OF ALEXANDRIA IS ON THE SIXTH DAY OF THE BLESSED MONTH OF KIAHK

On this day, of the year 970 A.D., the saint Anba Abraam, 62nd Pope of Alexandria, departed. This father was a descendant of the Christians of the East, whose name was Ebn-Zaraa the Syrian. During the days of this father, El-Mu'izz the Khalifa, had a Jewish Vizier; his name was, Jacob- Ebn-Yousef, who adopted the Muslim faith (Islam). That minister had a Jewish friend (Ebn- Killis), who used to go with him frequently to the Khalifa and converse with him. That Jew took advantage of the favor that his friend had with the Khalifa, and found this to be an opportunity to ask for the presence of the father, the Patriarch, in order that he might have a debate with him. Abba Abraam came along with Anba Severus Ebn-El-Mukafaa, Bishop of Ashmunein. El-Mu'izz ordered them to sit, so they sat down silently. He asked, "Why are you not debating?" Anba Severus answered, "How can we argue in the presence of El-Khalifa, with a man who is less intelligent than an ox?" El-Mu'izz asked for an explanation. Anba Severus said, "God has declared by the mouth of the prophet, 'The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's crib: but Israel does not know.'" (Isaiah 1:3) They debated that Jew and shamed him with all the irrefutable arguments that prove the soundness of the Christian faith. Then they left El-Mu'izz with great honor.

The minister and his Jewish friend were not able to bear the insults. So they sought the chance to take revenge of on Christians. A few days later, the Jewish Vizier; Jacob-Ebn-Yousef went to El-Mu'izz and maliciously told him, "Your royal highness knows that the faith of the Christians does not have a sound base. Their Bible states, 'If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain, move from here to there, and it will move.' (Matthew 17:20) Prince of the faithful knows the falsehood of these sayings. And to verify this, we will summon the Patriarch to give us the proof that their Christ's sayings are true." The Khalifa thought to himself, "If the sayings of Christ is true, that would be of great benefit to us, for the Mukatam mount is too close to Cairo. If the mountain can be moved away, that would make the position of the city greater than what it is now. If the saying is not true, that will give us the justification to persecute the Christians."

El-Mu'izz called the father, the Patriarch, and placed this saying before him, and asked for the proof of its soundness. The Pope asked for a three-day respite, which was granted. When the Pope left El-Khalifa, he gathered the monks and the bishops nearby and they all stayed in El-Mualaqua (the Suspended) Church in Old Cairo, for three days fasting and supplicating God. Before dawn of the third day as Abba Abraam dozed off out of sheer weariness; our Holy Lady, the Virgin, St. Mary, the Mother of God, appeared to him and told him to rise up and go to the street which leads to the market. There he would find a one-eyed man bearing a pot of water on his shoulder. She instructed Abba Abraam to tell him that he was the man designated by God to perform this sign.

This holy man's name was Simon and he was a Tanner. The father, the Patriarch, took him along with some of the priests, monks and people to see El-Mu'izz, who was out with the government leaders and the nobles of the city nearby the Mukatam Mountain. The father, the Patriarch, stood with those who were with him on one side and El-Mu'izz and his entourage stood on the other side. The father, the Patriarch, and the believers prayed and knelt down three times, and every time they knelt, they said, "Kirya-layson" Lord have mercy. Whenever the Patriarch and the congregation lifted up their heads after each bow, the mountain would lift up and when they bowed down, the mountain was lowered down to the ground, and whenever they walked, the mountain moved before them.

A great fear came on the Khalifa and his companions and many fell on the ground. The Khalifa advanced on his horse toward the Patriarch and said, "O great teacher, I now know that you are a holy man, ask whatsoever you wish and I will give it to you." The Patriarch refused to ask for anything; but when the Khalifa insisted, he asked the Governor to allow him to build churches, especially the church of St. Mercurius (of the two swords) which was in Old Cairo. He wrote him a decree permitting the building and the renovation of churches and he gave him a large sum of money from the treasury. The Patriarch thanked him and prayed for him, but he refused to take the money. As a result, El-Mu'izz revered and respected him more for his piety and righteousness. When they started building the church of St. Mercurius, some evil men prevented them from working, whereupon El-Mu'izz came to the sight and kept the troublemakers away. He remained there, standing until they completed laying the foundation.

This father renovated many churches all over the See of St. Mark. When he completed his course, he departed in peace after he sat on the chair for 3 years and 6 days.

His prayers be with us. Amen.

CHURCH FATHERS:

REFLECTION:

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

Muslim, Jewish, Religion

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Q. What is a slave?

A. In the old times, people used to get sold to other people as you would sell a cat or a dog

Q. What is confession?

A. Speaking about all the wrong things we have done

Q. Why did St. Moses go to the desert?

A. He was looking for the true God, and he heard a voice that told him that the monks in the desert know about God.

Q. What was the name of the monk who helped taught St. Moses about our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ?

A. St. Isidore

Q. How did St. Moses change in his life?

A. He used to be a criminal, did many evil things, and hurt a lot of people. Then he changed to become a monk and a saint, and he helped many other monks come closer to God.

Q. How did the Holy Spirit help St. Moses?

A. The Holy Spirit gave him joy and peace in his heart and made him able to control himself from eating too much. The Holy Spirit gave him a lot of love for our Lord that made him feel content and joyful all the time. The Holy Spirit also showed him that it is good to obey our spiritual and physical parents even when it doesn't feel good.

LESSON BODY:

THE HIDDEN ST. SIMON

One time in Egypt there was a very humble man named St. Simon. This man was a cobbler (remember, like Anianus – he fixed shoes). He loved God very much and did not care about having any attention from people. He never had anybody tell him anything like, “Wow, what a great person you are, Simon,” or “Simon, you are so good and so wise, and so holy; I wish I could be like you.” Actually, he really *was* very great, very good, wise and holy, but no one around him knew that he was any of those things. Which made him even greater in God’s eyes. It pleases God very much when people are humble, which means that they are like St. Simon and do not care for people to say all kinds of good things about them that they do not mean. And God had a plan for St. Simon, as we will see.

THE POPE’S DISCUSSION WITH THE GOVERNOR AND WHAT CAME OF IT

There was a Pope in Egypt at this time also, and his name was Anba Abraam. (He was like our Pope Shenouda). Anba Abraam was invited by the governor of Egypt to go to his house. The governor of Egypt was a **Muslim** man (**Muslims are people who do not believe in Christ as the Son of God, nor in the Bible that we have**). The governor also invited a **Jewish** man over to his house (**Jews are the children of Jacob who did not believe in Christ; they only know the Old Testament in the Bible**). He wanted to all three of them to be able to talk together about their different **religions**. (**Religion is what somebody believes in**). Anba Abraam brought with him a bishop. When they all started talking, Anba Abraam and the bishop were able to explain to the others why Christianity was good. This made the Jewish man who was there very angry and jealous. He did not like Christianity, and he wanted to do something to prove to everyone that Christians were wrong. He started to read in the Bible so he could find something to use against them. He read this verse where our Lord Jesus Christ is talking to his disciples, *"I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."* What this verse really means is that with our faith in Christ, we can do anything! But, when the Jewish man read this verse, because he did not love our Lord Jesus Christ and did not know anything about faith, he did not believe that a Christian would ever be able to move a mountain. And in his dark heart, he started to come up with a plan to prove the Bible wrong: he would give them a challenge which he thought for sure they couldn't do: Move the mountain, or get **persecuted (hurt them just because they are Christian)**. Then everyone would know that Christianity was not a good **religion**.

