



**THE COPTIC ORTHODOX PATRICHARCATÉ
ST. GEORGE AND ST. RUEISS CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRAM**

GRADE THREE

Revised Edition 2005

PREPARATION AND WRITING

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Toronto, Canada*

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SAINT MARK



H.H. POPE SHENOUDA III

Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate

FROM H.H. POPE SHENOUDA III

Deir Anba Rueiss, Ramses Avenue, ABBASSIYA,

CAIRO, EGYPT.

CABLE : ELANBARUEISS, CAIRO.



بطريركية الأقباط الأرثوذكس

Date { / / 19 17

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الى الدينيه المباركيه القوي مرقس الياس عبد المسيح
والذين تادرس يعقوب ملطي

سلام ومحبه وبعد ،

زارني ابننا د. محفوظ وسعد المنهج القترح لدارس
التربية الكنسية بالمهجر . وقد درست معه الخطوط الاساسية
للمنهج ، دوره الدخول في التفاصيل . وأبدت له بعض ملاحظات
من جهة مناهج هذه العقيدة والحقق : وفي الواقع أنه الجهد المبذول
جهد كبير جداً يتحده الشكر . ومع ذلك تحتاج دروس الكتاب
المقدم الى زيادة . وسأريك لكم ملاحظات اخري بالتفصيل بمشيئة
الرب .

فليبارك الرب كل ما قام به ابننا محفوظ من جهود في اعداد
المنهج ، وفي جميع المادة ، وفي عمل الترجمة . وليبارك الرب
أيضاً كل من اشتركوا في العمل ، وفي المراجعة
وليكنه صدقنا هو ما نستطيع الوصول اليه من كان على قدر
امكانياتنا . ويمكنه ترميد المنهج أيضاً بالصورة المناسبة والتي
تقرها كنيتنا من النواحي العقيدية والطقسية والتاريخية
الرب معكم . كونوا بخير

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سيد القديسة اغنريه
١٩٨٦/٨/٢٤

Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate

FROM H.H. POPE SHENOUDA III

Deir Anba Ruciss, Ramses Avenue, ABBASSIYA,

CAIRO, EGYPT.

CABLE : ELANBARUEISS, CAIRO.



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To my blessed two sons: Hegomain Fr. Marcous Elias Abdel Massih and Hegomain Fr. Tadros Yacoub Malaty.

Peace and love be with you.

Dr. Mahfouz has visited me and brought with him the suggested Sunday school curriculum for the land of immigration. I have studied with him the basic topics of the curriculum without getting into details. Although that I have pointed out some concerns on the doctrine and dogma curriculum, it is clear that the amount of work spent on preparing the curriculum is huge and worth thanking. Nonetheless, the Bible study part of the curriculum needs to be increased. God willing, I will also send you additional details on this curriculum.

May the Lord bless all the effort that our son Mahfouz has done in preparing the Sunday school curriculum, in collecting the relevant topics, and in performing the translation of subjects. May the Lord also bless all those who have joined him in preparing this project and those who revised the topics.

Let our goal be performing our best to try and arrive at perfection given what we have from abilities. Lastly, I would also suggest the addition of different recognized pictures according to our doctrine, dogma and history to the Sunday school curriculum.

May the Lord be with you. Be in peace.

Signed

Pope Shenouda III

22 August 1986

The feast of St. Mary

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INTRODUCTION TO THE SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRAM

Principal Goal of Christian Up-Bringing.

The child had and still has, first as a person and second as a child, a special importance to our Lord Jesus Christ. He called the children and considered them models of perfection, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me. But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matthew 18:3-5).

Therefore, children are beloved ones to Christ and are His friends with their simplicity and purity of heart. Christ called them, blessed them and asked His Disciples and Apostles after Him to take care of bringing up children and prepare the suitable environment for their spiritual growth.

St. Paul advises parents saying, "Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged", (Colossians 3:21). From a Christian point of view, the general principal goal of religious up - bringing is the formation of the perfect man of God who is following the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, "Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). Also, our Lord said, "For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you" (John 13:15).

Hence, a Christian up-bringing is not merely an education to be given or a curriculum to be taught, but it is rather a life that is given through example and behavior through teaching and discipleship. The saintly Fathers of the church have emphasized this fact. St. John said about his practice of life with the Lord "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life-the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us - that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:1-3).

The same fact was emphasized by St. Paul when he was talking to his disciple Timothy "But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose,

faith, long-suffering, love, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium ... But as for you, continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:10-15). Also in the letter of St. Paul to the Philippians 3:17, "Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern". Therefore, the principal goal of the Christian up-bringing is to change the life of our children to the life of Christ in them, i.e. to a life based on the work of Christ in them as true Christians and not just religious persons who fear God but deny Him.

The Starting Point in Achieving the Goal of Religious Upbringing.

The teacher should not start with the student from power Zero. The student comes equipped with many social and religious experiences. His religious experience, although it is limited, it has a strong basis that is ready for spiritual growth. In the Sacrament of Baptism, the student has already obtained the spiritual birth i.e. he became spiritually re-born. After his baptism he was anointed with the Holy Myroun (Chrism) and the Holy Spirit dwelt in him. St. John said "But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you; and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him" (1 John 2:27).

Therefore, by obtaining these two Holy Sacraments and the Sacrament of Eucharist, the student becomes a member in the body of the Lord and a living part of the body of the Holy Church. This means that religious up-bringing is not something foreign with respect to the student. The student is a temple of God and the Spirit of God dwells in him. This means that it is not the teacher who makes the student live a life for Christ, but it is the inside work of the Holy Spirit that makes the whole difference. The role of the teacher is to make the student aware of the effect and the work of the Spirit. In this sense the student becomes aware of the secret grace inside him and as a result the divine word inside him grows as the seed grows inside the earth.

The Difference Between Religious Education and Religious Upbringing.

We should not aim at providing lessons in the form of giving information, i.e. a mere religious education. In this case religious experience will never exceed the

circle of the mind and will never affect the heart and practice of the student. If we consider religious education as an element in religious bringing-up, we are in this case following Christ's plan in the development and building of the Christian personality. Christ with His example and His perfection gave us a model which should be followed and achieved. As for His teachings, they are meant to clear the way for us in order to follow them as examples and models.

The Need of our Church for a Coptic Orthodox Sunday School Program.

There is one basic difference between Eastern and Western theology; the latter depends on study, analysis and using scientific means, whereas Eastern theology is based on experience and depth which is mainly lead to true Christian life. The Eastern Church respects the role of the mind but it works under the supervision of faith.

The majority of recent Western Sunday School programs follow a pure analytical way of explaining the Bible. For example, miracles are explained through psychological and scientific factors. The man of God must accept miracles and believe them as they are. St. Athanasius said, "Our knowledge must not control (or have authority over) the word, but the word itself must have the control and authority over the mind".

Another basic difference is that our traditional Church uses the rites in education as a key in the process of living what is being taught.

Over and above what was mentioned before in relation to the basic differences in religious education between Eastern and Western churches, there are also basic differences in the various beliefs and the way Christianity is lived by in actual life.

We, as parents, teachers and clergy, are responsible in front of God to bring up our children according to the same spiritual Orthodox principles that we received from our saintly Fathers who shed their blood to perpetuate the perfect Orthodox faith . Therefore, our children must learn from the same source from which we learned before them.

The Sunday School program in your hands is a fruit of love granted by our Lord Jesus Christ to our children and a gift from Him to them. This program is purely Coptic Orthodox. All its references without exception are Coptic Orthodox (please review the reference list at the end of the book. In this manner all the information

that is in this book (as well as all the books in this series) can be used with total confidence as it is devised according to our glorified church. The spirit of the lessons is indeed the same spirit of the Coptic Orthodox Church.

About the Books in Your Hands.

These books in your hands are integrated series of books which were written for children from age 4 to 18. With the grace of the Holy Spirit, if the child at age 4 follows this series of lessons until age 18, he will obtain an all-rounded spiritual background. The books (covering the teachings from pre-schoolers to grade 12) cover a study of most of the major Biblical subjects of the Old and New Testaments, the celebrations of the church of our Master's feasts, the life of the Saints and their feasts, the divine liturgy with its rites and spirituality, the true Christian life and Christian behavior, church sacraments, fasting, prayers, the creed and its explanation, the Ecumenical Councils, the difference between the various major Christian sects, the Christian family, the history of our church, the major personalities in the Holy Bible, ... etc. The program is indeed comprehensive and it covers all the key areas of our Orthodox church. If these lessons were given in the spiritual way that was emphasized before, great results will be expected with the work of the Holy Spirit.

General Rules and Principles to be Followed by the Sunday School Teachers.

- 1) The teacher must know the stage and the characteristics of growth of the children that he or she is teaching. A child who is 12 years old is different than a child who is 8 years old. The teacher must know the level of his/her students, their abilities to receive information that he/she is giving and the differences between the various abilities in the same class.
- 2) The positive participation of the students is very important during the lesson and the effectiveness of teaching. One of the key incentives for the student is to give importance to the lesson and have an effective communication with the teacher and, above all, to define clearly the purpose behind it and present the lesson in the form of problems that attract their attention.
- 3) The teacher must follow a psychological order of the facts he is presenting. Our Lord Jesus Christ used effectively the psychological method of teaching through His parables. The parables in their simplicity are drawn from the daily life of the people. We must emphasize here that the psychological

method is not the only method of spiritual teaching. We should mention this method as one of the methods used. It is quite important to note that spiritual teaching must be imparted with certain goals in mind which are connected with the life of the children and related to the problems they face. We should provide guidance that is mostly needed for them.

- 4) The teacher must present the lesson and illustrate it with relevant information and present it as a coherent unity without ambiguity or contradiction. He may use illustrations to help him explain what he means.
- 5) Application of Christian principles to the actual social life must be emphasized in every lesson. The teacher should use stories (from the Old or New Testaments or from church history or church books) to attract the attention of the students and show the Christian principle in an applied manner. The teacher also may divide the subject into stages or small subjects. A good practice is to summarize the lesson or better still, ask the students themselves to summarize it.
- 6) The manner of expressing the lesson to the students is also very important. A teacher who is living by what he/she teaches will definitely be more effective in giving his/her message across. A teacher who is teaching under spiritual influence with compatible emotions to what he/she teaches will be definitely more effective than a teacher who is giving information.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On behalf of the Coptic Orthodox children and youth, who are going to benefit a great deal from this revised Sunday School Program, I would like to express a word of appreciation and gratitude to:

His Holiness Pope Shenouda III

This program leans quite heavily on the writings of His Holiness Pope Shenouda III. The majority of the contents of the lessons and their attachments are based on His Holiness' writings. This is a very bright and important aspect of this program. In 1986, during the time in which there was no Coptic Orthodox Sunday School program in the land of immigration, His Holiness reviewed the general contents of the program, commented and modified many key subjects, and then authorized the use of this program in all churches outside of Egypt, on a preliminary basis.

I can safely say that, if it was not for His Holiness Pope Shenouda III's support, wisdom, and writings, this book would not exist. The whole generation is in debt to His Holiness Pope Shenouda III, not only because of his great teachings and writings, but also because of his love and leadership.

His Grace Bishop Reweiss

His Grace Bishop Reweiss has been behind us all the way with his love and guidance. He wrote the forward for our previous version of the program in 1986.

His Grace Bishop Moussa

His Grace Bishop Moussa has provided constant support and encouragement in the completion of the previous program. Of course, His Grace's writings for the youth have been utilized in all the subjects directed towards the youth, in this book.

Fr. Tadros Malaty and Fr. Marcos Marcos

These Beloved Fathers reviewed thoroughly all of the contents of the first six books of the previous version of the program. Their dedication, experience, and wisdom have been an important factor in the quality of all the material. They contributed greatly towards setting up the lessons, in that sense. Father Tadros Malaty's deep writings, without any doubt, have been a key reference in the majority of the lessons. His latest advice to revise and enhance the previous version of the program has been held in the highest regards.

Dr. Fayek M. Ishak

Dr. Fayek Ishak (head of the English Department at Lakehead University) reviewed the first six books of the previous version of the program. He contributed, immensely, towards the setup of the lessons.

Fr. Gawargious Michael and Fr. Mikhael Armanios

These two beloved priests chose the proper songs to match the subjects of the lessons. They also arranged the proof-reading of all the books with a chosen group of youth.

Fr. Makary Silwanis

This beloved priest made all of the arrangements for revising the previous Sunday School Program. He single-handedly arranged to have the new program available online. His computer skills were a key factor in all areas.

Tassoni Ragaa

The continuous support and encouragement of Tassoni Ragaa played an essential role in the write-up of the previous version of the program, as well as in this revision. One of the aspects that kept this program centered and on track was her continuous reminder that this program is for generations to come and every effort is worthwhile for the sake of the upbringing of the children and youth.

The Youth of St. George and St. Rueiss Coptic Orthodox Church

There was a key participation from Heba Khattas in this revised version. She in total love and joy contributed with great efforts in typing, checking, proof reading and commenting. All these things by her own initiative despite all the other responsibilities that she had to do towards her family, her work and her study.

There was a key contribution from Marian Awad in this revised version. She proposed that the lessons for Grades 11 and 12 be totally redone in order to prepare the youth to face the challenges at the university level. This idea resulted in a huge change in the curriculum for these two grades, as well as in the writing of the "Contemporary Issues" book.

Ninette Bishay sang over 100 songs in order to make sure that all the lessons were accompanied by beautiful songs in a great language and tone.

Caroline Yassa typed many lessons for the author, mostly dictated over the phone, at times when his eyes were very sore from reading. Her efforts are greatly appreciated.

Comments and proof-readings of many of the youth are greatly appreciated.

Maha Takla	Mark Botros	Patty Ibrahim
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Marian Barsoum	Helen Hanna	Maria Nasralla
Angela Salama	Margaret Massoud	Martha Tawadrous
Mina Gindi	Nancy Bishay	Samih Kalilian
Fady Dawood	Nagat Yassa	Emad Iskander
Lillian Ibrahim	Christina Habib	Paul Tadros
Mariam Tawadrous	Donna Hanna	Dina Ayoub
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Sameh Barsoum	Marianna Nasralla	Samy Messiha
Sherin Ishak	Angy Hinis	Mariana Ramzy
Michael Malak	Monica Sourial	Nivin Bishay
Michael Kalilian	Mira Henis	Kamilia Beshara
Viola Iskander	Sarah Deif	Marina Mouharib
Hany Matta	Peter Gobran	Georgina Rizk
Marline Ayoub	Michael Abadir	John Hanna
Christina Salama	George Hanna	Irini Gad
Steven Messiha	Rasha Michael	Mohib Tawfik
Marilyn Yassa	Mina Elkatib	Nadir Deif
Sandra Eleigizy	Sherrine Fidal	Hidra Bastawrous

Fr. Rueiss Awad

TEACHER'S GUIDELINES:

HOW TO USE THIS PROGRAM?

1. The teacher should realize that each lesson has been prepared to cover a specific point; starting from the title of the lesson to the end of it.
2. The teacher should read all the materials referred to in the lesson (i.e. the Holy Bible as well as any articles attached to the lesson), and then proceed by emphasizing all the points.
3. The teacher should enlarge the picture ahead of each lesson and use it as a visual aid as he or she is teaching the lesson.
4. The teacher should discuss the practical applications as he or she proceeds with the lesson.
5. The teacher should summarize the main points of the lesson with the students and give prizes.

FEATURES OF THIS SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRAM

A COMPREHENSIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRAM

1. This Sunday School program was the very first program to be written in the lands of immigration. This work was initiated in 1974, and the first version was published in 1986. We thank our heavenly Father, Who has given us the opportunity to extensively revise and improve it, in 2005.
2. In this version of the program, any repetition that was in the previous program, has been removed, all lessons were upgraded in both coverage and depth. Moreover, a whole new book, on contemporary issues, has been added.
3. The contemporary issues book covers subjects that are important for children and youth in today's world. These lessons are optional. For churches with regular youth group meetings, these issues would best be discussed during those meetings. On the other hand, for churches that do not hold regular youth group meetings, those issues could be discussed as part of the Sunday School program.
4. This version of the program also includes lessons, which form a basis for a missionary service, a service that should in the ideal situation be practiced by every member of our congregation. The objective is that each child, every youth, and in the long run each Coptic individual can behave and act in a way, which is an embodiment of the teaching and tradition of the Coptic Orthodox Church. In other words, our congregation would become role models in their communities, who attract people to our Lord Jesus Christ through their good practices: sincerity, commitment, hard work and dedication, tolerance, forgiveness, and all the other good qualities that differentiate a good practising Christian from those who merely have a Christian education.

5. In this Sunday School Program, we depended heavily on the writings of H.H. Pope Shenouda III as a reference for most of the presented material.
6. The lessons in this version of the program have already been tried in Sunday School classes, reviewed, improved and tried again. This ensures that the lessons are relevant and suit the level of the students.
7. In this version of the program, efforts were put forth to ensure that every aspect of the Christian life in the Coptic Orthodox Church is covered.
8. This Sunday School Program is not merely about giving specific education on Christianity to our children and youth but it is rather an attempt to deeply affect their feelings and spirituality. It is believed that such an approach will facilitate the practical application of the various aspects involved so that Christianity becomes a way of life for the individual, with deeply rooted Christian values, that are manifested as behaviour and attitude.
9. All copyrights of other Sunday School programs, and other writers, have been fully respected.
10. In this version, each lesson comes complete with pictures and songs that are suitable for the lesson.
11. This Sunday School program comes in various formats, for convenience. In addition to being available on this website for widespread use, it is also available, upon request, in hard copy format or on CD.
12. It is our strong belief that this Sunday School program will play a vital role in the spiritual upbringing of our children. May the Lord bless this Sunday School program and all other programs, for the growth of His Kingdom in us.

THE PREPARATION OF SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

A. What is a Sunday School Lesson?

1. It is not a record of events that we convey to the students with the hopes of appearing to satisfy the required preparation process in front of other people. Neither is it a lecture that we deliver to our audience or student regardless of their interest in the matter.

2. However, it is, on one hand, a fruit of the live reaction between the servant and the lesson and, on the other hand, between the servant and the students. The Holy Spirit matures this fruit and directs this service towards the salvation of the students and towards the glory of God.

For if the servant who teaches the people does not teach himself, the voice of the Lord rebukes him saying, " You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself ? " (Romans 2:21), and again in James 3: 1: "My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment."

Therefore, the servant should engage himself in the lesson through prayers, relevant spiritual readings, and practical application, so that when the servant speaks with his students from experience and true knowledge, he says, with St. John the Beloved, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life-" (1 John 1:1)

If a servant is not aware of the spiritual level of his students, he may burden them with instructions and lessons which they cannot handle nor apply and this, in turn, may cause the students to go astray and lose their eternal life. Therefore, it is crucial for the servant to establish a healthy, trustworthy, and fruitful relationship with his students, as well as to share in their joys and cheers, and their sadness and fears, all towards Jesus Christ. This is what St. Paul refers to in his epistle to the Galatians when he says, "My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you..." (Galatians 4:19). This close relationship with the students allows the servant to choose the most appropriate lesson that applies to their needs.

Hence a Sunday School lesson is:

A live mixture between the personal lives of the servants and the students through the lesson; the Holy Spirit creates this mixture and allows it to result in the bearing of fruit.

B. The Requirements for Sunday School Lessons

1. Humility in prayer before God.

God said, "...for without Me you can do nothing." (John 15:5)

My beloved brethren, sit down in peace and tranquility with the Lord and talk to Him about your personal need for Him in your service. Ask for the guidance of the Holy Spirit and pray saying, " Guide me dear God. What would you like my students and I to learn this week ? " Be obedient to His voice. It would be suitable to maintain a prayer time which equals that of the lesson.

2. Accurate knowledge of the meanings contained within the lesson.

This is achieved through:

- a) Occupying yourself throughout the week with understanding the new lesson, beginning from the end of the previous lesson until the beginning of the new one. It is wise to use your free time, time before sleep, and time with fellow servants to increase and enhance your understanding of the lesson.
- b) Resorting to spiritual and religious references and literature to help you develop the right understanding and concepts behind the lines.
- c) Resorting to general educational references and literature to embody this understanding and these concepts, making them clear in the minds of your students.

3. Aids of presentation.

It is important that you transform your understanding of the lesson into a simple and clear presentation. It has been stated and proved that 85% of knowledge acquired is acquired through the sense of sight and visual

learning as opposed to the 10% that is acquired through the sense of hearing. The rest of the knowledge acquired is done so through the other three senses.

In reality, the least effective way of transmitting knowledge to others is by merely talking; this has the weakest influence on the students. In contrast, the most effective way to teach is to use the "Learning by Doing" method, which requires enough time as well as sound experience.

What differentiate between the effectiveness of the two means of presentation are the tools used in the presentation. These tools aid the students in effectively understanding and retaining the purpose of the lesson by engaging both senses of sight and sound. These tools may include audio-visual devices such as pictures and movies, spiritual trips and outings, role playing during class, intellectually stimulating games, etc.

C. Recording the lesson.

It is recommended that the servant records the following during the preparation of the lesson:

- Date of the preparation of the lesson.
- Date of the delivery of the lesson.
- Title of the lesson.
- Purpose of the lesson.
- References.
- Preface.
- Lesson.
- Inference.
- Bible verse.
- Homework.
- Aids of presentation.
- Other points for memory.
- Songs.
- Personal reflections of the servant.

Purpose of the lesson:

It is necessary for the servant to clearly understand the purpose of the lesson at the beginning of his preparation. It is also necessary that the purpose of the lesson should agree with the maturity level of the students. For example, it is more appropriate for children to learn about God's love; on the other hand, learning about the power of God in their lives and in the lives of the saints is more appropriate subject matter for youth. As for young adults, learning about Christian virtues and spiritual practices is most appropriate.

Most importantly, the purpose of the lessons should agree with Coptic Orthodox Christian teachings, whether in specific occasions or in general.

References:

References could include:

- a. Stories, examples, verses, etc. from the Holy Bible.
- b. Spiritual books and literature.
- c. General educational books and literature.

Recording the references is very useful for the servant because it helps the servant to refer back to them, if forgotten.

Preface:

The preface is the background of the lesson. It cultivates the thoughts of the students and directs their thoughts towards the lesson. This allows the lesson to be implanted in their minds and to, eventually, bear fruit.

It is important that the preface remain simple, short, and concise. The introduction could be in the form of focused questions, but should not be in the form of stories. Several stories in one lesson may deteriorate its effectiveness.

The Lesson:

The lesson could be divided into the following sections:

1. Introduction - it should be quick and concise and related to the preface. It should introduce the lesson smoothly without interrupting the chain of thoughts.

2. Body of the lesson - it contains the principle subject of the lesson, and follows these guidelines:

- a. You must be accurate and careful when explaining theological concepts.
- b. You must be careful when relating events and examples to elucidate the subject of the lesson, in order to properly guide the students' imagination without restricting it.
- c. You must diligently expose the Coptic Orthodox doctrine in the lesson.
- d. You should not use more than one story during the lesson and the story used should be relevant to the subject matter.

3. Focal Point - the point during the lesson at which the purpose of the lesson is clearly defined. (Examples: The Lord responds to the prayers of a needy person, or the angels come to give the saints their heavenly crowns and take them to heaven after many trials and persecutions.)

4. Conclusion - it should be, like the introduction, short and concise. It can summarize the purpose of the lesson, without introducing any new concepts.

Inferences:

Inference is a method used to determine how much the students have absorbed and retained from the lesson. It should be in the form of questions with the following guidelines:

- a. They should clearly show the purpose of the lesson.
- b. They should suit the maturity of the students.
- c. They should be simple and direct.
- d. They should link to each other.
- e. They should not be 'Yes' or 'No' questions.
- f. They should each have one correct answer.

Bible Verse:

The memorization of a Bible verse is an excellent way to help the students remember the purpose of the lesson. The chosen Bible verse should meet the following guidelines:

- a. It should show the purpose of the lesson clearly.
- b. It should be short which allows it to be easily memorized.
- c. Children can easily memorize, as well as understand it.

Homework:

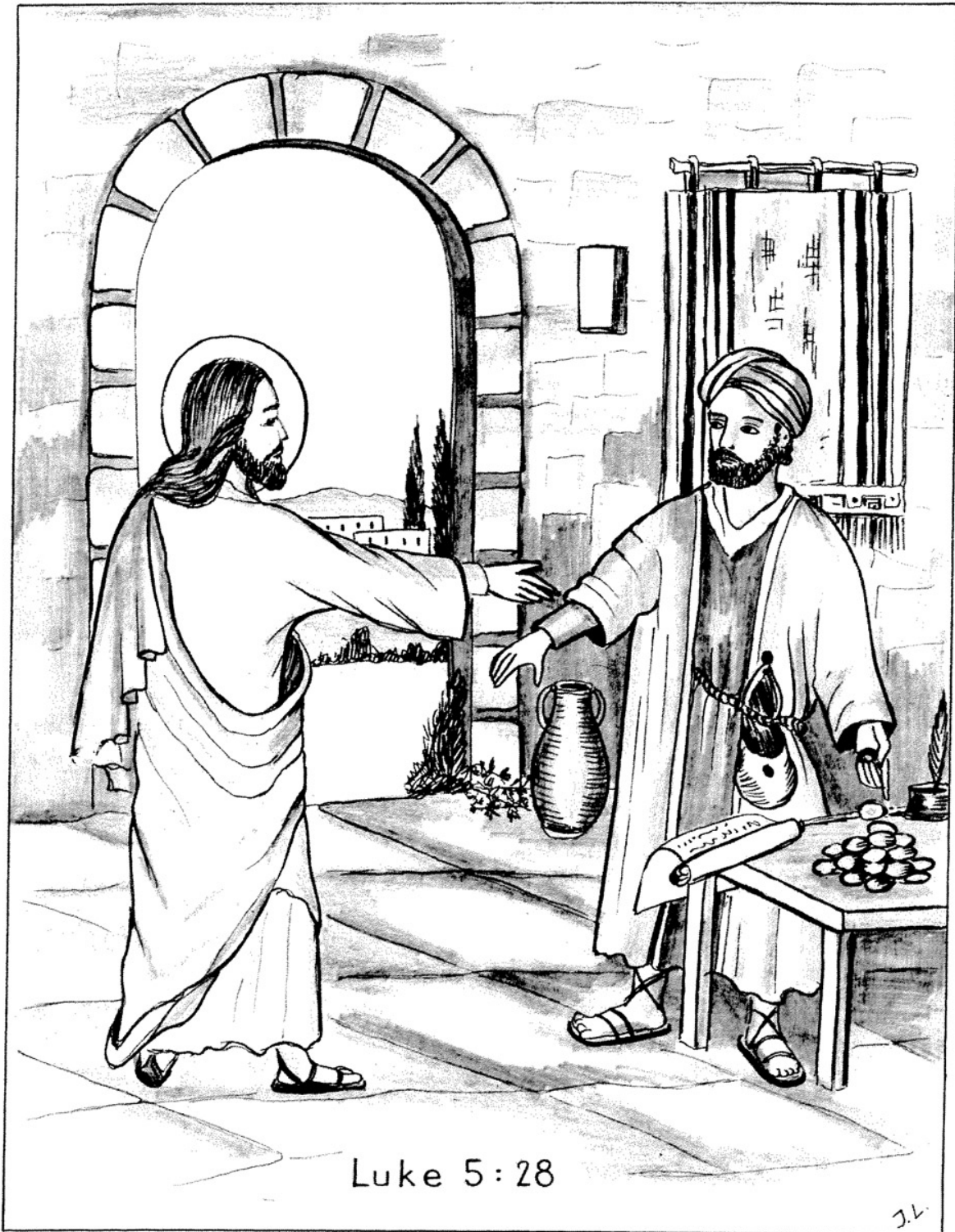
The height of your diligence in preparing the lesson is in choosing the proper and effective homework or application. The homework should have the following characteristics:

- a. It should contain practical applications that apply to everyday life.
- b. It should suit the maturity level of the students.
- c. It should help in mastering the comprehension and retention of the lesson.
- d. It should not include more than one instruction, in order to simplify the application of the lesson.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching in Grade 3 (age 8 to 9 years)

- 1) This age is characterized by an important mental development. A sense of cause and effect is developed, an ability to organize, classify and an interest in simple planning and carrying out a plan. We can see this reflected in how they play.
- 2) Now, there is a far more clear consciousness of "justice" than there has been before. The instinct of ownership was already present at an earlier age, but now there is a fairly clear understanding of what is "mine" and "not mine". Along with the sense of "law" and conscious "law breaking", there is a growth, and a development of finer feelings: compassion, desire to protect someone weaker than oneself and acceptance of certain moral standards.
- 3) Children in this age will show interest in cause and effect, and, in listening to Bible stories, will also show interest in God's plan for the world.
- 4) The story must be given as a story without too many comments. Lessons should be accompanied by hymns and class activities such as , cutting and pasting pictures, etc.
- 5) Though it is too early to discuss with children the problem of suffering, and especially the suffering of the innocent, it is sometimes unavoidable. We can establish in their minds the image of the Lord Jesus Christ as the one who was innocent and accepted suffering, but His suffering and death were not the end, but He rose from the dead. If the children have really assimilated the Passion and the Resurrection, we have provided them with a basis for a Christian approach to the problem of suffering. They will have to deal intellectually with it at an older age.
- 6) In addition to the above, the teacher should: start from simple to the more difficult facts, from known to the unknown and from the total to the parts and back to the total again. Children should love the teacher, the class, the lesson and come very anxiously to class.





**SEPTEMBER
FIRST SUNDAY**

THE LORD JESUS TELLS MATTHEW TO FOLLOW HIM

Please read Luke 5:27-39, Matthew 9:9-13 and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that we must obey our beloved Lord Jesus and follow Him. When we follow the Lord we will enjoy a peaceful life here on earth and also have a place in heaven.

MEMORY VERSE:

“Follow me! So he arose and followed Him” Matthew 9:9

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✝ Our Saviour went out and met a tax collector. His name was Levi and was also known by the name Matthew. He was the one who later on wrote the Gospel according to St. Matthew.

✝ The Jews hated the tax collectors and considered them sinners because they worked with the Roman authorities in order to collect money from the Jews. This money was a symbol of the slavery of the Jews to the Romans. Also these tax collectors usually collected more money than they were supposed to, taking a lot of it for themselves.

✝ However, our Lord Jesus did not consider any problem in adding to His Disciples one of those tax collectors. Our Lord Jesus, Son of God, knew that Levi would change and become a good Christian, There is always hope for change for to

the better, no matter how bad the previous life was. God will do the changes if we are willing to listen to Him and follow Him as St. Matthew did.

✝ Jesus Christ, our Lord visited Levi at the place of his work. He visits everyone at the place of their work too, whether they are students or adults; a paid worker or a volunteer doing a service in God's name. He is there with you while you are studying or doing your homework ... etc. He is anxious to help you and bless your efforts if and when you ask Him.

✝ Only two words from the Master, "Follow me", to the Levi were sufficient to let the latter leave his work and everything and follow the Lord. We have to obey our Heavenly Father and we have to find some time to leave everything to pray and read the Bible.

✝ The Pharisees did not like to see the Lord Jesus sitting with sinners because they did not understand that Jesus loves to have the sinners come back to Him. This is exactly like the doctor whose interest is to sit with the patient to know his illness and help him. Let us not judge others as the Pharisees did.

✝ Levi wanted to make a big celebration which was occasioned by his new life "in Christ". He invited his friends, the tax collectors, and invited the Lord Jesus as well. He wanted to show them how beautiful it was to be with the Lord, and maybe their life would change too. When we truly meet the Lord Jesus and He becomes everything in our life, we cannot stop from inviting others to meet with Him and gain salvation as we did.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

We must follow our Beloved Jesus; take His life on earth as the example in our life, before we say or do anything, let us ask ourselves, "Would the Lord Jesus say that or do that?" Start by giving time to the Lord: pray, read the Bible, and attend church regularly as well as Sunday School.

SONGS

I WILL ENTER HIS GATES

I will enter His gates with thanksgiving in my heart

I will enter His courts with praise

I will say this is the day that Lord has made

I will rejoice for He has made me glad

He has made me glad, He has made me glad

I will rejoice for He has made me glad

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.





SEPTEMBER
SECOND SUNDAY
El Nayrouz Feast and St. Stephen

Please read Acts 6:9-15, Acts 7:54-60 the attached NOTES “In the memory of our Martyrs”, “St. Ignatius”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

- † To familiarize the children with the Coptic Year.
- † To learn that the martyrs are people who loved the Lord Jesus more than anything or anyone else. A lot of miracles were performed by the martyrs. Who do we love in our life?

MEMORY VERSE:

"Lord! Do not charge them with this sin" Acts 7:60

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✝ Since the early years of Christianity, the Jews and all other non-believers tried to eliminate the new religion by killing all its followers, i.e., the new Christians. The new Christians had an important decision to make: either to follow the Lord Jesus Christ and face persecution or leave Him and Christianity and no one would hurt them. Guess what their choice was? They chose to die rather than to live as non-Christians!

✝ "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him, I will also confess before My Father Who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father Who is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32-33). So the martyrs loved the Saviour and the heavenly life much more than their earthly life. They

gave up their earthly life because of their great love for Christ the King. What have we given up for our Beloved Lord Jesus? (Please discuss with the children). Our heavenly Father teaches us to love everyone, to love our people and serve them, to love our church and serve Her and to give our life and our hearts to reign over them.

✝ Jesus declared to His followers that persecution was coming. "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore, be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves" (Matthew 10:16). But He also told His followers, "Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul" (Matthew 10:28). So the martyrs had a fixed belief that the pain to the body was not important when compared with the great joy in the heart, the crown of martyrdom and the heavenly rewards.

✝ The Coptic Year is named the "Martyrs' Year" in the days of Emperor Diocletian (in 283 A.D.) whom hated the Christians and had them killed and their churches destroyed. The Martyrs' Year (or the Coptic Year) started from the year 283 A.D.

✝ We take St. Stephen as an example of those martyrs. St. Stephen was the first martyr.

✝ St. Stephen was one of seven deacons. He was selected by the twelve Apostles to help distribute food and clothes to the poor and assist in several other services. Please read Acts 6:1-8. St. Stephen was full of the Holy Spirit, faith and power. "And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and signs among the people." (Acts 6:8)

✝ St. Stephen was accused falsely of speaking blasphemous words against Moses and God. Please read Acts 6:9-15.

✝ Please present the life of St. Ignatius (as in the attached material) as another example of the martyrs.

✝ St. Stephen was pleased to explain to the Jews in a very clear way his belief that the Lord Jesus is the Son of God. He did not fear all their threats. "And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God saying, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' Then knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, 'Lord, do not charge them with this sin.' And when he had said this, he fell asleep" (Acts 6:59-60). From St. Stephen's last words, we can learn that his emphasis was on (1) The Lord Jesus Christ receiving his spirit, and (2) praying for the forgiveness of the people who were

stoning him. "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you." (Matthew 5:44)

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) We must not be afraid to declare that we are Christians in front of anyone, but we have to witness to our Lord Jesus everywhere by our example (life) and words.
- (2) Let us learn from St. Stephen to say "God forgive you" to anyone who does bad things to us and also pray for him that God may strengthen him and give him special help.
- (3) The martyrs gave up their life for the sake of their love to the Lord Jesus. We must also train ourselves to give up something for the sake of the Lord Jesus.

SONGS

THE MARTYRS AND NAIROUZ

Come, Ye faithful people, come Where there is eternal life	to the heavenly Jerusalem and we'll live in peace with our Saviour
Nayrouz is the beginning of the year Who defended faith without fear	when we remember our martyrs and lived in peace with our Saviour
Our ancestors were brave Now in Heaven they are crowned	for their faith their lives they gave And they lived in peace with our Saviour
Our martyrs won their crowns And they opened Heaven's doors	when they laid their lives down now they live in peace with our Saviour
Never flinched they from the flame They shed their blood for His Name	nor from the tyrant's sharpest aim Now they live in peace with our Saviour
By their faith they saw the land They put their souls in His hand	where triumphant now they stand And lived in peace with our Saviour
If Satan comes to divide us And His peace will be with us	the voice of God will gather us And we'll live in peace with our Saviour
Lord, deliver us from all sin And lead us to Thy Kingdom	that eternal life we may win O our King, and our Saviour

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.

IN THE MEMORY OF OUR MARTYRS

EL-NAYROUZ FEAST

✝ El-Nayrouz feast is the beginning of the Coptic (or Egyptian) Year. The Egyptian Year is a very old one. The ancient Pharaohs created this system 5000 years before the birth of the Lord Jesus, naming its months after the names of their ancient Egyptian gods. The Egyptian year has 13 months; they are: Tout, Baba, Hatour, Kyahk, Touba, Amshier, Baramhat, Baramouda, Bashense, Baouna, Abib, Messra and El-Nassey. Each month of these months is 30 days, except the last month, El-Nassey, which is only 5 days.

✝ Up until now, the Egyptian farmers are using the Coptic Year system in their timing for agriculture.

✝ Egypt had used the Egyptian Year system until the French came to Egypt in the reign of Ismail Basha and introduced the Western Year system (January, February, etc.).

✝ In the reign of Diocletian in which the numbers of martyrs increased very much, the Egyptian Year was named the "Martyrs' Year".

✝ The church these days celebrates the "NAYROUZ FEAST" as the "MARTYRS' FEAST". This celebration lasts for 17 days until the "CROSS FEAST". During the Coptic Year (which is the Egyptian Year), the church system, i.e., feasts, fasting and readings in the church, are divided into the following rounds:

Round # 1:

This is the Nayrouz round in which the church celebrates the memory of the martyrs who helped establish the church on the sound basis of their faith and their precious blood. (Tout)

Round # 2:

The church celebrates the mystery of the Nativity (Kyahk) and this terminates at Christmas.