The Jewish man hurried to the governor and told him about his idea to make the Christians prove that they could move a mountain. The governor thought about it for a while, and decided it was a good idea. Either way, he thought it would work out well: if the Christians really *could* move the mountain, then this would be helpful for Egypt because he didn't like where the mountain was now. And if the Christians *couldn't* move the mountain, then it would be a good reason to **persecute (hurt them just because they are Christian)** them.

THE POPE IS TOLD ABOUT THE PLAN

The Governor told the Pope about this, and this is what he told him: "It says in your Bible that a Christian can move a mountain if he or she has faith in Jesus Christ. We would like you to prove that this is true. If you are not able to move the mountain, then we will **persecute** you and the Christians, but if you do move the mountain, then you will all be safe." The Pope asked the governor for 3 days, and at the end of the 3 days he would give him an answer. The Pope went and called all the priests and monks and they all went to a church together to pray and fast for the three days. They needed help from God. What would they do? No one had ever moved a mountain before. They believed the Bible, but they also knew that they would need a **miracle** from God to

make this happen and to keep the Christians safe from **persecution**. So for the whole 3 days, they all prayed and fasted together.

ST. MARY SPEAKS TO THE POPE

At the end of the third day, the Pope was very tired and he started to fall asleep. Then he saw something beautiful, which not many people have seen before, but the ones who have would tell you again and again how beautiful it is to see: He saw St. Mary, the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ coming to him. She asked him what was wrong. And he told her, "O Lady and Mother of us all, you know what is wrong and what is happening with us." St. Mary told him not to worry, and to wake up and go to the street which leads to the market. There, he would find a man carrying a pot on his shoulder. This very humble man, St. Mary told the Pope, would be the one who would perform the **miracle** of moving the mountain.

Can you guess which man St. Mary was talking about? (See if the children can guess it is St. Simon). It was in fact, St. Simon.

ANBA ABRAAM MEETS ST. SIMON AND HOW THE MIRACLE HAPPENED

The Pope woke up and right away, he ran to find St. Simon. When he found him, he told him everything that had happened and how he had seen St. Mary and what she told him. Now this is the most important part of the whole story: Instead of getting worried and scared, St. Simon felt very peaceful because the Holy Spirit gave him faith in his heart and showed him how to completely trust in God. He *knew* that God would move the mountain and save all the Christians because the Holy Spirit helped him feel this trust inside his heart. St Simon then told the Pope what they would do together: get all the Christians to come to the mountain and stand all together. Then everyone would pray, and after they had all prayed, Anba Abraam would make the sign of the cross over the mountain. Anba Abraam did exactly what St. Simon said: he gathered all the Christians together, and everyone went to the mountain. The Governor was also there, with the Jewish man who had started the whole problem, and a lot of other people were with them. The Christians stood on one side, and everyone else stood on the other side from them. The Christians started to pray all together, everyone from the bottom of his and her heart were crying together to God. St. Simon was there too, standing in the middle of all the Christians, but still no one knew anything about him or about what St. Mary had told the Pope. The people prayed "Kirya-layson" 400 times, 100 times in each direction East, West, North, and South. (This is why we do that on Good Friday). After they finished praying, Anba Abraam made the sign of the cross over the mountain, and it moved up so high in the air that you could see the sun *underneath* it! This happened three times. Because of the faith the Holy Spirit gave St. Simon, God heard their prayers and moved the mountain!! The

Governor and the Jewish man and everyone else with them were so shocked, surprised, and afraid. The governor came to Anba Abraam and told him, "Now I know that you are a holy man, and I will give you anything you want." Anba Abraam only asked that the governor would allow them to build more churches, which he said he would. Anba Abraam looked for St. Simon after that, but he couldn't find him anywhere, and no one ever saw him again after that day. And later on, the governor himself converted to become Christian because the Holy Spirit had showed him who the real God is through this miracle and the faith of St. Simon.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- **Idea:**
- ***Scrap book building***
- ***Coloring:***

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What was very special about St. Simon?

A. He was very humble

Q. What was the Jewish man's plan?

A. He found a verse in the Bible that says, "I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." He wanted to force them to prove this verse, and gave them a challenge that he thought they could never win: move a mountain or we will persecute all the Christians.

Q. What did Anba Abraam do after this?

A. He gathered the priests and monks together and they all fasted and prayed for three days to ask God for help

Q. What did St. Mary do?

A. St. Mary came to Anba Abraam in a vision while he was sleeping and told him to find St. Simon, who would be the reason that God would move the mountain

Q. What was the miracle that happened?

A. The Christians all stood together and prayed, and God heard their prayer because of the faith of St. Simon and moved the mountain three times

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." Matthew 17:20

Q. What was very special about St. Simon?

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REVIEW VERSE

"I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." Matthew 17:20

Unit IX: The Holy Spirit Gives us gifts to be like our Lord

Purpose: In this unit, the student are exposed to the work of the Holy Spirit in Christ's body- the Church. The stories of the saints are told from this point (the work of the Holy Spirit in them). The stories in this unit are chosen to reflect different fruit of the Holy Spirit. His first action is to bring our Lord and savior into the heart and ignite the greatest love for Him. Through His work in the saints, the Holy Spirit shapes the Christians to be "like Christ". By doing this, the Holy Spirit witnesses for Christ in the world. "Let your light shine." Note: the stories of Martyrs (except that of St. Mark) were kept for older age groups

LESSON 47: THE HOLY SPIRIT GAVE JOY AND KINDNESS TO ST. NICHOLAS

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES

THE TENTH DAY OF THE BLESSED MONTH OF KIAKH

On this day also the righteous St. Nicholas, Bishop of Mora (Myra), departed. He was from the city of Mora, his father's name was Epiphanius and the name of his mother was Tona. They were rich, as well as God-fearing, people. They had no children to bring joy to their hearts and to inherit their wealth after their deaths. They remained without a son until they grew old and they were enveloped with despair. God had pity on them and gave them this saint. He was filled with the Divine grace since his young age. When he reached school age, he demonstrated, through intelligence and knowledge, that he learned far more from the Holy Spirit than he did from his teachers. He learned all the doctrine and the teachings of the church since his young age and was ordained deacon. Then he became a monk in a monastery wherein his cousin was the abbot. He lived an ascetic and a righteous life, and was ordained a priest when he was 19 years old. God gave him the gift to work signs and wonders and to heal the sick.

St. Nicholas is too illustrious to describe all the signs that were performed by his hands, but an example of his good deeds and benevolent works follows: There was a very rich man in the city of Mora who lost all his wealth. He had three daughters who had passed the age of marriage, and he could not marry them because of his poverty. Satan tempted the man to think that he should make his daughters live in sin so that they might get their food by means of fornication. God revealed to St. Nicholas the thoughts which were in this man's head, and what he intended to do. St. Nicholas took 100 dinars of his father's money and tied it up in a sack. During the night, secretly and without anyone seeing him, he threw the money into the window of that poor man's house. When the man

found the gold, he was astonished and rejoiced exceedingly and was able to give his eldest daughter away in marriage. During another night the saint threw another hundred dinars into the man's house and the man was able to give his second daughter away in marriage. The man wanted to know who this charitable person was. The third time when the saint threw the gold into the house, the man was watching and immediately when he felt the drop of the sack, he ran out of his house to see who was throwing the gold to him. He found the kind bishop St. Nicholas and the man bowed down at his feet and paid him great homage and thanked him because he saved his daughters from poverty and from a life of sin. The saint refused to accept any thanks and asked them to thank the Lord Who put this thought in his heart. St. Nicholas drove out the devil and his angels from people, he healed many sick people, and he blessed little bread to satisfy many people, with much more left over. Before being selected bishop, he saw in a vision, a great throne and magnificent vestments placed on it and a man said to him, "Put on these vestments and sit on this throne." Another night he saw our Lady, St. Mary, giving him the vestments of the priesthood and our Lord Jesus Christ gave him the Gospel. When the Bishop of Mora departed, the Angel of the Lord appeared to the Archbishop and told him the one who was chosen for this rank was Nicholas and described his virtues to him. When he woke up he told the bishops what he had seen, and they all believed that vision. They knew that it was from the Lord Jesus Christ. They took St. Nicholas and made him Bishop over the city of Mora. Shortly thereafter, Diocletian reigned, and incited the pagan worship. When Diocletian arrested many of the believers, he heard about this saint. He seized him and tortured him severely for many years. The Lord Christ strengthened him, protected him, and raised him whole from all these tortures so that he might become a mighty branch of the tree of faith. When Diocletian was tired of torturing him, he cast him into prison. Saint Nicholas wrote to his congregation from prison to teach, encourage and confirm them in the faith. He remained in prison until God perished Diocletian and established the reign of Constantine the Just. Constantine brought out all the confessors from prison, among them was St. Nicholas, who returned to his city.