Round # 3:

The Baptism of our Lord Jesus and the manifestation of the Triune

God (God in the Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit). (Touba)

Round # 4:

The Fast of Jonah and the preparation for the Holy Forty-day fast. - (Touba)

Round # 5:

The Great Lent. (Amshier - Baramhat)

Round # 6:

The Easter celebration. (Baramouda - Bashense)

Round # 7:

The sending forth of the Disciples on their mission and the Disciples' fast. (Abib)

Round # 8:

St. Mary's fast. (Messra)

Round # 9:

The short month (Nassey), and all the readings in the church in this month are about the end of the world.

I hope you will join the church in celebrating these nine rounds so that you keep in touch with all the events, and hence partake in the system, remember it, learn from it and be blessed by it too.

Let me give you an example of one of our beloved martyrs: **Saint Ignatius**

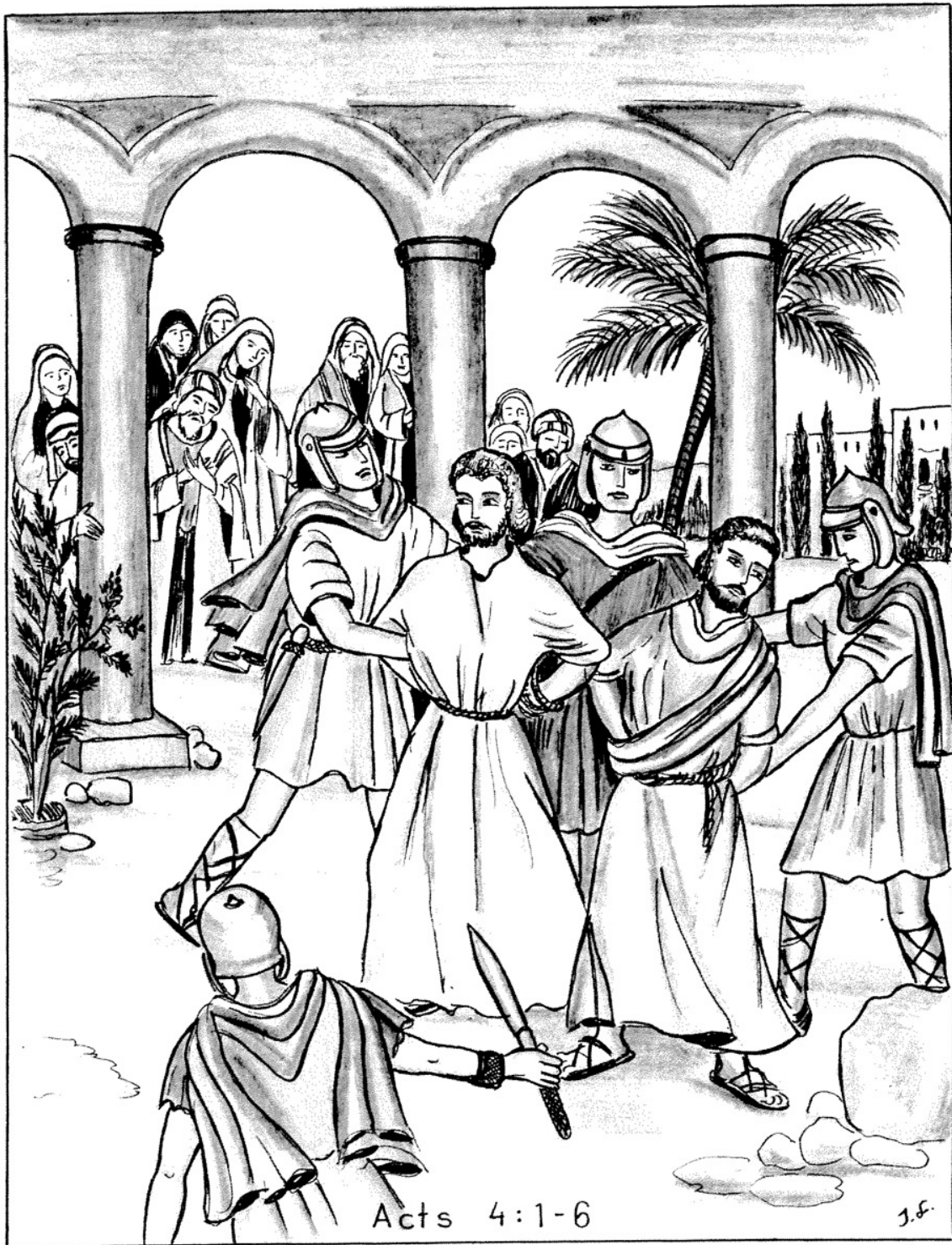
✠ He is one of the Apostolic Fathers - the Apostolic Fathers are the early church fathers who lived in the age of the holy Apostles and were their disciples.

✠ Although they were few in number, they succeeded in spreading the Christian faith in many parts of the world.

✠ The Emperor Trajan, condemned SAINT IGNATIUS to exposure before the wild beasts in the Roman amphitheatres. Before leaving for Smyrna, the Saint wrote to the Romans saying:

✠ "I am bound with chains for the love of Christ. But I fear that your love for me will bring me harm. I do not want you to prevent my death. For if I am deprived of martyrdom now, on account of your love, it may be very difficult to be martyred

later. I long for martyrdom in order to prove myself a Christian, not only in word, but also in deed. Let me then be thrown to the beasts, and may the beasts eat up all my body, so that its remains will be a burden to no one.
May the blessing of his prayers be with us; AMEN.





**SEPTEMBER
THIRD SUNDAY**

But not a Hair of your Head shall be Lost

Please read Luke 21:12-19, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that despite troubles and persecutions that the non-believers will do to us, our Saviour Jesus Christ takes care of us completely.

MEMORY VERSE:

"But not a hair of your head shall be lost" Luke 21:1

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

- 1) Whenever we meet any troubles, what should we do?
- 2) Would God ever let anything bad happen to us without protecting us?

Here is a story to illustrate how God always protects his children in their time of need.

✝ The Lord Jesus told His Disciples that the Jews "will lay hands on you and persecute you" (Luke 21:12). A few days later, the Lord Jesus' words were fulfilled and the Jews laid their hands on Him and crucified Him. Then, He arose from the dead, appeared for 40 days to His Disciples at various occasions and then on the fiftieth day, the Holy Spirit came down on the Disciples. After that, the Disciples started their preaching and the Jews started their persecutions. Examples of these persecutions were as follows:

✝ St. Peter and St. John were put in prison (Acts 4:1-6)

✝ They killed St. Stephen (Acts 7:58)

✝ They killed St. James (Acts 12:2)

✝ They tried to kill St. Peter (Acts 12:4)

✝ They stoned St. Paul (Acts 14:19-20)

✝ But in all these troubles, the Holy Spirit provided the Apostles with complete peace and joy. They were singing and praising God while in jail; they were spiritually vibrant and stronger than those who were persecuting them and they were happy to have the opportunity to witness to the name of the Saviour Jesus Christ. This is a clear picture of the fulfillment of the promise of Jesus Christ to His Disciples "But not a hair of your head shall be lost," and the effect of the Holy Spirit on them.

✝ These trials and persecutions that the Apostles had to go through were very successful means for them to show others and tell them about their beliefs. Therefore, so many new Christians were added daily to the Church. When the people saw their faith and love to our Lord Jesus they were convinced and became Christians following their example.

✝ The Disciples were not well educated. They were a simple people. Our Beloved Jesus wanted to comfort and encourage them so that they did not have to care about what to say in front of all these very well educated Jews. "For I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist" (Luke 21:15). Sometimes we feel that there are things and situations that are too difficult for us. However, if we recognize that our Lord will strengthen us, then we should not fear anything. "I can do everything in Christ Jesus Who strengthens me".

✝ The Disciples loved Jesus with all their hearts. This love eliminated any love for the world. Hence, it was their decision to follow the teachings of the Master Jesus Christ and reject the world.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) As the Lord Jesus took care of His Disciples, the Apostles and all His believers who witnessed their faith, He will also take care of us in our daily life. When we resist the temptations of the devil and all his attempts against us, we must ask for God's help in our prayers.
- (2) As the Disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ were good examples to others by their Christian behaviour, we also must show our faith by our good deeds. "You are the light of the world."

SONGS

JESUS, JESUS

“we love Him because He first loved us” (1Jn 4:19)

Jesus , Jesus
You have given me Your blessings

can I tell You how I feel?
I love You so

Love, love, love, love
Love your neighbour as your brother

the Gospel in a word is love
love, love, love

Holy God
Holy and Immortal One

Holy and Mighty
have mercy on us

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.





SEPTEMBER FOURTH SUNDAY

The Day of the Cross Feast

Please read the attached sheets on "The Appearance of the Cross in the Sky", and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON

To learn that the Cross is a subject of glory to the Christians. We must look at the Cross and meditate on the love of God for us.

MEMORY VERSE:

"But God forbid that I should have glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me and I to the world." Galatians 6:14

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions

- 1) What does the cross remind us of?
- 2) Why do we sign ourselves with the sign of the cross at all times?

✝ The Cross Feast is 16 days after the Nayrouz Feast. Our church celebrates the feast of the Cross twice: first feast is on Tout 16 (Tout is the first month of the Coptic Year) and on Baramhat 10 (Baramhat is the seventh month of the Coptic Year).

✝ In the first Cross Feast, we celebrate the finding of the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by Saint Helena the mother of Emperor Constantine the great. This happened in the year 326 AD. When the people could not recognize our Lord

Jesus' Cross from the three crosses that they found, they put each of them on a dead person and only with Jesus' Cross did the dead person rise 'from the dead. Please tell the details of finding the Cross of the Saviour using the attached material.

✝ In the second Cross Feast, we celebrate the second finding of the cross in the year 628 A.D. by Emperor Heracles which happened as follows:

When St. Helena found the Cross in the year 326 A.D., she built a very nice church in Jerusalem and kept the Cross in it. When the Persian army was defeated by Emperor Heracles and while they were passing by Jerusalem, a Persian king saw a very luminous light coming out from a piece of wood surrounded by God's glory inside the church. The king stretched his hand to touch the Cross and a fire came out of it and burnt his fingers. The Christians in the army informed him that only Christians can touch the Cross. He found two Christians (who were not actually true Christians) and gave them a lot of money and asked them to carry the Cross to his homeland and they did. Then, King Heracles heard of what happened and sent a big army to the Persian country and defeated them and went around searching for the Cross because the king of Persia had buried the Cross in his garden. Then with the help of God he was able to find the Cross. He took it to the city of Constantinople and built a church on it.

✝ Concentrate on the Cross as a sign of glory for Christians because salvation happened through the Cross. Therefore, Christianity without the Cross is not Christianity at all. St. Paul, as we can see in the memory verse, would like to emphasize that the only glory of his life is the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. On the Cross our Lord Jesus paid the price for our salvation. The price was His precious Blood. Since then we became entitled to be the children of God.

✝ This means that we have to concentrate on the Lord Jesus and His love towards us and not on loving the world.

✝ On the Cross our Lord Jesus proved His love for us. When we carry the cross with us we remember the power of the Cross in our life and what our Saviour did for us. Let us have a Cross (or more than one) hung on the walls in our homes.

✝ The sign of the cross is a sign of victory over Satan and death. This is the reason that we put the sign of the cross on us during the day several times. Explain.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

(1) We gain great peace every time we look at the cross

✝ Every time I look at the Cross, I remember that Jesus died on my behalf so that I can live and have a share in eternal life. He died not only for me but for all who believe in the name of Jesus Christ, Son of God.

✝ Let us make the sign of the cross on ourselves several times during the day.

SONGS

MY CROSS

My cross, my cross
I place you on my bosom

my glory is in you!
and in my bedroom too.

REFRAIN

My cross, my cross
But in my heart, my cross

you're made of lowly wood
you're more precious than gold

My cross, my cross
I sign you every morning

is with me everywhere
and whenever I fear

My cross, my cross
the pledge of my success

My victory's in you
in whatever I do

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.

THE APPEARANCE OF THE CROSS IN THE SKY

This happened **THREE** times:

1. The **FIRST** time it appeared in the sky, was to the Emperor Constantine The Great to assure him of victory in the prospective war. He and his officers saw it like a pillar of light in the sky surrounded by the following words: "With it (the Cross) you will conquer". Constantine was encouraged, became a Christian, went to war and was victorious.
2. The **SECOND** time the Cross appeared to Julius Caesar on the doors of the city of Antioch. It appeared in the East like a pillar of light which startled all those who saw it.
3. The Cross appeared again for the **THIRD** time to all the people of Jerusalem. This happened in the sacred days of the Pentecostal Feast, to be exact, on the 8th of May, A.D. 351 at 3:00 pm (about 9:00 am our time). A big Cross appeared in the sky on Golgotha stretching to Mount Olive. It was very clear and was seen not only by one or two, but by all the people of the city. It remained for many hours shining brighter than the rays of the sun. All the people of the city came out to see the apparition. They were astounded, and scared, but with great joy they witnessed that heavenly scene. Old and young, men and women of all ages, Christians and non-Christians, from all places praised Jesus Christ, our Lord.

THE DAY OF THE CROSS FEAST

In the day of the Cross Feast we remember the appearance of the glorious Cross of Jesus Christ our Lord. When the Jews found out the very large number of miracles done in the name of Jesus' tomb, they became angry and asked everyone in the Jewish nation to collect all the garbage and put it on top of the tomb to bury it. The Jews continued to do that for over 200 years until a very large pile of dirt was formed. Saint Helena, the mother of King Constantine, went to Jerusalem and asked about the location of the Cross, Nobody told her until she met an old man who told her that the Cross was underneath that pile of dirt. She then ordered that the pile of dirt must be removed. It was then easy to get out the Holy Cross of Jesus Christ. Afterwards she built a church on that site and the Christians went to visit the Cross and the Church.

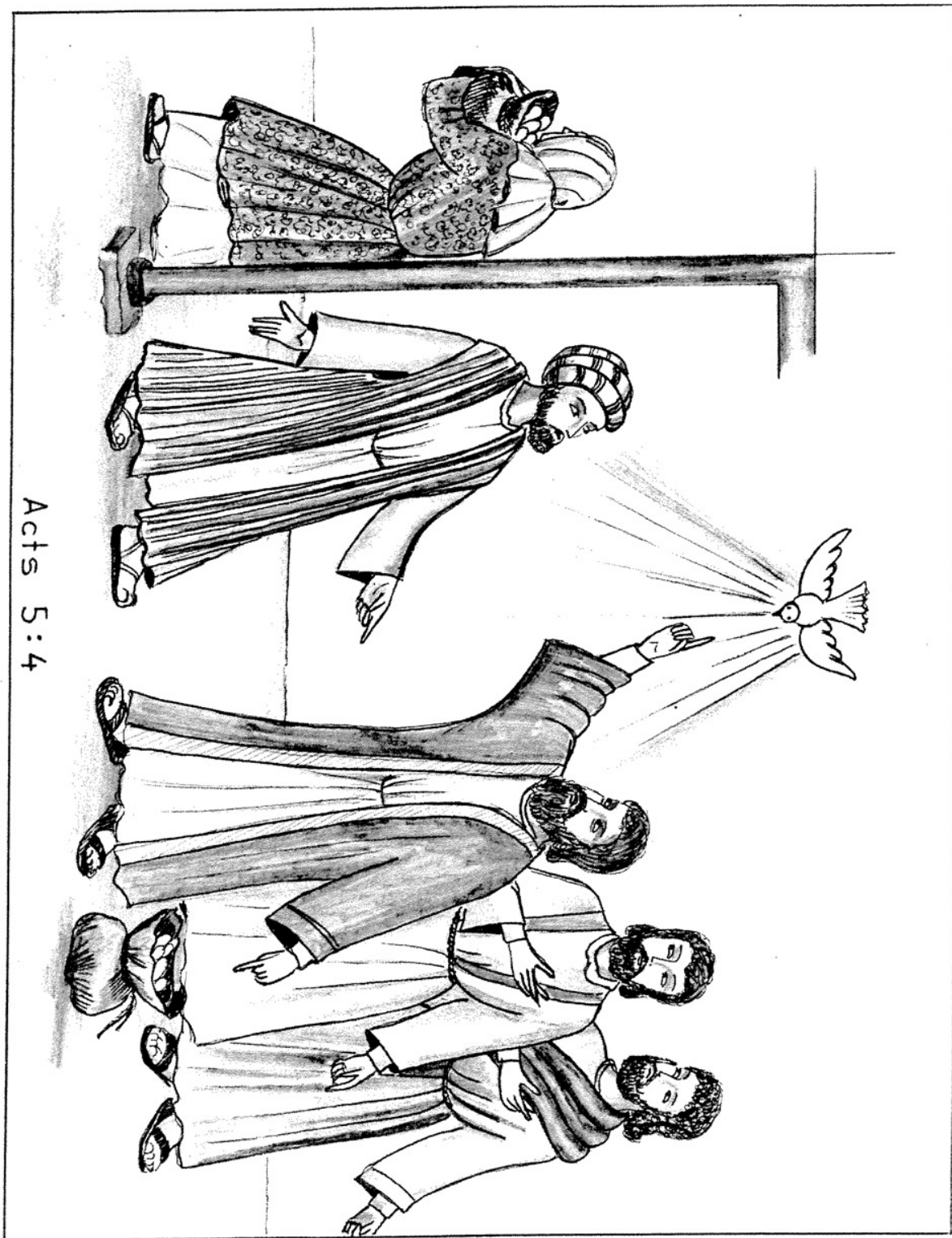
St. Helena did that because she loved the Cross that appeared to her son King Constantine before he went to war and won that war.



For the success
of this Sunday
School Program
the teacher should
refer to the

HOLY BIBLE

in his/her preparation
of the lessons and in
teaching the children
in the class



Acts 5:4



**OCTOBER
FIRST SUNDAY**

"Do Not Tell a Lie"

Please read Acts 5:1-11, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that we must never tell a lie. We hurt ourselves when we lie.

MEMORY VERSE

You have not lied to men but to God" Acts 5:4

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) Have you ever undergone a difficult situation, where you felt that lying would be the only solution?
- 2) In that case, by lying what have you gained and what have you lost?
- 3) Do you think that liars can ever inherit a place in heaven?

✠ In the Apostles' Church, money is placed in an interesting place. It is "at the apostles' feet" (Acts 4:35). This is to emphasize that the church has been relying on the power and the work of the Holy Spirit to do his work. The church has never been dependent on money to do its work.

✠ In the Apostles' Church, they were sharing all things. They brought the money, laid it at the Apostles' feet and the "apostles distributed to each as anyone had

need" (Acts 4:35). For example Josses (who was named Barnabas by the Apostles) sold his land and brought the money and laid it at the Apostles' feet (Acts 4:36-37). Do we share our toys with our friends?

✝ Ananias and Sapphira his wife sold their possession. They thought they could keep part of the money for themselves and put the rest at the Apostles' feet and still show the rest of the church that they were like others who donated all their possessions. "Who would know?" They thought no one would know. God knew and He also let St. Peter, who was full of the Holy Spirit, know. So, they lied and did not get away with it.

✝ St. Peter said to them "You have not lied to men but to God" (Acts 5:4). Everything we say or do, we must remember that even if the people do not know the reality of things, God is looking and He knows everything.

✝ As Ananias heard St. Peter's words, he fell dead. Three hours later his wife came, not knowing what had happened, she also lied, St. Peter said to her, "You have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord" (Acts 5:9). She also fell dead.

✝ Was St. Peter unkind? No. He used the power given to him by the Holy Spirit to declare to all people not to tell a lie in the church or anywhere else.

✝ A great fear came upon the whole church after they saw what St. Peter said.

✝ When we tell a lie, we commit a sin and lose the trust of other people.

✝ If we keep lying, God is going to wait and wait for us to repent and change our ways. But if we don't, in His love for us He might take away His blessing from us in order that we realize the gravity of our sins and lies and come back to Him telling the truth always.

✝ We have to avoid and fear the anger of God.

✝ When you give something to God, be honest and avoid boasting. Give in secret and avoid the praise of others. Do not do as Ananias and Sapphira did but follow the teachings of our Lord as stated in the Sermon on the Mount. Please read (Matthew 6:1-4).

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

In every situation at home, school, church or anywhere, we must always tell the truth. Sometimes in difficult situations, we may think that a lie will help overcome difficulties. However, ultimately we can never win that way but always lose and complicate matters by lying. Moreover, lying is a sin that deserves punishment.

SONGS

JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD

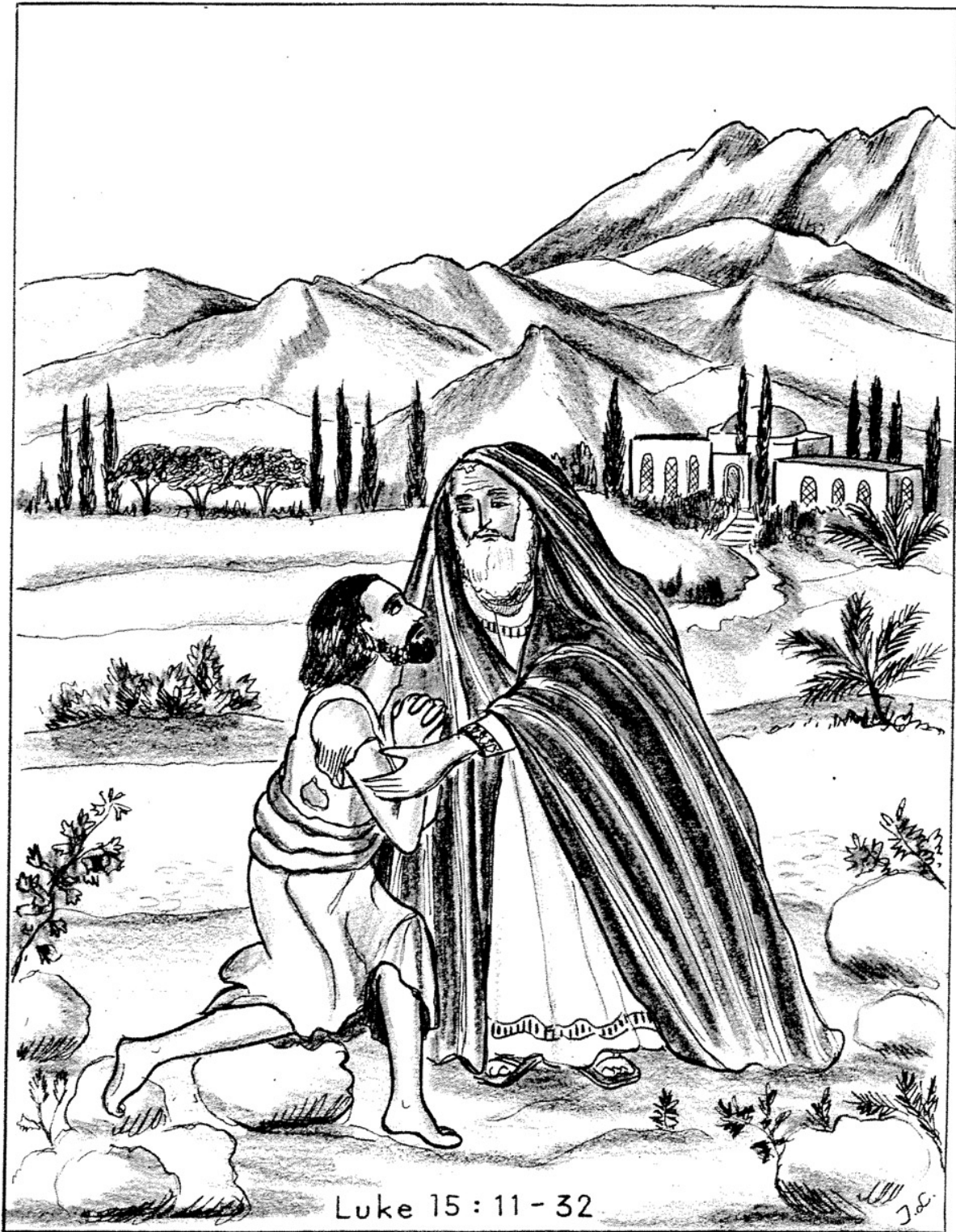
“Now you are the body of Christ and members individually.” (1Cor 12:27)

REFRAIN

Jesus Christ our Lord	Saviour of my soul
Let my thoughts be Your thoughts	that is all in all
Let my senses be Your senses	that is all in all
Let my heart be Your heart	that is all in all
Let my will be Your will	that is all in all
Let my deeds be Your deeds	that is all in all
Let my way be Your way	that is all in all

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.





**OCTOBER
SECOND SUNDAY**

Thanksgiving to God Who Forgives all our Sins

Please read Psalm 103:1-18, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

We must give thanks to the Lord at all times. Emphasize the aspect of His mercy on us to accept us back and forgive our sins.

MEMORY VERSE:

*"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me,
bless His Holy Name" Psalm 103:1*

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) What do you think is one of God's greatest blessings that we should always be thankful for?
- 2) Why do you think forgiveness from God is considered a blessing?

✚ It is very hard to count the blessings the Lord has given us. They are too many, but let us try. Ask the children to mention some of the things they are thankful for. Did anyone mention that we thank God because He forgives our sins?

✚ Let us discuss this in more detail. God forgives our sins. He is our Father and He treats us very kindly. Because God is merciful, we are encouraged to go back to Him admitting that we have sinned against Him and that we are seeking His forgiveness. "Remember, O Lord, Your tender mercies and Your loving kindness

for they have been from the old. Do not remember the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions; According to Your mercy remember me, for Your goodness' sake, O Lord." (Psalm 25:6-7)

✝ What are the steps for forgiveness? First, when I do something wrong I must admit that I am wrong and decide that I am not going to do the same again. Second, I go to Abouna in my confession and declare in front of him what has happened, seeking his advice, prayers and absolution as well. Thirdly, I go and take Communion because the Blood of Jesus Christ will wash away my sins and give me the strength to overcome them in the future.

✝ Jesus gave us His Body and His Blood in communion that our sins may be forgiven.

✝ Every time we sin, repent and come back to the Lord, He welcomes us. "...there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance" (Luke 15:7), Jesus said a parable that a farmer had 100 sheep, one of them was lost. The farmer left the 99 and went to look for the lost sheep and when he found it he came back full of joy.

"The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in mercy" (Psalm 103:8). There are large numbers of examples for God's mercy in both the Old and the New Testaments, some of these examples follow:

In the Old Testament:

✝ When Adam and Eve sinned against God, He gave them leather clothes because they were naked and promised that He would get them back to paradise through the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God Who would complete the salvation and the forgiveness of sins.

✝ David had sinned, but when he cried to God, God told him that He forgave his sin.

In the New Testament:

✝ On the Cross, Jesus asked for the forgiveness of the people who were insulting Him and crucifying Him, "Father forgive their sin".

✝ When Peter denied his master, the Lord did not reject him but He was so kind to him and accepted him back.

✝ In the Parable of the Lost Son, the tender mercy of the father to his son when he was coming back home was fully exemplified. "And he (i.e. the lost son) arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him". (Luke 15:20)

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

(1) We must thank our Lord Jesus Christ Who is merciful to us and accepts us back when we repent.

(2) We must never delay repentance. We just have to go back to our Heavenly Father without any delay and say as the prodigal son said "I will rise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you." Acts 9:36

SONGS

KUM BA YA

"Singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." (Eph 5:19)

kum ba ya my lord, kum ba ya (3)
O lord kum ba ya, O lord kum ba ya

Someone is singing my Lord, kum ba ya
O lord kum ba ya, O lord kum ba ya

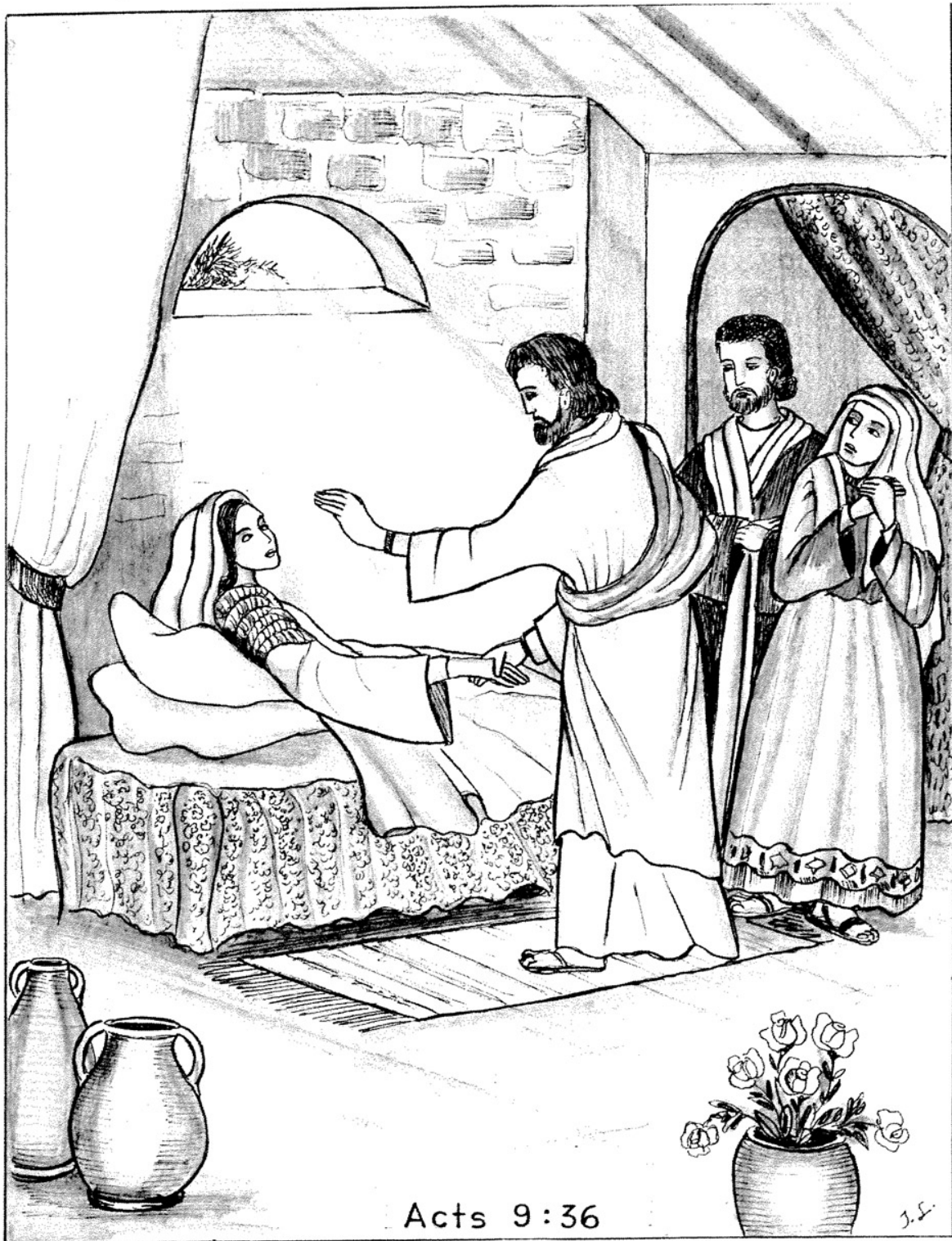
Someone is crying my Lord, kum ba ya
O lord kum ba ya, O lord kum ba ya

Someone is laughing my Lord, kum ba ya
O lord kum ba ya, O lord kum ba ya

Someone is praying my Lord, kum ba ya
O lord kum ba ya, O lord kum ba ya

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.





**OCTOBER
THIRD SUNDAY**

Peter Brought Tabitha Back to Life

Please read Acts 9:36-4, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that helping the needy and the poor is a true expression of our love to God and to people. We will be rewarded handsomely for that.

MEMORY VERSE:

"This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did" Acts 9:36

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) Why do you think we should do good deeds with people around us on earth?
- 2) Does God see these deeds and do they count for something?

The story of Tabitha can be used to illustrate this point.

✠ The compassion of the Lord Jesus Christ is manifested in His prophets and people. We can see in this miracle of raising Tabitha from the dead a mark of the deep compassion which God's people have for those in trouble. As the Saviour Jesus Christ had "compassion on the multitude", so St. Peter saw the grief of all these people who were bereft by the death of Tabitha. St. Peter came immediately from Lydda to Joppa, went to the upper room where Tabitha was laying dead; prayed, said "Tabitha arise", gave her his hand and lifted her up alive.

✝ In the wonderful healing of Aeneas (please read Acts 9:32-35), St. Peter seemed to have taken the initiative and he boldly announced to each one that he was to be made well. But in this case of Tabitha, the Disciples sent two men "imploing him not to be delayed in coming to them" (Acts 9:38).

✝ Tabitha was helping the poor people. The poor people asked on her behalf after she died and St. Peter brought her to life again with the power of the Holy Spirit in him. When we help the poor, we will be rewarded handsomely here and in heaven.

✝ Tabitha did not have money to help the poor, but she thought of sewing clothes, selling them and giving the money to the poor. Also she made clothes and gave them to the poor people. Let us love and help other people as Tabitha did. Let us think of ways and means to help others.

✝ St. Peter prayed before he said "Tabitha arise". We have to pray at all times. Whatever we ask in our prayers with complete faith will be granted to us.

✝ It must have been a moment of rejoice when Peter lifted her up and called in the saints and the widows and presented their saintly benefactress alive!

✝ The people in town, when they saw what St. Peter had done, became Christians and they had faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This was the promise of the Lord Jesus to His Disciples "And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs" (Mark 16:20).

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

Tabitha used her talent in making tunics and garments to help the poor. We must also use our talents to help others. Can we help our younger brother or sister do their homework? Can we collect money for the poor? Can we participate in car washes to raise money for our beloved church? Can we help the handicapped? Can we help the older people?

SONGS

LOVE, LOVE, LOVE

Love, love, love, love
Love your neighbour as yourself

The Gospel in a word is love
Love, love, love

Pantocrator
You created heaven and earth

You are my Creator
I adore You.

Jesus Christ
You are our Sacrifice

You are our Redeemer
I love You

Holy Spirit
You sanctify our souls

You are our Comforter
I need You

Coptic Church
Through Your Sacraments we are saved

You are our blessing and pride.
I serve you

Agios O Theo-os
Agios Athanatos

Agios Ees- shiros
Eleison ymas

Recitation Curriculum :

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.





**OCTOBER
FOURTH SUNDAY**

Return Good for Evil

Please read I Samuel 24, 26, the attached summary "Return Good for Evil", and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below..

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn to love other people even the enemies. As Christians we must practice returning good for evil.

MEMORY VERSE:

*"For when the Lord delivered me into your hands you did not kill me"
1 Samuel 24:18*

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) If someone did slap you on one cheek, would you have the courage to do as our Lord Jesus taught us and give them the other cheek as well?
- 2) Do we actually apply what we are taught in our daily life as Christians?

✝ A very strong man, named Goliath, from the camp of the Philistines insulted God's people. David, a young boy at that time, was given power from God to go and kill Goliath. "Now it had happened as they were coming home, when David was returning from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women had come out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing to meet king Saul with tambourines, joy, and musical instruments. So the women sang as they danced, and said, Saul

has slain his thousand, and David his ten thousand" (1 Samuel 18:6-7). From this moment on King Saul hated David and wanted to kill him, King Saul was pursuing David to kill him, David hid in caves and in woods, but he was not alone. The Lord was with him and He gave him new friends.

✝ David had two chances to get even with Saul but he did not do so. Tell these two chances in detail.

David's Chances to Get Even And How Saul Responded

First: 1 Samuel 24:11 and 17, Second: 1 Samuel 26:12 and 21.

✝ Do you think David did the right thing? Why? Yes, the right thing was done because we should not repay evil for evil. God takes care of us if we do this and we will win in the end. David became the king and Saul was killed in a war later on.

✝ Our Lord Jesus did not punish the people who were crucifying Him; on the contrary, He forgave them, "Father forgive their sins". He returned good for evil. Similarly, while the Jews were stoning St. Stephen, he said, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin" (Acts 7:60),

✝ Can we do that in our daily life? Yes; we do this if we pray for the people who hurt us. If you want, you can avoid them so that they may not hurt you again.

✝ "See that none render evil for evil unto any man, but always pursue what is good both for yourself and for all," (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

God is more powerful than any enemy. Hence, if we rely on Him to protect us as He is our heavenly Father, no one can hurt us. But if we are His children we must return good for evil as He did and as He taught us. Let us pray seeking God's guidance so that we do good to others regardless of what they do to us.

SONGS

LOVE, LOVE, LOVE

Love, love, love, love
Love your neighbour as yourself

The Gospel in a word is love
Love, love, love

Pantocrator
You created heaven and earth

You are my Creator
I adore You.

Jesus Christ
You are our Sacrifice

You are our Redeemer
I love You

Holy Spirit
You sanctify our souls

You are our Comforter
I need You

Coptic Church
Through Your Sacraments we are saved

You are our blessing and pride.
I serve you

Agios O Theo-os
Agios Athanatos
Eleison ymas

Agios Ees- shiros
Eleison ymas

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.

RETURN GOOD FOR EVIL

Saul is out to get David:

David was always on guard watching for Saul and his soldiers. Saul was still hunting for David. David hid in caves and in woods, but he was not alone. The Lord was with him and He gave him new friends. Men who were in trouble or who were unhappy joined David. They became a brave group of men. David was tired of running away. One day the Lord gave him a surprise. His best friend, Jonathan, visited him, They talked about the Lord's love and care.