When the Council of Nicea convened in the year 325 A.D. to judge Arius, he was one of the 318 fathers assembled there. Having finished his course and guarded his flock, he departed to be with the Lord. He sat on the Episcopal throne for more than 40 years, and all the days of his life were about 80 years.

His prayers be with us and Glory be to our God forever. Amen

St. Nicholas is the true personality behind the story of St. Claus or Baba Noel, who leaves presents for children on Christmas Eve.

REFLECTION

PRAYER

LESSON PREPARATION:

VOCABULARY

Miracles, Bishop

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

THE TRUE SANTA CLAUSE

Tell the children that we are going to play a Guessing Game: You are going to describe a person, by giving them one hint at a time, and you will see if they can guess who you are talking about. First hint, he loves to give people presents. (see who they are thinking of now) Second hint, he is a very happy man and you always see him laughing in pictures. (let them give more guesses) Third hint, he is a very fat man and wears red clothes. The children should have guessed by now that it is Santa Clause. If not, tell them that he is always talked about around Christmas time.

Ask the kids if they think Santa Clause (or Papa Noel) is a real person. Then ask them if they know his story: if they know about him as a child, where he grew up, where he was from. Then ask the children, Would you like to know the true story of St. Nicholas? Who would like to know the true story of St. Nicholas?

LESSON BODY

ST. NICHOLAS AS A BOY

There once was a young boy whose name was Nicholas. Nicholas was a very special boy. He loved our Lord Jesus Christ with all his heart and he wanted to be just like Him. Something that we should know about our Lord is that He was always giving. So Nicholas also loved to give. He would give to

people anything and everything: He would give help, he helped people whenever they needed him. Can you think of things that people need help with sometimes? (Let the kids suggest some simple, practical ways they can help their family). For example, we can help by praying for people. Nicholas always used to pray for people when he saw anyone who was sick, or who looked sad. He would also give presents, or money (when he had it). He used to give his allowance to other people! He also was very good in school because the Holy Spirit helped him with very many things (God can help you in school too, just ask Him). And he learned very many things in church, and he became a deacon. He loved to sing the songs in church, and he learned as many of them as he could.

ST. NICHOLAS CONTINUES TO GIVE, AND GOD GIVES HIM

Because God saw that St. Nicholas loved to give, God gave him a lot of things too. God's gifts are very, very special, and they always make people very joyful. For example, if I give you a toy, what might happen to that toy one day? (Answer: it could break). But, God's gifts never break, they never go away. They stay with you always. The Holy Spirit gave him joy inside his heart. He was always smiling, even if bad things happened, and he always feeling very good inside himself. Nothing made him sad. He made other people very happy too, just by being around him. They would see him very joyful, and then they also felt very joyful. Then he had even more to give! God and St. Nicholas together did many **miracles** for people who needed help and they would heal a lot of sick people. God also gave him money, so that he could keep giving it to people who were very poor and needed money to buy food and to live.

THE POOR FAMILY

One time there was a family who lived near St. Nicholas. This family was very poor. There were three sisters in this family, and they did not have enough money for any of them to get married. The girls were very sad about this. St. Nicholas heard about this family, and he went to their house when no one was looking. He had with him a lot of money that he wanted to give them, but he didn't want them to know that it was from him. He wanted to give them this gift *secretly*. So he was outside their house, and wondering about how he would be able to put the money inside without anyone seeing, when he saw an open window. St. Nicholas then threw the money inside the window and left very quickly! The family found the money, and was so thankful for it! They thanked God, who did not forget about them. it is said that the money landed right inside a sock that was hanging on the fireplace to dry. (this is like the stockings that people hang up now for Santa to leave gifts in). Now the family had enough money for one girl to get married, so the oldest sister got married. St. Nicholas came back another time, when he had gotten more money, and threw money inside the window again, enough for the second sister to get married. The family was so very joyful and thankful again, they almost couldn't believe it! The second sister got married. There was one

more sister left. But this time, the father wanted very much to do know where the money was coming from. He waited next to the window and watched. When St. Nicholas came back again, and threw more money inside the window. This time, the father was waiting, and he ran outside and saw St. Nicholas. He thanked him from all his heart.

ST. NICHOLAS THE BISHOP

St. Nicholas gave many gifts in this way, secretly, so that no one would see him doing something good. And he made very many people joyful and safe, especially children. He always used to take care of children because he loved them very much. So, this means that St. Nicholas loves you all very much and will hear you when you ask him for help.

God wanted St. Nicholas to be a **bishop (the shepherd of the church, who has the same job as Jesus' disciples had)**. He sent His angel to tell the church that St. Nicholas would be a bishop. They ordained St. Nicholas and he became the bishop of a city called **Mora**. The Holy Spirit now helped St. Nicholas even more than before. He was always joyful, even when bad things happened. And something bad did happen to him. He was put in prison just because he was Christian. The Holy Spirit stayed with him in prison, and whenever he felt lonely, or hungry, or scared, the Holy Spirit gave him even more joy, and he forgot about hunger, loneliness, or pain. He loved our Lord Jesus Christ even more than he did before, and his heart felt very peaceful and content. He knew that God was taking care of him. Later, he was freed from the prison. St. Nicholas stayed a bishop until the end of his life, and he continued to be generous, loving the poor and the children, and caring for his people in every way possible.

PLAN AND MATERIAL

DVD: Nicolas the boy who became Santa, by *CCC of America*

<http://ccc of america.com/>

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Q. What did Nicholas like to do when he was a boy?

A. *He loved to give: He helped people, he prayed for people, he gave them gifts and money (his allowance)*

Q. Did St. Nicholas show off when he gave gifts to people?

A. No, he used to give gifts secretly. This is how we should also give gifts

Q. What is a bishop?

A. a shepherd of the church who has the same job as Jesus' disciples had

Q. What gift did the Holy Spirit give St. Nicholas?

A. Joy

Q. Who is the real Santa Clause?

A. The saint, St. Nicholas, who was a very joyful man who always gave. He lived in the country called Turkey.

VERSE TO REMEMBER

"God loves a cheerful giver" 2 Cor 9:7

Unit IX

Purpose: This unit covers the feasts and the seasons of the church. The main focus of this unit is to prepare the students to fully engage in the church life and celebrations.

LESSON 48: FEAST OF NYROUZ

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Psalm 42:1-4 "As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my food day and night, While they continually say to me, "Where is your God?" When I remember these things, I pour out my soul within me. For I used to go with the multitude; I went with them to the house of God, With the voice of joy and praise, With a multitude that kept a pilgrim feast."