David Has a Chance to Get Even:

One time Saul was looking for David among some cliffs. After a while, Saul and his soldiers went into a cave to sleep. Later David and his men saw them. One of David's men said, "Now is your chance to kill Saul," David went secretly up to Saul who was sleeping. He did not kill him, instead, he cut off a part of Saul's robe. Later Saul left the cave. David shouted to him, "My lord the king". Saul turned around in surprise. David bowed to Saul. David asked, "Why do you think I want to hurt you? I will not hurt you for you are the Lord's chosen king. I could have killed you today but I did not. See, I have a piece of your robe in my hand". Saul cried because David had been so kind. He said, "You are a better man than I. You return good for evil. I return evil for good." Then Saul and his soldiers went home. David and his men stayed in the woods. After a while, Saul began to hate David again. He wanted to kill him. David and his men found out where Saul and his soldiers were camping. Then one night David and one of his men went secretly to Saul's camp. The man said, "Let us kill Saul now. It will be easy." David said, "No. It is a great sin to kill the king whom the Lord has given us".

Then David had an idea. He said, "Let us steal his spear and the water bottle near him". Carefully they went secretly up to Saul as he slept and took his spear and water bottle.

Then David stood on the top of a hill at a safe distance away and shouted to the general of Saul's soldiers, "Why haven't you kept better watch on the water bottle?" Saul recognized David's voice. He said, "I have sinned. Come back home, I will not harm you."

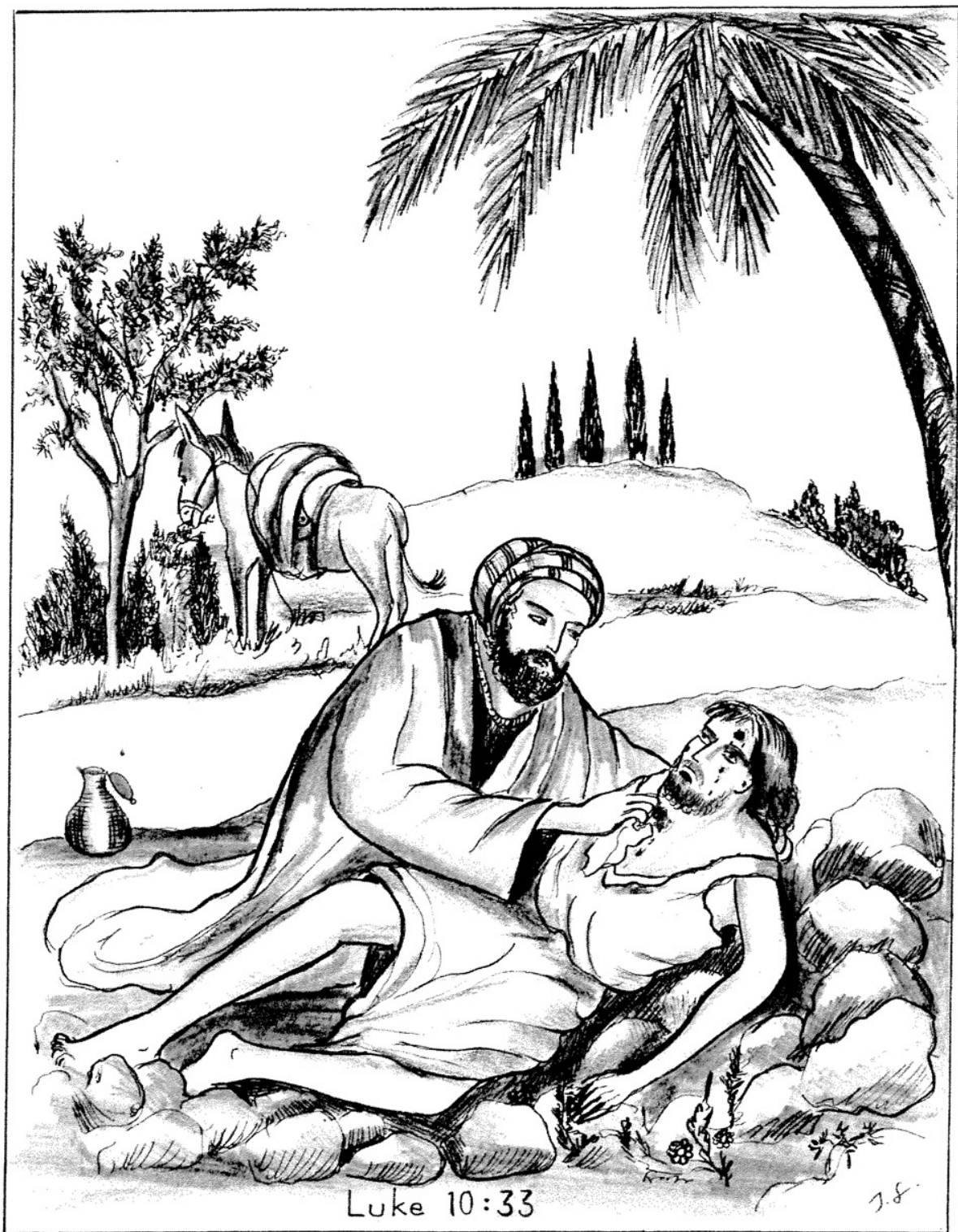
David answered, "The Lord rewards every man for being faithful and doing right. As I valued your life today, so may the Lord value my life". So David went on his way. Saul returned home.



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in the class





**OCTOBER
FIFTH SUNDAY**

The Good Samaritan

Please read Luke 10:30-37, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To show that we must have compassion on people regardless of their skin colour, age, sex, nationality or religion.

MEMORY VERSE:

"When he saw him, he had compassion on him," Luke 10:33

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

1) Which do you think is more important, to learn our religion by ways of rules and laws or by ways of action and daily practices?

2) If your enemy was down and needed your help, would you walk away from him or stop to help him because our religion teaches us to love our enemies?

✚ Our Lord Jesus used parables in His teachings to illustrate an idea to the people using a story or as a typical example from their life.

✚ A certain lawyer (who knew a lot about Moses' Law) stood in front of the Lord Jesus Christ and tried to test Him on the one hand and to "justify himself" on the other hand. This lawyer had no true compassion or love for others, but relied only on his knowledge of Moses' Law without applying it to his life. Hence, the Lord

Jesus wanted to teach him and others that religion is not the mere knowledge that we keep in our heads or the words that we say, but rather that religion must become a way of life and should be the transformed action and deeds of love towards others. The Lord Jesus, therefore, gave him the parable of the priest and the Levite who failed to apply religion and have compassion on the wounded man. Although as a priest or Levite, one would expect that they would practice what they preach. On the other hand, a Samaritan who had the least knowledge of the Laws had compassion. This is what counts and we call him "The Good Samaritan".

✝ A man was going from Jerusalem to Jericho when robbers hurt him badly.

✝ A priest and later on a Levite passed him by, looked at him and did not help him.

✝ The Samaritan (although the Samaritans are known to be bad people) had compassion on the injured man. He helped him, took him to an inn and took care of him.

✝ Our Beloved Lord Jesus told the man who asked Him "Who is my neighbor?", that his neighbor is the person who helps him when he is in need. Jesus then, asked him to be like the Good Samaritan, i.e. have compassion on others.

✝ Love your neighbor as you love yourself.

✝ The Son of God came down to our world to become our friend. He carried us not to an inn but to His church. He did not give us two denarii as the good Samaritan did, but He gave us His own Body and Blood so that He abides in us and we in Him. In His second coming, the Lord will take us with Him so that we live with Him forever.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Have compassion when you deal with all people: younger or older brothers and sisters, mommy and daddy, all children at school regardless of their sex, color or religion. Most important have compassion on anyone who asks you for help. Go the extra mile with the needy.
- (2) We must have compassion on others as the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour has great compassion on us.

(3) When we deal with people in a merciful way God will also have mercy on us.

SONGS

LOVE, LOVE, LOVE

Love, love, love, love
Love your neighbour as yourself

The Gospel in a word is love
Love, love, love

Pantocrator
You created heaven and earth

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Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.





**NOVEMBER
FIRST SUNDAY**

Moses Leads his People out of Egypt by the Power of God-I

Please read the attached material "Moses leads his People out of Egypt I" and review Exodus Chapter 2 to Chapter 12, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that with a strong hand the Lord delivered his people out of Egypt. The Lord supports us in all our difficulties. No matter how strong the devil is, God is much stronger and he will make us victorious over the devil.

MEMORY VERSE:

"And he looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, but the bush was not consumed." Exodus 3:2

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) Did you ever face a situation where you felt unable to handle it by yourself?
- 2) What should we do then in order for us to be victorious over this difficult problem?

Here is a story to illustrate how asking for God's help always leads to victory.

✠ Joseph brought his father Jacob and the Hebrews to Egypt. Joseph was lord of all Egypt. After Jacob died and as the years passed, the Hebrews multiplied greatly and grew strong. A new Pharaoh came who did not know anything about Joseph. He feared the large number of the Hebrews, so he made them slaves, "So the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigor" (Exodus 1:13).

✠ Use the above introduction to proceed with the birth of Moses, his preference not to stay in Pharaoh's house and his departure to Midian. (Exodus 2:1-15)

✠ He looked upon the burning bush, yet unconsumed. It was a symbol of St. Mary who was pregnant with the Lord Jesus, the Son of God (the fire of the Divine) and was not burnt.

✠ Moses was afraid at the beginning, but the Lord showed him that He will support him with miracles and he will assign his brother Aaron to help him. 'And the Lord said: "I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt ... So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, ... Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel out of Egypt." But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh,.." So God said, "I will certainly be with you ..." (Exodus 3:7-11).

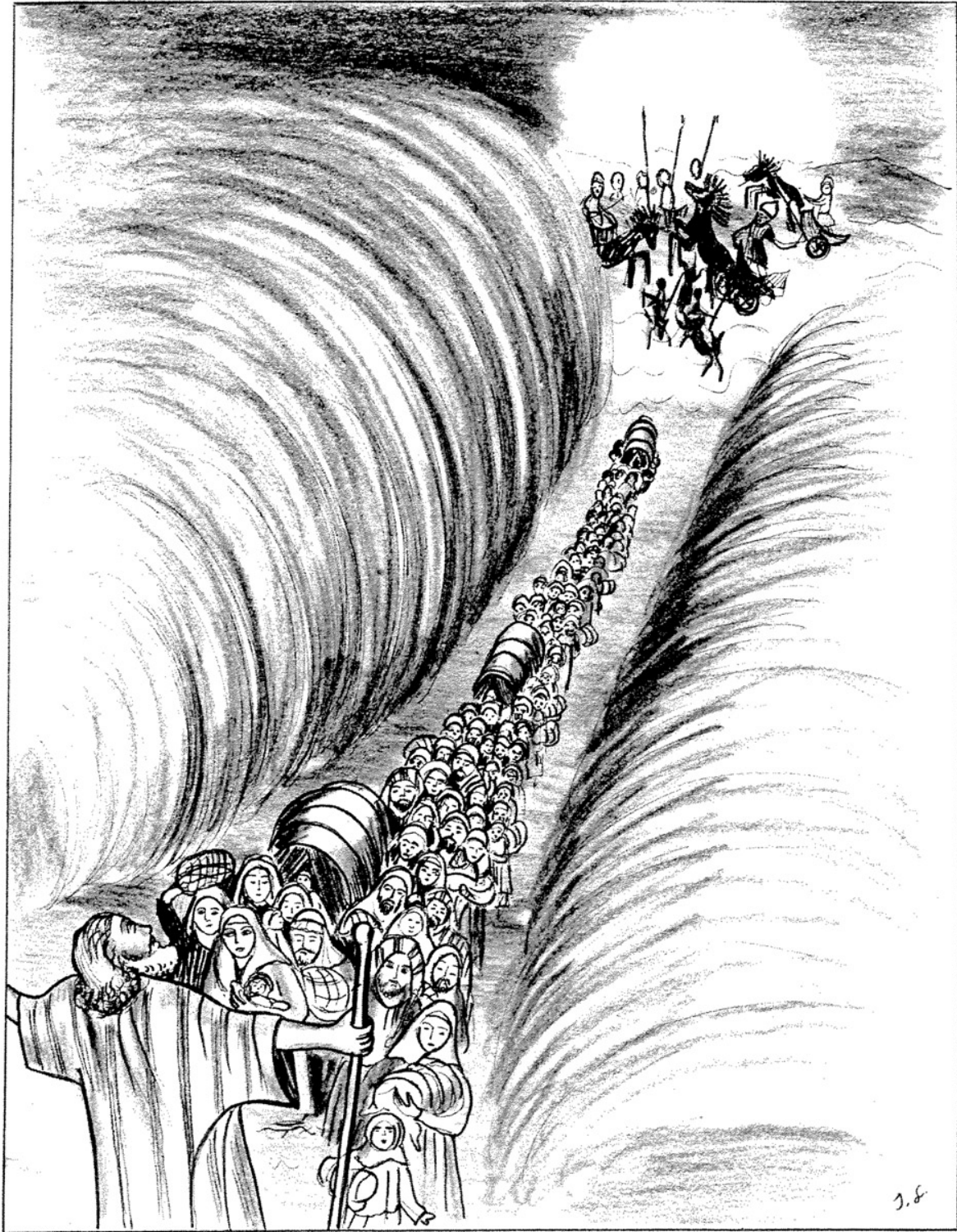
✠ To prove that their mission was from God, He supported them with miracles. Aaron threw down his staff and it immediately turned into a snake. Pharaoh summoned his court magicians who did the same thing, all of their staffs became snakes when they threw them down. But Aaron's staff ate up all of their staffs. "And Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and did not heed them, as the Lord had said," (Exodus 7:13)

✠ Describe briefly the ten plagues as per the attached material.

✠ Pharaoh's heart was hard. He did not want the Lord's people to go. The Lord wanted to prove to His people that He will get them out of Egypt by a strong hand so that their faith would grow in spite of the hardening heart of Pharaoh.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) God is more powerful than all our enemies. If God is with us, we will be victorious.
- (2) If we need something, we must mention it in our prayers, and then leave it in God's hands. We have to be patient. The Lord will answer our prayers and give us all our needs and more; at the right time and in the most suitable way. We can see this very clearly in the way through which God delivered His people out of Egypt.



SONGS

OUR SAVIOUR HAS SUMMONED US

REFRAIN

Our Saviour has summoned us
He gave us a new covenant

to all stay by His side
His love which does abide

He took bread and gave thanks
He broke and gave the disciples saying:

He blessed and sanctified it
this is my Body, eat of it

From the chalice, He gave them
My Blood is shed for mankind

this is the covenant
to forgive all sins

It is the heavenly manna;
The Remedy for our souls

the Body of Jesus
and the Healer for us

The mercy of our God
Mercy and love

is indeed abundant
together in this sacrament

The angels and all creatures
He's the only Lord to worship

submit to Him in fear
with love and awe indeed

Our Lord is the true God
Now I am closer to Him

He is magnified and praised
because in my heart He stays

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.

MOSES LEADS HIS PEOPLE OUT OF EGYPT - I

(A) MOSES' FLIGHT TO MIDIAN

The story finally reached Pharaoh about Moses' killing an Egyptian and Pharaoh decided to punish him by death. By this time, Moses had fled out of the country. He went to Midian. One day he was sitting all alone by a well when he saw seven girls, the daughters of a Midianite priest, who came to draw water. They were just watering their flocks when along came some rude shepherds who pushed them out of the way. Moses took the side of the girls and helped them water their flocks.

When the girls arrived home, their father asked, "Why are you home so early today?"

The girls answered that an Egyptian had defended them from some shepherds and had also helped them draw water for themselves and for their sheep.

"Where is this Egyptian?" asked their father. "And why didn't you invite him to come and eat with us?"

So Moses was welcomed into the priest's household. He eventually married one of the girls whose name was Zipporah. When she had a son, Moses named him Gershom, for he said, "I have been a stranger in a strange land."

In the meantime, the Pharaoh whom Moses feared died and another took his place. But still the oppression of the Hebrews continued as before, and they cried out to the Lord for help. God heard their moaning and saw their condition of slavery. Then He remembered His promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

He recalled to mind the promises that He had made - that these people would be His people and that someday they would be as numerous as the sands of the sea.

Therefore, He resolved to free them from the yoke of slavery under which they were suffering in the land of Egypt. And He resolved that He would send His angel to call His servant Moses and appoint him to be the Saviour of His people.

(B) THE CALL OF MOSES

One day Moses was pasturing the flocks of his father-in-law when he came to Mount Horeb. There he suddenly saw a bush which seemed to be on fire. Yet it was not consumed. He was just going to investigate when he heard a voice coming out from the midst of the bush calling him by name. When he answered, the voice said, "Come no nearer. Take off your sandals for you are standing on holy ground."

The voice then continued, I am the God of your father and of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. I have heard the cry of My people in Egypt, and I have seen their great affliction. Therefore, I plan to free them from their slavery and bring them into a land flowing with milk and honey, the land of Canaan. I hereby send you to Pharaoh, to bring My people out of Egypt."

Moses said, "But I am unable to do this". The Lord answered, "I shall be with you and you will bring the people to this very mountain to worship God."

Moses again protested that he was not eloquent, and did not believe he could persuade Pharaoh.

Then the Lord grew angry with Moses and said, "What about your brother Aaron? He can speak well. I will tell you what to say and you will tell him."

Then Moses saw his brother Aaron coming towards him, and he explained to him all that the Lord had said. Together they went down to Egypt to free the people. When they first told Pharaoh that the Hebrews were complaining because they did not have enough work to do, he therefore made their work harder.

Moses and Aaron went back to Pharaoh. To prove that their mission was from God and to be respected, Aaron threw down his staff and it immediately turned into a snake. Pharaoh summoned his court magicians who did the same thing; all of their staffs became snakes when they threw them down, but Aaron's staff ate up all of their staffs.

(C) THE TEN PLAGUES

The Lord said to Moses, "Pharaoh's heart has hardened, he refuses to let the people go. So tomorrow, when he goes to the river, you and Aaron are to stand on the bank and warn him that I the Lord gave you power to **change the water to blood** if he continues to be so stubborn."

You shall say to him, "The Lord God of the Hebrews has sent me to tell you that you must let the people go into the wilderness to worship." Then the Lord said to Moses, "Tell Aaron to stretch out your rod over the waters of Egypt, over their streams, rivers and ponds and all their pools of water, so that all may become blood."

Moses and Aaron did what the Lord commanded. In front of Pharaoh they changed the waters of the river to blood by smiting it with the rod. And all the fish that was in the river died, and the water began to smell so bad that the Egyptians could not drink it. But the Egyptian magicians could do the same thing, so Pharaoh's heart was hardened. He refused to listen to Moses and Aaron just as the Lord had predicted. So Moses and Aaron threatened to bring about another disaster. Should Pharaoh refuse to let the people go out and worship, a **plague of frogs** would overrun the country. And the frogs did come in swarms, into the bedrooms and into the beds, into the ovens and kneading bowls and over all the people.

Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and promised to let the people go if they would only get rid of the frogs. They did so, but Pharaoh changed his mind.

Then God told Moses to have Aaron strike the dust with his rod, so that it would turn into **mosquitoes**. He did so and the mosquitoes attacked men and animals throughout Egypt. Pharaoh's magicians told him that this was God's doing but as usual, he refused to listen.

The next plague was **gadflies**. They swarmed over all the Egyptians, but there were no flies in Goshen where the Hebrews lived. This was to prove that God distinguished between His people and the Egyptians. Pharaoh relented only insofar as letting the Hebrews worship within Egypt. But Moses said they must go for three days' journey into the wilderness. Pharaoh yielded, but as soon as the flies were gone, he refused again.

Next, God **killed all the livestock** of the Egyptians, all the cattle and horses, the asses and camels, the oxen and sheep; but not one animal of the Hebrews was stricken. Pharaoh refused again.

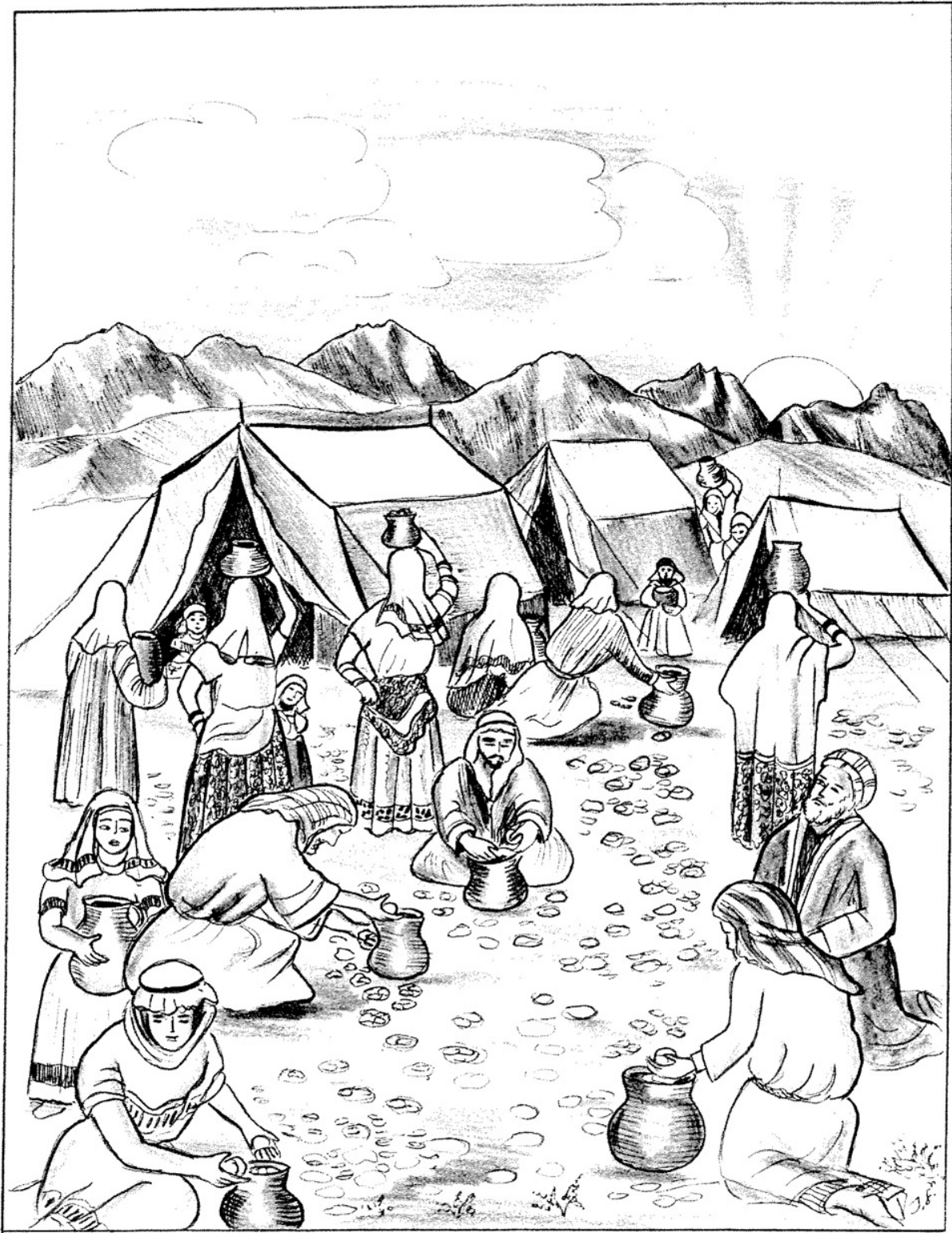
God then told Moses to take ashes from the kiln, throw them up in the air, for when they would come down on the Egyptians, all the people would break out with **terrible boils and sores on their skin**. Still Pharaoh said "no",

Then Moses promised a **hail storm** such as had never been seen in Egypt before. All the crops would be ruined. And so it happened. Thunder and lightning and hail went on striking down every plant and shattering every tree. Only in the land of Goshen was there no hail. Pharaoh promised Moses to let the people go, if he would only pray that God make the hail storm cease. But when there was no more hail, Pharaoh forgot his promise.

The Lord then sent a plague of **locusts** to eat every green leaf and plant that remained after the hail. By this time, the whole country of Egypt was nearly mined. Pharaoh's servants urged him to let the Hebrews go. But still he refused.

Then God sent **thick darkness**, so dark that the people could not see each other, nor could they even get up for three days. Pharaoh allowed the people to go, but insisted that they leave their herds behind. Moses, however, said that they must have animals to sacrifice. Then Pharaoh ordered Moses to go out of his presence and told him never to look upon his face again.

Then the Lord came around midnight and went into the midst of Egypt and all the **firstborn in the land of Egypt died except for the children of Israel**. There was a great cry throughout Egypt. Then Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and asked them to take the children of Israel and depart from Egypt. So, the Hebrews led by Moses left Egypt. God kept His promise to Moses and delivered His people out of Egypt with a very strong hand.





**NOVEMBER
SECOND SUNDAY**

Moses Leads his People out of Egypt by the Power of God- II

And The Quail and the Manna

Please read the attached material "Moses Leads his People out of Egypt - II" and also Exodus Chapter 16, and give the lessons with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that the Lord gives us all our needs.

MEMORY VERSE:

"I will sing to the Lord for He has triumphed gloriously" Exodus 15:1

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✝ Review the previous lesson and continue to describe the tenth plague in detail. The Hebrews put the blood over the lintel and the posts of their doors. So when the Angel passed through that night to let the destroyer smite the Egyptians, He saw the blood on the doors of the Hebrews and passed-over. Since that time the Hebrews' most important feast is the "Pass-over" as they remember how the Lord got them out of Egypt.

✝ For us as Christians our Pass-over Lamb is our Lord Jesus Christ because through His Blood on the Cross we gained salvation and were transferred from death to life. This new life was granted to us by the Risen Lord on Easter which has become our new Pass-over.

✠ Please describe the Red Sea crossing as per the attached material. "Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and made the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided. So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. And the Egyptians pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea ... Then the Lord said to Moses, 'stretch out your hand over the sea, that the waters may come back upon the Egyptians' ... And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; ... the sea returned to its full depth, while the Egyptians were fleeing into it."

✠ Please let the children read the rest of the song of Moses and his people (Exodus 15:1-21). "I will sing to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously!... The Lord is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation; He is my God, and I will praise Him ..." Our Lord is capable, our Lord loves us and when we are with Him we are very happy.

✠ At the sea of Marah, the water was bitter, they could not drink it and Moses cried to the Lord. Moses threw a tree in the water according to God's command and the water became sweet.

✠ After they had exhausted their food supplies in the wilderness, the Lord gave them flesh (quail) in the evening and bread (manna) in the morning.

✠ The Hebrews lived on God's food for forty years in the desert. As the Lord took care of the Hebrews at that time, He takes care of us now.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

(1) When we take communion, the Lord Jesus gives us His Body to eat and His Blood to drink. This is the heavenly food that is given to us now to be able to gain eternal life. When the Hebrews were in the desert God gave them regular food to eat, i.e., the quail and manna.

(2) We have to be very careful of the temptation of the devil who wants us to fall in sin. But we must not be afraid of the devil because God is much stronger and he is with us.

SONGS

OUR SAVIOUR HAS SUMMONED US

REFRAIN

Our Saviour has summoned us
He gave us a new covenant

to all stay by His side
His love which does abide

He took bread and gave thanks
He broke and gave the disciples saying:

He blessed and sanctified it
this is my Body, eat of it

From the chalice, He gave them
My Blood is shed for mankind

this is the covenant
to forgive all sins

It is the heavenly manna;
The Remedy for our souls

the Body of Jesus
and the Healer for us

The mercy of our God
Mercy and love

is indeed abundant
together in this sacrament

The angels and all creatures
He's the only Lord to worship

submit to Him in fear
with love and awe indeed

Our Lord is the true God
Now I am closer to Him

He is magnified and praised
because in my heart He stays

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.

MOSES LEADS HIS PEOPLE OUT OF EGYPT - II

(A) THE TENTH PLAGUE: THE DEATH OF THE FIRST BORN

Then God told Moses that He would kill every first-born in Egypt that night at midnight.

Moses summoned the elders of Israel and told them to have all the Hebrew families kill a lamb, then sprinkle its blood over the lintel and the doorposts of their doors. So when the Angel passed through that night to let the destroyer smite the Egyptians, He would see the blood on the doors of the Hebrews and "pass-over" them. Moses told them also that when they eventually came to the land that the Lord would give them, they were to keep this ritual.

That night at midnight, the Lord struck down all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh who sat on the throne to the first born of the prisoner in the dungeon. He even struck the first-born of the cattle. Pharaoh got up that night, along with all his household and all the Egyptians, and a loud wail rose up throughout the country, for there was not a single house without its dead.

(B) THE DEPARTURE FROM EGYPT AND THE CROSSING OF THE RED SEA

When Pharaoh heard that the Hebrews had departed and had taken their flocks and herds with them, along with jewels of gold and silver that they had borrowed from the Egyptians, he had a change of heart and wished he had not given them permission to go. Accordingly, he decided to pursue them and bring them back, so he made ready his chariot and six hundred other chariots, all with their captains, and he overtook them as they were encamping by the sea.

When the Hebrews looked up and saw all the chariots and horsemen of Egypt bearing down on them, they were terrified. And they were angry with Moses.

"Is it because there were not enough graves in Egypt that you have brought us out to die in the wilderness?" they asked scornfully. "It would be better to live as slaves in Egypt than die out here."

But Moses said, "Fear not. Just behold the salvation that the Lord will work for you today. These Egyptians you will never see again. For the Lord will fight for you."

Then the Lord told Moses to stretch his staff out over the sea. He did so and the waters of the sea were divided in two; the children of Israel went through the midst of the sea. The waters were like a wall to them on the right hand and on the left.

When they were all safely crossing, Moses saw the chariots of the Egyptians also crossing right behind them. So he raised his staff again, and the waters rolled down on top of the Egyptians and covered their chariots and their horsemen until there was not one left.

That was the way the Lord saved Israel that day from the hands of the Egyptians. The people saw it and revered the Lord, and believed in Him and in His servant Moses. And they made up a song of thanksgiving to God.

(C) THE QUAIL AND THE MANNA

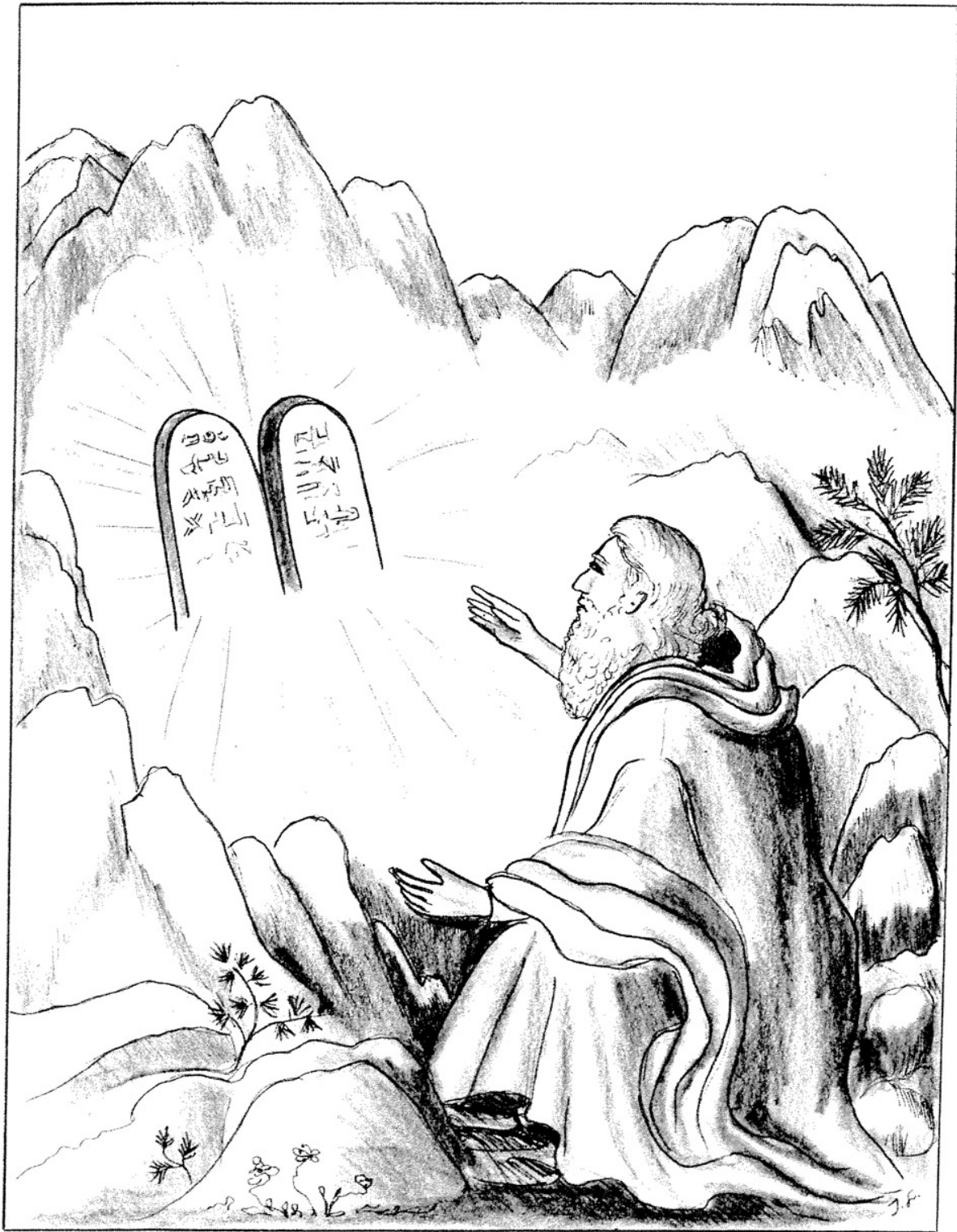
About six weeks after leaving Egypt, the sons of Israel came into the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai. By that time their supplies had nearly run out, and they grumbled to their leaders about their condition.

"We wish we had died by the hand of the Lord back in Egypt, where at least we had pots of flesh enough to eat. You brought us out here so that we can all die of hunger", they said.

Then the Lord said to Moses, "I will bring food to these people, flesh in the evening and bread in the morning, so that they will know that the Lord brought them out of the land of Egypt."

On that very evening, quail flew in and covered the camp, so that there was plenty of quail for everyone. And in the morning, when the dew was melted, there lay on the ground something like hoar frost. The people did not know what it was.

"This is the bread which the Lord has given you", said Moses. "Gather as much as you want". It was white as coriander seed and tasted like wafers made with honey. The Hebrews called it manna; they lived on it for forty years.





**NOVEMBER
THIRD SUNDAY**

The Ten Commandments

Please read the attached "The Ten Commandments", read Exodus 20:1-17, Exodus 31:12-18, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This lesson is a continuation of the series of lessons about Moses and his people as discussed in the previous two lessons. In this lesson we will learn about the Ten Commandments.

MEMORY VERSE:

"And He gave Moses two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God." Exodus 31:18

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) Why is Moses considered a very important character in the Old Testament?
- 2) After spending forty years in the desert, what did Moses receive from God?
- 3) Why are the Ten Commandments important for us as Christians?

✚ Discuss the ten commandments. We as Christians are supposed to follow these commandments and even more. We should love not only our neighbours but also our enemies. "You shall have no other gods before Me., You shall not make any carved idols... You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain..., Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy... Honor your father and your mother... You shall not murder... You shall not commit adultery... You shall not steal... You

shall not bear false witness against your neighbour,.. You shall not covet your neighbour's house, You shall not covet your neighbour' s wife nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbour's." (Exodus 20:3-17)

✠ Our Lord Jesus Christ fulfilled Moses' Laws. He said, "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill." (Matthew 5:17)

✠ The commandments were given to Moses for the people of Israel to follow in their life. The people at that time did not have the grace of the Holy Spirit as we now have him when we are baptized. So, the commandments were the basics and we as Christians are required to do a lot more. For this reason the Lord Jesus said, "For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:20).

✠ Sabbath (Saturday) is the Lord's Day of rest. God commanded His people to keep that day holy so that they continue to remember His mighty works in creation. Adam's disobedience took away God's rest. "And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth and He was grieved in His heart," (Genesis 6:6). When did rest return to God? On His Resurrection when He gave life back to man. Therefore, Sunday has become our day of rest ... our Sabbath.

✠ The people of Israel had to keep the Sabbath (remember that the word Sabbath means rest). But they kept it in a very rigid way. When our Beloved Jesus came and performed some of his miracles on the Sabbath, they were angry. For example, our Saviour healed the man at the pool of Bethesda on a Saturday, please see (John 5:1-17). The Jews were very angry. "For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him because He had done these things on the Sabbath." (John 5:16). The Jews were wrong. They should have realized that the Lord Jesus is the Son of God and He could do any merciful deeds at any time even on the Sabbath. God does merciful deeds at all times. Even ourselves we can do merciful deeds on Sunday.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) I must know and follow God's commandments and all the teachings of the Bible, both the Old and the New Testaments. I follow their commandments for my goodness sake.
- (2) Sunday, the day of the Lord's Resurrection, has become our day of rest ... our Sabbath. We can make Sunday as a very special day in which we remember the Lord's Resurrection and the new life that He gave us. We go to church and take communion and family members get together dedicating time for prayers and hymns. Let us make Sunday an ideal day of our life in behaviour, prayers and happiness.