CHURCH FATHERS:

A martyr from The Apostolic Fathers: St. Ignatius of Antioch
Feast on the twenty-fourth day of Kiahk

Virtually nothing is known of St. Ignatius' life preceding his journey to martyrdom from Antioch to Rome. St. Ignatius (about 35-107 C.E.) was probably born a pagan of Syrian origin. In the year 69 C.E, St. Ignatius was appointed as the second bishop of Antioch, succeeding St. Peter the Apostle. Antioch is a city in Syria where St. Paul and St. Barnabas started their famous journey. Also at that time, St. Ignatius was a disciple of the apostle John.

His Martyrdom

St. Ignatius was ordered by the Roman prefect to be chained and sent to Rome during the reign of Emperor Trajan. When the Emperor heard that St. Ignatius had attracted many to believe in the Lord Christ through his teachings, the Emperor brought the saint and asked him, "Are you Ignatius the Theophoros?" St. Ignatius replied, "Yes, I am." The Emperor inquired about the meaning of his name. The saint replied saying, "Theophoros means 'God-bearer.'" The Emperor asked, "Do you think that we do not carry our gods to support us in wars?" The Saint answered, "How can these statues be gods? Listen, there is no God except the only God that created the Heaven and Earth, and His Son Jesus Christ who was incarnated to save mankind. So if you had believed in Him, you

would be content now in your kingship." The emperor attempted to persuade him to forsake Christianity, but he refused. The Emperor was enraged, ordered him bound with chains, and taken to Rome to be thrown to the beasts.

Despite the misery that St. Ignatius was subjected to, he was still always content and thankful. Ignatius responded to the Emperor's orders by kissing the chains that would be his means of receiving the crown of martyrdom. He shouted in joy, "Thank You Lord, for You granted to honor me with the abundance of Your love. You allowed me to be chained like Your Apostle Paul." He then left Syria under a heavy guardianship of ten soldiers. Two members of his own church, Rufus and Zosimus, also accompanied him and were also eventually sentenced to death. The believers tried to save St. Ignatius by paying bribes to the soldiers, but St. Ignatius refused, for he was yearning for martyrdom. He went on his way to Izmir (Smyrna) where the guards halted the journey for an extended rest stop. This is where he wrote a letter to the Christians of Rome that said in it: "I am afraid that your love may be harmful. If you wish to prevent my death, that will not be difficult for you. But allow me to be slaughtered wherever the altar has been prepared... I am wheat which must be ground, to make bread, to be offered to Jesus Christ. Whenever the people will not behold me anymore, I will behold our Lord Jesus Christ."

In Izmir (Smyrna) St. Ignatius was received with great honor by St. Polycarp and was visited by many priests, deacons, and members of neighboring Christian communities. Onesimus, bishop of Ephesus, was also with Ignatius there. Onesimus brought along a deacon named Burrhus who was a scribe, and with his help, Ignatius wrote letters to the churches. He wrote thence to the Churches of Ephesus, Magnesia, and Tralles, letters of encouragement, and a fourth to the Church at Rome, begging them not to deprive him of martyrdom by intervention with the pagan authorities.

From Izmir (Smyrna), the guards hauled Ignatius to the port city of Troas. Burrhus the scribe stayed with him, still writing letters to the various churches. He wrote to Philadelphia, Smyrna, and St. Polycarp. Then he was taken from there through Macedonia and Illyria to Dyrrhachium, where he was embarked for Italy.

When he arrived at the coliseum in Rome, the guards rushed him into the arena where he faced the wild beasts cheerfully as a person hurrying to eternal glory. Two lions sprang upon him and left only a few bones of him as the Saint delivered up his soul in the hand of the Lord. Then the lion released him and went back to his place, and the believers came and carried his body with great honor to a place that they had prepared for him in Antioch. Emperor Theodosius the Young (408-450) put the relics in the temple of Fortune located in the center of Antioch, which was converted to a Christian church, and named it after St. Ignatius' name.

His Feast

The feast of St. Ignatius is the 17th of October in the Roman Catholic calendar. It is the 20th of December in the Greek Church. The Coptic Church celebrates his feast on Kiahk 24 (January 2nd).

His Letters

St. Ignatius' life is represented mainly by his letters and writings. Seven of St. Ignatius' writings composed on his way from Antioch to Rome are preserved. The seven epistles are an invaluable testimony to the beliefs and internal organization of the early Christians. St. Ignatius is the first writer to stress the virgin birth. He firmly denounced Docetism and viewed the mystery of the Trinity as an implicit doctrine of faith. The only guarantee against heresy, he taught, is the church united under a bishop. St. Ignatius is also the first in Christian literature to use the word *Catholic*.

The overall theme of St. Ignatius' letters is best described by St. Paul the Apostle's words, "Christ in you, the hope of glory!" (Col 1:27) To St. Ignatius, union with Christ is more important than anything else imaginable. St. Ignatius' theme can be summed up by his final salutation to the Church of Smyrna, "I salute the bishop, worthy of God, and presbytery for God, and my fellow slaves, the deacons, and all of you, individually and together in the name of Jesus Christ and His flesh and blood, in union with God and with you." (St. Ignatius' letter to Smyrna 12:2)

Each of St. Ignatius' letters is fairly similar in content, though each one has its own uniqueness. Perhaps the most common element of each letter is St. Ignatius' emphasis of the unity of the church and the role of the bishop as the center of that unity. He is most emphatic about the value and role of the Eucharist as the primary means of mediating the life of the risen Lord to the members of His body, the church. The letters differ according to St. Ignatius' delegations and conversations with the separate regions. These letters are of immeasurable significance for the history of the dogma.

His Teachings

St. Ignatius' letters reflect how fervently he spoke and show us how he taught through intense religious zeal. In his letters, St. Ignatius addressed the question, "how can we attain salvation?" He taught that salvation may be attained by "fellowship with Christ, the only source of life," and "isolation from those whom we do not live the true life with." Also, he explained that we have attained salvation through the death of our Lord Jesus Christ who was crucified to grant us life. Finally, salvation may be attained by our unity with the risen body of Christ. The Lord is immortal life who grants us the new risen life and divine love.

St. Ignatius' letters reveal to us much of the history of the Church and the foundation of its true beliefs. For instance, St. Ignatius proceeds to write about the Church's role for Christians. He explains that the Church is a place of sacrifice, presenting the Eucharist as the sacrifice of the Church. It is a place of salvation, as salvation uses infinite love towards God to destroy death and the authority of the devil. He states that the Church is a place of prayer, as the combined prayers of the clergy and people are much more powerful than those of the individual. He also asserts that the Church is a place of purity, and all who are involved with the Church are pure.

St. Ignatius is the first to use the term "Catholic Church," denoting the faithful gathered collectively and universally. It has been used in our liturgies, not to mean universality in location, but the spiritual existence in relation with the one altar and one Eucharist. It is the Church who gathers in love and unity in Christ.

St. Ignatius has also reiterated the function of the sacraments in our church's early history. Baptism is among the sacraments that St. Ignatius wrote about. He taught that baptism was necessary for Jesus to purify the water from the dominion of the devil and to fulfill every righteousness. St. Ignatius also taught of the sacrament of the Eucharist. He affirmed that it is the primary means of mediating the life of the risen Lord to the members of the church and renewing our spiritual life. St. Ignatius has also underlined the rules of marriage. He declared that marriages must be held before the bishop and through his approval, as he is the father of the couple, and he emphasized the importance of celibacy and the sanctity of marriage. St. Ignatius also had very much to say about priesthood, as he was the bishop of Antioch.

St. Ignatius also had much to contribute to the hierarchical orders of the church. He portrayed a vivid picture of the ranks of priesthood and their place in ministering. He also confirmed that God had established these ranks by his own will and through the Holy Spirit, and thus they are to be respected regardless of their age or any trivial matters. The idea that the head of the Church represents Christ causes Ignatius to view these positions with great dignity, yet humility. He also manifests the great responsibility that priests and bishops must have, because without them not even baptism, agape, or Eucharist may be celebrated.