SONGS

OUR SAVIOUR HAS SUMMONED US

REFRAIN

Our Saviour has summoned us
He gave us a new covenant

to all stay by His side
His love which does abide

He took bread and gave thanks
He broke and gave the disciples saying:

He blessed and sanctified it
this is my Body, eat of it

From the chalice, He gave them
My Blood is shed for mankind

this is the covenant
to forgive all sins

It is the heavenly manna;
The Remedy for our souls

the Body of Jesus
and the Healer for us

The mercy of our God
Mercy and love

is indeed abundant
together in this sacrament

The angels and all creatures
He's the only Lord to worship

submit to Him in fear
with love and awe indeed

Our Lord is the true God
Now I am closer to Him

He is magnified and praised
because in my heart He stays

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

In the third month of the journey, the Hebrews camped in the desert, near Mt. Sinai. And the Lord called Moses and told him to sanctify the people and have them wash their clothes, for in three days He would appear before them on the mountain.

On the third day in the morning, there was thunder and lightning and a thick cloud covering the mountain. Then came great clouds of smoke for the Lord descended upon the mountain in the form of fire. When Moses spoke, God answered him with a voice.

Then God called Moses to come up to the top of the mountain, and **He gave him these commandments:**

1. You shall have no gods except Me.
2. You shall not make any carved idols.
3. You shall not use the name of God profanely.
4. Remember to keep the Sabbath day Holy.
5. Honor your father and mother.
6. You shall not kill.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not give false evidence.
10. You shall not covet anything of your neighbor's.

Moses was on the mountain so long that the people became impatient. They went to Aaron and asked him to make them gods to go before them. So Aaron had them contribute their golden jewelry, which he melted down and formed into a golden calf.

When Moses came down the mountain, he heard the people singing. Then he saw them dancing naked in front of the golden calf and worshipping it. Moses was in a fury. He broke the stone tablets with the Ten Commandments on them. Then he took the golden calf and burned it and ground it to powder.

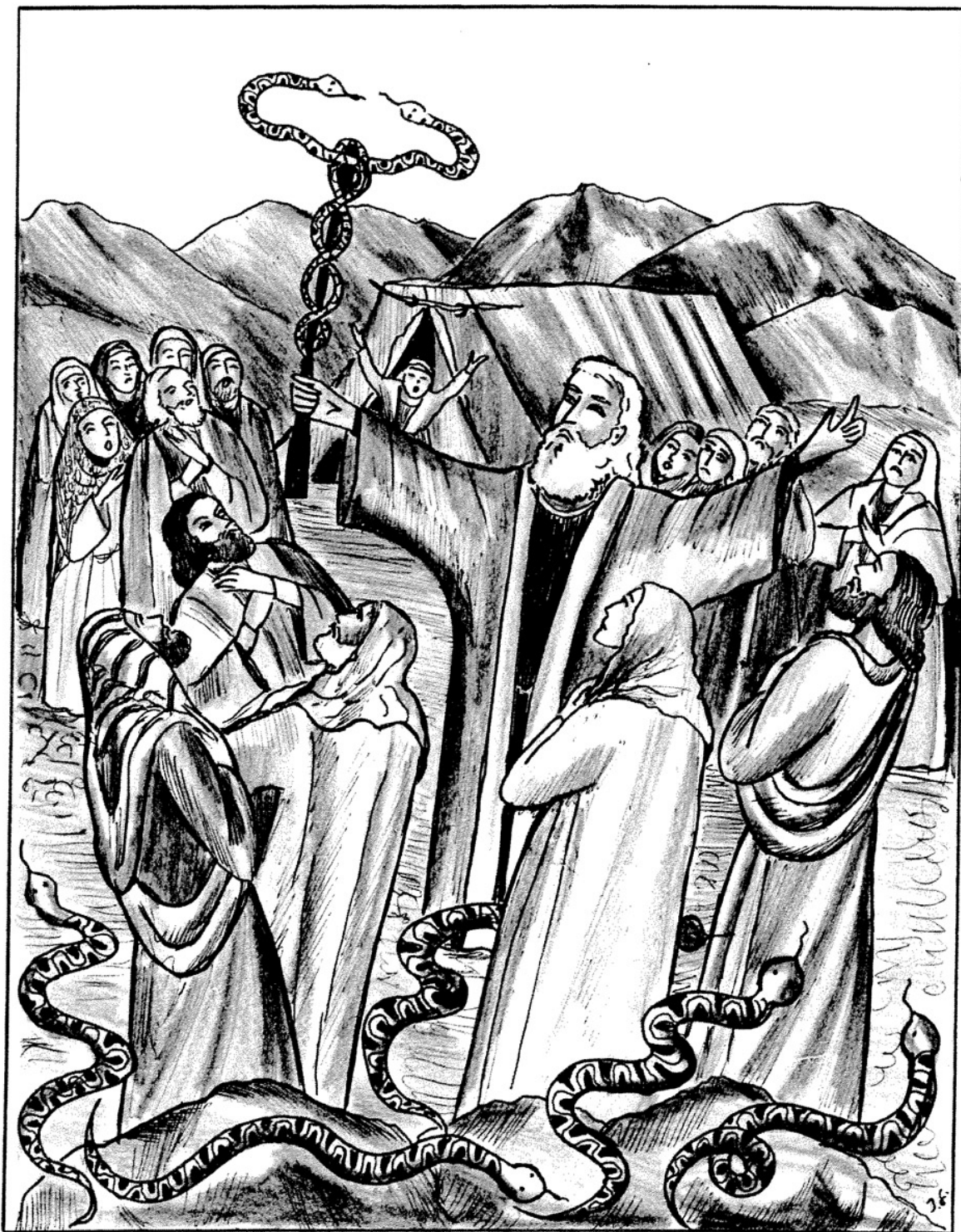
Later, Moses returned to the mountain and received the stone tablets engraved with the commandments a second time.



For the success
of this Sunday
School Program
the teacher should
refer to the

HOLY BIBLE

in his/her preparation
of the lessons and in
teaching the children
in the class





**NOVEMBER
FOURTH SUNDAY**

The Bronze Serpent and Review of the Life of "St Mina"

Please read Numbers 21:4-9 and also review briefly the life of St. Mina in commemoration of his feast, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To complete the series about the Lord's care for Moses and his people. He also takes care of us. Let us all train ourselves not to be complainers.

MEMORY VERSE:

"If a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent he lived" Numbers 21:9

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✝ The people were continually complaining against both God and Moses.

"Why did you lead us out of Egypt in order to die in the wilderness?" was their constant cry. "There is no bread, no water, and we are tired of manna."

Then the Lord sent stinging serpents among the people which bit them. Many of them died from serpent bites.

Then the people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned in speaking against the Lord and against you. It is because of our sin that these serpents have been set upon us. Would you pray to the Lord for us, that He remove these serpents?"

So Moses prayed for the people, and the Lord told him to construct a bronze serpent and place it on a pole. If anyone should be bitten by a serpent, all he had to do was to look at the bronze serpent on the pole, and his life would be spared.

✝ The Jews were complainers in the days of Moses and also in the days when our Lord Jesus Christ was on earth in the flesh. "And the Lord said to what then shall I liken the men of this generation, and what are they like? They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, saying: We played the flute for you, and you did not dance, we mourned to you, and you did not weep. For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon,' The Son of Man has come eating and drinking and you say, 'Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' But wisdom is justified by all her children." (Luke 7:31-35). We should not be complainers at home or at school or at church or at any place we go to.

✝ The Bronze Serpent was a symbol of Jesus when He was crucified. As the Bible said, "As Moses raised the serpent in the wilderness, the Son of Man will be raised on the cross so that who believes in him will inherit eternal life." (John 3:14-15).

✝ Imagine a Hebrew child bitten by a stinging serpent and then he was healed when he looked upon the bronze serpent. Should he just go to his tent or go and play afterwards? No. He should go to other people and tell them about the glory of God and the miracle that was performed on him. We should do the same. We must tell people about the Lord Jesus, who saved us with His Blood on the Cross.

✝ Please review the four lessons of the month of November as one series for what the Lord did to the Israelites.

✝ Review the life of St. Mina. Ask the children, what do they remember about St. Mina's life from the Sunday School lessons of previous years?

✝ The church is celebrating on November 25 (FIFTH of Hatour) the martyrdom of St. Mina.

✝ He was called the Miracle-Maker for the very large number of miracles performed through his prayers and intercession.

✝ Pope Cyril the sixth (the late pope before Pope Shenouda) had a very large monastery built for St. Mina. Many Copts visit this monastery for the blessings of St. Mina.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) We must be thankful for all that we have from God. We must not complain as the Israelites did.
- (2) God is very merciful. When the Israelites repented and confessed their sins to Moses, God healed them through the bronze serpent (the symbol of the Cross). Similarly, God accepts us when we repent.

SONGS

SAINT MINA

"And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul." (Mat 10:28)

St. Mina the martyr	beloved of Jesus
Always among us	we truly love you
Oh hero you were not afraid	in front of the crowds
You called with courage	"Oh my Lord Jesus"
Through the sufferings	you kept our strong faith
You stood unyielding	Jesus gave you strength
Your happiness was great	when they killed you
Angels carried you	to the eternal joy
The martyrdom's crown	you received from God
Intercede for us	before our Lord

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.





**DECEMBER
FIRST SUNDAY
ST. NICHOLAS**

Please read the attached material on "St. Nicholas", and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To clear all doubts about Santa Claus and to tell the true story behind it about "St. Nicholas". We will also touch on the real meaning of Christmas and how our church prepares for it.

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✚ Describe in detail the story of St. Nicholas, He was from Asia Minor. Clear all doubts about Santa Claus. Ask questions as you go along. Make sure the children understand that there is no Santa Claus who comes from the North Pole or from the chimney.

✚ Helping the poor was the main purpose in St. Nicholas' life. We have to learn to help other people. We have to bring good news to other people.

✚ Use the example of Santa Claus to show how society changes reality into meaningless commercialism. The spirit of Christmas in the Bible is very different from all the materialism we see during Christmas.

✚ We must not be attracted by the decorations around us and forget the essential meanings of Christmas.

✚ In preparation for Christmas we must be very happy. But we have to be careful not to forget the real meaning of Christmas: Our Lord Jesus came for me to dwell in my heart. He came for our salvation. The Son of God came to our world to declare to us the love of God and the glory of God; When God Himself took flesh and dwelt among us, He honoured and blessed our human nature and opened the door for us to have eternal life.

✠ How does our church prepare for Christmas?

- Special hymns for our Lord Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary the Mother of God.
- Fasting is meant as preparation for the special blessings of Christmas.
- Additional evening prayers.
- Additional readings in the Bible.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) St. Nicholas was a bishop of Myra who gave all his inheritance to the poor. There is no reality behind Santa Claus who comes from the North Pole or from the chimney.
- (2) We have to be careful not to lose the real meaning of Christmas. Namely, Jesus Christ the Son of God who came to our world to save us.

SONGS

THEY WILL KNOW WE ARE CHRISTIANS

“If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.” (1 Jn 4:12)

We are one in the spirit
And we pray that our unity

we are one in the Lord
will one day be restored.

REFRAIN

And they'll know we are Christians
Yes they'll know we are Christians

by our love, by our love
by our love.

We will walk with each other
And together we'll spread the news

we will walk hand in hand
that God is in our land

We will work with each other
And we'll guard each man's dignity

we will work side by side
and save each man's pride

Our praise to the Father
And our praise to Christ Jesus
And our praise to the Spirit

from whom all things come
His only Son
who makes us one

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.

ST. NICHOLAS, CALLED "OF BARI"

The great veneration with which this saint has been honoured for many ages and the number of altars and churches which have been everywhere dedicated in his memory are testimonials of his holiness and the glory which he enjoys with God. He is said to have been born at Patara in Lycia, a province of Asia Minor. Myra, the capital, not far from the sea, was an Episcopal see, and with this church falling vacant, the holy Nicholas was chosen bishop, and in that station became famous by his extraordinary piety and zeal and many astonishing miracles. The Greek histories of his life agree that he suffered imprisonment for the faith and made a glorious confession in the later part of the persecution raised by Diocletian, and that he was present at the Council of Nicaea and there condemned Arianism.

We are assured that from his earliest days Nicholas would take nourishment only once on Wednesdays and Fridays and in the evening according to the canons.

At the age of five he began to study the sacred sciences, and day by day the teaching of the church enlightened his mind and encouraged his thirst for sincere and true religion. His parents died when he was a young man, leaving him well off, and he determined to devote his inheritance to works of charity. An opportunity soon arose. A citizen of Patara had lost all of his money; moreover, he had to support three daughters who could not find husbands because of their poverty; so the wretched man was going to give them over to do degrading type of work. This came to the ears of Nicholas, who thereupon took a bag of gold and, under cover of darkness, threw it in at the open window of the man's house. Here was a dowry for the eldest girl, and she was soon duly married. At intervals Nicholas did the same for the second and third; at the last time the father was on the watch, recognized his benefactor, and overwhelmed him with his gratitude. Coming to the city of Myra when the clergy and people of the province were in session to elect a new bishop, St. Nicholas was indicated by God as the man they should choose. This was at the time of the persecutions at the beginning of the fourth century, and, as he was the chief priest of the Christians of this town and preached the truths of faith with a holy liberty, the divine Nicholas was seized by the magistrates, tortured, then chained and thrown into prison with many other Christians; But when the great and religious Constantine assumed the imperial diadem of the Romans, the prisoners were released from their bonds and with them St. Nicholas, who, when he was set at liberty, returned to Myra. According to the tradition, he was not only at the Council of Nicaea in 325, but he did not hesitate to give the heresiarch Arius a slap in the face. Whereupon the conciliar fathers deprived him of his Episcopal insignia and committed him to prison; but our Lord and His Mother appeared there and

restored to him both his liberty and his office, as he was against Aryanism so he was too against paganism. St. Nicholas was tireless and took strong measures; among other temples he also destroyed was that of Artemis, the principal in the district, and the evil spirits fled howling before him. He was the guardian of his people as well in temporal affairs. The governor Eustathius had taken a bribe to condemn to death three innocent men. At the time fixed for their execution St. Nicholas came to the place, seized the hand of the executioner, and released the prisoners. Then he turned to Eustathius and unceasingly reproached him until he admitted his crime and expressed his penitence. There were present on this occasion three imperial officers who were on their way to duty in Phrygia.

Later, when they were back again in Constantinople, the jealousy of a man called Ablavius caused them to be imprisoned on false charges and an order for their death was procured from the Emperor Constantine. When the officers heard this they remembered the example they had witnessed of the powerful love of justice of the Bishop of Myra and they prayed to God that through his merits and by his instrumentality they might yet be saved. That night St. Nicholas appeared in a dream to Constantine and told with threats to release the three innocent men; Ablavius also experienced the same thing. In the morning the emperor and Ablavius compared, and the condemned men were sent for and questioned. When he heard that they had called on the name of Nicholas of Myra who had appeared to him, Constantine set them free and sent them to the bishop with a letter asking him not to threaten him any more but to pray for the peace of the world. For long this was the most famous miracle of St. Nicholas, and at the time of St. Methodius it was the only thing generally known about him.

The accounts are unanimous that St. Nicholas died and was buried in his Episcopal city of Myra, and by the time of Justinian there was a basilica built in his honour at Constantinople. An anonymous Greek wrote in the tenth century that, "the West as well as the East acclaims and glorifies him. Wherever there are people, in the country and the town, in the villages, in the isles, in the furthest parts of the earth, his name is revered and churches are built in his honour. Images of him are set up, panegyrics preached and festivals celebrated. All Christians, young and old, men and women, boys and girls, revere his memory and call upon his protection. And his favours, which know no limit of time and continue from age to age, are poured out over all the earth: the Scythians know them, as do the Indians and the barbarians, the Africans as well as the Italians."



For the success
of this Sunday
School Program
the teacher should
refer to the

HOLY BIBLE

in his/her preparation
of the lessons and in
teaching the children
in the class





**DECEMBER
SECOND SUNDAY**

**The Birth of St. John the Baptist and
The Birth of Our Lord Jesus are Announced**

Please read Luke 1:5-38, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To let the children rejoice with these two happy events and know them by heart.
Emphasize the simplicity of the Virgin Mary.

MEMORY VERSE:

“Do not be afraid....” Luke 1:13

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) What does it mean to be humble?
- 2) What does it mean to be obedient?
- 3) Who in the New Testament is known for her humbleness and obedience?

✚ As St. John the Baptist was designated, according to God's plan, to come before our Lord Jesus, St. Luke started by describing first the events of the birth of St. John the Baptist then the events of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

✚ Tell the two stories of the birth of St. John the Baptist and our Saviour the Lord Jesus in detail. The starting point of the angel with Zacharias was different from that of the Virgin Mary.

✝ The angel started with Zacharias saying, "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). This reminds us that in spite of the fact that Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth were too old to have a son, they did not lose hope, and God responded to their prayers in due time. When the angel came to the Virgin Mary, he said, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you, blessed are you among women." (Luke 1:28). St. Mary was "the highly favored one", "the Lord is with her" and that she is "blessed among women".

✝ The answer of Zacharias was quite different from that of the Virgin Mary. Zacharias did not believe the message. The Virgin Mary believed and obeyed.

✝ Ask the children to talk about the main characteristics of the Virgin Mary: Simplicity "let it be to me according to your word", humility and obedience "Behold the maidservant of the Lord". The Virgin Mary said that she was the "maidservant of the Lord" after the angel told her, "That Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God." (Luke 1:35). This means that she was going to be the Mother of God.

Even if we do not understand what the Bible is telling us, we have to be simple and straight in our thinking and take it as it is and believe it. God will explain things to us at the right time when we mature.

✝ The Holy Spirit will be with the Virgin Mary so that she would give birth to a child and he would be called Holy. He is the Son of God.

✝ Why was John the Baptist needed to come before our Lord Jesus? He was needed to come before to prepare the minds and hearts of the people so that they may accept the Lord Jesus Christ as the Messiah, the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Our Lord Jesus Christ was born, taking on a body from the Virgin Mary, for our salvation, and the remission of our sins. Hence, Christmas is the happiest occasion of our lives.
- (2) Let us learn from the Virgin Mary to be simple and obedient. When we read the Holy Bible at home or listen to it at church, we must listen, obey and apply what we read or hear in our daily life; even if we do not fully understand.

CHRISTMAS SONGS

AWAY IN A MANGER

**“....and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger”
(Luke 2:7)**

Away in a manger The little Lord Jesus	no crib for a bed lay down His sweet head
The stars in the sky The little Lord Jesus	look down where He lay asleep on the hay
The cattle are lowing The little Lord Jesus	the Baby awakes no crying He makes
I love You Lord Jesus And stay by my side	look down from the sky till morning is nigh

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.





**DECEMBER
THIRD SUNDAY**

St. Mary Visits St. Elizabeth,

St. Mary's Song of Praise

And the Birth of St. John the Baptist

Please read Luke 1:39-66, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To review the three items mentioned in the title of the lesson. The emphasis here is on God who has looked at St. Mary's heart and rewarded her greatly.

MEMORY VERSE:

"Henceforth all generations will call me blessed" Luke 1:48

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Why do you think God chose St. Mary to be the Mother of God?

- † Let the children read Luke 1:39-66 and discuss the verses as you go along.
- † When St. Mary entered St. Elizabeth's house and before giving her the news about the anticipated birth of the Son of God from her, St. Elizabeth knew through the Holy Spirit 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 came to me" (Luke 1:42-43). St. Mary is called "the Mother of the Lord" or "the Mother of God".

- † St. Mary's song of praise was the main thing that was said by her in the Holy Bible. She never said much, and she hid all that she saw in her heart. But this is a very beautiful song of praise and has a very deep meaning. St. Mary thanked and praised the name of the Lord. It is because of her humility that the Almighty raised her to the highest position among all people. Therefore, "Henceforth all generations will call me blessed." (Luke 1:48). St. Mary fully realized that the Baby inside her womb was the Savior, the Son of God. Therefore she said, "and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior." (Luke 1:47). She also declared that the Savior is Mighty, His name is Holy, His mercy is great, He exalts the lowly and He fills the hungry.
- † In due course, St. Elizabeth gave birth to her son and called him John. When Zacharias agreed to call his son John as he was named by the angel "immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, praising God." (Luke 1:64). Remember that Zacharias was mute since he disbelieved the angel's message which was fulfilled in its own time.
- † The Lord rewarded St. Mary because of the pure heart in several ways:
- † The Angel greeted her very nicely.
- † St. Elizabeth greeted her very nicely and received her joyfully in her house.
- † The baby John inside St. Elizabeth's womb leaped with joy when St. Mary arrived.
- † St. Joseph honored St. Mary and helped her in all her needs as the angel told him.
- † All generations will call St. Mary blessed.
- † St. Mary remained a virgin after she gave birth to the Lord Jesus.
- † When St. Mary died, her body was taken away by the angels to heaven.
- † St. Mary performs many miracles through her prayers and intercession to God.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Generation after generation, all the believers call St. Mary 'blessed' because she gave birth to our Lord Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit. She became a merciful Mother for everyone who seeks her help. We should seek St. Mary's intercession on our behalf so that God forgives us sins.
- (2) Let us follow St. Mary's example when she traveled to help St. Elizabeth. We should help the needy without waiting until they seek our help. Also let us learn from St. Elizabeth to receive our guests very well and greet them joyfully.
- (3) If we set our hearts to do good things, God will help us a lot to do more good things and reward us greatly as he did with St. Mary.

CHRISTMAS SONGS

THE GOSPEL HYMN IN CHRISTMAS

A star appeared in the east the
Wise men followed it until it
Brought them to Bethlehem and
Bowed to the King of all ages.

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.

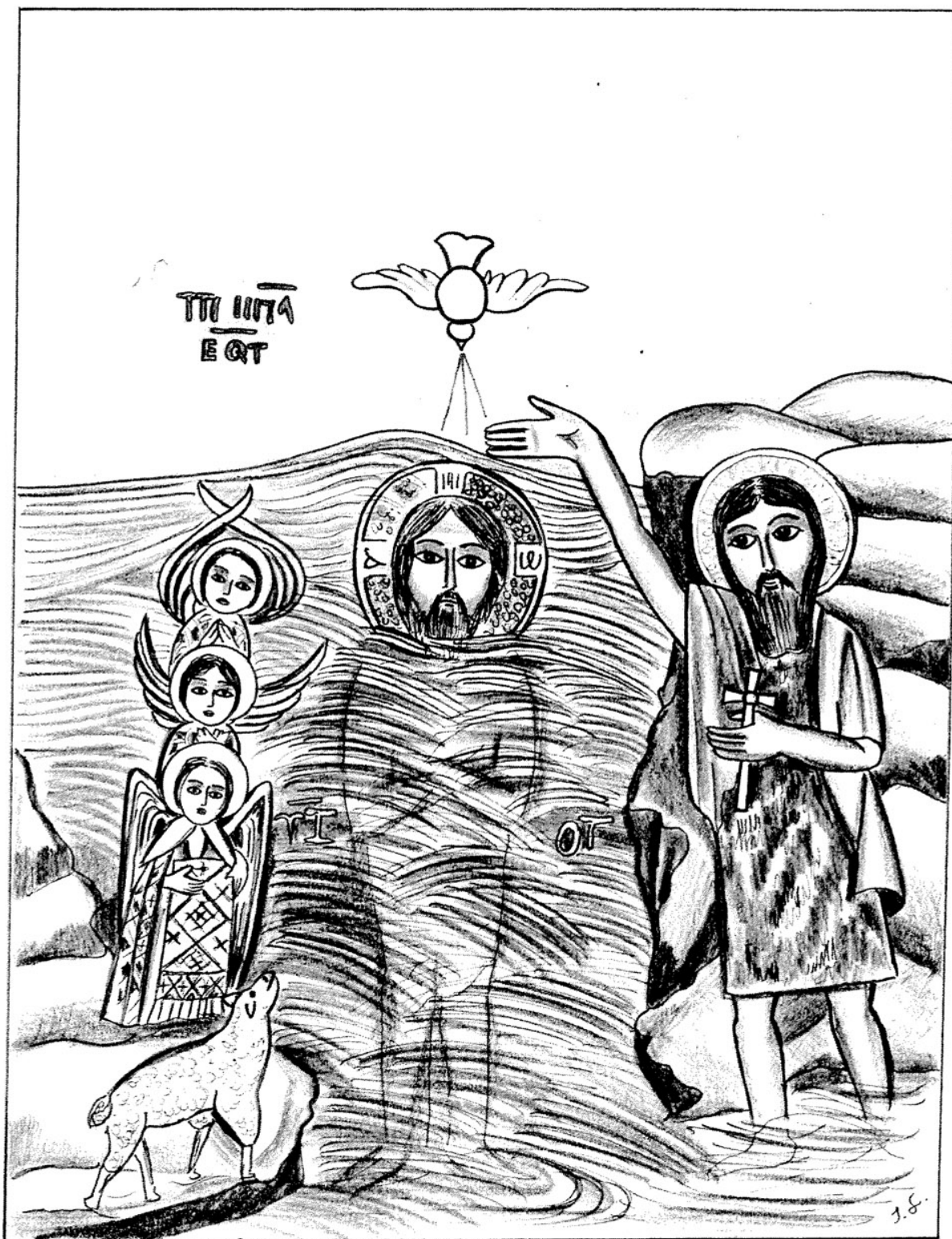
Oo-seio afshai khi niman shai:
Animaghos moshi ensof: sha enetef
Enoo evethle-em: avoo-ost emep
Ooro eni- e- oon.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia
Alleluia, Issos piekhrastos
Epshiri emefnooty: fi –etafmasf
Khen Vethle-em.

Fai ere pio-oo ereepi naf:
Nem pefyot enaghathos; nem
Pieonevma ethoo-wab: yesgen
Tino nem sha-eneh.

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.





DECEMBER FOURTH SUNDAY

THE NEW YEAR - LET US TAKE A LOOK AT THE PAST YEAR AND LEARN FROM IT

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To teach the children that they should practice sitting alone to review what God does in their life, what they did last year and think of what they should do in the coming year.

MEMORY VERSE:

“Bless the Lord, O my soul...” PS. 103:1

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) As Christians, what should we do before the New Year starts?
- 2) Do you sit with yourself to see how you can improve in the New Year?

✝ When a child is baptized, his mother carries him in the baptismal room. She looks first to the West and says, "I reject the Devil and all his wicked things, all his wicked soldiers, all his wicked power, all his attempts, all his army and all his false teaching. I reject the devil; I reject, I reject."

✝ Then the mother carrying her child looks towards the East (where the light comes from) and says this vow: "I admit and confess that Christ is my Lord and my Saviour. I confess all his good deeds that give life to us." Then the priest

carries the baby and dips him in the baptismal font three times in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. So the baby is buried with Christ and is risen with Him in the victory of a new life. Then the mother dresses her child in white clothes as a symbol of complete purity.

✝ Each one of us is the same as this child. On the baptismal day, we are all dressed in pure clothes inside and outside, i.e., reborn after defeating the devil and all his power and after being buried with the Lord Jesus and risen with Him.

✝ The days passed by, and one year is just gone. What did we do to the white clothes and to the vow to God? Did we forget already?

✝ Let us learn to sit quietly and review the past year?

- ✝ What did God do for us?
- ✝ Did God heal us when we were sick?
- ✝ Did God help us in our studies?
- ✝ Did God save us from an accident?
- ✝ Did God accept us when we repented and confessed?
- ✝ Did God give us peace at the time of trouble?
- ✝ Did God welcome us in His house (i.e. the church)?
- ✝ What did we do in our relation with God?
- ✝ Did we pray?
- ✝ Did we concentrate in our prayers or we were just praying while thinking about something else?
- ✝ Did we follow the commandments?
- ✝ Did we read the Holy Bible?
- ✝ Did we read it regularly?
- ✝ Did we listen to the Bible reading in church?
- ✝ Did we go to church early?
- ✝ Did we confess our sins?
- ✝ Did we take communion?
- ✝ How frequently did we take communion?
- ✝ What did we do with other people?
- ✝ Did we honour our parents?
- ✝ Did we help people (Please review the story of the Good Samaritan)?
- ✝ Did we love people?
- ✝ What did we do with our talents?
- ✝ God gave us time, body, ability to do work and effort.
- ✝ How did we use our talents last year?

✝ Did we do our homework regularly? A good Christian must do his best at school and tries to get the highest marks.

✝ As the year passed by, it is gone without coming back. Let us be careful not to waste our time and make sure that we live with God according to the vow that we took when we were baptized.

✝ Let us also remember to “give thanks to the Lord with all our hearts”.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

(1) Time is very valuable. Let us not waste it watching TV or not doing something useful. Let us be committed in this New Year to be in God's hands and follow Him.

(2) Let us be careful this coming year before we say or do anything. Let us not say or do anything that hurts God's feelings. God loves us and takes care of us.

SONGS

I AM GLAD

“Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people” (Luke 2:10)

I am glad, I am glad
With Your peace and Your love

that You came to our land
we will go hand in hand

REFRAIN

He came for us
Our God, our God

with His tender love
came to save us our God

Saint Mary was pleased
He told her you will bear

when she heard Gabriel
our Lord Emmanuel

The angels in the sky
Glory to God in the highest

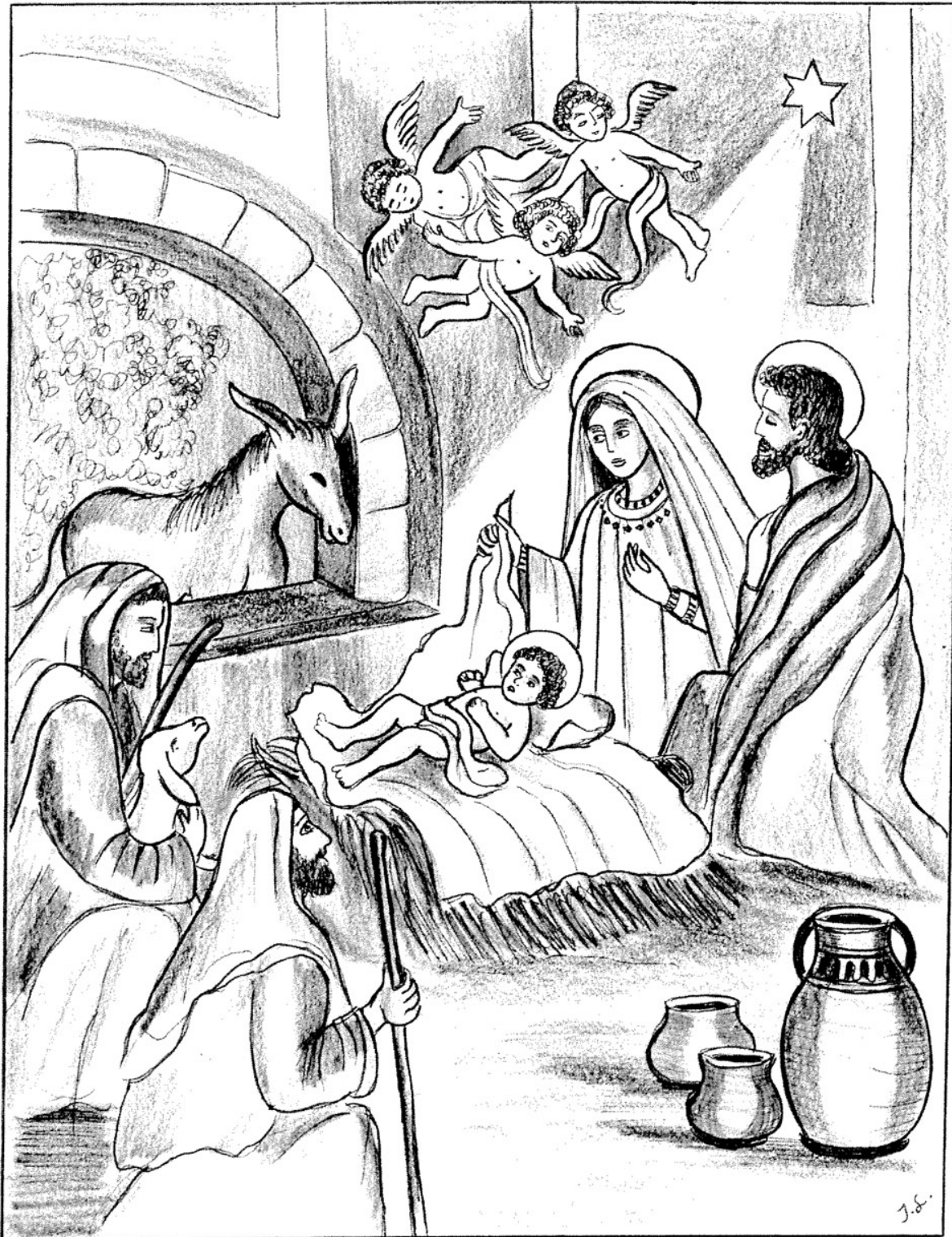
praised the Lord for His birth
and peace be on earth

A bright star far in the east
It lead them to the manger

appeared to the three wise men
in the city of Bethlehem

Recitation Curriculum :

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.





JANUARY
FIRST SUNDAY

Christmas **SONGS**; preparation for Christmas; party and slide presentation.





**JANUARY
SECOND SUNDAY**

Our Lord Jesus is Born in a Manger in Bethlehem

And The Escape of the Holy Family to Egypt

Please read Luke 2:1-20, Matthew 1:18-24 (Jesus is born), Matthew 2:7-23 (Jesus Goes to Egypt), the attached material "The Birth of God's Son", "Jesus is Kept Safe", and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that our Lord Jesus was humble and did not use His power against His enemies. We also must be humble in our life and in all our dealings with people. We must flee away of temptations and fights

MEMORY VERSE:

"Out of Egypt I called My Son" Matthew 2:1

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

1) Why do you think our Lord Jesus Christ chose to be born in a humble manger in Bethlehem?

2) What character did he want to teach us by doing so?

God wanted to teach us humility. When our Saviour the Lord Jesus was born, He chose a poor girl (the Virgin Mary) and a manger for His birth. Let us not think highly of ourselves so that our Beloved Jesus would come and rest in our hearts. In St. Mary's song, she said, the following about God, "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." (Luke 1:51-52). This means that in order to receive the Lord Jesus' help in our lives, we must be humble.

Please ask the children: What does humble mean? It means that we do not think that we are better than others, it means we are content with the bare necessities of life, and it also means that we should feel our weaknesses, realize that we are sinners and in need of God's grace and His great mercy on us.

Joseph and Mary came to Bethlehem to be registered as the government wanted. But the prophecies were then fulfilled that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was born in Bethlehem.

When the Lord Jesus was born they gave Him the name "Jesus" which means Savior because He saves His people from their sins. So the prophecy "The Virgin Mary shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14) was fulfilled, Immanuel means "God is with us" which implies that He took flesh, stayed with us and saved us.

Describe the visit of the shepherds briefly.

Describe the visit of the wise men in detail and then mention what King Herod did:

- He was afraid because he thought a new king would take away his authority. He thought only of himself.
- He called all the chief priests and asked them where about Christ would be born. They said in Bethlehem.
- He invited the wise men in secret and wanted to know where Jesus was born so that he could go and kill Him.

After the wise men saw the Lord Jesus and gave Him their gifts, they returned to their far town and did not go to King Herod.

The angel then appeared to Joseph and asked him to take Mary and Jesus and go to Egypt. God had the ability to kill King Herod himself and all his people, but He did not want to use this power. God had several other ways to save the Lord Jesus from King Herod, but He chose to use this opportunity so that Egypt would be blessed with the visit of our Lord Jesus Christ, and also to fulfill the prophecy "Out of Egypt I called My Son".

King Herod was still concentrating on his job. He sent an army and killed all the young children up to the age of two. When our Beloved Jesus went to Egypt He was about 2 years old.

Compare the love of the wise men that came from very far to the hatred of King Herod.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Since the first day of the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ, He wanted to teach us to be content with the minimum of the materialistic things. We must stop asking for more toys and more candy. We must thank the Lord and thank our parents for what we have.
- (2) We must flee away from possible fights and problems as the Lord Jesus fled away from King Herod.

SONGS

WE THREE KINGS

“And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh” (Mat 2:11)

We three kings of Orient are
Field and fountain moor and mountain

bearing gifts, we traverse afar
following yonder star

REFRAIN

O, star of wonder, star of night
Westward leading, still proceeding

star with royal beauty bright
guide us to thy perfect light

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain
King forever, ceasing never

gold I bring to Crown Him again
over us all to reign

Frankincense to offer have I
Prayer and praising, all men raising

incense own a deity nigh
worship Him God most high

Myrrh in mine, its bitter perfume
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying

breathes a life of gathering gloom
sealed in the stone-cold tomb

Glorious now, behold Him arise
Alleluia! Alleluia!

King and God and Sacrifice!
Earth to the heaven replies

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.

THE BIRTH OF GOD'S SON

Now the time was ripe for the Saviour to be born on earth. And how the world needed Him, for everyone was selfish and unhappy! All the people in the world were sinners, just as Adam and Eve had been. When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, God promised them that a Saviour would come some day to take away their sins. The prophets too had often told the people of Israel that this wonderful Saviour was going to come.

One day the time came, and God sent His angel to Mary. She was a Jewish girl who was a relative of King David, who had lived hundreds of years before. Gabriel the Angel of the Lord said, "Do not be afraid, Mary! God has greatly blessed you. You are going to have a baby and His name will be JESUS. He will have no human father, for He will be the Son of God. And God is giving a baby to Zacharias and your cousin Elizabeth."

Mary did not understand how she could have a baby, for she was a virgin, that is, she was not married. But the angel explained that this was not necessary, for God would perform a special miracle to make her pregnant while she was a virgin. No other babe has ever been born without a human father. Jesus was different. How excited and happy Mary was at this wonderful news that she would be the mother of the Saviour of the world!

She was engaged to be married to an old man named Joseph, who was a carpenter.

But when they arrived at Bethlehem there was no room for them at the little hotel; it was already full. So they went out to the stable where the donkeys and camels were kept, to sleep in the straw on the ground. And while they were resting in the stable, Mary's baby was born. He was the little son that the angel Gabriel had told her about. Yes, Jesus was born out there in the stable; and Mary dressed Him in some baby clothes she had brought, and wrapped Him up in a blanket, and laid Him in a manger.

In those days the Jews were under the rule of the Romans; they had to do whatever the emperor of Rome and his assistants told them to. Now he made a law that the name and address of every Jew must be written down. He instructed everyone to go to the city where his ancestors had lived, so that the Roman officers could record their names. Ancestors mean relatives who lived hundreds of years before. So Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem where King David used to live, because they were relatives of his, though he had lived hundreds of years before they were born.

That same night some shepherds in the fields outside the town were watching their sheep to protect them from wild animals. Suddenly an angel surrounded by a bright light appeared to them. They were very frightened. But the angel said, "Do not be afraid; for I have good news for you, and for all people. In the city of David your Saviour was born! His name is Christ the Lord."

"And this is how you will know Him: you will find Him wrapped in baby clothes and lying in a manger!"

Then suddenly many, many other angels appeared, praising God and saying "Glory to God! in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!"

After the angels returned to heaven the shepherds said to each other, "Let's now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass which the Lord has made known to us." So they ran to the village and soon found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger! Afterwards the shepherds returned to their flock again, praising God for what they had heard and seen, as it was told to them.

JESUS IS KEPT SAFE

The night was cool. Joseph whispered softly when he lifted Baby Jesus up to Mary's arms, He watched Mary tuck the blanket carefully around Jesus.

Joseph looked all around. "Now let us go quickly!" he said as he led the donkey. That night an angel had told him to take Jesus and His mother to Egypt.

When the sun came up they were far away from Bethlehem. In a few days they came to the land of Egypt. They stayed in Egypt a long time.

Then one night in a dream the angel said to Joseph, "Arise and take Jesus and His mother back to Israel. Those who tried to kill Him are dead."

So once more Joseph lifted Jesus gently up to Mary and they rode the donkey. He led the way back to the land of Israel. On and on they walked until they came to the town of Nazareth. There they lived in a small house.

Joseph watched happily as Jesus grew. He saw that Jesus helped His Mother, Joseph let Jesus help with his carpentry work too. Joseph took good care of the boy Jesus, Joseph knew that Jesus was God's Son, our Savior.





**JANUARY
THIRD SUNDAY**

EPIPHANY

A Voice Preparing you for the coming of the Savior

Please read Matthew 3:13-17, John 1:18-34, the attached material "The Baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ," and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that St. John the Baptist came to prepare people's mind for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. There was a declaration from heaven as well as a declaration from St. John the Baptist that Jesus is the Son of God.

MEMORY VERSE:

"I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness" John 1:2

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

If Jesus is the Son of God and He is already cleansed from sin, why did get baptized?

Introduce the role that St. John the Baptist played before the preaching of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- ✠ St. John the Baptist came before the Lord Jesus to reveal to the people of Israel that the Lord Jesus is the Messiah for whom they have been waiting for many years.

- ✝ In St. John's way of declaration of the Messiah, he did two things: (1) when the people came to him, he said that I am not the Messiah, but I am the voice who is telling you about Him. (2) He started to baptize people with water. When the Lord Jesus came with them to him, a declaration was made from heaven that the Lord Jesus is the Messiah Son of God.
- ✝ Describe in detail the baptism of Jesus Christ from John. Emphasize the declaration from heaven and then the declaration of John to the people that Jesus is the Son of God. The declaration from heaven came like this: "The heavens were opened to Him and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased'." (Matthew 3:16-17). The declaration from St. John the Baptist came like this: "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. 'I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God," (John 1:32-34)
- ✝ The Lord Jesus had no sins, He did not need to be baptized, but He did it for two reasons: (1) Because Jesus is carrying on His back a heavy burden, all the sins of all those people who have ever lived or will ever live and who trust in God's salvation. That is why He is called the Savior. (2) Because Jesus had to be revealed to Israel through the declaration from Heaven. "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:17).
- ✝ When we celebrate Epiphany we remember the manifestation of the three Persons of the Holy Trinity; the Father speaks from heaven, the Son in the Jordan River being baptized, and the Holy Spirit descends from heaven taking the shape of a dove.
- ✝ Did the people of Israel believe the message from St. John the Baptist?

Some of them did, some did not believe him or believe our Lord Jesus either despite all the miracles that the Lord Jesus Christ did in front of them. The reason for this was that lots of them thought the Messiah, when He comes, will be a strong king who will lead them in the world to win more wars and become rich. On the contrary, our Lord Jesus declared, "My Kingdom is not from this world." Everything that Jesus did was predicted by the prophets in the Old Testament.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Ask the children to repeat saying “This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.” The children should repeat this verse several times. This was the voice from heaven.
- (2) Everything in life must be in order, i.e., step by step. We must prepare things in advance, for example, we must prepare our-selves before we take communion, pray, repent and confess.
- (2) Before our Saviour the Lord Jesus started His ministry, St. John the Baptist came first to declare to the people that the Lord Jesus is the Messiah.

SONGS

THE EPIPHANY

On Epiphany every year We celebrate once a year	we are happy with one accord the baptism of our Lord
On the Jordan shores there stood Preaching, teaching, all good	John the Baptist baptizing the people repent, sin despising
Jesus came to John the saintly He said “No, I am not worthy	asking him to be baptized I am in need to be baptized”
Jesus stood in the Jordan John saw the Holy Spirit	to be baptized by John instead as a dove above Christ’s head
There opened were the heavens This is My Beloved Son	the voice of the Father heeded in whom I am well pleased
We are immersed in baptism Our sins are forgiven	three times in holy water new birth we have with our Father
Alleluia, Alleluia Jesus Christ the Son of God	Alleluia, Alleluia was baptized in the Jordan

Recitation Curriculum :

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.

EPIPHANY

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS CHRIST

January 19 (according to the Julian Calendar)

GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING:

At the very end of the Jordan River and just before it pours its waters into the Dead Sea, there is a shallow area in the river that could be crossed by wading called now the ford of 'Bethabara' (the crossing way). There, for many years merchants and travelers from Arabia, Persia and India have crossed the river on their way to Jerusalem, Egypt and Africa. It is a very rugged spot. During the summer, the heat is terrible, the air is heavy and the surface of the Dead Sea is in the color of lead. There too was located the lost cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (read Gen, 13-19). The smell of sulphur still hangs in the air as if to remind man forever that "..... the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23).

Winter is a bit better because a cooling breeze blows down the Jordan Valley in the evening to replace the heat of summer.

INTRODUCTION

In this unfriendly spot of land, one day, a prophet or a messenger of God appeared around the year A.D. 30. He was a strange, rough looking man. His only garment was a camel skin caught at the waist by a strip of leather. His food was locusts and wild honey.

The message of that man was not more attractive than his appearance. He cried to everyone who passed by and, out of curiosity stopped a moment to listen: "The reign of God is about to begin. Right now, God has His axe set ready at the base of the tree of your life. Unless you repent of your wicked ways, and submit your life to His rule, He will chop you down and throw you into the fire."

However, there was a happy side to his preaching. Everyone, who truly repented would be forgiven.... But, how would the repentant be forgiven? ... The messenger did not explain. Instead, he led his hearers to the river's edge and dipped their sweaty, dust-covered bodies into the refreshing water. Just as the water of the Jordan River cleansed their bodies, so God would clean their filthy, sin-stained souls. The Prophet called this 'baptism'. That is why we call I that messenger of God 'John the Baptist'.

The word 'baptism' is derived from the Greek word 'baptismos' which means 'emersion'.

CROWDS COME TO JOHN THE BAPTIST:

In the early Jewish tradition, and until the coming of the Messiah, God used to send every hundred years or so a prophet to preach to the Jews to return to their God and to foretell about the coming of the Messiah, the Saviour who would release them from their bondage. When John the Baptist appeared at the Jordan River, it was more than 300 years since the Jews had a prophet to tell them, "Thus saith the Lord ...". The Jews were waiting for either another prophet or the Messiah Himself. Therefore, the word spread like fire through the land, "There is a new prophet preaching at the Jordan ford. There is a message that has come from God."

THE BAPTISM OF THE MESSIAH:

People crowded to see and listen to the new prophet. Among the crowds were the rich and the poor, the officials of the church and those of the government, the sophisticated and the plain ordinary people. As they listened, their consciences awoke and they remembered their past sins. They streamed into the water to be baptized by John ... to be cleansed from their sins.

One day, someone asked another, "Can this be the promised Saviour, the Messiah?" In few minutes, everyone was asking the same question. Right away John answered: "I am only a voice crying in the wilderness, a voice preparing you for the coming of the Saviour. Soon, someone will come after me, someone greater than I am that I am not fit to untie His shoes. He will baptize you with the fire of the Holy Spirit."

Among the crowds, there was a stranger from a far away city called Galilee. He also stepped into the water to be baptized. But this particular man was different from all other men, This man alone has no sins. He is the only man who does not need to be baptized. Why then does he join the wicked and the sinners at the water's edge? This thought came to John himself, and the Baptist said to Jesus Christ: "It is I who needs baptism from you, and yet You come to me?" But Jesus insisted... Do you know why? Because Jesus is carrying on His back a heavy burden ... all the sins of all those people who ever lived or will ever live who trust in God's salvation, That is why He is called The Saviour.

Something else happened at His baptism. After His emersion into the water, as Jesus stood up, suddenly above His head, as if a crack happened in the sky, and the Holy Spirit descended in the shape of a dove and rested on Him; and God the Father Himself said. "This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:17)

EPIPHANY IN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH:

We in the Orthodox Church, consider this event, the Baptism of Jesus Christ, one of the major Feasts of the Church. It is called the 'Epiphany' which is a Greek word that means 'showing forth' or 'manifestation'. In this event, Jesus Christ was not only declared by God the Father to be His only Begotten Son; but also it shows forth the three Persons of the Holy Trinity; the Father speaks from heaven, the Son in the Jordan River being baptized, and the Holy Spirit descends from heaven taking the shape of a dove.

On Epiphany Eve, and just before the Divine Liturgy, a special service is held in the Orthodox Church. It is called the 'Lakan which means 'the blessing of the water'. This is to commemorate the blessing of the water of the Jordan by having Christ baptized in it and by having the Holy Spirit descending on our Lord. In this service, the priest asks God's blessing of this water. He says:

"Bless this water that is set before thee and give it the blessing that you gave to the Jordan by the descent of the Holy Spirit...Let it be a fountain of blessing, a holy gift, a healer of the sickness of the body and the soul ... and a blessing to the homes ...,"

At the end of the service, the priest blesses the people with that water by crossing their foreheads three times. The people also fill small bottles with that water and take them home to use when there is sickness in the family or to bless a new home, office, business, car, etc.



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Daniel 1: 1:17.



**JANUARY
FOURTH SUNDAY**

LIFE OF COURAGE

Please read Acts 4:5~21, Acts 4:23-31, Daniel 1:1-17, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that we should have no fears if we are doing things according to God's will and commandments.

MEMORY VERSE

*"But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself
with the king's delicacies" Daniel 1:8*

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) Is courage an important characteristic to have as Christians?
- 2) Do you think you have the courage to stand up to what you believe in as did many saints in the Old and New Testament?

† Please tell the story of Daniel and his courage in detail (Daniel 1:1-17), Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. He took to Babylon a lot of articles from the house of God as well as some of the best children of Israel. Among those were Daniel and his friends Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. The chief of eunuchs, upon instructions from the king, asked Daniel to eat from the king's delicacies and his wine. But Daniel had the courage to say no. Daniel could have all excuses because

he was in a foreign country (Babylon). Daniel said 'no' because he did not want to defile himself by eating these types of food. He wanted only to eat vegetables. Daniel did not want to be busy eating food and being distracted by eating the king's delicacies. He wanted to be serious and nourish his spiritual life.

✝ The courage of Peter and John (in detail) as mentioned in Acts 4:5-21 and Acts 4:23-31.

✝ At the gate of the temple, called beautiful, St. Peter healed the lame man when he said, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk" (Acts 3:6). On the next day, Peter and John had to address the Sanhedrin (highest Jewish council) to testify on what they did to the lame man. Peter had full courage. Although he knew that the powerful Sanhedrin council hated the Lord Jesus and can also kill him (Peter), he said to them "Let 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, who God raised from the dead. By Him this man stands here before you whole," (Acts 4:10), Peter was brave.

Do we have the courage to tell the truth and nothing but the truth, not fearing anyone?

✝ When Peter and John went to their companions and told them what happened at the Sanhedrin, they praised the Lord and said "Now, Lord look on their threats, and grant to your servants that with all boldness they may speak your word," (Acts 4:29).

✝ God is the Creator and He is stronger than anyone. If we believe in Him and that our actions are according to His will, then we must not be afraid of anyone.

✝ If we have enough courage, we never lie because God will protect us.

When we lie, it means we are afraid of someone. If our actions are right we must not lie, if we have enough courage, we tell the truth.

✝ If we are asked to give our opinion on something, we must have enough courage to say it exactly as we see in complete truth,

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) We must have the courage to say no to the things that we do not agree with. We have our own religion, our own church and our own principles. We must not be faced to participate in anything that we disagree with.
- (2) If we abide with the Lord's commandments, then we must never fear anything or anyone.

SONGS

JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD

“Now you are the body of Christ and members individually.” (1Cor 12:27)

REFRAIN

Jesus Christ our Lord	Saviour of my soul
Let my thoughts be Your thoughts	that is all in all
Let my senses be Your senses	that is all in all
Let my heart be Your heart	that is all in all
Let my will be Your will	that is all in all
Let my deeds be Your deeds	that is all in all
Let my way be Your way	that is all in all

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.





**JANUARY
FIFTH SUNDAY**

LIFE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Please read Luke 15:11-32, Matthew 25:14-30, review the life of St. Anthony in commemoration of his feast on Touba 22 (January 31st) and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

We have to learn to be positive in our thinking and in our attitudes and be responsible in what we do.

MEMORY VERSE:

"Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me." Luke 15:1

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) What does it mean to be responsible?
- 2) What are some of the responsibilities that we have currently in our lives?
- 3) Who do we have a responsibility towards?

✠ From the beginning of the world, Adam and Eve were held responsible for their disobedience to God. God said to Eve after the sin, "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children, your desire shall be for your husband and he shall rule over you." (Genesis 3:16). As for Adam, "The Lord sent him out of the garden of Eden

to till the ground from which he was taken. So he drove out the man." (Genesis 3:23-24).

✝ Also Cain was held responsible when he killed his brother. Eve bore Cain and Abel. Abel became a keeper of sheep and Cain became a tiller of ground. "Cain brought an offering of fruit of the ground to the Lord. Also Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat". (Genesis 4:2-3). So Abel offered his best to God. God respected Abel and his offering and He did not respect Cain and his offering. Cain became so angry and killed his brother. Then God told him, "So now you are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your land." (Genesis 4:11). Cain was held responsible for killing his brother and was punished. We are responsible for everything we do.

✝ **We are responsible to God for what we do: Please give two examples:**

(1) The Parable of the Lost Son: Luke 15:11-32

The younger son wanted to take his portion of goods from his father, spend it as he wishes and be away from his father. He was held responsible for his action. He was involved in a very bad situation after he left his father's house. "And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything" (Luke 15:16). After the lost son had suffered a lot, he took the positive approach. "He came to himself ... I will rise and go to my father and he arose and came to his father ... when his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him ..," (Luke 15:17-22).

(2) The Parable of the Talents: Matthew 25:14-30

Every one of the servants received his share of the goods from his master. Some of the servants used their goods (i.e., their talents) and made profits and produced some more. They took their reward from their master. He said to them, "Well done, good and faithful servant, you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things, enter into the joy of your Lord." (Matthew 25:21). The other servants who did not use their goods (i.e., their talents), they also got their reward. He said to them, "You wicked and lazy servant

And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Matthew 25:26-30).

✝ **We are responsible to our families:**

Success of the family life is based on cooperation of every member in it. Everyone should share the responsibility. Our Lord Jesus was helping Joseph (to whom his Mother was betrothed) in his work as a carpenter.

At our age of Grade 3 or 4, we can do a lot of things around the house. We can also help our younger brothers and sisters on behalf of our parents.

✝ **We are responsible to the society and the church:**

We have to spare some of our time to serve the church and the society. We also have to abide with the laws and the system of the society.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) We are not babies any more. We must become responsible for what we say or do.
- (2) We should use our talents which the Lord gave us to serve Him, to serve in His church, to cooperate in the family life and to serve the society that we live in.

SONGS

JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD

“Now you are the body of Christ and members individually.” (1Cor 12:27)

REFRAIN

Jesus Christ our Lord	Saviour of my soul
Let my thoughts be Your thoughts	that is all in all
Let my senses be Your senses	that is all in all
Let my heart be Your heart	that is all in all
Let my will be Your will	that is all in all
Let my deeds be Your deeds	that is all in all
Let my way be Your way	that is all in all

Recitation Curriculum :

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**FEBRUARY
FIRST SUNDAY**

LOVE NEVER FAILS

Please read: 1 Corinthians 13:1-8 "The Greatest Gift", Luke 10:30-37 - "The Good Samaritan", Genesis Chapters 37, 43 and 44 "Joseph's Brothers had Envy and no Love", and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To deal with love in everything we do in our daily life. This way we can have an effective relationship with God because He is love.

MEMORY VERSE:

"Love never fails" I Cor. 13:8

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) What does it mean to have Love?
- 2) What are the typical characteristics of a loving Christian?

✠ Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-8 and explain. Love is the greatest gift. There is no benefit from anything good that we do if it is not based on love. If I did all the things mentioned, 1 Cor. 13:1-3 (I speak with the tongues of men and of angels ... I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge ... I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains ... I bestow all my goods to feed the poor or I give my body to be burned) and I do not

have love, then I do not know God because "God is love", "God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him" (1 John 4:16).

✝ Please ask the children to say some examples out of their daily life experience on the application of love as mentioned in the following points:

✝ **Love suffers long and is kind:**

Even if friends did something bad to us we have to be patient and kind. We also have to be patient and kind to our younger brothers and sisters, to the handicapped, to the elderly and to all people.

✝ **Love does not envy; love does not parade itself:**

Tell the story of Joseph's brothers when they sold him. They did not love Joseph but he loved them and went out of his house to look for them and ensure their safety. Therefore God helped him and turned his bad situation as a slave into a very good situation as the best man behind Pharaoh.

✝ **Love is not puffed up, does not behave rudely:**

We have to speak to people in a nice way and never say something bad intentionally to anger people.

✝ **Love does not seek its own:**

We have to look for the general benefit and not to focus only on our ways of doing things. At home, at church and at school we have to cooperate in doing things, first for the benefit of everyone else and second for our own benefit.

✝ **Love is not provoked; it thinks no evil:**

If we differ in opinion with people, we can express that in a kind way and not aggressively.

✝ **Love does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth:**

If we find someone doing something wrong, we should feel sorry for him and we have to be careful not to fall in the same mistake. We should not judge him. If someone is doing right things, then we should rejoice and thank God for His gift to him.

✝ **Love bears all things:**

We should bear our responsibilities in life with a spirit of complete love.

- † **Love believes all things:**
This means that we must not doubt what other people say. But we have to examine it and make sure it is according to God's commandments.
- † **Love hopes all things:**
Love always seeks good things and anticipates good things to happen.
- † **Love endures all things:**
Love always has patience in dealing with people's actions.
- † **Love never fails:**
Mention the story of "The Good Samaritan" in detail (Luke 10:30-37). Also mention Joseph's behaviour towards his brothers when they came to Egypt and met him (Genesis 43 and 44).

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) We have to base everything we do on love because love is the good foundation for all our relationships with others.
- (2) The ultimate goal of loving others is to see that all people are rejoicing together and inherit the eternal glory.
- (3) Even if we differ in opinion with people, we have to express ourselves in full love.

SONGS

LOVE, LOVE, LOVE

Love, love, love, love
Love your neighbour as yourself

The Gospel in a word is love
Love, love, love

Pantocrator
You created heaven and earth

You are my Creator
I adore You.

Jesus Christ
You are our Sacrifice

You are our Redeemer
I love You

Holy Spirit
You sanctify our souls

You are our Comforter
I need You

Coptic Church
Through Your Sacraments we are saved

You are our blessing and pride.
I serve you

Agios O Theo-os
Agios Athanatos
Eleison ymas

Agios Ees- shiros
Eleison ymas

Recitation Curriculum:

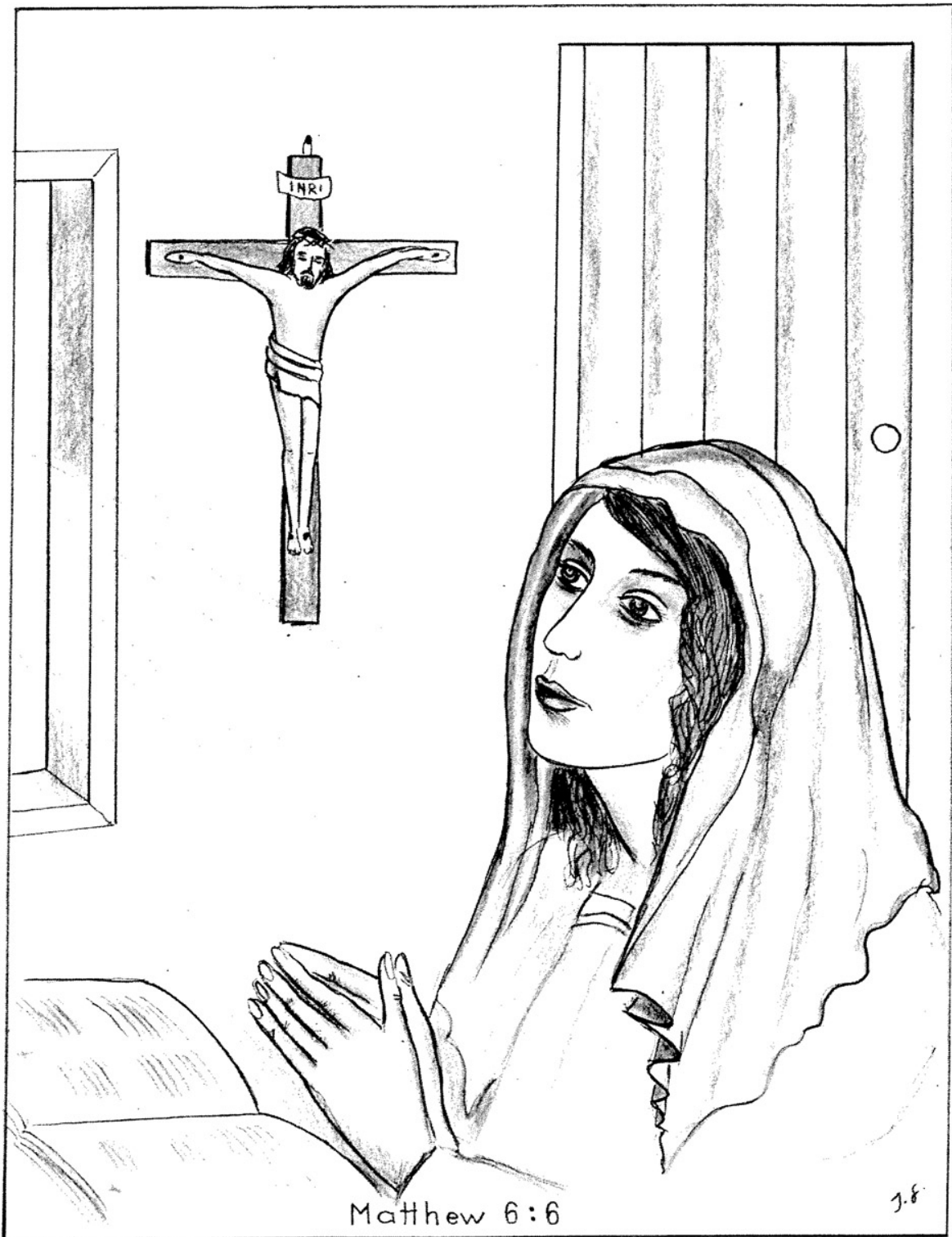
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Matthew 6:6



**FEBRUARY
SECOND SUNDAY**

THE LORD'S PRAYER - I

Please read Matthew 6:9-14, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is the first lesson of a series of three lessons on the Lord's Prayer. In this lesson we learn that God is our heavenly Father who takes care of us and that the mention of His Holy name purifies us.

MEMORY VERSE:

"But when you pray, go into your room and when you have shut your door, pray to your father" Matthew 6:6

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) What are some of the behaviours that should come along with prayers?
- 2) Do we really think of God as our Heavenly Father?
- 3) Our Heavenly Father gave us a great gift which shows His highest love towards us, what is that gift?

† Our Father, who art in Heaven:

When the Son of God was incarnated, He told us about the nature of the "Father"

"No one has seen God at any time, the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known" (John 1:18).

So the Lord Jesus declared that the nature of God is that He is "our Father". The Lord Jesus said, "But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father" (Matthew 6:6).

✝ **Definition of Prayer:**

It is a meeting with the Father. It is a talk from the heart to God.

Our relationship with God must be established on the basis of sons and daughters with their Father who is full of love.

✝ Our Lord Jesus Christ came to declare that God is "our Father":

Jesus our Saviour always wanted to draw our attention to the fact that God is our Father:

"And your Father knows that you need these things" (Luke 12:30). Then He gives us generously.

"If a son asks for bread from any father among you will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish, or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him" (Luke 11:1 1-13).

✝ **This is the main purpose of the birth of the Lord Jesus:** to make us sons and daughters of God.

✝ God is everywhere. Why do we then say, "**Who art in heaven**"? Our Lord Jesus taught us to say that to draw our attention to the heaven. Here are the worldly things and there are the heavenly things. Our Beloved Jesus Christ wanted us to concentrate and give highest priority to heavenly matters. We are going to spend the rest of our life in heaven, after we die, Therefore, we must always think about heaven.

✝ The Holy Spirit also declares that God is "our Father":
"For you did not receive the spirit of bondage to again fear, but you received the spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, Abba! Father! (Romans 8:15).

Therefore, the Holy Spirit inside us is always crying inside us, reminding us that we are sons and daughters of God.

✝ We are the Sons and daughters of God:
"See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God" (1 John 3:1). Hence, as God is our Father, therefore we are His sons.

✝ We are the Sons and daughters of God with Authority:
"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name." (John 1:12)

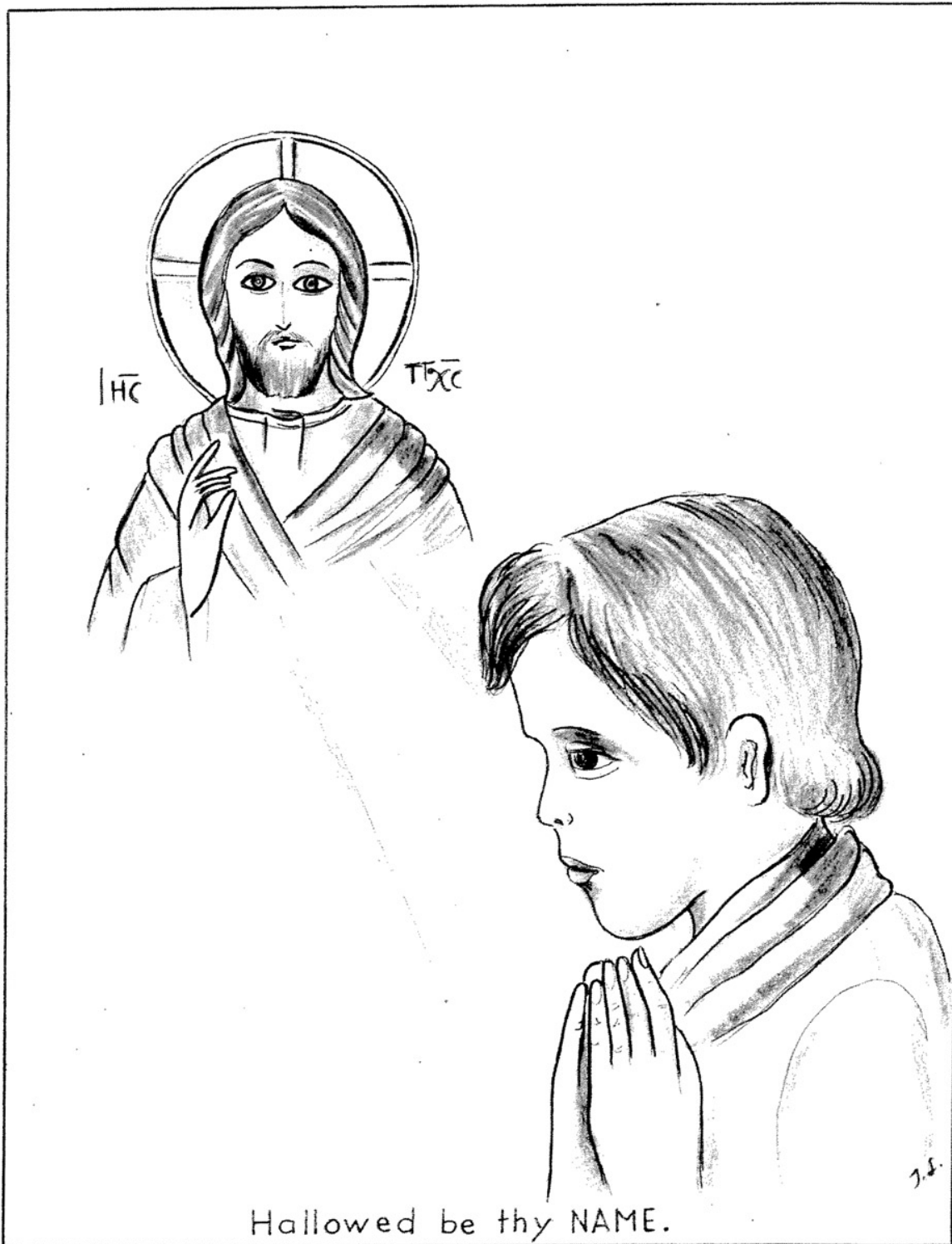
✝ **Hallowed be Thy name:**

- When we were baptized we became bearers of the Holy Spirit. When we pray "Hallowed be thy name" it means that Holiness from the Spirit of God may flow inside us.
- When we pray "Hallowed be thy name" we become anxious to be Holy. "Pursue peace with all men, and holiness without which no one will see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14).
- Holiness opens our eyes to our birth from heaven as we declare that we are the sons and daughters of the Holy God.
- "For both he who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one origin, for which reason is not ashamed to call them brethren saying 'I will declare your name to my brethren'; in the midst of the congregation I will sing praise to you." (Hebrew 2:11-12).
- Hallowed be Thy name is the prayer of the whole church: the priest, the servants, the parents ... everyone is entreating to have holiness.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Every time we say the Lord's Prayer, we must pray it slowly with full concentration and remember that we are talking to our Father. We pray in the name of all the church members by saying "Our Father" not "My Father".

- (2) The Name of God is Holy. When we pray saying "Hallowed be Thy Name", we entreat that His name purifies us to become Holy by the action of His Holy Spirit inside us.
- (3) For God to be our Father is an honour and obligation. It is an honour because we do not deserve to call God our Father. It is an obligation means if we are children of God we have to behave like ones.



SONGS

OUR LIFE IS FILLED WITH JOY

“I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High.” (Ps 9:2)

Our life is filled with joy
O my Lord Jesus Christ

to remember Your Holy name
my Redeemer and Saviour

All creations glorify Thee
O my Lord Jesus Christ

those on earth and in heaven
my Redeemer and Saviour

Seven times in every day
O my Lord Jesus Christ

to the Lord I stand and pray
my Redeemer and Saviour

From the morning to the eve
O my Lord Jesus Christ

Your Holy name is in my heart
my Redeemer and Saviour

All the sins that I have done
O my Lord Jesus Christ

please forgive O blessed Son
my Redeemer and Saviour

The son of God in His glory
O my Lord Jesus Christ

will come again on judgment day
my Redeemer and Saviour

To give each one of us all
O my Lord Jesus Christ

according to what we have done
my Redeemer and Saviour

May we then not hear that sound
O my Lord Jesus Christ

that proclaims I know you not
my Redeemer and Saviour

Recitation Curriculum :

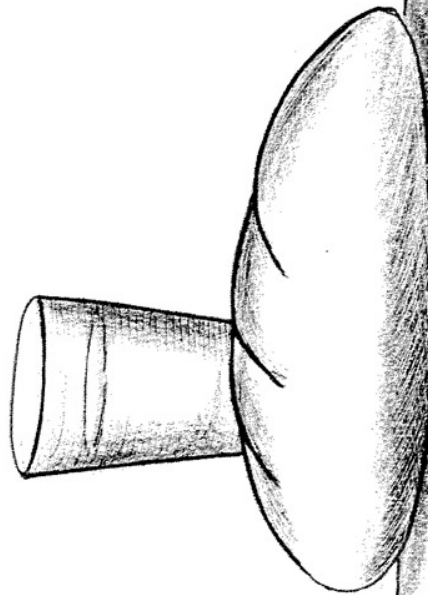
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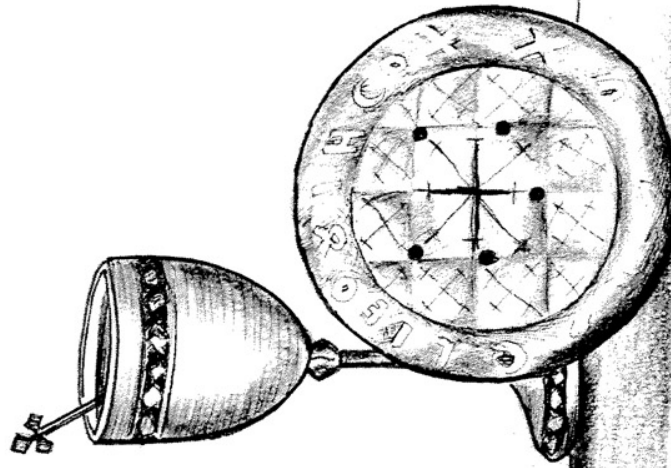
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The daily bread.



The Spiritual bread and wine.

Give us this day our daily BREAD.



**FEBRUARY
THIRD SUNDAY**

THE LORD'S PRAYER - II

Please read Matthew 6: 9-14, and give the lesson with emphasis on the below points.

PURPOSE OF THIS LESSON:

This is the second lesson of a series of three lessons on the Lord's Prayer. In this lesson we learn that we, the Christians, belong to the Kingdom of God.

MEMORY VERSE:

"Give us this day our daily bread" Matthew 6:11

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) When we say "Thy Kingdom comes", is this kingdom up in Heaven or on earth?
- 2) What are some of the characteristics of that kingdom?

✝ **"Thy kingdom come"**

- This is the second request in the Lord's Prayer. The Kingdom of God is the right of the children of God and the Lord Jesus is asking us to pray for having it, If we truly behave as children as of God, we are certainly members in His Kingdom.
- The Kingdom of His Beloved Son:

- ✝ "He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the Kingdom of His beloved Son" (Colossians 1:13). This means that in this Kingdom we are all His children with our Saviour Jesus Christ as our head (because the Lord Jesus is the Head of our church whom everyone of us is a member of).
- ✝ This is the Kingdom of the children in the bosom of the Father. How do we define the kingdom of God? It can be defined as follows:
 - (A) **The Kingdom of Love:**
It is a Kingdom governed by love. "By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35). Let all our matters be discussed and settled in complete love for one another.
 - (B) **The Kingdom is not from this World:**
This Kingdom is not established on the materialistic things of this world. This Kingdom is for the meek, the kind, the peace-makers and the pure in heart.

The Kingdom of the Lord Jesus is within our souls.

- Our Lord Jesus taught us to pray: "Our Father Thy kingdom come", Let us pray slowly and think about this beautiful Kingdom of God when we become members of it.
- Please God strengthen us to be part of Your Kingdom so that we discover Your presence with us and inside us. Then we have no fear, no worries and no problems. Also when we say "Thy kingdom come" we are praying for the wide-spread of His salvation over all nations, we are also praying for this second coming in His full glory to have our place in the Kingdom that was prepared for us.
- ✝ **"Thy will be done":**
 - No one can say "Thy will be done" before he says "our Father". This is because when we realize that God is our Father, we entreat Him as His children to do what is to our benefit as His will.
 - Children are best to say "Thy will be done":

When a child is walking with his father holding his hands, he does not ask about the road. He is completely under the guidance of his father. "But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." (2 Corinthians 11:3)

- What is preventing us from leaving the full guidance and responsibility to God?

Because we like things to be done in a certain way according to our benefit as we think of them, also we must keep thinking of God as "Our Father" who is in control of everything and knows what is good for our benefits.

- Let us not think of the past or the future. We only say "Thy will be done" for all our present needs.
- Please Lord let everything in our life be according to Your will because You are "our Father", We must remember at all times that God is "our Father" and hence we give Him the full control of our life. In our thanksgiving prayers we call God "The Beneficent" because He only does good things. Therefore, when we put our full trust in God we are sure that He takes care of us. Even if things do not appear at the beginning to be good but they are in God's hands, everything will turn good. Remember two stories; Joseph son of Jacob (Genesis Chapters 37 to 42) and St. Peter the Disciple of our Lord Jesus (Acts 12:1-17).

✝ **"On earth as it is in heaven":**

- This part is a completion of the first three parts:

✝ Our heavenly Father "Hallowed be Thy name" in my life on earth as it is in heaven.

✝ Our heavenly Father "Thy kingdom come" in my life on earth as it is in heaven.