Finally, St. Ignatius taught that we must follow the perfect example; that of Christ. As Christ imitated his Father so must we imitate Christ. St. Ignatius chose to be martyred as the perfect imitation of Christ; hence "only he is the true disciple of Christ who is ready to sacrifice his own life for Him." St. Ignatius teaches that we must always seek Christ, placing Him who died for us before all the earth. Thus we must always yearn to be in God's hands and never fear death, as death is actually bondage of the devil.

THE EPISTLE OF IGNATIUS TO THE ROMANS

Ignatius, who is also called Theophorus, to the Church which has obtained mercy, through the majesty of the Most High Father, and Jesus Christ, His only-begotten Son; the Church which is beloved and enlightened by the will of Him that wills all things which are according to the love of Jesus Christ our God, which also presides in the place of the region of the Romans, worthy of God, worthy of honor, worthy of the highest happiness, worthy of praise, worthy of obtaining her every desire, worthy of being deemed holy, and which presides over love, is named from Christ, and from the Father, which I also salute in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father: to those who are united, both according to the flesh and spirit, to every one of His commandments; who are filled inseparably with the grace of God, and are purified from every strange taint, [I wish] abundance of happiness unblameably, in Jesus Christ our God.

CHAPTER 1: AS A PRISONER, I HOPE TO SEE YOU

Through prayer to God I have obtained the privilege of seeing your most worthy faces, and have even been granted more than I requested; for I hope as a prisoner in Christ Jesus to salute you, if indeed it be the will of God that I be thought worthy of attaining unto the end. For the beginning has been well ordered, if I may obtain grace to cling to my lot without hindrance unto the end. For I am afraid of your love, lest it should do me an injury. For it is easy for you to accomplish what you please; but it is difficult for me to attain to God, if ye spare me.

CHAPTER 2: DO NOT SAVE ME FROM MARTYRDOM

For it is not my desire to act towards you as a man-pleaser, but as pleasing God, even as also ye please Him. For neither shall I ever have such [another] opportunity of attaining to God; nor will ye, if ye shall now be silent, ever be entitled to the honor of a better work. For if ye are silent concerning me, I shall become God's; but if you show your love to my flesh, I shall again have to run my race. Pray, then, do not seek to confer any greater favor upon me than that I be sacrificed to God while the altar is still prepared; that, being gathered together in love, ye may sing praise to the Father, through Christ Jesus, that God has deemed me, the bishop of Syria, worthy to be sent for from the east unto the west. It is good to set from the world unto God, that I may rise again to Him.

CHAPTER 3: PRAY RATHER THAT I MAY ATTAIN TO MARTYRDOM

You have never envied any one; ye have taught others. Now I desire that those things may be confirmed [by your conduct], which in your instructions ye enjoin [on others]. Only request in my behalf both inward and outward strength, that I may not only speak, but [truly] will; and that I may not merely be called a Christian, but really be found to be one. For if I be truly found [a Christian], I may also be called one, and be then deemed faithful, when I shall no longer appear to the world. Nothing visible is eternal. "For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." For our God, Jesus Christ, Now that He is with the Father, is all the more revealed [in His glory]. Christianity is not a thing of silence only, but also of [manifest] greatness.

CHAPTER 4: ALLOW ME TO FALL A PREY TO THE WILD BEASTS

I write to the Churches, and impress on them all, that I shall willingly die for God, unless ye hinder me. I beseech of you not to show an unseasonable good-will towards me. Suffer me to become food for the wild beasts, through whose instrumentality it will be granted me to attain to God. I am the wheat of God, and let me be ground by the teeth of the wild beasts, that I may be found the pure bread of Christ. Rather entice the wild beasts, that they may become my tomb, and may leave nothing of my body; so that when I have fallen asleep [in death], I may be no trouble to anyone. Then shall I truly be a disciple of Christ, when the world shall not see so much as my body. Entreat Christ for me, that by these instruments I may be found a sacrifice [to God]. I do not, as Peter and Paul, issue commandments unto you. They were apostles; I am but a condemned man: they were free, while I am, even until now, a servant. But when I suffer, I shall be the freedman of Jesus, and shall rise again emancipated in Him. And now, being a prisoner, I learn not to desire anything worldly or vain.

CHAPTER 5: I DESIRE TO DIE

From Syria even unto Rome I fight with beasts, both by land and sea, both by night and day, being bound to ten leopards, I mean a band of soldiers, who, even when they receive benefits, show themselves all the worse. But I am the more instructed by their injuries [to act as a disciple of Christ]; “yet am I not thereby justified.” May I enjoy the wild beasts that are prepared for me; and I pray they may be found eager to rush upon me, which also I will entice to devour me speedily, and not deal with me as with some, whom, out of fear, they have not touched. But if they be unwilling to assail me, I will compel them to do so. Pardon me [in this]: I know what is for my benefit. Now I begin to be a disciple. And let no one, of things visible or invisible, envy me that I should attain to Jesus Christ. Let fire and the cross; let the crowds of wild beasts; let tearings, breakings, and dislocations of bones; let cutting off of members; let shatterings of the whole body; and let all the dreadful torments of the devil come upon me: only let me attain to Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 6: BY DEATH I SHALL ATTAIN TRUE LIFE

All the pleasures of the world, and all the kingdoms of this earth, shall profit me nothing. It is better for me to die in behalf of Jesus Christ, than to reign over all the ends of the earth. “For what shall a man be profited, if he gain the whole world, but lose his own soul?” Him I seek, who died for us: Him I desire, who rose again for our sake. This is the gain which is laid up for me. Pardon me, brethren: do not hinder me from living, do not wish to keep me in a state of death; and while I desire to belong to God, do not

ye give me over to the world. Suffer me to obtain pure light: when I have gone thither, I shall indeed be a man of God. Permit me to be an imitator of the passion of my God. If anyone has Him within himself, let him consider what I desire, and let him have sympathy with me, as knowing how I am straitened.

CHAPTER 7: REASON OF DESIRING TO DIE

The prince of this world would fain carry me away, and corrupt my disposition towards God. Let none of you, therefore, who are [in Rome] help him; rather be ye on my side, that is, on the side of

God. Do not speak of Jesus Christ, and yet set your desires on the world. Let not envy find a dwelling-place among you; nor even should I, when present with you, exhort you to it, be ye persuaded to listen to me, but rather give credit to those things which I now write to you. For though I am alive while I write to you, yet I am eager to die. My love has been crucified, and there is no fire in me desiring to be fed; but there is within me a water that lives and speaks, saying to me inwardly, Come to the Father. I have no delight in corruptible food, nor in the pleasures of this life. I desire the bread of God, the heavenly bread, the bread of life, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who became afterwards of the seed of David and Abraham; and I desire the drink of God, namely His blood, which is incorruptible love and eternal life.

CHAPTER 8: BE YE FAVORABLE TO ME

I no longer wish to live after the manner of men, and my desire shall be fulfilled if ye consent. Be ye willing, then, that ye also may have your desires fulfilled. I entreat you in this brief letter; do ye give credit to me. Jesus Christ will reveal these things to you, [so that ye shall know] that I speak truly. He is the mouth altogether free from falsehood, by which the Father has truly spoken. Pray ye for me, that I may attain [the object of my desire]. I have not written to you according to the flesh, but according to the will of God. If I shall suffer, ye have wished [well] to me; but if I am rejected, ye have hated me.