✝ Our heavenly Father "Thy will be done" in my life on earth as it is in heaven,

In the Divine Liturgy:

✝ In celebrating the Divine Liturgy we are actually celebrating the coming of Jesus our Lord with His Flesh to the altar and at the same time praising Him with the angels saying, "Holy, Holy, Holy". Hence, the Divine Liturgy is the

best way to get out of the whole world and say, "Let it be on earth as it is in heaven".

Therefore, we sing saying, "He made the two in one Heaven and Earth,"

✝ This means that the heavenly church comes to us on earth. It so means as God's will is prevailing in heaven, we are praying for His will to prevail on earth as well.

✝ **"Give us this day our daily bread":**

- **Spiritual Meaning:**

The bread of life is the Body of our Beloved Jesus we take when we take communion.

"I am the living bread which came down from Heaven, If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world," (John 6:5 1)

When we eat the Flesh and drink the Blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ in the communion we grow spiritually.

- **Literal Meaning:**

Give us dear Lord our daily needs of life. We are not asking for luxurious things because as sons of God we do not care about luxurious things but we are asking for the bread of life.

"And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content." (1 Timothy 6:8)

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON:

- (1) When we were baptized we became sons and daughters of God. Since then we belonged to His Kingdom because we became altars of God and the Spirit of God is inside us. We must love one another if we are truly children of God.
- (2) To continue in the Kingdom Of God, one has to stay committed to God in his or her prayers and regular attendance in the church.
- (3) Our spiritual growth is fed by the Flesh and Blood of our Lord Jesus which we take in the communion.



SONGS

OUR LIFE IS FILLED WITH JOY

“I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High.” (Ps 9:2)

Our life is filled with joy
O my Lord Jesus Christ

to remember Your Holy name
my Redeemer and Saviour

All creations glorify Thee
O my Lord Jesus Christ

those on earth and in heaven
my Redeemer and Saviour

Seven times in every day
O my Lord Jesus Christ

to the Lord I stand and pray
my Redeemer and Saviour

From the morning to the eve
O my Lord Jesus Christ

Your Holy name is in my heart
my Redeemer and Saviour

All the sins that I have done
O my Lord Jesus Christ

please forgive O blessed Son
my Redeemer and Saviour

The son of God in His glory
O my Lord Jesus Christ

will come again on judgment day
my Redeemer and Saviour

To give each one of us all
O my Lord Jesus Christ

according to what we have done
my Redeemer and Saviour

May we then not hear that sound
O my Lord Jesus Christ

that proclaims I know you not
my Redeemer and Saviour

Recitation Curriculum :

Please Look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.



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**FEBRUARY
FOURTH SUNDAY**

The Lord's Prayer - III

Please read Matthew 6:9-14, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is the third lesson of a series of three lessons on the Lord's Prayer. In this lesson we learn that in order to live a victorious life over sin, we have to seek the Lord's help to deliver us from the evil one and to forgive those who trespass against us.

MEMORY VERSE:

"But deliver us from the evil one" Matthew 6:13

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) Why is it important to forgive the sins of others?
- 2) Would God forgive our sins if we don't forgive those of others?

Introduce the story of the Pharisee and tax collectors who were praying for God.

✠ **And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us:**

- We are asking the Lord to forgive our sins. This in itself is an admittance from us that we are sinners and that we are asking the mercy of God. Please tell the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector when both went to pray. The tax collector said, "Have mercy O Lord on me because I am a sinner."

The Pharisee only praised himself. The Lord Jesus said after the parable that the tax collector only went home with his sins completely washed from him.

- As a condition for forgiveness, we must forgive other people's mistakes against us. Our Lord Jesus Christ said, "For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged and with the same measure you use, it will be measured back to you." (Matthew 7:2)
- When we admit that we are sinners and do not blame anyone for our mistakes, God forgives our sins,

✝ **And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one:**

- The Lord Jesus is urging us to pray and say "Please God do not allow us to be tempted by bad things and fall into temptation."
- This is an admittance to God that we are little and weak and cannot withstand any strong temptation.
- **Why does God allow the devil to tempt us sometimes?**

✝ (a) To prune us and bring us back to Him if we did something wrong.

✝ (b) To praise us if we pass the temptation similar to example of Job.

- Then the last part of the Prayer "deliver us from the evil one".

It means the whole thing: keep us with You dear God and protect us. Let us enjoy the peace, love and joy of life with You.

✝ Jesus said, "Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation."

We have to pray and be with God at all times. When we lose connection with God the evil one comes to tempt us and try to force us to commit sins. A good example to show the importance of our continuous connection with God is as follows: If we look at the electric wire while it is plugged to the wall, if anyone touches the tip of it, he dies because there is electricity in it. But if we unplug this wire from the wall, anyone can play with it. As long as we are connected with God, the evil one cannot come close to tempt us. But if we are disconnected from God (the source of our strength), the evil one will come and tempt us.

✝ We ask you dear God to help us because we are so weak in faith and alone we do not have the strength to defeat the evil one. But with You our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ, we are with our Father, completely protected and the devil cannot hurt us.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) From now on when we pray the Lord's Prayer, we should be slow and think about its meaning.
- (2) In every prayer, let us seek the Lord's help against the devil who is like a lion going around trying his hardest to tempt and lead us to fall in sins.
- (3) An important element in the spiritual life is regularity. We have to be regular in our prayers, reading of the Holy Bible and attending the church.

SONGS

OUR LIFE IS FILLED WITH JOY

“I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High.” (Ps 9:2)

Our life is filled with joy
O my Lord Jesus Christ

to remember Your Holy name
my Redeemer and Saviour

All creations glorify Thee
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Recitation Curriculum:

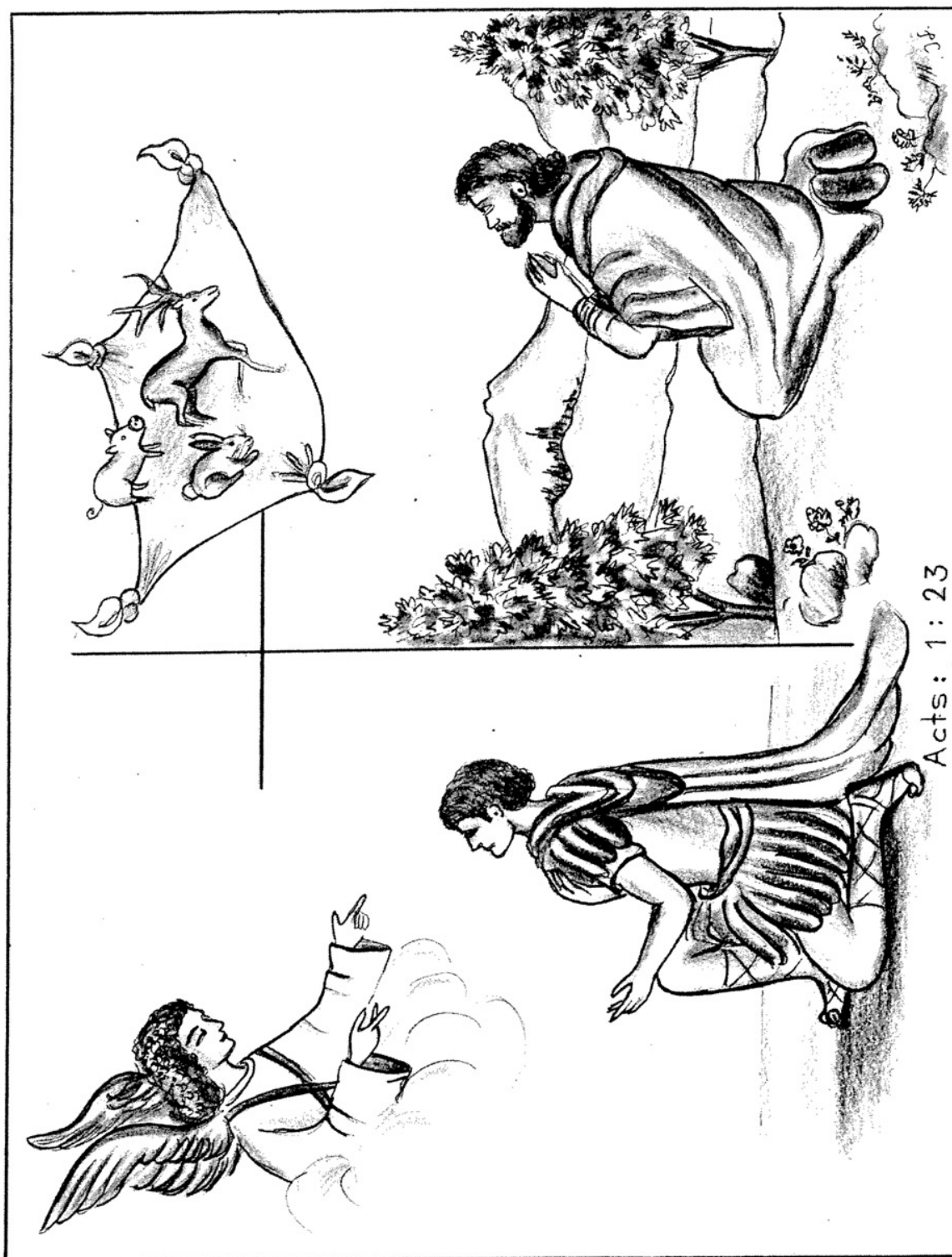
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**MARCH
FIRST SUNDAY**

OUR CHURCH LOVES AND WELCOMES ALL PEOPLE - I

CORNELIUS' FAITH

Please read Acts 10:1-23, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is lesson one in a series of two lessons. In this lesson we will learn that God shows no partiality. Therefore, our church loves and welcomes all people and seeks their salvation.

MEMORY VERSE:

"But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him" Acts 10:35

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) What does a Gentile mean?
- 2) Does God differentiate between a Gentile and a Christian?
- 3) Should we accept people who have different backgrounds to become Christians?

Introduce the story of Cornelius and St. Peter.

✝ Acts Chapter 10 deals with a remarkable event treated quite in detail, of a heathen who sought God, and of miraculous measures God took to see that he heard the Gospel and was saved.

✝ Cornelius was a centurion (or officer, usually captain of a hundred men) in the group of Roman soldiers called the Italian band. He was "devout", not a Christian, but he had a heartfelt desire for God and doing the right things. He was not a Jew. He was a Gentile from Italy.

✝ **Cornelius was good:**

- He feared God. We are also supposed to be careful not to make God angry by neglecting His commandments and continuing to do bad things.
- He gave alms. We must also give money to the poor as a sign of our love for them.
- He prayed constantly. We must also pray several times during the day to be close to our Heavenly Father and enjoy being with Him and experience His loving kindness.

✝ Where then are his morality, his prayer fulfillment, his God fearing, his devoutness? All men have God's law written in their heart and conscience. St. Paul said, "For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things contained in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them." (Romans 2:14-15)

✝ God accepted Cornelius and his life and wanted to give him what he still needed very badly: to be baptized, become a Christian, have the Holy Spirit and be saved by the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ which was shed on the Cross.

✝ St. Peter in preaching Christianity to Cornelius represents the church. Remember that the Lord Jesus one time said to Peter, "You are Peter and on this rock I build my church," The church loves all people and her goal is to preach Christianity to all people so that they can gain salvation through the Saviour Jesus Christ.

✝ **Our Saviour Jesus Christ prepared everything for Cornelius:**

- He sent his angel to Cornelius to tell him what to do:
i.e., to send three men to Peter,

- He also sent the message to St. Peter to accept the three men and go with them.
- How did the Lord explain to St. Peter to accept Cornelius? St. Peter had a vision, a great sheet from heaven, let down by four corners ... Please tell the story in full detail and explain that it means God has no partiality.

✝ Describe the conversation between St. Peter and the three men. St. Peter called them in to be his guests. "Then he invited them in and lodged them." (Acts 10:23)

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) As long as a person does his best towards God and people, God then devises a well-prepared plan and makes sure that this person would become Christian and gain salvation.
- (2) God loves all people and He has no partiality. Therefore we must love all people as well, regardless of their nationality, colour, sex, education or even religion.
- (3) Our churches must be very welcoming to guests to come in to listen to the word of God, pray and meet with us. To preach the word of God we must be very welcoming and have no partiality.

SONGS

Our Father

“when you pray say: Our Father in heaven...” (Lk11:2)

Our Father Who art in heaven
We cry unto you in afflictions

hallowed be Thy name
Our Father Who art in heaven

Your name will be glorified O Helper
Have mercy on Your servants

and blessed at all times
Our Father who art in heaven

Your kingdom come O my Lord
This is my prayer and pleading

And Your Holy spirit fills my heart
Our Father Who art in heaven

Your will be done on earth
Makes us obedient to your word

fulfilled and we submit to it
Our Father Who art in heaven

Your will be done in heaven
Save us all from trials

on earth, You are our Master
Our Father who art in heaven

This our daily bread
Your mercies are multiplied

Give us, O glorious God
Our Father who art in heaven

Recitation Curriculum:

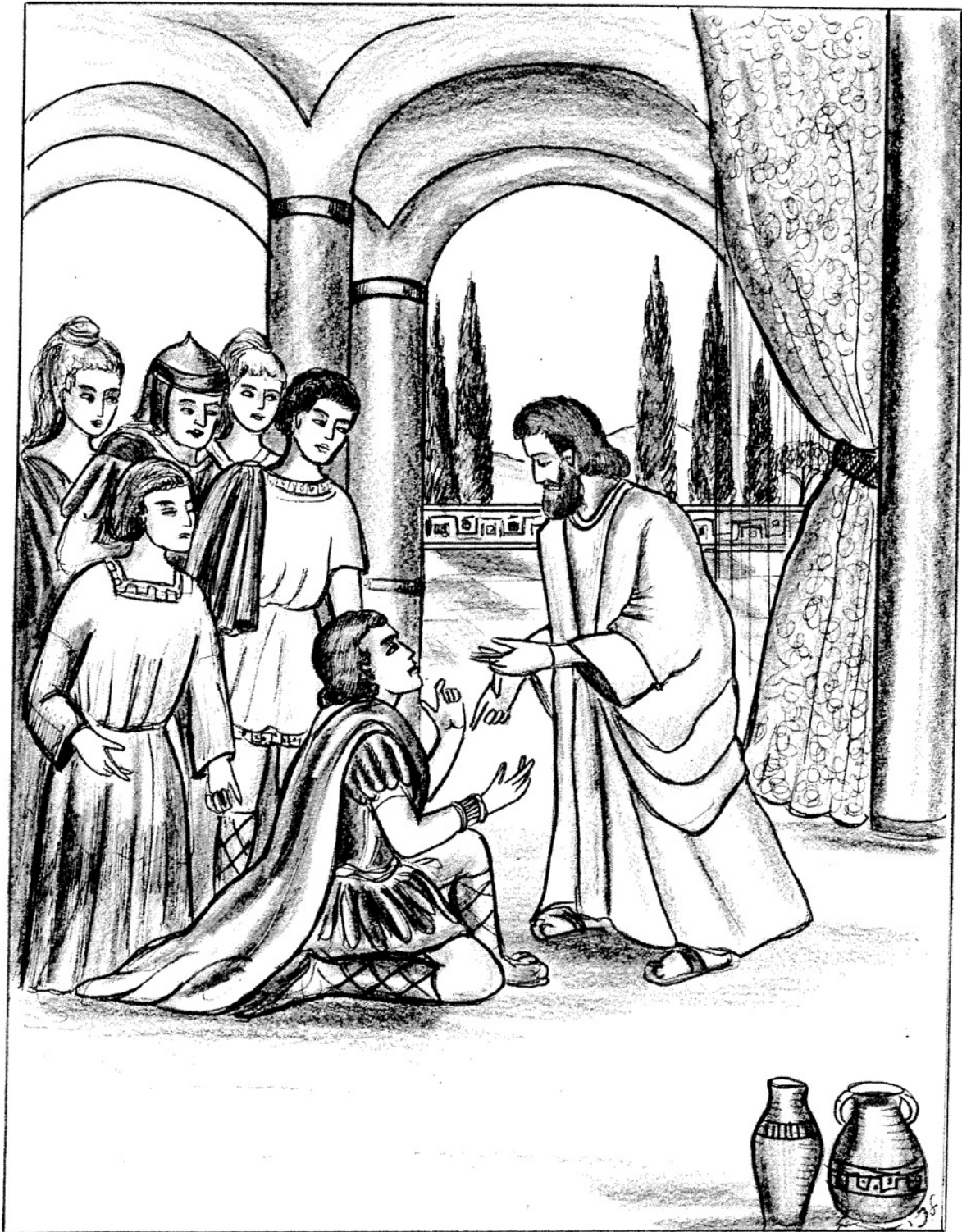
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**MARCH
SECOND SUNDAY**

**OUR CHURCH LOVES AND WELCOMES ALL PEOPLE - II
CORNELIUS' FAITH**

Please read Acts Chapter 10:24 to the end, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is the second lesson in a series of two lessons. In this lesson we learn that we must take positive actions to help others gain salvation as St. Peter did to help Cornelius.

MEMORY VERSE:

“...And he called together his relative and close friends” Acts 10:24

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) What does it mean to preach and give examples of some of the saints who preached Christianity?
- 2) Why do you think preaching is important in Christianity?

Continue the story of Cornelius emphasizing the idea of providing salvation to others, who are non-Christians.

✚ Start from the ending of the last lesson after a quick review.

✝ Describe St. Peter's visit to Cornelius' house (Acts 10:24-33).

✝ Cornelius waited for them and had called together his kinsmen and close friends. Already this good man, seeking to know God, had led others to have real confidence in his sincerity and character. Now with him are his household, his kinsmen, servants and some of the soldiers.

✝ Cornelius fell down and worshipped St. Peter but St. Peter lifted him up saying "stand up; I myself am also a man."

✝ St. Peter described to them the vision and that he should not call anyone unclean.

✝ Cornelius described to them what the angel told him, (Specify).

✝ Cornelius thanked St. Peter because he was kind enough to come. Then Cornelius asked St. Peter to teach them the word of the Lord.

✝ Describe what St. Peter said in preaching to Cornelius about the Saviour Jesus Christ (Acts 10:34-43):

- In this part, St. Peter was telling Cornelius about the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ.

✝ Cornelius had certainly heard about the Lord Jesus. "That word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea", (Acts 10:37). Caesarea, where this Roman soldier was stationed was only some forty miles from Nazareth and Capernaum, perhaps fifty or fifty-five miles from Jerusalem. The multitudes who assembled from time to time to hear the Lord Jesus Christ (for example, five thousand men besides the women and children at one time, Matthew 14:2 1), and the fact that the crowd around the Lord Jesus was called "the multitude" or "multitudes" more than twenty times in the Gospel of Matthew alone, show that nationwide the people talked about Jesus, Again, He had sent the twelve and then the seventy into every city and place. All Judea, all Jewish Palestine had been covered with reports about our Lord Jesus, His marvelous healings and His teachings.

- **Cornelius evidently did not know how to be saved. Even so, many people who hear about Christ do not know how to be saved.**
- St. Peter was careful to say that the Gospel is primarily concerned with preaching peace through Jesus Christ. He is Lord of all, (Acts 10:36), There has never been any way to approach God and have peace with Him except through Jesus Christ. So Abraham rejoiced to see Christ's day and he

believed in God and it was credited to him for righteousness (John 8:56, Genesis 15:6 and Romans 4:3). The Old Testament saints did not know in detail how God would provide a sacrifice to pay for sin, but spiritually minded saints in the Old Testament did trust in God's provision for their sins, the sacrifice, the Messiah who was to come.

- St. Peter was preaching that Jesus was personally "the mighty God" (Isa. 9:6). He was "the image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15). And "by Him were all things created ... And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist" (Col. 1:16-17). Before the Lord Jesus was born, Mary, filled with the Spirit, said, "My Spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour" (Luke 1:47)

"And we are witness of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem" (Acts 10:39). So, the Apostles were the witnesses and they described to the people what had happened. All through the book of Acts the preaching largely takes the form of witnessing.

"To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43). So, all the prophets preach the same Saviour, the same plan of salvation.

✠ The Holy Spirit Falls on the Gentiles (Acts 10:44-48)

- While St. Peter was still talking about the Saviour Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit descended on all who heard the word.
- The Holy Spirit was also given to the Gentiles. So God had no partiality.
- When they were filled with the Holy Spirit, they were speaking in tongues and extolling God.
- St. Peter baptized Cornelius and all his family in the name of Jesus Christ.
- St. Peter stayed with them for some days to lead and teach them more.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) God wants all people to be saved. He has no partiality. Hence, we must also have no partiality but love all people, pray for them and act for their salvation. We should be good Christians and give example by our good behaviour so that others will glorify God's name and follow our footsteps.

We should outreach our friends who do not come to church or to Sunday School, We should visit the sick and serve the elderly.

- (2) Cornelius invited other people when St. Peter visited him so that they can become Christians as well. We also have to invite people to enjoy the blessing that we have and share with us.
- (3) So many people have heard about the Lord Jesus but they do not know how to be saved by him. We have to help.



SONGS

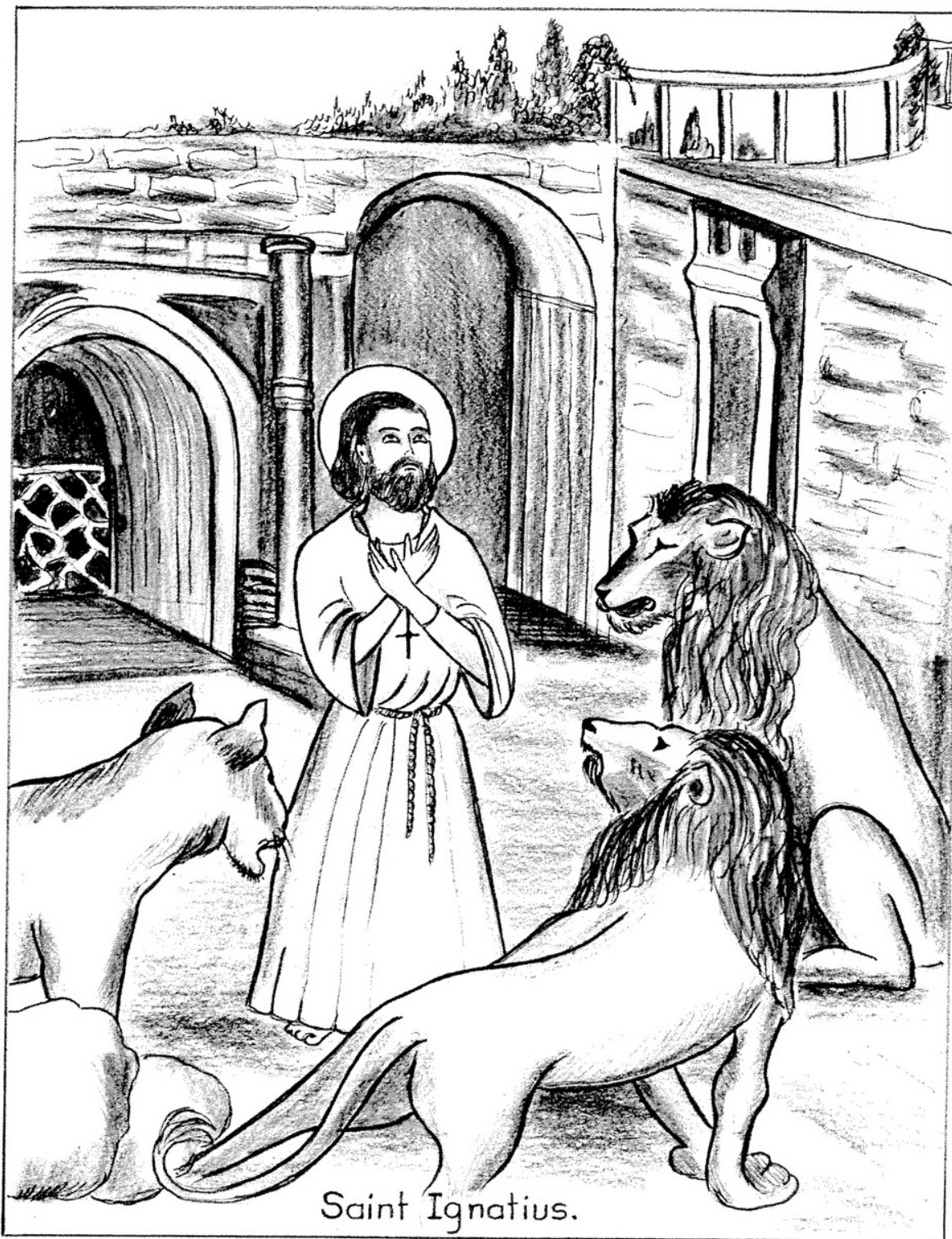
Our Father

“When you pray say: Our Father in heaven...” (Lk11:2)

Our Father Who art in heaven	hallowed be Thy name
We cry unto you in afflictions	Our Father Who art in heaven
Your name will be glorified O Helper	and blessed at all times
Have mercy on Your servants	Our Father who art in heaven
Your kingdom come O my Lord	And Your Holy spirit fills my heart
This is my prayer and pleading	Our Father Who art in heaven
Your will be done on earth	fulfilled and we submit to it
Makes us obedient to your word	Our Father Who art in heaven
Your will be done in heaven	on earth, You are our Master
Save us all from trials	Our Father who art in heaven
This our daily bread	Give us, O glorious God
Your mercies are multiplied	Our Father who art in heaven

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.





**MARCH
THIRD SUNDAY**

SAINT IGNATIUS' LOVE FOR HEAVEN

Please read the attached material "Braving the Lions", and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that St. Ignatius loved the church and all her members. He also was longing for his heavenly share and did his very best to go to heaven.

MEMORY VERSE:

*"And Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them"
Matthew 18:2*

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening questions:

- 1) How much do you love your Church and its members?
- 2) Do you love them enough to sacrifice yourself and your life for them?

- ✠ It is said that St. Ignatius was the child whom Christ set in the midst of His Disciples to teach them humility. Please read: Matthew 18:1-6.
- ✠ The Lord chose St. Ignatius to be the Bishop of Antioch because of his love for Christ and his keen desire to teach people about Him so that they can gain salvation.

- ✝ He was zealous in his work. He taught the people in the church the same teachings he had from the Apostles.
- ✝ Describe in detail the conversation between St. Ignatius and the Emperor. He explained to the Emperor that the word Ignatius means "Bearer of God". From this statement on, he explained to the Emperor in a very strong and clear way that there is only one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and His Son the Lord Jesus Christ who incarnated and became man in order to save us.
- ✝ When he was to be martyred, he asked to be thrown to the lions so that they may eat his body and so its remains will not be a burden to anyone. To that extent he loved the people of the church and chose not to cause any burden to them.
- ✝ He prayed for the church.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) As St. Ignatius was longing for heaven, we too have to do our best not to lose our Share in heaven by loving God and abiding with His commandments.
- (2) We must love the members of the church and do everything possible to help them and above all, be true worshippers.

SONGS

Our Father

“When you pray say: Our Father in heaven...” (Lk11:2)

Our Father Who art in heaven	hallowed be Thy name
We cry unto you in afflictions	Our Father Who art in heaven
Your name will be glorified O Helper	and blessed at all times
Have mercy on Your servants	Our Father who art in heaven
Your kingdom come O my Lord	And Your Holy spirit fills my heart
This is my prayer and pleading	Our Father Who art in heaven
Your will be done on earth	fulfilled and we submit to it
Makes us obedient to your word	Our Father Who art in heaven
Your will be done in heaven	on earth, You are our Master
Save us all from trials	Our Father who art in heaven
This our daily bread	Give us, O glorious God
Your mercies are multiplied	Our Father who art in heaven

Recitation Curriculum :

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BRAVING THE LIONS

It is said that Saint Ignatius was the child whom Christ set in the midst of the Disciples as an example of humility. As Ignatius grew up, his love for his Lord increased and his faith grew. His one ambition was to teach people about Christ. So the Apostles made him Bishop of the church of Antioch.

Ignatius was zealous in his work. He wrote letters which aimed at strengthening the churches in the Christian faith as he had learnt it from the Apostles themselves. And indeed, through his life and teaching, he was able to win many pagan people to Christ.

On his way to fight the Persians, the Emperor Trajan passed through Antioch. There he met Ignatius, and the following conversation took place:

Emperor Trajan: "Are you Ignatius Theophorus?"

Ignatius: "Yes"

Emperor Trajan: "What is the meaning of your name?"

Ignatius: "Bearer of God."

Emperor Trajan: "And do we not also bear our gods to the wars in order to be victorious?"

Ignatius: "How do you consider these graceless statues to be gods?" Emperor Trajan: "Are you blaspheming against our gods?"

Ignatius: "Know, Oh king, that there is no God but one, the Creator of heaven and earth, and His Son the Lord Jesus Christ who became man in order to save us. If you believe in Him, you will be truly happy."

Emperor Trajan: "Let alone this senseless talk, and do what will save your life and win you favour in my sight: offer a sacrifice to my gods, and I shall make you the greatest of my priests."

Ignatius: "May God increase your wealth, Oh king. But I cannot do what you ask, for I am the priest of my Lord Jesus Christ, and to Him alone I offer my daily sacrifice."

The emperor was so angry that he condemned him to exposure before the wild beasts in the Roman amphitheatre. When his Christian friends knew of his fate, they went to see him off with tears in their eyes. As he passed through Smyrna, its bishops went out to meet him, and delegations from nearby churches sought his blessing. So he wrote them a letter saying:

"Let your holy way of life chasten evil-doers. Conquer their hatred and unfairness by love and justice; their cruelty by patience and prayer; and their treachery by faithfulness. For the sake of Christ, bear injustice, loss and persecution. Indeed, for His sake, I bear all this preferring my bonds to the treasures of the world. I rejoice in my sufferings for Him. Pray for me that I may find rest in heaven."

Before leaving to Smyrna, he wrote to the Romans saying:

"I am bound with chains for the love of Christ. I fear that your love for me will bring me harm. I do not want you to prevent my death. For if I am deprived of martyrdom now, on account of your love, it may be very difficult to be martyred later. I long for martyrdom in order to prove myself a Christian, not only in word but also in deed. Let me then be thrown to the beasts. And may the beasts eat up all my body so that its remains will be a burden to no one."

When Ignatius arrived at Rome, the believers there were so happy to see him; but their happiness soon turned to sadness when they learnt of his fate. He stretched out his hands and blessed them. He prayed for the church. When he had finished praying, the soldiers took him to the amphitheatre and set upon him two hungry lions which ate him up, leaving only his bones. These were taken to Antioch.

May the blessings of his prayers be with us; Amen.





**MARCH
FOURTH SUNDAY
THE GREAT LENT**

Please read Matthew 6:16-18, Matthew 4:1-11, the attached material "What is Fasting?", and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that Fasting is a method that helps us to grow in our spiritual life by being less dependent on materialistic things and become closer to God; this could happens to us.....

MEMORY VERSE:

"When you fast, anoint your head and wash your face" Matthew 6:17

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) What is fasting and what are the spiritual benefits that we can attain from fasting?
 - 2) What sort of behaviour should we have when we are fasting?
 - 3) Do we fast only by food alone?
- ✝ There are various lent periods in our Coptic Orthodox church: the Christmas Lent (called Advent), the Holy Forty-day Lent (called the Great Lent), the Apostles' Lent, the Virgin Mary's Lent, Jonah's Lent and every Wednesday and Friday of the week (except in the Master's feasts and during the fifty days after the Easter celebration).

✝ The oldest of these Lents is the great lent that our church is celebrating these days. It is called the Holy forty-day fasting because we remember in it our Lord Jesus who fasted for us forty days and forty nights.

✝ This fasting is 55 days: 1 preparation week + 40 days as our Lord Jesus fasted for us + 1 week which is called the Holy Week or the Pascha Week.

✝ **What is fasting?**

It is a method that helps us to defeat the devil. Our Saviour Jesus Christ Himself, although He did not need to fast, he did so to teach us that fasting will help us to defeat the devil. Fasting does not mean abstaining from food only, but it also means refraining from lies, evil talk, anger and all other sins. We have to do our best and seek the Lord's help in order to overcome falling in sin.

✝ We should start to practice fasting from a young age. But be careful! Stop doing any bad things that you might be doing, for example, not listening to your parents. You will have special power from God during the fasting period to defeat the devil when he comes to you to force you to fall in sin.

✝ If an individual cannot fast the whole duration of the lent (because of health reasons or age or any other reasons), he (or she) should consult his (or her) father of confession and seek an advice for an adequate period of fasting to suit him (or her).

✝ **Teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ about Fasting (Please read Matthew 6:16-18):**

Our Lord Jesus Christ did not talk about the details of the fasting period but He concentrated on the "spirit" of fasting. The ultimate aim of fasting is the purity of the heart. The details of the fasting period were left to the church, by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to set to the believers.

✝ The Fasting of our Lord Jesus Christ (Please read Matthew 4:1-11):

- "And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry" (Matthew 4:2).

This shows us that an important element of fasting is to become hungry. Hence, fasting in our church has two parts: in the first part we are not supposed to eat anything, i.e., skip a meal or two and in the second part we eat only foods without meat or meat products or milk or milk products.

- Fasting was the weapon that our Beloved Jesus Christ offered to His believers to have in the spiritual wars, together with prayers.
 - Our Lord became hungry at the end of forty days to emphasize his humanity because if He fasted more than Moses (Exodus 24:18) or Elijah (1 Kings 19:8) (both of them fasted for forty days and forty nights) the people may think that He did not have a true flesh like ours.
- ✝ Fasting is supposed to be in secret, i.e., do not go around showing off to people that you are a religious person and that you are fasting. Go back to the memory verse and explain it.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

Let us make a commitment to dedicate the Great Lent (the Holy forty-day fast) to God. Let us remember that fasting is not just changing one type of food to another but we must be so careful in staying away from any sin.

SONGS

Our Father

“When you pray say: Our Father in heaven...” (Lk11:2)

Our Father Who art in heaven
We cry unto you in afflictions

hallowed be Thy name
Our Father Who art in heaven

Your name will be glorified O Helper
Have mercy on Your servants

and blessed at all times
Our Father who art in heaven

Your kingdom come O my Lord
This is my prayer and pleading

And Your Holy spirit fills my heart
Our Father Who art in heaven

Your will be done on earth
Makes us obedient to your word

fulfilled and we submit to it
Our Father Who art in heaven

Your will be done in heaven
Save us all from trials

on earth, You are our Master
Our Father who art in heaven

This our daily bread
Your mercies are multiplied

Give us, O glorious God
Our Father who art in heaven

Recitation Curriculum :

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.

WHAT IS FASTING?

The purpose of fasting is to master yourself and to conquer the passions of the flesh. It is also to liberate yourself from depending on the things of this world in order to concentrate on the things of the Kingdom of God. It is to strengthen you spiritually so that you would not yield to temptation and sin.

People fast to be delivered from carnal passion through the humiliation of the flesh.

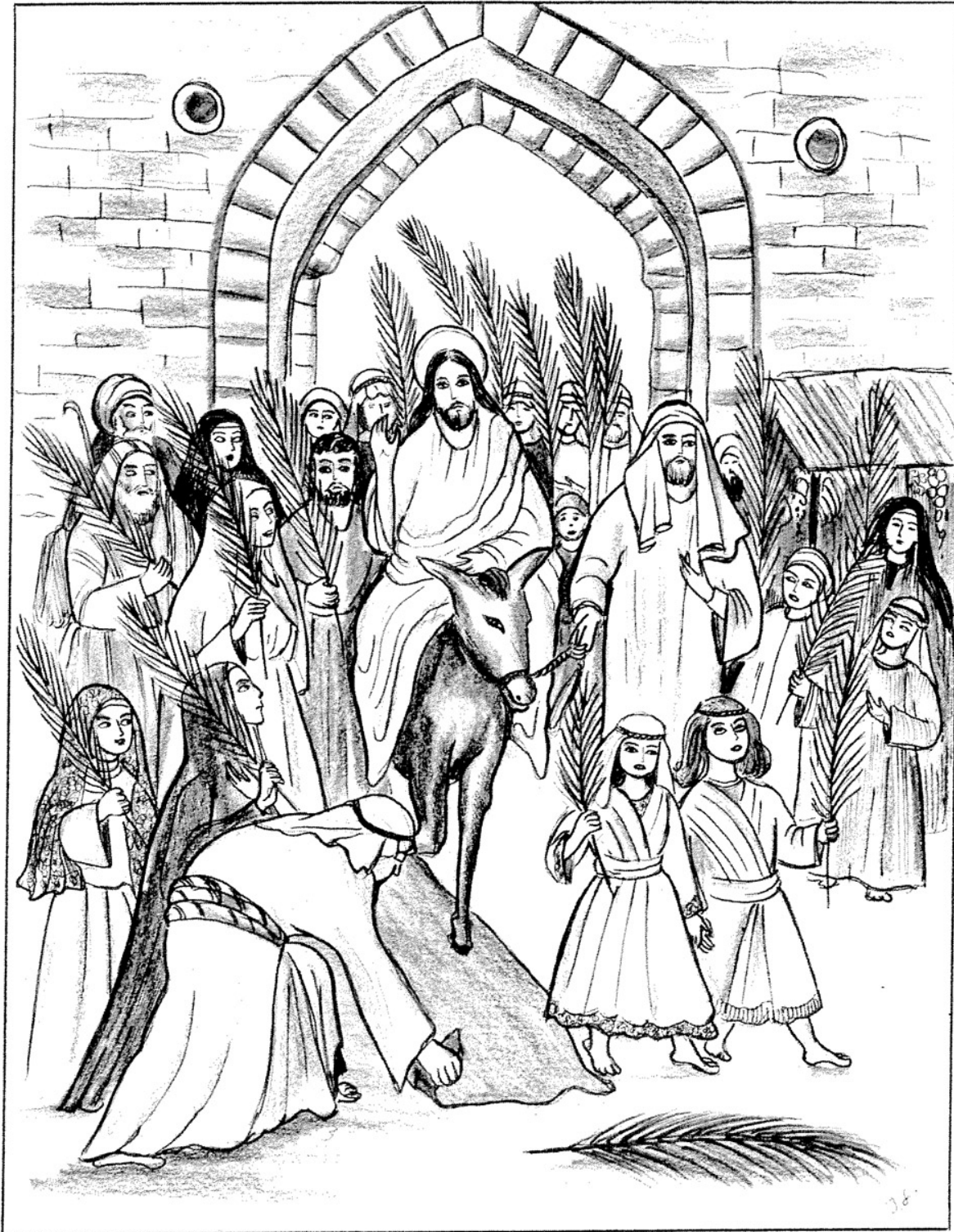
Fasting without effort in virtue is wholly in vain.