CHAPTER 9: PRAY FOR THE CHURCH IN SYRIA

Remember in your prayers the Church in Syria, which now has God for its shepherd, instead of me. Jesus Christ alone will oversee it, and your love [will also regard it]. But as for me, I am ashamed to be counted one of them; for indeed I am not worthy, as being the very last of them, and one born out of due time. But I have obtained mercy to be somebody, if I shall attain to God. My spirit salutes you, and the love of the Churches that have received me in the name of Jesus Christ, and not as a mere passer-by. For even those Churches which were not near to me in the way, I mean according to the flesh, have gone before me, city by city, [to meet me.]

CHAPTER 10: CONCLUSION

Now I write these things to you from Smyrna by the Ephesians, who are deservedly most happy. There is also with me, along with many others, Crocus, one dearly beloved by me. As to those who have gone before me from Syria to Rome for the glory of God, I believe that you are acquainted with them; to whom, [then,] do ye make known that I am at hand. For they are all worthy, both of God and of you; and it is becoming that you should refresh them in all things. I have written these things unto you, on the day before the ninth of the Calends of September (that is, on the twenty-third day of August). Fare ye well to the end, in the patience of Jesus Christ. Amen.

REFLECTION:

It is no coincidence that the coptic Calendar is the Calendar of martyrs. Our Coptic Church as the Bride of the Lamb, is also the mother of martyrs. We know that the faith of Christ could have not

survived without the martyrs' blood that covered Egypt at different times and ages. There is not a city nor a town that had not been void of martyrs. There had not been a century that did not witness martyrdom of Copts. Martyrs are the precious sacrifices that the church offers to God from this passing world.

First grade students should be taught about Nyrouz martyrs without unnecessary exposure to violent stories.

PRAYER:

Praise is awaiting You, O God, in Zion; And to You the vow shall be performed.

O You who hear prayer, To You all flesh will come.

Iniquities prevail against me; *As for* our transgressions, You will provide atonement for them.

Blessed is the man You choose, And cause to approach *You, That* he may dwell in Your courts. We shall be satisfied with the goodness of Your house, Of Your holy temple.

By awesome deeds in righteousness You will answer us, O God of our salvation, *You who are* the confidence of all the ends of the earth, And of the far-off seas;

Who established the mountains by His strength, *Being* clothed with power;

You who still the noise of the seas, The noise of their waves, And the tumult of the peoples.

They also who dwell in the farthest parts are afraid of Your signs; You make the outgoings of the morning and evening rejoice.

You visit the earth and water it, You greatly enrich it; The river of God is full of water;

You provide their grain, For so You have prepared it.

You water its ridges abundantly, You settle its furrows;

You make it soft with showers, You bless its growth.

You crown the year with Your goodness, And Your paths drip *with* abundance.

They drop *on* the pastures of the wilderness, And the little hills rejoice on every side.

The pastures are clothed with flocks; The valleys also are covered with grain; They shout for joy, they also sing. *Psalms 65*

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

O red dates your color is like...

VOCABULARY:

Relic – part of a saints' body, Martyr – one who witnesses to the Truth, even up to death

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	We believe in heaven
Liturgical:	Nyrouz procession & Celebration
Moral:	Steadfastness
Spiritual:	Praise and singing

INTRODUCTION

If your church owns relics of martyrs you can ask your students: *Who here knows what all those red tubes are that we have in our church?* Does anybody know what is inside them, why they are so special? [*there are **relics** of the saints inside them!*] Does anybody know on which feast we take out almost all of them? [*Nyrouz! Nyrouz is one of the feasts of the church and it is the Coptic New Year. It comes every year in September. Every year, our church does a very big procession, even going outside and around the church, with all the deacons holding a relic*]. Does anybody know which special saints' relics we take out on Nyrouz? [*The **Martyrs***]. Martyrs are people who were killed because they believed in Christ. They are most honored in the church and God gives them a very special place in Heaven. And on the Feast of Nyrouz, we remember the martyrs and we celebrate them (because we are happy that they were victorious on earth and are now with God in Paradise), we celebrate *with* them (because the church in heaven and the church on earth together worship and praise God joyfully), and we also thank God for giving the martyrs to His church because without them, the church would not have survived.

LESSON BODY:

THE MANY MARTYRS OF OUR CHURCH

Take one copy of each one of the icons so that every martyr is represented and put them up on the board or at the front of the room so all the students can see them. Tell the students the names of each one of the martyrs. Explain to the students that each student will get to choose one of these icons, color their own icon, sign their name on the back, frame it, and then walk in the procession at church on Nyrouz vespers with their icon, showing the church this martyr so that the people can honor him/her.

Have the students choose their icons. Have the ones who chose the same icons sit in groups. As each group is coloring their icon, one servant will come and sit with the students and (gently) explain the story of that martyr to them while they are coloring. Servants will also help the students sign their names and frame their icons when they are finished coloring. Icons will be stored in the classroom. Servants will come up with a plan for distributing the icons to the students on the feast vespers procession and will tell the students what they should do in order to get their icon on Nyrouz and to be ready to walk in the procession. Servants should carefully plan and assist students to participate in the procession in co-ordination with the priest, deacons and parents.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

The purpose of this class is to give the students a way to take part in the feast of Nyrouz. By coloring and framing their own icons in order to walk in the procession, the students will come to understand that they have a role in the church and an important place in the family of God. The stories of the saints' lives will be told to the students while they are coloring.

Servants should have extra ready framed colored pictures of martyrs for children who did not have a chance to be in the class and prepare for the feast.

- Copies of the icons of martyrs for the students to color and frame preferably on card paper
- Crayons and colored pencils
- Frames
- Decorations for the frames
- A way for the students to sign their names to the back of their icon
- A letter to the parents to bring their children on the eve of Nyrouz for vespers

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What is Nyrouz?

A. *The feast of the new Coptic Year*

Q. What do we celebrate on Nyrouz?

A. *The Martyrs of the Church*

Q. How do we celebrate the Nyrouz feast?

A. *By making a procession with relics and icons of martyrs*

Q. What is a martyr?

A. *One who witnesses to the truth even to the point of death*

Q. What is a relic?

A. *A part of the body of the martyr.*

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Philippians 1:21

Unit IX

Purpose: This unit covers the feasts and the seasons of the church. The main focus of this unit is to prepare the students to fully engage in the church life and celebrations.

LESSON 49: FEAST OF THE CROSS

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

John 12:32-34 "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself." This He said, signifying by what death He would die. The people answered Him, "We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever; and how can You say, "The Son of Man must be lifted up"? Who is this Son of Man?"

Galatians 6:14 But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

Matthew 24:29-31 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

CHURCH FATHERS:

St Cyril of Alexandria Commentary on St John 12:32,33

Howbeit, after that Christ had given Himself unto the Father for our salvation as a Spotless Victim, and was now on the point of paying the penalties that He suffered on our behalf, we were ransomed from the accusations of sin. And so, when the beast has been removed from our midst, and the tyrant is deposed, then Christ brings unto Himself the race that had strayed away, calling not only Jews but all mankind as well unto salvation through the faith that is in Him. For whereas the calling through the Law was partial, that through Christ was universal. For Christ alone, as God, was able to procure all good things for us. And with exceeding good omen, He speaks of being "uplifted" instead of being "crucified." For He would keep the mystery invisible to those intent on killing Him; for they were not worthy to learn it: nevertheless, He allowed them that were wiser to understand that He would suffer because of all and on behalf of all. And especially I suppose any

one might take it in this way, and very fitly; that the Death on the Cross was an exaltation which is ever associated in our thoughts with honor and glory. For on this account too Christ is glorified, forasmuch as the benefits He procured for humanity thereby are many. And by these He draws men *unto Himself*, and does not, like the disciples, lead them to another. He shows therefore that He is Himself by Nature God, in that He does not put the Father outside Himself. For it is through the Son that a man is drawn unto the knowledge of the Father.

33 But this He said, signifying by what manner of death He should die.

Hereby the Evangelist showed that the Lord did not suffer in ignorance, but voluntarily; and with full knowledge, not only that He was dying, but also in what manner: and He named the Cross [as His] death.

St John Chrysostom commentary on the letter to the Galatians chapter 6:14

Verse 14. *“But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

Truly this symbol is thought despicable; but it is so in the world’s reckoning, and among men; in Heaven and among the faithful it is the highest glory. Poverty too is despicable, but it is our boast; and to be cheaply thought of by the public is a matter of laughter to them, but we are elated by it. So too is the Cross our boast. He does not say, “I boast not,” nor, “I will not boast,” but, “Far be it from me that I should,” as if he abominated it as absurd, and invoked the aid of God in order to his success therein. And what is the boast of the Cross? That Christ for my sake took on Him the form of a slave, and bore His sufferings for me the slave, the enemy, the unfeeling one; yea He so loved me as to give Himself up to a

curse for me. What can be comparable to this! If servants who only receive praise from their masters, to whom they are akin by nature, are elated thereby, how must we not boast when the Master who is very God is not ashamed of the Cross which was endured for us. Let us then not be ashamed of His unspeakable tenderness; He was not ashamed of being crucified for thy sake, and wilt thou be ashamed to confess His infinite solicitude? It is as if a prisoner who had not been ashamed of his King, should, after that King had come to the prison and himself loosed the chains, become ashamed of him on that account. Yet this would be the height of madness, for this very fact would be an especial ground for boasting.

Verse 14. *“Through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”*

What he here calls the world is not the heaven nor the earth, but the affairs of life, the praise of men, retinues, glory, wealth, and all such things as have a show of splendor. To me these things are dead. Such an one it behooves a Christian to be, and always to use this language. Nor was he content with the former putting to death, but added another, saying, “and I unto the world,” thus implying a double putting to death, and saying, They are dead to me, and I to them, neither can they captivate and overcome me, for they are dead once for all, nor can I desire them, for I too am dead to them. Nothing can be more blessed than this putting to death, for it is the foundation of the blessed life.

REFLECTION:

The Church celebrates the feast of the finding of the Holy Cross with two processions. One short at vespers and another longer and more elaborate at Matins. Children would be excited to share in both processions, but because the feast in most years falls on week days, it might be impractical for them to participate in the morning one. All attention should be given to them in participating in the vespers procession.

PRAYER:

Lord, who on the sixth day, at the sixth hour You were nailed to the Cross for the sin that Adam dared to commit in paradise. Break the bonds of our sins, Lord Christ and save us. I cried to the Lord and He heard me. Lord accept my prayer and answer my supplication, hear me in the evening and in the morning and at noon. Hear my words and spare my soul.

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

Evol Heten pi-Estavros.

VOCABULARY:

Trinity, Blessed

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	Power of the Cross
Liturgical:	Holy Cross procession & Celebration
Moral:	Obedience
Spiritual:	Praise and singing

INTRODUCTION

I have a very important question for you today; the answer to this question has literally changed peoples' lives. What is the most powerful sign in the whole world? [May need to provide examples of signs so that the students understand: a heart, an arrow, etc... Encourage them to think of truly the most *powerful* one]. The Cross. This is the most powerful sign in the world.

LESSON BODY:

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

Why is the Cross so powerful? Because when I sign myself with the Cross, I sign myself with the weapon that defeated the devil and sin. Because when our Lord gave up Himself on the cross He brought us back to His kingdom.

It is powerful because I say with it the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (make the sign of the cross as this is being said). This is the Name of our God, of the **Trinity**. And it is the most important name and the most **blessed** name.

I need to tell you something else – the sign of the Cross is almost like a secret for the Christians. Other people who are not Christian do not understand how special the Cross is to Christians and to them, it just seems like moving your hand around. But a Christian knows the secret, knows how powerful and how special the Cross is. Remember that.

When I sign myself with the Cross, I go from top to bottom. This means something. Let me ask you – who went from the top to the bottom? What is up there, at the top? [Heaven]. And what is down here, that we are standing on? [Earth]. Who was living in Heaven and then came down to Earth? [Our Lord Jesus Christ]. So when I take my fingers and I go from top to bottom, I am doing what Christ did when He came from Heaven down to Earth and was born from St. Mary.

Then after this, we go from left to right. This also means something very special. The left side represents the sadness and darkness we were in without Christ. Then when I move my fingers from the left side to the right side, this shows the change that Christ has done in my life – He moved me from a dark, sad place and to a place that is full of light and joy, moved me closer to Him.

USING THE CROSS

Does anybody know when we use the sign of the Cross? [Anytime and all the time!] We use the cross before we do anything: before we leave our room, eat, sleep, do our work in school and at

home. We also use the sign of the cross if we are ever scared or sad or angry. [Invite the students to name other times they would use the sign of the cross].

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- *Prepare wooden crosses for the students to carry during procession. have them decorate it during the class and write messages of love to Christ our Lord.*

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. Why the sign of the cross is powerful?

A. *because it is the sign that defeated the devil and that we say the Name of God with it*

Q. When do we bless ourselves with the sign of the cross?

A. *before we start anything*

Q. When I make the sign of the cross, why do I move my hand from my head to my belly?

A. *to say that Our Lord came down from heaven to the belly of St Mary*

Q. Why do I move my hand from left to right

A. *to say that by the Cross of Our Lord we were moved from darkness and sadness to light and joy*

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

Galatians 6:14 But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

LESSON 50: HOW TO WRITE AN ICON OF THE THEOTOKOS

- Print multiple copies of the coloring page of the Theotokos icon
- Distribute gold, blue, and purple colors (crayons); give each student three stars of a different color.
- Explain the icon itself, then followed by the colors and the stars
- Points to highlight:
 1. What is the word "Theotokos" mean? Mother of God
 2. What is the use of the icon? Three purposes: (1) educational - it teaches something (i.e. it answers the question "why" to the things on the icon; (2) liturgical - it plays a role in the liturgy; (3) spiritual - the one who prays with icons obtain a connection with the saint, because icons are "windows into heaven"
 3. Where would we find the icon of St. Mary in every Orthodox church? On the left hand side when facing the altar.
 4. Jesus sitting at the left hand of St. Mary: He is the King, and she is the Queen, always at His right.
 5. St. Mary points to Him. Why? Because she wants us to listen to whatever He says; she is also presenting Him to us ("who presented to us God carried on her hands")
 6. Why is Christ's hand pointed to heaven? Because He is leading us to His Father.
 7. Why do we paint her robe blue? Because she became the Second Heaven.
 8. Why do we paint His robe in red/purple? Because He died on the Cross to save us (it is the color of blood).
 9. Why do we place three stars on her? Because she was a virgin BEFORE, DURING, and AFTER Christ's birth. She is the Ever-Virgin Theotokos.
 10. Why is there a halo around their heads? Because they have the divine light. Christ is the source, and St. Mary is filled with it. Halos and the rest of the icon are gold to reflect divinity and heavenly realm
- Vocabulary: **Theotokos, virgin, icon**

THIRD SECTION

MINI REFERENCE

THE LITURGICAL CYCLE:

- Every family has their own celebrations (for example: birthdays, anniversaries). The Church, as the family of God, comes to celebrate certain occasions.
- The church invites all of us to celebrate the important occasions that made our faith as one body
- What are the feasts we celebrate in general?