In fasting the spirit is working through prayers and contemplation. The heart is working through love of God and mankind.

"Is this not the fast that I have chosen: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free ... is it not to share your bread with the hungry ..." (Isaiah 58:6-7).

In fasting one must not only obey the rule against gluttony in regard to food but also refrain from every sin so that while fasting, the tongue may also fast, refraining from slander, lies, evil talk, degrading one's brother, anger and every sin committed by the tongue.

A man who fasts wisely, wins purity and comes to humility and proves himself a skillful builder.





**APRIL
FIRST SUNDAY**

PALM SUNDAY - JESUS ENTERS JERUSALEM AS KING OF PEACE

Please read Luke 19:29-44, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To describe the events that led to the triumphal entry of our Lord Jesus Christ to Jerusalem as King of Peace. The Lord Jesus is the only one who can grant the true peace.

MEMORY VERSE:

"Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord" Luke 19:38

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

† **Introduction**

Our Lord Jesus went on ahead going up to Jerusalem after He told His Disciples and all the people around Him the parable of the Minas. Therefore, St. Luke said in Chapter 19:28, "When He had said this, He went on ahead going up to Jerusalem". In the parable of the Minas, our Lord described various types of human behaviour towards His Kingdom. Some people accepted Him as the king in their lives; they took the gifts from Him, used these gifts effectively and welcomed Him to reign over them. The Lord Jesus welcomed each of these people saying, "Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten

cities" (Luke 19:17). Others did not use the gifts that their Master gave them and received Him in a very bad manner. For those people, the Lord Jesus said, "But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me" (Luke 19:27).

✝ Our Lord Jesus mentioned this parable just before His entrance to Jerusalem because He was then talking about the people in Jerusalem who had refused Him; they refused Him despite the fact that He was very merciful to them and performed a large number of miracles. Those people who refused the Saviour will be punished on the last day.

✝ **Please read first (with the children) Luke 19:29-44 and explain the various parts as follows:**

- The Lord Jesus knows everything because He is the Son of God. He told His Disciples to enter the village opposite to them and, on entering the village, they will find a colt. He told them what to say to the owner of the colt and that the owner will let the colt go.
- The Lord Jesus entered Jerusalem riding a colt not a horse. It was known in these days that when a king entered a city for war, he rode a horse. He said to His Disciples one time "peace be with you" and he taught His disciples that when they enter a house to teach people, they should first say "peace be with you".
- In the memory verse, the Disciples were singing, saying: blessed is the king because our Lord Jesus is the king of kings who deserves all praise, who comes in the name of the Lord, i.e., He is coming from God as a declaration of God's love for people. The Disciples continued saying: peace in heaven and glory in the highest.

✝ Our Lord Jesus wept over the city of Jerusalem because of His kindness and because He knew in advance about the destruction that would happen to the city.

Jerusalem was a chosen city by God to have the only altar that was deemed fit, according to the law, to have the offerings to God. It was expected that this city will be the first to receive Jesus and follow His teachings and believe in Him. On other hand, the people in Jerusalem refused Him and they became very vicious. Please read Ezekiel 22 3-31 to see what God was saying through the prophet Ezekiel about Jerusalem.

✝ Jerusalem's last chance: when the Saviour entered the city, this was their last chance to gain salvation and they did not know this "You do not know the time of your visitation" (Luke 19:44).

✝ The prophecy of Jesus about Jerusalem was fulfilled. After 35 years from the entrance of Jesus to Jerusalem, Rome attacked the city and completely demolished it, not even leaving a stone unturned. The blood was all over. Why? Because the city did not know Jesus and its inhabitants led a vicious life.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) As true Christians, we must accept the Lord Jesus Christ, who created us and gave us the gift of life, to reign over our lives. We follow what He taught us, praise His name at all times and put our lives in His hands.
- (2) If the Lord Jesus is truly the King of our hearts, we will enjoy His heavenly peace which is only for Christians. Let us entreat Him in our prayers to reign over our hearts, our feelings and our thoughts.
- (3) As in the case of the people in Jerusalem, there will be always a group who rejects the Lord Jesus as their Saviour and they will lose. They will also be a group who welcomes Him and they will win everything.

SONGS

THE LORD ABOVE THE CHERUBIM

The Lord above the Cherubim
Taking the human flesh to redeem

today enters Jerusalem
Hosanna in the highest

Jesus to Jerusalem , planned to go
A big crowd followed Him saying

for Passover according to the law
Hosanna in the highest

Our Saviour and our God
Coming along Jerusalem road

humbly on a donkey He rode
Hosanna in the highest

Passing through the Mount of Olive
To Your kingdom as long as we live

the crowd cried our hearts we give
Hosanna in the highest

Olive branches raised up high
With thundering voice of shout and cry

people joined in as He passed by
Hosanna in the highest

They put their garments in the street
The future King they wished to meet

and put their shirts under His feet
Hosanna in the highest

The multitude entered the town
With mighty voice seeking Him to crown

it's walls seemed to tumble down
Hosanna in the highest

King of Sion on a colt will lead
Hosanna to the Son of David

Zachariah prophesied indeed
Hosanna in the highest

Recitation Curriculum :

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**APRIL
SECOND SUNDAY**

THE HOLY WEEK AND GOOD FRIDAY - I

Please read Matthew 26:17-30 (the Lord's Supper), Matthew 26:36-56 (the Lord Jesus in Gethsemane), and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is the first lesson in a series of two lessons on the Holy week and Good Friday. Two events to be emphasized in this lesson: the Lord's Supper and the Lord Jesus in Gethsemane.

MEMORY VERSE:

*"Drink of it, all of you for this is My blood of the new covenant"
Matthew 26:27*

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) Why is the Last Supper a very important event during the Holy Week?
 - 2) What did Our Lord Jesus Christ introduce to the disciples in that supper that we are still practicing till now in our Church?
- ✝ After our Saviour had entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, two main events happened before He was crucified on Friday: The Last Supper and the time that He spent with His Disciples in Gethsemane.

† **Our Lord Jesus celebrates the Lord's Supper with His Disciples:
Matthew 26:17-30**

- The Disciples asked Jesus "Where do You want us to prepare for You the Passover?"
 - Why did the Disciples ask Jesus this question?
 - From this question it may be clear that Jesus did not have a home or a permanent place to live in.
 - Also His Disciples, who left everything and followed Him, did not have a suitable place for them to prepare for the Passover with their Master.
- Our righteous Saviour washed His Disciples' feet. Then on the table the Lord Jesus declared that one of them was going to tell the chief priest how to capture Him. The Lord talked about the Disciple who was going to betray Him without declaring his name or personality in order not to hurt his feelings. But when Jesus saw that they were "exceedingly sorrowful and each of them began to say to Him, "Lord is it I?" (Matthew 26:22), He was concerned about their peace and declared that "He who dipped his hand with Me in the dish will betray Me" (Matthew 26:23). And, in order to remove any doubts from the Disciples' minds that whatever was going to happen to Him was going to happen, He said, "The Son of Man goes as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born" (Matthew 26:24), This means that what was going to happen was taking place according to God's plan but what Judas did was a sin done by his own free will. Remember that Judas did not repent, but he went and killed himself.
- Jesus washed His disciples' feet to teach us to be humble and also to teach us that we have to be clean in spirit and body before we take communion.
 - On Thursday, at St. Mark's house, the Lord Jesus Christ and His Disciples celebrated the Passover. After this celebration was completed, they had another more important celebration which is the Lord's Supper. In the Lord's Supper they had one bread and one cup of wine. These were transubstantiated by the Lord Jesus into His own Body and Blood. He said to them, "Drink of it, all of you for this is My Blood of the new covenant" (Matthew 26:27). Hence, He established the sacrament of the Holy communion. Please note that Judas attended only the first celebration which was the Passover, but he did not attend the Lord's Supper.

† **The Lord Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane after the Lord's Supper
(Matthew 26:36-56)**

- † "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful" (Matthew 26:38). The Lord Jesus said this not because He was scared of the sufferings that He expected but because of the amount of sin that He had to carry.
- † Our Saviour knew that the hour was very near for Judas to betray Him. Jesus was praying to teach us that we should pray at all times. He said to His Disciples "Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation" (Matthew 26:41).
- † Our Lord Jesus asked His Disciples three times to "Watch and pray" but they could not and on the third time He said "Are you still sleeping and resting?" This teaches us that we must be alert and pay attention to our spiritual life. "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak ." (Matthew 26:41)
- † The Lord wanted to teach us to submit ourselves to the guidance of God. Jesus said, "not as I will, but as You will" (Matthew 26:39).

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Every time we take communion we must believe that we are eating the Body of the Lord Jesus and drinking His Blood. In this way, we are united and become one with Him.
- (2) As the Lord advised His Disciples to "watch", we also must watch and pay attention to our spiritual growth. We must see that our love for God and people, our faith, our behaviour and our alms giving are growing by the grace of God and in our struggle against sin.
- (3) We should come to church regularly during the Pascal week with full respect, sing and participate in all the prayers.

SONGS

REMEMBER ME O LORD

Remember me O Lord, When You come into Your kingdom.

Remember me O Holy, When You come into Your kingdom.

Remember me O Master, When You come into Your kingdom.

Remember me O God, When You come into Your kingdom.

Remember me O Saviour, When You come into Your kingdom.

Recitation Curriculum :

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**APRIL
THIRD SUNDAY**

THE HOLY WEEK AND GOOD FRIDAY - II

Please read Luke 23:1-25 (Jesus stands before Pilate), Matthew 27:27-56 (the crucifixion of Jesus), Matthew 27:57 - 66 (the burial of Jesus), and give the lessons with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is lesson two in a series of two lessons on the Holy Week and Good Friday. In this lesson we learn that our righteous Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, suffered and died for us to save us. He knew all about it and accepted it in order to pay the price of all sins.

MEMORY VERSE:

"Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingdom" Luke 23:42

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) What should we always keep in mind whenever we fall into sin?
- 2) Who are we hurting with these sins?
- 3) Why did Our Lord Jesus Christ suffer and was crucified on the cross?
- 4) What did He accomplish by dying on the cross?

† **The Lord Jesus was handed over to Pontius Pilate: Luke 23: 1-25**

- Pilate and Herod did not find the Lord Jesus guilty of anything "I have found no fault in this Man concerning those things of which you accuse Him, neither did Herod" (Luke 23:14-15). This was supposed to be enough for Pilate to rule out that the Lord need not to be crucified. However, Pilate bowed down to the chief priests and the Jews. "And the voices of these men and of the chief priests prevailed. So Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they requested" (Luke 23-24). Do we bow down under pressure and give up what we believe in? Sometimes the pressure from bad people and from temptation becomes so great that we give up our Beloved Jesus and fall into temptation. Every time we make a mistake we become like those people who crucified the Lord Jesus. We must not do like Pilate, the Roman Governor. We have to go all the way and witness the truth and not follow something that is unjust. This was the mistake that Pilate made.
- The bad people who were accusing the Lord Jesus Christ were just saying any false thing. For example, they were saying that He was "preventing the nation, and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar". This was not true. We remember that one time these people were trying to trap the Lord Jesus and asked Him if they should pay taxes to Caesar. He asked them to bring a coin and then asked them "To whom is this picture?" They answered, "to Caesar", Then the Lord said, give Caesar what is for Caesar and give God what is for God. Therefore it is very clear that their accusations were all false.

✝ **The crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ: Matthew 27:27-56**

- We can account for the suffering of the Saviour into two parts: before the crucifixion (Matthew 27:27-31) and during the crucifixion (Matthew 27:32-38).

Jesus was insulted on many occasions and He also suffered for us. He could have, if He wanted to, destroyed all these bad people. But He wanted to declare His love to us by His own Will to die for us on the Cross. He wanted to also to pay the price of our sins (which is death) instead of us. One of the robbers had faith in our Lord Jesus because He saw Him taking all these punishments without deserving any of them, He knew that Jesus Christ was the Son of God and asked Him to remember him in heaven. Jesus accepted him and told him that he would be with Him that day in paradise.

- Sin in its essence is a fruit of the Ego. Man in his attempt to seek all the honours, pleasures and materialistic things for himself, wanted to be his own

god. For this reason the bad people stripped Jesus and put a scarlet robe on Him to insult Him. They declared then that they would like to be their own gods and the Lord Jesus who was claiming to be Son of God was rejected by them.

- "Now as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name, Him they compelled to bear His cross" (Matthew 27:32). This man of Cyrene represents every person in the church who would have a share of carrying the Cross with Jesus through withstanding all the sufferings because of faith; we must be like Simon of Cyrene and carry the Cross with Jesus.

† **The burial of our Beloved Jesus: Matthew 27:57-66**

- Joseph of Arimathea gave his tomb for the Lord Jesus' body. Joseph loved the Lord and he gave Him the best care.
- Compare the burial of the Lord Jesus with Jonah's stay inside the whale (the big fish) for 3 days. As Jonah came out safely, our Lord Jesus also arose from the dead safely.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Our Lord Jesus was insulted on different occasions and He also withstood lots of pain on our behalf. Every time we do bad things let us remember that we participate with those people who were crucifying Jesus.
- (2) Let us learn from Simon of Cyrene who helped the Lord in carrying the Cross. Let us give a hand of help to anyone who is suffering; at home, in church and at school. Remember every time we help someone, we are actually helping the Lord Jesus Himself. We will then be rewarded handsomely here on earth and in heaven as well.
- (3) Everything on Good Friday went according to God's plan. All the pains and sufferings of the Lord Jesus were clear to Him in advance. He accepted all there suffering because He looked ahead to what was going to happen after the crucifixion i.e. Resurrection.

SONGS

THE PASCHA HYMN

Thok te ti goun, nem pi oou, nem pi
Ezmou, nem pi amahi sha eneh
Amen.
Emmanuel pennoti pen oro.

Thine is the power, the glory, the
blessings And the majesty forever.
Amen.
O Emmanuel our God and our King.

Thok te ti goun, nem pi oou, nem pi
Ezmou, nem pi amahi sha eneh
Amen.
Pachois Isos Pekhrestos. Pa Soteer en
Aghathos.*

Thine is the power, the glory, the
blessings And the majesty forever.
Amen.
O my Lord Jesus Christ My good
Saviour.*

Thok te ti goun, nem pi oou, nem pi
Ezmou, nem pi amahi sha eneh
Amen.

Thine is the power, the glory, the
blessings And the majesty forever.
Amen.

*Tagom nem pa esmou pe –epchois af
Shopi neya sotiriya ethowab.

* The Lord is My strength, My praise,
and has become my salvation.

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**APRIL
FOURTH SUNDAY**

RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

THE POWER OF THE RESURRECTION

Please read Matthew 28, Luke 24:1-12, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, we have gained special blessings and power in our life. When we are united with the Lord Jesus we can defeat the devil, sin and death as He defeated those by His Resurrection.

MEMORY VERSE:

"Why do you seek the living among the dead?" Luke 24:5

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✠ Describe (in a story fashion) the events of the resurrection of the Saviour Jesus Christ as mentioned in Luke 24: early on Sunday morning after the Sabbath had ended, Mary Magdalene and other women took ointment to the tomb but they did not find the Lord Jesus. Two angels told Mary Magdalene that Jesus arose from the dead. Later on our Lord Jesus met Mary Magdalene and told her to tell the Disciples and Peter about His resurrection.

✠ St. Peter and St. John came to look for the Lord Jesus in the tomb since Mary Magdalene had told them that He had risen from the dead. St. Peter was older than St. John. St. John arrived at the tomb first but he did not go inside; instead he let

St. Peter who was older enter first. Please read John 20:1-9. We should have a special respect for older people.

✝ The Lord Jesus arose from the dead by Himself; He did not need the angel Michael to open the gates of the tomb. The angel came only to make the announcement, Jesus arose from the dead with the stone rolled at the door and the guards beside the stone.

✝ The guards said (by the advice of the chief priests) that His Disciples came at night while they (the guards) were sleeping and took His body. This was a big lie.

✝ The Lord Jesus Christ arose from the dead and defeated the devil to enable us also to arise from our sins. If we do not arise from our sins and defeat the devil then we cannot claim that we benefited from the resurrection of Christ. Every time we fall in sins then we arise, repent, confess and never do it again we are actually defeating the devil. All the powers of the devil were defeated when the Lord arose from the dead declaring no authority of the devil. "Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:57).

✝ By the resurrection of Christ, He conquered death and death has no power on the believers. As Jesus arose from the dead, He will raise us also from the dead. Therefore, the prophecy of Hosea "O Death I will be your plagues! O grave, I will be your destruction" (Hosea 13:14) was fulfilled. Our church in the intercession for the deceased says "Raise them up on the day appointed according to Thy faithful and true promises". Then the church continues to say "For there is no death for Thy servants, but merely a departure."

✝ At the end of our Orthodox creed we say "And we look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come, Amen," The resurrection and the life of the world to come were granted to us through the crucifixion and the resurrection of the Lord. "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you" (Romans 8:11).

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

(1) Through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, He granted us (the believers) special blessings and life of victory over sins and death.

(2) In our every day life here on earth we must live through the power of the resurrection. This means we live through Jesus and defeat the devil, the sins and all the lust of the world.

(3) On Easter we greet each other by "Khristos Anecti.. Alithos Anecti", which means Christ is risen.... He is indeed Risen"

SONGS

VERY EARLY SUNDAY MORNING

“Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb.”(Mk 16:2)

Very early Sunday morning	while the guards were still asleep
Our Lord arose declaring	His promise He did keep

REFRAIN

Resurrection is my song	resurrection gave me life
Resurrection made me strong	Jesus my Lord is alive

Jesus is risen in glory	heaven and earth sang and praised
And the angel told the story	He is risen as He said

Mary Magdalene was looking	in the garden for her Lord
Jesus Himself was telling	her to go and spread the word

All the disciples were praying	they were truly in great fear
When Mary came to them saying	He is risen, He is not here

While they were in the room	Jesus Christ Himself appeared
My peace I give to you	and My peace with you I leave

But Thomas did not believe	what the disciples had seen
So Jesus again appeared	showed him the place of the spear

Tell the Marys to cease mourning	among the dead do not seek
For Jesus our Lord is living	giving power to the weak

Jesus my victorious Lord	conquered the powers of Hades
And the thorn of death he broke	my salvation He proclaimed

The heavenly hosts were singing	welcoming our glorious Lord
Heavens joy was overwhelming	Jesus opened its doors.

Alleluia , Alleluia	risen is the King of peace
Alleluia , Alleluia	truly He is risen indeed

Recitation Curriculum :

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.





**MAY
FIRST SUNDAY**

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

GAVE HIS DISCIPLES THE POWER TO SERVE

Please read Matthew 28:16-20, John 20:19-28, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead has given divine power to the Disciples and to all the believers (us). We must always remember the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

MEMORY VERSE:

"That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings" Philippians 3:10

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) What is very important about Our Lord's resurrection?
- 2) Did the resurrection have any influence on the disciples?
- 3) How did the disciples change by our Lord's resurrection?

✠ When the Saviour arose from the dead, He did two things:

- 1) He showed Himself to His followers so that their belief becomes complete that Jesus Christ is the "Son of God" who arose from the dead by His own Divine Power.
- 2) He solved their problems (that originated from the events of His crucifixion) of "fear" (i.e. as the Disciples were hiding in the upper room) and "sadness" (as Mary Magdalene was weeping). Then our Lord Jesus gave His Disciples the power to serve.

✠ Jesus said to His Disciples "All authority has been given to Me, in heaven and on earth." "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20)

✠ Jesus gave His Disciples power to do great things and preach Christianity all over the world. Their success was based on their belief on what He said to them "I am with you always".

✠ St. Paul had that power to do great things in serving the Lord Jesus. St. Paul had some hard times. But God's power always helped him get through them. Remember that St. Paul traveled a great deal to preach the word of God and the ship was broken in the sea several times; he was jailed and he stood in front of kings and emperors talking about Jesus who rose from the dead. Jesus granted St. Paul the power of the resurrection and never asked Paul to do anything without giving him that power.

✠ The power of the resurrection also turned St. Peter who denied Jesus before, into a believer who preached in many places and completed up his life on the cross similar to Jesus. Also the power of the resurrection turned St. Thomas from a person full of doubt (mention what happened with him (John 20:24-29) into a believer. All the rest of the Disciples gained strength and from only 12 people Christianity spread all over the world.

Their preaching was focused on the Lord Jesus Christ Who was crucified and arose from the dead on the third day.

✠ The power of the resurrection united the hearts of the Disciples. Remember that unity results in strength. Those Disciples before the resurrection were at times

saying "Who is the greatest among us?" After the resurrection, the book of Acts says the following about their unity and love to each other:

- "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers." (Acts 1:14)
- "Now when the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." (Acts 2:1)
- "So 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, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved." (Acts 2:46-47)

Therefore their unity resulted in their success in preaching the word of God. They gained this unity after the resurrection of Jesus.

✝ The Lord Jesus gives us power to do everything especially when we remember that Jesus defeated death. Therefore the "power of Jesus' resurrection" must influence my life and behavior. It influences my life. As a Christian since I was baptized I was buried with Jesus and was risen with Him from the dead to the new life as "born from God". It influences my behavior by living a life of victory over sin and all the temptations of the devil.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) The resurrection of our Lord Jesus gave His disciples divine power to preach Christianity. His resurrection was the focus of their preaching.
- (2) The resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ has provided power to everyone as individuals and church congregations. Now I can say "I can do everything in Jesus Christ who strengthens me". I can do well at home, at church and at school through the power which the Lord Jesus Christ has granted me.
- (3) I must not be ashamed of the cross. In fact I must be proud about it once I add the resurrection. Therefore the resurrection gave meaning to the cross.

SONGS

THE GOSPEL RESPONSE IN EASTER

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia
Alleluia, Jesus Christ The
King of Glory, rose from
Dead on the third day

This is He to whom the glory
Is due, with His Good Father
And the Holy Spirit , now and
Forever

Blessed be the Father, the
Son and the Holy Spirit , the
Perfect Trinity, we worship
Him and glorify Him

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia
Alleluia, Isos Pikhristos eporo
ente epo-oo: aftonf evol khien ni
ethmo-oot

Fai ere pio-oo ereprepi naf
nem pefyot enaghathos: nem
piepnevma ethoo-wab : yesgen
tinoo nem sha – eneh

Je efezmaroot enje efyot nem
epshiri: nem piepnevma ethoo-
wab tietrias et jeek evol : ten
oo-ost emmos ten tio-onac

Recitation Curriculum :

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.



For the success
of this Sunday
School Program
the teacher should
refer to the

HOLY BIBLE

in his/her preparation
of the lessons and in
teaching the children
in the class





**MAY
SECOND SUNDAY**

GOD SENT AN ANGEL TO DEFEND KING HEZEKIAH

Please read 2 Kings 19:1-37, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that God uses many methods to help us. God appointed an angel to help king Hezekiah. We only have to present our needs as they are to God and He has His ways to help us.

MEMORY VERSE:

"The angel of the Lord went out, and killed in the camp of Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand" 2Kings 19:35

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) If we are in a moment of need, would God ever forsake us?
- 2) To whom should our prayers be directed when we need help?
- 3) What does the word intercessor mean? Introduce the story of King Hezekiah and how in his moment of need, he used the intercession of Isaiah the Prophet to ask God for help.

The events in detail that led to the need for the angel to come and help king Hezekiah.

The king of the Assyrians did not worship God. He was an enemy to Hezekiah the king of Israel. King Hezekiah was a good man and he loved and worshipped God.

The king of the Assyrians sent a letter to Hezekiah saying that he is going to attack Jerusalem and the "God" of Hezekiah cannot defend him.

Hezekiah was afraid and sad, but he went to the house of God and prayed. Then Hezekiah sent a message to prophet Isaiah saying "Lift up your prayer for the remnant that is left" (2 Kings 19:4). This teaches us that we can ask other believers to pray on our behalf whenever we have a problem. Most important, we can ask for the intercession of the Virgin Mary and the prayers of other Saints (like Saint Mark, Saint George, Saint Mina) on our behalf.

God sent to Hezekiah a message through Isaiah "the man of God" and told him that God is going to defend him and that he should not worry about it.

Hezekiah believed the message of Isaiah and waited for God to work.

Let us review Hezekiah's prayer and learn from it (2 Kings 19:15-19). He started his prayers by praising God saying "God of Israel, the one who dwells between the cherubim You have made heaven and earth". So, let us learn to start our prayers always by praising the name of the Lord. Then Hezekiah presented the situation to God with regard to the king of the Assyrians and his request to the Lord. "Now therefore, O Lord our God, I pray, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You are the Lord God. You alone." (2 Kings 19:19), So let us learn from Hezekiah to leave the method of our plea to God. God will choose the method as deemed fit. Our methods are usually limited and may only fit some respects. God's solutions are total,

God sent his angel to the camp of the Assyrians at night and killed 185,000 men, God allowed this to happen because these people were non-believers who insulted Him and His people and were going to kill them, Moreover, "that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you are the Lord God. You alone." (2 Kings 19:19) In the morning Hezekiah and his people knew that God defended them.

Later, the king of the Assyrians, while he was worshipping the idols, was killed by his two sons. He was an old man.

When we are sad or when we need anything, we must go to our heavenly Father and pray. He will quickly help us. He might use an angel to do what we need.

Remember St. Peter in the prison (Acts 12:6-14), the Lord sent an angel who opened the doors of the prison and saved his life, Please tell what happened in a story fashion.

Everyone of us has his own guardian angel with him all the time to protect and guard him or her.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) There is a great power attached to our prayers. God uses many methods to solve our problems. He may choose to send an angel to serve us and respond to our needs.
- (2) Lord teach us how to pray. Teach us to praise your Holy Name and in complete faith present all our needs to You and leave it in Your Hands to satisfy it according to Your Divine wisdom.

SONGS

CHRIST IS RISEN

Christ is risen from the dead
Trampling death by His death
And upon those in the tomb
He bestowed eternal life

Khristos anesti eknekron
thanato thanaton patisas
ke tis entis emni masi
zueen kharisaminos

Glory be to the Father, the
Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen

Zoksapatri ke iyou-ke agi
you epnevmaty

Now and at all times, and
Forever and ever . Amen

kenin ke aa-ee ke is touce
e-on-ace ton e-ono, Amen

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.





MAY
THIRD SUNDAY
ST. PACHOMIUS

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

Feast day of St. Pachomius, the Father of Communal Monasticism, What do we learn from his life?

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

Which is a more effective method of preaching: to tell someone about Christianity or to set an example and show how Christianity works?

Introduce the story of St. Pachomius and show how he became a Christian simply by seeing other Christians acting in love towards their enemies.

✝ On this day of every year (1FOURTH of Bashans which is around May 2SECOND) our church celebrates the Feast day of St. Pachomius, the Father of Communal Monasticism.

✝ St. Pachomius was born in year 290 A.C. in Upper Egypt from parents who worshipped the idols. When St. Pachomius was about 20 years old, he became a soldier in the army of the Emperor Constantine the great. He suffered a lot from the Roman leaders. One day his regiment was camping around a town called Esna in Upper Egypt in preparation of attacking the town to kill the Christians. The people of this town, however, went out carrying to them food and drinks.

✝ St. Pachomius was surprised about this nice treatment from these people and asked for the reason behind it. The other soldiers answered him saying that the people of this town are Christians and their Christianity teaches them to love not only the friends but also the enemies. These Christians were doing what Christ taught them to do. St. Pachomius said to himself, “If Christianity is so nice like

that, if I go back safely, I will become a Christian.” It happened and after he returned safely he studied the Christian religion for three years and after that he was baptized. St. Pachomius insulted the idols and refused to worship them. He went and became a disciple for a monk whose name was St. Plamoun. He stayed several years as a disciple for St. Plamoun until he learned all about monasticism.

✝ After that an angel came to him and asked him to establish a “Holy Communal Monastery”.

✝ A large number of monks came to him and he helped them to build not only one but several monasteries. He organized them so that they had some time for work, some time for food and some time for reading and prayer. And he was the father of all of them.

✝ He used to go to all their monasteries and look after all their needs and guide them in their spiritual life. This is why he was called by the church “The Father of Communal Monasticism”.

✝ He told all the monks who followed him not to become priests. He wanted them to dedicate all their life to prayers and in this way they support the church and the priests by their prayers. Remember that the church needs preaching and praying together.

✝ St. Athanasius called St. Pachomius and wanted to ordain him as a priest. St. Pachomius refused and wanted to stay only as a monk the same as all his disciples. St. Athanasius said to St. Pachomius, “Blessed are you and your disciples because you chose to have no glory and build your faith on the rock.”

✝ St. Pachomius continued to be the head of Communal Monasticism for forty years. When he was about to pass away, he called his disciples, strengthened them and wished them peace and spiritual prosperity.

What do we learn from St. Pachomius’ life?

(1) The most effective type of preaching is by setting up a good example. By dealing with everyone in love, he (or she) gets attracted to Christ and Christianity. St. Pachomius started to think to become a Christian when he experienced the love of the people in the town of Esna.

(2) We must learn to live together in peace as all the disciples of St. Pachomius have done. Unity is very important for the success of the family, the church and the society as a whole. Even if we differ in opinion with other people, we should never lose love.

SONGS

ALLELUIA RISEN IS THE KING

Alleluia risen is the king of peace ...Alleluia, truly He is risen indeed
Alleluia Jesus is risen today ...alleluia the great stone is rolled away

Mary Magdalene went so early to the tomb
for the body she brought spices and perfumes

Mary stood outside with her eyes full of tears
looking at the empty tomb she did fear

She asked the gardener, "Where did they put my Lord?"
She did not know that He is the risen Lord

Jesus told her; "O Mary rejoice"
She cried "O Master as she recognized His voice

He told her "go to My brothers and preach the news
Tell them I will come and see them very soon

Mary went to the disciples right away
With the joy she preached 'Jesus is risen today "

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.





**MAY
FOURTH SUNDAY**

THE TOWER OF BABEL

Please read Genesis 11:1-9, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn to be humble and not demand too much (or think we are better than others) so that at the Holy Spirit inside us would guide us and lead us to spiritual growth.

MEMORY VERSE:

"Learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart" Matthew 11:29

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

✠ The sons of Noah multiplied for many generations. They built many cities and formed many nations. All the people everywhere had only one language and they could all understand each other. Some of these people migrated from the east. They came to a plain in the land of Shinar which seemed a good place to settle. So they went to work firing bricks. When they had enough, they said, "Let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth." (Genesis 11:4)

✠ But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower. And when He saw how high it was, He said, "Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be

withheld from them. Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." He did just that and immediately they stopped building the tower, and the city was named Babel. The Lord then scattered the groups and nations all over the earth. They all had separate languages so that they could not understand each other any more.

✚ One of the main characteristics that all the saints have in common is "humbleness". The Holy Spirit can only work and become effective in a person's life when he is humble. No one can become a saint without the guidance, help and declaration of the Holy Spirit. This is the reason our Lord Jesus said, "I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes, Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight." Luke 10:21). St. Mary's song when she met Elizabeth was "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." (Luke 1:51-52)

✚ In Pentecost, the Holy Spirit granted the Disciples "who continued with one accord in prayer and supplication (Acts 1:14) the ability to speak several languages so that they can communicate with other people and "spread" the word of God to all nations. So, what had happened to the modest Disciples in the Pentecost was the reverse to what had happened to the proud people at Babel when they were confused by the Lord so that they may not understand one another's speech.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Let us be humble and not demand fancy things like the people who wanted to build a "high tower". Let us not ask for fancy clothes or cars or toys. Lord, help us to be satisfied with the bare necessity.
- (2) When we get higher marks than our friends or we win a game, we must give glory to God who helped us. Reject the idea that we are better than other people.
- (3) Big achievement can happen every time we behave in a humble way.

SONGS

SONS OF GOD

REFRAIN

Sons of God hear His holy word
Eat His body, drink His blood
Alleluia , Alleluia

gather around the table of the Lord
and we'll sing a song of love
Alleluia , Alleluia

Brothers, sisters, we are one
In the spirit we are young

and our life has just begun
we can live forever

Shout together to the Lord
Happiness a hundred fold

who has promised our reward
and we'll live forever

Jesus gave a new command
Till we reach the Promised Land

that we love our fellow man
where we'll live forever

If we want to live with Him
Die to selfishness and sin

we must also die with Him
and we'll live forever

Make the world a unity
Till we meet the trinity

make all men one family
and we'll live forever

With the church we celebrate
So we'll make a holiday

Jesus coming we await
so we'll live forever

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.





**JUNE
FIRST SUNDAY**

THE ASCENSION FEAST:

CHRIST'S LOVE IN HIS ASCENSION

Please read Luke 24:44-53, the attached material entitled “Notes on the Ascension of Jesus”, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that the Lord Jesus Christ was giving His blessings up to the last minute. The last thing He did on earth was the blessing of His Disciples.

MEMORY VERSE:

"While He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven"(Luke 24:51)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

1) After our Lord Jesus Christ resurrected from death, after how many days did he ascend to heaven?

2) Our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished so much when He was with us on earth, what things did we learn from Him?

✚ The Lord Jesus ascended to heaven on the fortieth day after His resurrection,

✚ **Before the Lord Jesus' ascension, He wanted to emphasize to His Disciples a few important things:**

- a) He is the Messiah, Son of God, in Him all things were fulfilled which "were written in the Law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms." (Luke 24:44).
- b) What were those things that were fulfilled in our Lord Jesus Christ? "It was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." (Luke 24:46-47).
- c) The main aspect that the Saviour wanted His Disciples to concentrate on in their preaching was what He just summarized to them as stated here in items a) and b) above. "And you are witnesses of these things" (Luke 24:48).

The Lord Jesus showed His love in practical ways at all stages during His life on earth:

- First of all He came to our world in a humble way and was born from the Virgin Mary. He came to save us.
- During His lifetime on earth He did a large number of miracles: He healed the sick and raised the dead.
- Even during His crucifixion, He was kind to the right-hand robber and granted him salvation. He also asked for the forgiveness of the people who crucified Him, He asked His beloved disciple John to look after His mother and she was a blessing in his home.
- After His resurrection, He solved the various problems that His people had: the sadness of Mary Magdalene, the doubt of Thomas, the fear of Peter and the rest of the Disciples.

✝ **In His ascension He showed His love as follows:**

- ✝ He blessed His Disciples.
- ✝ He told His Disciples before He left them to go back to Jerusalem. They were afraid before and refrained from going to Jerusalem, but now their Master told them to go and stay there until He sends the Holy Spirit to strengthen them.

✝ The land which did not accept Jesus and which crucified Him, took his blessings before He ascended to heaven. The last thing that Jesus did on earth was blessing His Disciples telling them "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creation, he who believes and is baptized will be saved." (Mark 16:15-16)

✝ The Disciples went back to Jerusalem with great joy. We can now compare their joyful feeling while Jesus was ascending to heaven in front of their eyes with their sad feeling when Jesus was telling them before His crucifixion that He was going to leave them. "But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me 'where are You going'? But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart." (John 16:5-6). The Disciples' feelings had changed because their faith has been augmented after they witnessed His crucifixion, His resurrection and His ascension with a special blessing from Him before He left them, His blessings gave them complete peace and joy.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Jesus who blessed His Disciples at that time (time of the Ascension) is also now blessing us, but we must have faith in salvation by His Name.
- (2) As our Lord Jesus showed His love to His Disciples and to many people by His actions, we also should not express our love in mere words but in loving actions. If you love God, obey Him. If you love your parents or your brothers and sisters, do not yell at them but treat them nicely. If you love the church, serve her.

SONGS

Christ ascended to heaven!

The Lord ascended up on high!
The Lord has triumphed gloriously!
The grave and Hell are captive led,

The heavens, with joy, receive their Lord –
By saints, by angel hosts adored,
O earth, adore your Glorious king,
Christ ascended to heaven!

You have gone before us, Lord
To prepare for us our heavenly abode,
That we may be where You are now,
Christ ascended to heaven!

For You sat at the Father's right hand,
Our hope, our love may always be.
Dwell in us that we may, too
Dwell forever more in You.

Recitation Curriculum :

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.

NOTES ON THE ASCENSION OF JESUS

✝ Nobody has ever arose from the dead and ascended to heaven except the Lord Jesus Christ Son of God.

✝ The ascension of Jesus after His resurrection is a proof of His Divinity.

✝ When Jesus talked to Nicodemus He told him "No man has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven" (John 3:13).

So the Lord Jesus when He was speaking with Nicodemus, He was in heaven at the same instant.

✝ But Jesus ascended with our flesh which He took from the Virgin Mary, that is with my flesh and yours. Hence, Jesus blessed our bodies and opened the gate of heaven for us.

✝ "And raised up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:6).

✝ He ascended into heaven so that we could realize that our true place is in heaven. We should be thinking about heaven and should not let the things of the world control our lives.