FEASTS OF THE LORD- MAJOR AND MINOR

MAJOR FEASTS :

1. Holy Nativity
2. Holy Theophany
3. Palm Sunday
4. Covenant Thursday
5. Holy Resurrection
6. Holy Pentecost
7. Holy Annunciation

MINOR FEASTS:

1. Presentation of the Lord into the Temple
2. Circumcision
3. Entry into Egypt
4. Wedding of Cana of Galilee
5. Holy Transfiguration
6. Holy Ascension
7. Thomas Sunday

- In addition we celebrate the feasts of the saints on daily basis, except in the Holy fifty days, as we focus all our attention to the *Resurrected Lord*.

FASTING

- A. **First Degree Fast:** Absolute restriction to meat & dairy & seafood; includes every –
 - Wednesday and Friday (*except during the 50 days after Resurrection*)
 - the Great Lent,
 - Baramoun days,
 - Jonah's Fast
 - B. **Second Degree Fast:** Absolute restriction to meat & dairy- seafood is allowed; includes:
 - Advent,
 - Fast of the Apostles,
 - the Fast of St. Mary
- Moveable Feasts and Fasts
 - Moving Feasts and Fasts (do not come on a fixed date every year)

1. Jonah's fast
2. Beginning of Holy Lent
3. Holy Week
4. Holy Resurrection
5. Holy Pentecost

PRAYERS: 1ST GRADE

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

In the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, one God. Amen

OUR FATHER

Our Father who art in Heaven
Hallowed by Thy name
Thy Kingdom come
Thy will be done
On Earth as it is in Heaven
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us
Lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil
Through Jesus Christ our Lord
For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen

THANKSGIVING PRAYER (SECTION)

Let us give thanks to the beneficent and merciful God, the Father of our Lord, God and Savior, Jesus Christ, for He has covered us, helped us, guarded us, accepted us unto Him, spared us, supported us, and brought us to this hour. Let us also ask Him, the Lord our God, the Almighty, to guard us in all peace this holy day and all the days of our life.

O Master, Lord, God the Almighty, the Father of our Lord, God and Savior, Jesus Christ, we thank You for every condition, concerning every condition, and in every condition, for You have covered us, helped us, guarded us, accepted us unto You, spared us, supported us, and brought us to this hour.

INTRODUCTION TO THE CREED

We exalt you, The Mother of the True Light. We Glory you, O saint, the Theotokos, for you brought for unto us the Savior of the Whole world; He came and saved our souls. Glory to You our Master, our King, Christ the pride of the Apostles, the crown of the martyrs, the joy of the righteous, the firmness of the churches, the forgiveness of sins. We proclaim the Holy Trinity in One Godhead. We worship and glorify Him. Lord Have Mercy, Lord Have mercy, Lord Bless. Amen.

THE CREED

Truly we believe in One God, the Almighty God the Father, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages; light out of light, true God out of true God, begotten not made; consubstantial with the Father, through whom all things came into being. He descended from heaven for us and for our salvation, and was incarnated from the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary, and became man. He was crucified for us at the time of Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried; arose from the dead on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures; He ascended to the heavens and sat at the right hand of the Father; He shall also come in His glory to judge the living and the dead; of whose kingdom there will be no end. Truly we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Life-giving Lord, who proceeds from the Father, we worship and glorify Him together with the Father and the Son, who spoke in the prophets. And in one, holy, universal and Apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. And we look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. **Amen**

LITURGY RESPONSES

A. Lord have mercy: Kereye lieson

B. Glory be the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the age of all ages. Amen, Alleluia : Doxa patri ke eyou Ke Agiou Epnevmati Ke nin ke a-ee ke Ke yes tos e-onas Ton e-onon. Amen, Alleluia

C. Peace be with you all: Irene Passe

D. And with your spirit: Ke to pnevmati soo

E. Alleluia. this is the day which the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it. O Lord save us, O Lord straighten our ways. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Alleluia : Alleluia fai pe pi eho-oo eta ep Chois thamiof: maren thelil en ten oonof emmon enkhitf: O

Ep Choïs ek-e nahmen: O Ep Choïs ek-e sooten nen moit: Ef-esmaro-oot enje fi ethnioo
khen ef raan em ep Choïs: Alleluia

F. Amen. Amen. Amen. Your death, O Lord, we proclaim. Your holy resurrection and
ascension, we confess. We praise You, we bless You, we thank You, O Lord, and we entreat
You, O our God.

G. The golden censer is the Virgin, her aroma is our Savior. She gave birth to Him; He saved us
and forgave us our sins.

Tee-shory ennob te ti-Parthenos, pes-aro-mata pe pen-Soteer, asmisi emmof, afsoti
emmon, owoh ka nen-novi nan e-vol.

SEASONAL RESPONSES:

A. Thok te ti gom nem bi ouh nem bi ezmouh nem bi amahi sha eneh. amin. Emanoel benouti
pen oro.

Thok te ti gom nem bi ouh nem bi ezmouh nem bi amahi sha eneh amin bashoice
essous bi ekhristos basotir en aghathos. (Tagom nem bi ezmoh bi ebchioce av shobe-niah av-
soutiria efouaab).

Thok te ti gom nem bi ouh nem bi ezmouh nem bi amahi sha eneh. Amin

To you is the power, and the glory, and blessing for ever amen. Emanuel our God and our
king.

To you is the power, the glory, the majesty for ever amen. My Lord Jesus Christ my good
Savior. (My strength, and my hymnal is the Lord and he became my holy salvation).

To you is the power, the glory, the majesty for ever amen.

B. He ascended unto heaven and sent to us the Paraclete, The Spirit of Truth the comforter,
Amine Alleluia

CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

DRAWING AND ART

- Album/CD covers
- Boxes (for art projects or collections)
- Flyers
- Greeting cards
- Mobiles
- Models from clay or dough
- Mosaics (construction paper, paper punch holes, Easter egg shells, seeds)
- Bulletin boards
- Christmas trees
- Collages (magazine pictures or odds and ends)
- Displays
- Banners
- Book jackets
- Booklets (bound with yarn or staples, accordion type)
- Bookmarks
- Doorknob hangers
- Dot pictures
- Finger paintings
- Fingerprint pictures from ink pads

(details with felt-tipped pens)

- Movies
- Puppets
- Sculpture (wire, paper, aluminum, foil, clay)
- Sponge paintings
- Stained-glass windows
- Student-made storybooks
- Texts lettered on seashells, rocks
- Paper dolls
- Paper weight
- Photo albums with illustrations and captions
- Photo essays (magazine pictures or photos)
- Posters
- T-shirts
- Water pictures on the board
- Yarn-and-cloth pictures

WRITING

- TV shows
- Web pages
- Paraphrases of Bible passages
- Poems
- Prayers
- Questions and answers
- Quizzes
- Reports
- Riddles
- Commercials
- Conversations
- Crossword puzzles
- Diaries
- Emails
- Interviews
- Letters
- Litanies
- Modern parables/stories
- Newspaper headlines/stories
- Skits
- Speeches
- Stories

AUDIOVISUALS

- DVDs
- Flannel boards
- LCD projectors
- Maps
- Models
- Movies
- Multimedia shows
- Pictures
- Power-point presentations
- Bulletin boards

- CDs
- Chalk-talk
- Charts
- Computers
- Concrete aids
- Scrapbooks
- Slides
- Songs
- Transparencies
- Videocassettes or audiocassettes

ROLE-PLAYING AND DRAMATIZING

- Cutouts on overheard projector
- Puppet shows
- Role-plays
- Dramatic reading/storytelling
- Gestures to songs
- Play

SPEAKING AND SINGING

- Panel discussions
- Questions and answers
- Singing
- Storytelling
- Discussions (small group/large group)
- Guest speakers
- Interviews
- Lectures

PLAYING GAMES

- Board games
- Spelling bees
- Team games
- Trivia games
- Drawing games
- Icebreakers
- Quiz shows
- Skill games