✝ We can remember the ascension in the following:

- Every time we pray the Lords prayer and say "Our Father who are in heaven..." we realize that Jesus meant that praying should be to our Father in heaven.
- During The Divine Liturgy, when we stand close to the altar, we are considered as if we are standing in heaven.
- Every time we neglect the world and concentrate on Jesus we ascend to heaven with all our being.





**JUNE
SECOND SUNDAY**

PENTECOST:

THE FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Please read Acts 2:1-12, Galatians 5:22-23, the attached material entitled "Pentecost", and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that as the Holy Spirit gave the Disciples strength and spiritual fruits in their life, we also have the Holy Spirit Who gives us strength and spiritual fruit in our life.

MEMORY VERSE:

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, Joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" Galatians 5:2

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) When did we receive the Holy Spirit?
- 2) When did the Lord's disciples receive the Holy Spirit?
- 3) Why is the Holy Spirit important in Christianity?

✝ Describe at first the events of the Pentecost. The Disciples were in the upper room (in the house of St. Mark) with the Virgin Mary waiting for ten days for the promise that the Lord Jesus Christ gave before His ascension to heaven (to wait in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit comes to them). They were praying together in one accord. Then after they gained the strength from above, they could start preaching.

✝ The Disciples began to speak in various tongues: "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?" said the people who heard them speaking in tongues. The Lord gave them this gift to be able to preach to the whole world. This was exactly what the Disciples did. They went all over the world to preach the word of God.

✝ After the Apostles received "the power from high", they began to preach and bear witness to Jesus as the risen Christ, the King and the Lord.

✝ We also have the Holy Spirit inside us. After we were baptized, Abouna anointed us with a special ointment (Myron) and prayed for us to have the Holy Spirit. We became the "temple of the Holy Spirit". God's spirit dwells in us. When we gained the Holy Spirit, we gained a new life. It is a life that is full of love, peace, joy, etc. as mentioned in Galatians 5:22.

In order for us to continue to enjoy this fruitful life, we have to be humble, obedient and love one another, just as the Disciples did.

✝ Let the children memorize by heart the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Give prizes in the next lesson to the children who can memorize the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

✝ When we mention or write about the Holy Spirit, we refer to Him as "He" not "she" or "it". The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Holy Trinity.

✝ Let us discuss the fruit of the Holy Spirit. We have to show our love to other people in real actions. We must be happy at all times because this is a fruit of the Holy Spirit in our life. Peace is also a fruit of the Holy Spirit. Our Lord Jesus said to His Disciples "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27). Therefore, in all ages true Christians are enjoying peace in mind and in heart at the most difficult circumstances. Patience is also a fruit of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is known as the "comforter" which means He gives the believers comfort and patience at the most sad or troubled times. Kindness, goodness and gentleness are also fruits of the Holy Spirit. These three fruits have some similarity and these fruits show a Christian having good relation with all people, poor or rich, old or young, Christians or non-Christians.

Faithfulness is also a fruit of the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit guides and declares to the believer things related to God that would enhance His faith. Self-control is also a Christian characteristic that comes as a fruit of the Holy Spirit. Self-control means that the Holy Spirit who dwells in me is in full control of me and no outside circumstances would control me.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) The Disciples obeyed the Lord Jesus and waited in the upper room until they received the Holy Spirit and His gifts. Let us always obey God.
- (2) Let us always pray to God that the Holy Spirit inside us would show His fruits in our life: love, peace, joy, etc. Let us not ask for material things in our prayers like clothes or toys. Let us practice in our prayer to ask God for love, joy, peace, kindness and that the Holy Spirit inside us would keep working.
- (3) Since we have the Holy Spirit in us we suppose to be different from the rest of the world. We suppose to have the fruit of the Holy Spirit and this should shape our personality.

SONGS

WHEN THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD

“If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” (Gal 5:25)

REFRAIN

When the Spirit of the Lord	moves in my heart
I will love	as Jesus loves
I will pray	as David prayed
I will preach	as Peter preached
I will serve	as St. Paul served

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.

PENTECOST

THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In the Old Testament Pentecost was the feast which occurred fifty days after the Passover. As the Passover feast commemorates the exodus of the Israelites from the slavery of Egypt, so Pentecost celebrates God's gift of the Ten Commandments to Moses on Mount Sinai. In the New Testament as well, the Pentecostal feast is fulfilled and made new by the coming of the new law, the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Disciples of Christ.

The Apostles received "the power from high" and they began to preach and bear witness to Jesus as the risen Christ, the King and the Lord. This moment has traditionally been called the Birthday of the Church.

It must be noted that the feast of Pentecost is not simply the celebration of an event which took place centuries ago; it is the celebration of what must happen and does happen to us in the Church Today. We all have died and risen with Messiah the King, and we all received His most Holy Spirit. We are the "Temple of the Holy Spirit". God's Spirit dwells in us. We, by our own membership in the Church, have received "the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit" in the sacrament of Chrismation.

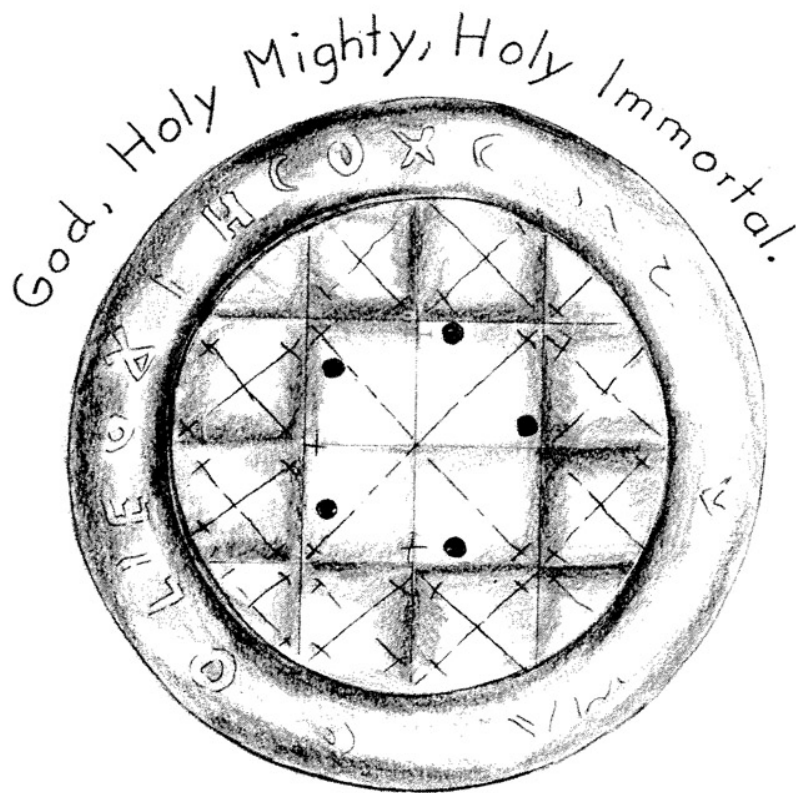


For the success
of this Sunday
School Program
the teacher should
refer to the

HOLY BIBLE

in his/her preparation
of the lessons and in
teaching the children
in the class

EL ORBANA.





**JUNE
THIRD SUNDAY**

THE HOLY BREAD (EL-QORBANA)

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn the special way and the features of making the Holy Bread (El-Qorban) in our Coptic Orthodox Church.

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

1) There are many symbols that we see on the Qorbana, what are these symbols? (A Qobrana can be used for demonstration).

2) Can anyone make the Qorbana or does it have to be a special person?

✝ A deacon or Abouna (or at least someone who is serving God) makes El-Qorban. This means not anyone can participate in making Qorban.

✝ Whenever we come to attend the liturgy at church, and even when we do not partake of the Holy Communion, we take a "Qorbana" from Abouna. The Qorbana is not made like regular bread. It is made in a special way and has special features. Let us discuss them now.

✝ Have you ever seen the deacons making "Qorban"? While it is being made, the Psalms are read because the Psalms have prophecies about the Lord Jesus Christ and His suffering for our salvation. No salt is added to the dough like any other dough. Why? Because salt is added to regular food to give it a nice flavor; however, the Lord Jesus, Who is represented by the "Qorbana", does not need flavor because He is the salt of the world. Yeast is added to the dough because yeast is a symbol of sin, and our Saviour carried our sins in His Body.

✝ **Why is the "Qorbana" round and not rectangle or triangle in shape?** Because it refers to Jesus who is the Sun of Righteousness and the sun is, of

course, round. The other reason is that the round shape has neither beginning nor end; it refers to God because God has no beginning or end.

✝ **What do you see in the center of the "Qorbana"?**

You see a big Cross, representing the Cross of our Lord Jesus surrounded by twelve small crosses who represent the twelve Disciples, and these in turn represent the whole church. You notice some Coptic writings around it. What do they say? They say Holy God, Holy Almighty, Holy Immortal.

If you look carefully at the "Qorbana", you notice that there are five holes. These are a symbol of the sufferings of Jesus. Three of them are a symbol of the three nails in Jesus' hands and feet. The fourth hole is a symbol of the spear with which Jesus' side was wounded. The fifth hole is a symbol of the crown of thorns put upon Jesus' head.

✝ Next time you eat a "Qorbana" in the church, look at these features and try to remember the meaning of each of them. Remember that everything on the "Qorbana" is not done haphazardly, but has a special purpose and meaning.

✝ One of these Qorbanas is selected by Abouna at the beginning of the service for the Offering.

✝ There are lots of symbols in our church. The purpose of these symbols is to remind us of the implied meaning because we tend to forget.

✝ Ask every student to draw El-Qorbana and memorize the meaning of the symbols on it. Give prizes to the children who could memorize.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) There are several spiritual lessons and blessings for us when we look at or eat El-Qorban. We remember our Beloved Jesus Who suffered and died on the Cross for our salvation. We remember the twelve Apostles who, by the support and guidance of the Holy Spirit, carried the Christian faith to the whole world.
- (2) When we eat a piece of Qorbana it is a blessing for us because it has crosses on it, it has the name of God on it and the people who prepared it they prayed the Psalms on it.
- (3) When we partake of the Holy Communion eat the true Body and drink the pure blood of our Lord Jesus.

SONGS

LET US ALL PRAISE THE LORD

Let us all praise the
Lord for He is in glory
Glorified

Maren hos e-epchoise: Je
Khen ou –o –oo ghar afetchi o-oo

REFRAIN

He ascended into heaven
And send us the Paraclete
The Spirit of truth, the
Comforter Amen. Alleluia

Afshenaf e-epshoi enifio –wee
wee af oo- orpe nan empi
parakliton piepnevma ente
timethemi: Amen . Alleluia

He made the two into one
Which is heaven and earth

pentaf er piesnav en owai
ete fai pe etfe nem epkahi

O come all ye nations, let
Us worship Jesus Christ

Amoini nilaos tiro: entenoo-
osht en Isos piekhrastos

This is God our Saviour
And Lord of every one

Fai pe efnooti pensotir : owoh
epchoise ensarex niven

Three in one and one in
Three; the Father the
Son and the Holy Spirit
The spirit of truth the
Comforter. Amen Alleluia

Oo-etrias esjik evol: esoi
enshomt esoi enowai: ete fai
pe efiot nem epshiri nem pi
epnevma ethoo-wab; piepnevma
ente timethmiL amin Alleluia

Recitation Curriculum :

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.



Arch-Angel
Michael.



Arch-Angel
Gabriel.



**JUNE
FOURTH SUNDAY**

**THE ARCHANGEL MICHAEL
AND THE ARCHANGEL GABRIEL**

Please read Joshua 5:13-15, Luke 1:1 to the end, Matthew 28:1-10, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn something about the angels and specifically about Archangel Michael and Archangel Gabriel. We must think about God, heaven and the Angels in our daily life.

MEMORY VERSE:

"Are they (the angels) not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?" (Hebrews 1:14)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) Are angels human like us or are they spirits?
- 2) Can we ask the angels for their intercession just like we do with the saints?
- 3) From the bible, what are some of the things that God asked the Angels to do?

† General outlook about the angels:

- † They are spirits - see the memory verse.
- † They are in heaven around God. When needed, God sends them to serve us.

- † God is the only One whose knowledge is unlimited. Even Angels' knowledge is limited. The angels are free to do what they like to do. The devil was an angel, but he decided not to obey God anymore and wanted to be more powerful than God. The devil said in his heart "I will ascend into heaven. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of congregation the farthest sides of the north." (Isaiah 14:13). God rejected - him and he was thrown out to hell (Isaiah 14:12-15).
- † The angels of God are holy. "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." (Matthew 25:31)

† **Archangels:**

They are seven. Their names are Michael, Gabriel, Rafael, Sorial, Sedakael, Sarathael and Ananael. (Let the children memorize their names and give prizes.) Each one has his host of angels and they do services as God deems fit.

† The church is called "the house of God". She is also called "the house of the angels".

† The angels seek on our behalf (or intercede on our behalf) to God if we ask for their intercession. "Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar, and he was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the Saints ascended before God from the angel's hand." (Revelation 8:3-4)

† The angels bring pleasant news to good people but bad people fear the angels. In other words, the angels can be fearful to bad people. An example of this is the Archangel Michael when he brought the good news of the Lord Jesus' resurrection. "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, and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men, But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen," (Matthew 28:2-6)

† **Archangel Michael:**

- † Archangel Michael, the head of the heavenly powers, is the first Archangel. He serves in front of the Lord. God sends us His mercies with the intercession of Michael because he is near to God entreating on our behalf.
- † He was the angel to announce the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:1-4).
- † He was the angel to help Joshua in his war (Joshua 5:3-15). Please tell the story in detail.

† **Archangel Gabriel:**

- † He was the angel who came to Zacharias to tell him about the birth of John the Baptist.
- † He was the angel who came after that by six months and told St. Mary about the birth of the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Everyone of us has his guardian angel to serve him. But we have to listen to God so that the guardian angel (who is a servant of God) does not get mad, but always protects us.
- (2) At the end of our prayers, let us remember to seek, on our behalf, the intercessions of the Virgin Mary and Archangels Michael and Gabriel; and the prayers of the Saints like St. Mark, St. George and St. Mina.

SONGS

ARCHANGEL MICHAEL

"And war broke out in haven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon." (Rev 12:7)

REFRAIN

Archangel Michael's intercessions are accepted by our Saviour.
He's the captain of the heavenly hosts guarding and serving the Divine Throne.

Jesus granted him the crowns and named him Angel Michael
Chief of the heavenly angels guarding and interceding for us.

Victory and strength are yours you conquered Satan with your hosts
And threw him in the bottomless pit where forever he will sit!

All Satan's army of soldiers are scared when his voice is heard.
When we call Angel Michael they run quickly and tremble!

From evil protect our lives. Guard your children day and night
And with joy hear us all shout Peace to you Angel Michael!

Recitation Curriculum:

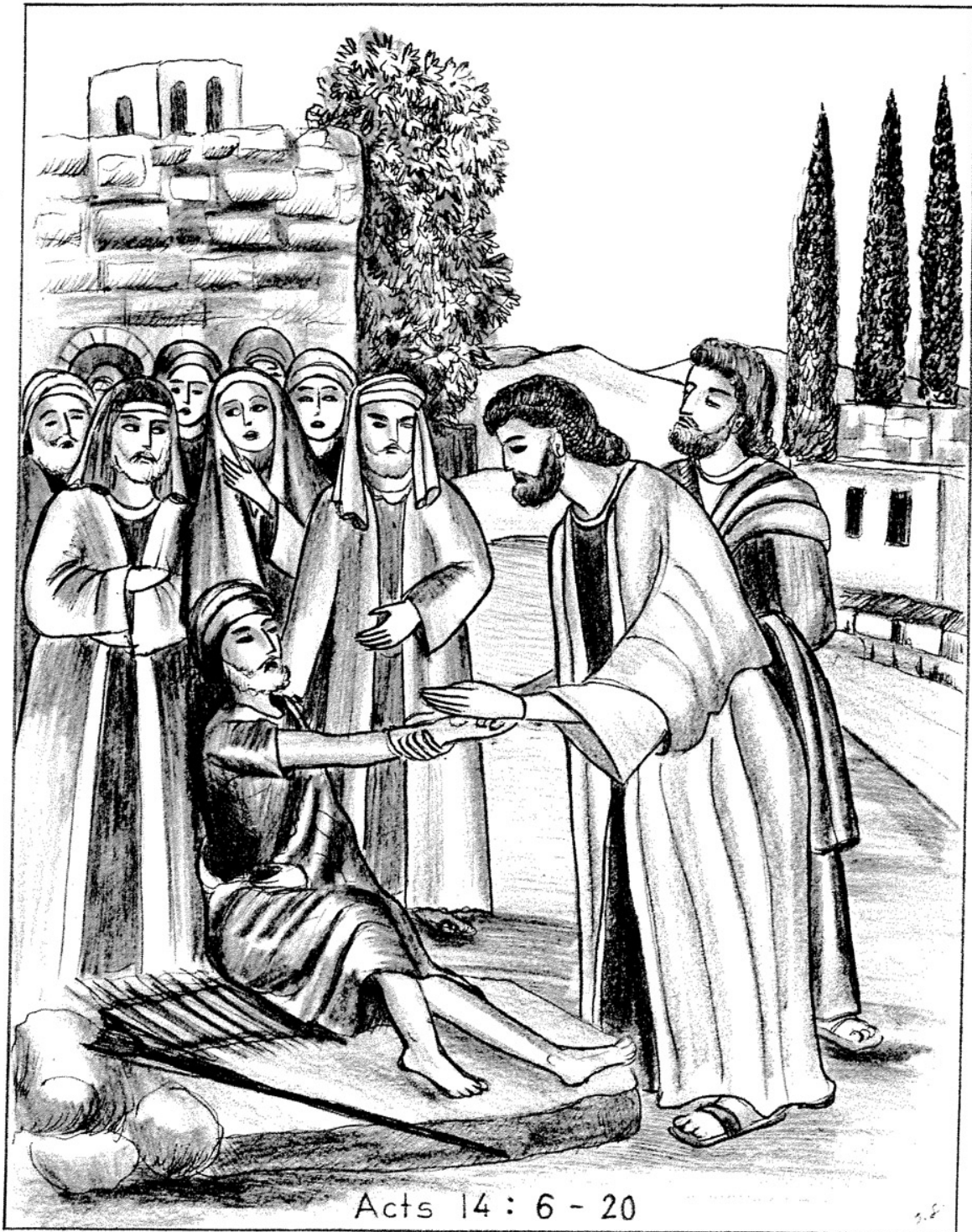
Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.



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**JULY
FIRST SUNDAY**

PAUL AND BARNABAS FROM WORSHIP TO STONING IN LYSTRA

Please read Acts 14:6-20, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that Paul was faithful to the Lord. In his preaching the gospel, St. Paul gave all the glory to the Lord Jesus Christ. People can change their minds but God's love continues and He doesn't change His mind

MEMORY VERSE:

"It is required in stewards, that one be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:2)

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) If something good happens to us, like getting good marks, is it wise to think that we got it because we accomplished it on our own?
- 2) Who is always helping us in everything we do?
- 3) Whenever the saints performed miracles, do these miracles happen because the saints are powerful on their own or is it through Our Lord Jesus Christ that gives them that power?

✝ These days we are celebrating the Apostles' fast. This is the fast after the Pentecost. On July 12 of every year we have the Apostles' Feast (1FIFTH Abib which is July 12).

✝ Today we are going to talk about the Apostles St. Paul and St. Barnabas.

✝ St. Paul and St. Barnabas were missionaries in the city of Lystra. Do you know what a missionary is? It is a group of people sent from God to preach His word to others. For example the mission of the seventy Apostles "sent two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go" (Luke 10:1). There is also the mission of the twelve Apostles (Matthew 10:5-15).

✝ A crippled man was among the crowd. He had never walked. He listened to every word St. Paul said about the Saviour Jesus Christ. The crippled man believed that the Lord Jesus could heal him (Acts 14:9).

✝ St. Paul looked at the crippled man and said, "stand up straight on your feet! ". At once the man stood up.

✝ The people saw the miracle and they thought St. Paul and St. Barnabas were gods. "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!" (Acts 14:11). The people brought sacrifices and wanted to worship St. Paul and St. Barnabas. St. Paul and St. Barnabas said, "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these vain things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea and all things that are in them." (Acts 14:15)

✝ A few days later some Jews came to Lystra. They hated the Lord Jesus and St. Paul. They told the people that Paul was trying to trick them. The people stoned St. Paul and dragged him outside the city thinking that he was dead. A little crowd of Christians stood around St. Paul and saw him moving. They helped him stand up and he walked back to the city. The Lord had saved St. Paul's life, because he was faithful to Him. The people changed their minds and instead of being grateful they became aggressive with no mercy towards St. Paul.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) St. Paul was faithful to the Lord. He prevented the people from worshipping him. He admitted that he is just a man. We also have to stick to the truth of the matters and should have enough courage to declare the truth.

- (2) We have to be faithful in our life. When we achieve something great (getting good marks or winning a prize ... etc.), we have to admit that God has helped us to do it. We have to be humble.
- (3) We have to love the Lord as St. Paul and St. Barnabas loved Him and suffered a lot in preaching the Gospel. If we love the Lord we have to serve Him through our Christian behaviour, our help to the needy and our service to the church.

SONGS

O APOSTLES OF CHRIST

"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mk 16:15)

With happiness and joy Now many crowns enjoy	in heaven with our Lord O Apostles of Christ
Through sufferings and tears You taught for many years	and yet without any fears O Apostles of Christ
In pain you never complained The paradise obtained	even when you were jailed O Apostles of Christ
Remember to ask for us Blessings may He grant us	before our Lord Jesus O Apostles of Christ
With happiness and joy Now many crowns enjoy	in Heaven with our Lord O Apostles of Christ

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.





**JULY
SECOND SUNDAY**

THE APOSTLES' FEAST:

THE WONDERFUL LIFE OF THE YOUNG CONVERTS

Please read Acts 2:41-47, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To know the wonderful life of the young converts and learn to be glad and fully united together as they were.

MEMORY VERSE:

*"And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved"
Acts 2:47*

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

Whenever a person converts to Christianity, what is the first thing that they must receive in order to become one?

✠ Please read Acts 2:41-47 and give illustrations and discussion verse by verse.

✠ This young church in Jerusalem had almost none of the things we now often think to be essential in performing church services. They had no church building of

their own. They met in people's homes, in porches of the temple, in a borrowed synagogue, in a vacant lot or by the sea side.

✠ **The Happy Steps to Christian Success:**

- ✠ "Then those who gladly received his word were baptized and that day about three thousand souls were added to them." (Acts 2:41). There is a direct connection between verse 4 and verse 41. In verse 4 "And they (the Apostles) were all filled with the Holy Spirit." In verse 41, we see that the people gladly accepted their teaching and were baptized. Preaching in the fullness of the Holy Spirit must have a positive result on others to the extent that they are saved. In the Bible we often find the connection between Spirit-filled witnessing and sinners being saved. Please mention in detail the following examples:
 - a) Luke 1:15-16
 - b) Acts 4:31 as it relates to Acts 4:33 and Acts 5:14.
- ✠ "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers." (Acts 2:42). They had a daily study of the word of God. They joined themselves together, i.e., were fully united. This membership included fellowship and breaking bread. They continued daily and regularly in earnest prayers.
- ✠ "Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles" (Acts 2:43), The Lord supported the preaching of the Apostles with powerful miracles and signs. These miracles and signs prompted the people to be serious and fear God. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (Proverbs 1:7). In our church before the deacon reads the gospel he says, "In the fear of God stand and listen to the Holy Gospel." We love God and He is our Father but we have to fear His anger and we must give Him full respect.
- ✠ "Now all who believed were together and had things in common" (Acts 2:44). They were united by the power of the Holy Spirit. Unity is very important at home, at church and even at school for any group to be successful.

- † "And sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need" (Acts 2:45). They learned to give and share joyfully. Their hearts were connected with winning eternal life and hence the possessions and goods had no significance and they just divided everything among themselves as anyone had need.
- † "So 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" (Acts 2:46). They visited each other, ate with each other and rejoiced to see each other. They were not complicated in dealing with each other, accepting everything in a simple way. When we sit at home to eat our meals, do we sit and eat with gladness?
- † "Praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:47). They praised God because He saved them through the preaching of the Apostles. We can see from the word "daily" that the church was growing at that time because of the effect of the Holy Spirit. This is the reason for saying "and the Lord added" and the verse does not say "and the apostles added".

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Living together in unity and love brings gladness and simplicity, in the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us always preserve the spirit of unity at home, at school and at church. Avoid arguments, aggressiveness and insulting expressions to others.
- (2) We must pray that our church today grows with the addition of new Christians as was the case of the church in the Apostolic era.

SONGS

O APOSTLES OF CHRIST

"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mk 16:15)

With happiness and joy
Now many crowns enjoy

in heaven with our Lord
O Apostles of Christ

Through sufferings and tears
You taught for many years

and yet without any fears
O Apostles of Christ

In pain you never complained
The paradise obtained

even when you were jailed
O Apostles of Christ

Remember to ask for us
Blessings may He grant us

before our Lord Jesus
O Apostles of Christ

With happiness and joy
Now many crowns enjoy

in Heaven with our Lord
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Recitation Curriculum:

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**JULY
THIRD SUNDAY**

LET US TRUST GOD – (I)

THEY TRUSTED THE LORD JESUS

Please read Luke 5:1-11, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is lesson one in a series of three lessons on our need to fully trust God. In this lesson we learn that Jesus' Divine power helped people mentioned in the Holy Bible to trust Him. The Lord asks all around us and with us too.

MEMORY VERSE:

"So when they had brought their boats to land they forsook all and followed Him" Luke 5:11

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) What does it mean to trust in God?
- 2) There are many examples from the new testament, where people trusted Our Lord Jesus Christ, who are they?

✝ There are several examples in the Holy Bible for people who trusted the Lord Jesus and put their lives in His hands. Their trust was complete when they witnessed His Divine power, His love and His keen interest in helping them.

✝ Four fishermen followed our Lord Jesus Christ (Luke 5:1-11). Please read it with the children in the class and discuss with them. The four fishermen believed that the Lord was the Saviour, Son of God. "So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him." (Luke 5:11). They trusted Him to the extent that they left the boats, the nets and the great amounts of fish which they caught.

✝ A man who could not walk trusted the Lord Jesus to help him walk (John 5:1-9). For 38 years this man could not walk but when he heard the word "Rise" from the Lord he "immediately" walked. Just by continuing the discussion with Jesus to heal him after being sick for 38 years he puts his trust in Jesus. The trust of the sick man in the Lord overcame all the hopelessness of being healed.

The Son of God fed 5,000 people with five loaves and two fishes (Mark 6:35-44). Again He fed 4,000 people with seven loaves and a few small fishes (Mark 8:1-9). Then the people knew He was the Son of God and trusted Him.

✝ At one time there was a storm and the Lord Jesus came to the Disciples and stopped the storm. So they knew He has power over nature and that it obeys Him, (Matthew 14:22-26).

✝ A man that was born-blind knew that Jesus could create new eyes for him and help him see. The Lord did it (John 9:1-23). So Jesus helped the blind man and granted him eyesight; so He is God, The blind man trusted Him when he let Him put the clay on his eyes. The Lord then asked him to wash in the lake. Any person does not want to put anything on his eyes especially clay. But this blind man trusted Jesus.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) Let us trust everything mentioned in the Holy Bible. Let us cast away any doubts about God's love to us and about His Divine power to help us. Doubts are from the devil.
- (2) Let us trust that God takes care of us so that we should not fear or need anything.

- (3) When we look forward we can see how beautiful the world is that God has created with care. God looks after all the nature around us and the care that He specially provides for us we can trust Him with our lives.

SONGS

PSALM 150

Praise God, in all His saints
Praise Him, in the firmament of His power.
Praise Him, for His mighty acts.
Praise Him, according to the multitudes of His greatness.
Praise Him, with the sound of the trumpet
Praise Him, with psaltery and harp
Praise Him, with timbrel and chorus
Praise Him, with strings and organs
Praise Him, with pleasant-sounding cymbals
Praise Him, upon the cymbals of joy.
Let every thing that has breath praise the name of the Lord our God. Alleluia
Glory be to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Now and forever and to the ages of ages, Amen Alleluia, Alleluia
Glory be to Thee, our God . Alleluia.
Glory be to our God. Alleluia
O Jesus Christ, the Son of God, hear us and have mercy upon us.

Recitation Curriculum :

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.





**JULY
FOURTH SUNDAY**

LET US TRUST GOD – (II)

ELISHA'S SERVANT LEARNED TO TRUST GOD

Please read 2 Kings 6:8-23, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is the second lesson in a three-lesson series on our need to fully trust God. In this lesson we learn that the Lord can open our eyes to realize that we have a lot of heavenly power to support us more than all the powers against us.

MEMORY VERSE:

"Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them" 2 Kings 6:16

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) In what situations, are we more likely to lose trust in God?
- 2) Does God have limits or is He unlimited?

† Tell in a story-like about the fear that Elisha's servant had. He lacked the feeling of trusting God.

† Elisha the prophet helped the king of Israel. He was called the man of God. God tells Elisha something and Elisha tells it to the king of Israel. The king of Syria was

surprised about the strength of Israel but one of his servants said to him, “Elisha the prophet, who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom” (2 Kings 6:12). Therefore the king of Syria wanted to capture Elisha and he “sent horses and chariots and a great army there, and they came by night and surrounded the city” (2 Kings 6:14). When Elisha’s servant saw this army he was very afraid and said, “Alas, my master! What shall we do?” (2 Kings 6:15).

† **Elisha asked the Lord to open his servant’s eyes that he may see.**

† This means sometimes we cannot understand the word of God by ourselves. But God can open our eyes (meaning our minds to understand and believe the word of God).

† We have to pray to God to give us good eyes to be able to see that God is with us.

† When Elisha’s servant saw the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha, he trusted that “those who are with us are more than those who are against us”. All his fears then disappeared.

† The people who wanted to capture Elisha, the prophet, were blinded and captured by Elisha who led them to Samaria. Then Elisha prayed to the Lord to open their eyes and He did. They found themselves in Samaria. When the king of Israel wanted to kill them, Elisha said “no”. Instead they were given food and water and allowed to go back to their master. This shows us that Elisha did not want to take the opportunity to kill the enemies. He only trusted God and wanted to prove to the Syrians that they cannot take him captive because he was the man of God.

† All the saints of the church trusted God and knew that “those who are with us are more than those who are against us”. Hence, they stood in front of kings and judges and did not fear anything.

† Another example for the opening of the eyes of the people to understand and trust God: the two disciples of Emmaus who did not understand what happened to the Lord Jesus after He was crucified. The Lord Jesus opened their eyes and they knew that the person who was speaking to them was the Lord Himself. Please read this example in Luke 24:13-31.

✝ If we do not understand anything in the Bible, what do we do? Pray to God to enlighten us. If we still do not understand, then we should ask Abouna or our parents or our Sunday School teacher to give explanation to us.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) We must trust that God loves us and He is also the Almighty.
This means He can do everything for our benefit.
- (2) Let us not fear anything: tests, competition, darkness ... etc. We should develop a firm belief that those who are with us (i.e. God who sends His angels to serve us) are more than those who are against us (i.e. the devil).

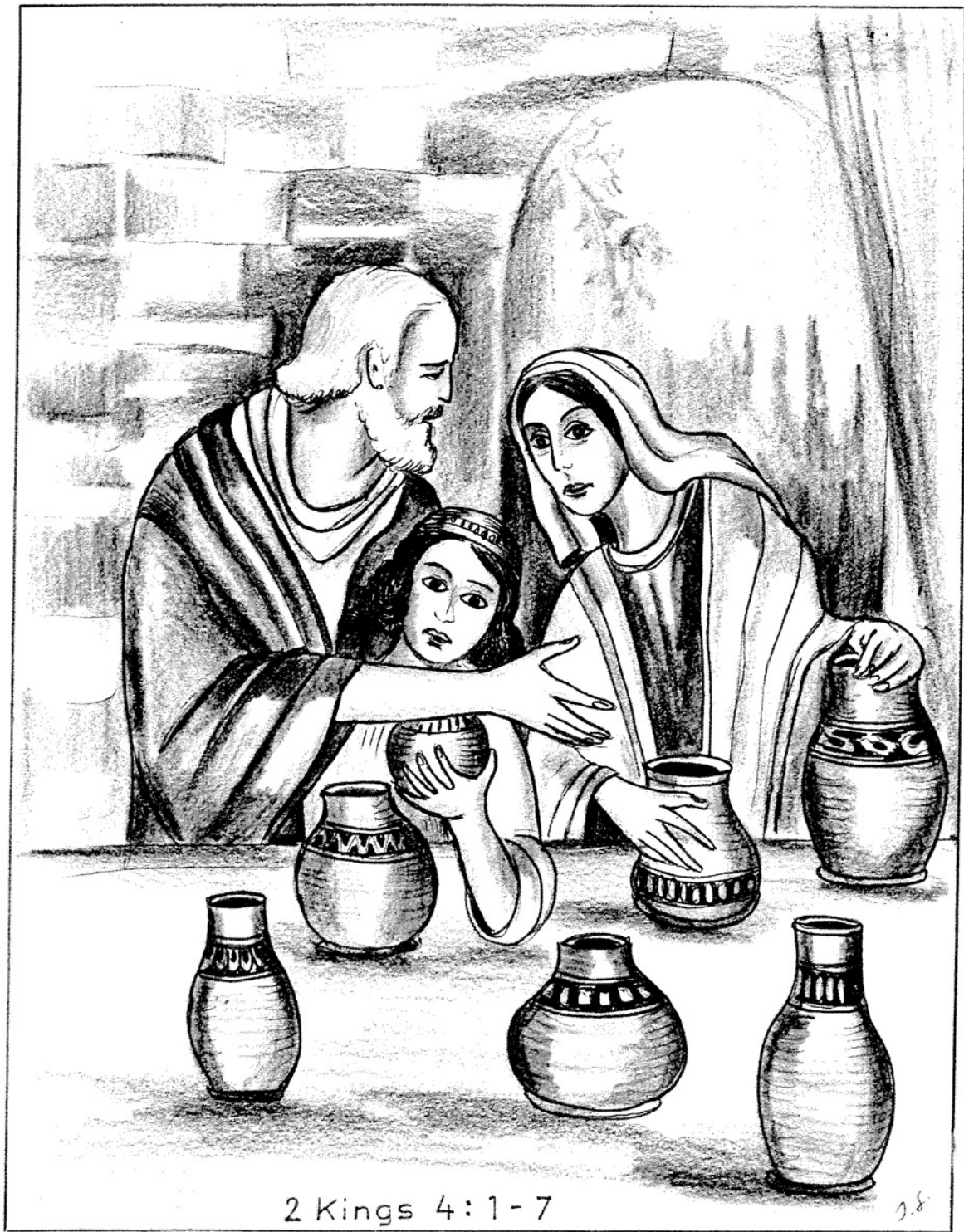
SONGS

PSALM 150

Praise God, in all His saints
Praise Him, in the firmament of His power.
Praise Him, for His mighty acts.
Praise Him, according to the multitudes of His greatness.
Praise Him, with the sound of the trumpet
Praise Him, with psaltery and harp
Praise Him, with timbrel and chorus
Praise Him, with strings and organs
Praise Him, with pleasant-sounding cymbals
Praise Him, upon the cymbals of joy.
Let every thing that has breath praise the name of the Lord our God. Alleluia
Glory be to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Now and forever and to the ages of ages, Amen Alleluia, Alleluia
Glory be to Thee, our God. Alleluia.
Glory be to our God. Alleluia
O Jesus Christ, the Son of God, hear us and have mercy upon us.

Recitation Curriculum:

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**JULY
FIFTH SUNDAY**

LET US TRUST GOD – (III)

GOD HELPS A POOR WOMAN THROUGH ELISHA

Please read 2 Kings 4:1-7, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

This is the third lesson in a series of three lessons on our need to fully trust our God. He helps us through His believers, so we must listen to God's people.

MEMORY VERSE:

"Commit your way to the Lord" Psalm 37:5

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) Whenever we are faced with a challenging problem, who should we commit our problems to?
- 2) Are we limited or unlimited?
- 3) Is God Limited or Unlimited?

✠ A certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets went to Elisha because she had a problem. She knew that Elisha is a man of God. God accepts the prayers of His true believers. This means that the mother trusted Elisha and, more

importantly, she trusted God because He is truly the one who can solve all problems.

✝ The mother cried out to Elisha, saying, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your servant feared the Lord. And the creditor is coming to take my two sons to be his slaves." (2 Kings 4:1)

✝ The mother asked the boys to bring empty containers. She trusted and obeyed what Elisha asked her to do. She asked them to collect as many containers as they can. They did.

✝ God helped the mother and the boys as follows:
From a very small amount of oil that she had, she was able to fill all containers, until all the containers were completely filled. She asked then the boys to bring more containers. When they said that they did not have any more, the oil stopped.

✝ What did she do with the oil? She sold it and paid the loan. She took the rest of the money to spend on her other needs.

✝ Discuss the memory verse:

Commit our way to the Lord means let Him handle all our life. If we have a test at school, we must not fear. If we have someone sick in the family, we must not get sad and lose hope. All what we have to do is to pray and do our best, then we leave the rest to God. Always leave room for God to work. Let us memorize the memory verse by heart and give prizes.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) We must trust that God can do everything and that He, at the same time, loves us. So we must ask Him for all our needs.
- (2) Help from God can come to us through His believers. We must trust and obey God's people. When Abouna tells us to do something we must obey him because we trust Abouna.
- (3) As long as we pray, God is going to act and do everything to our best. God has His ways which are beyond our understanding.

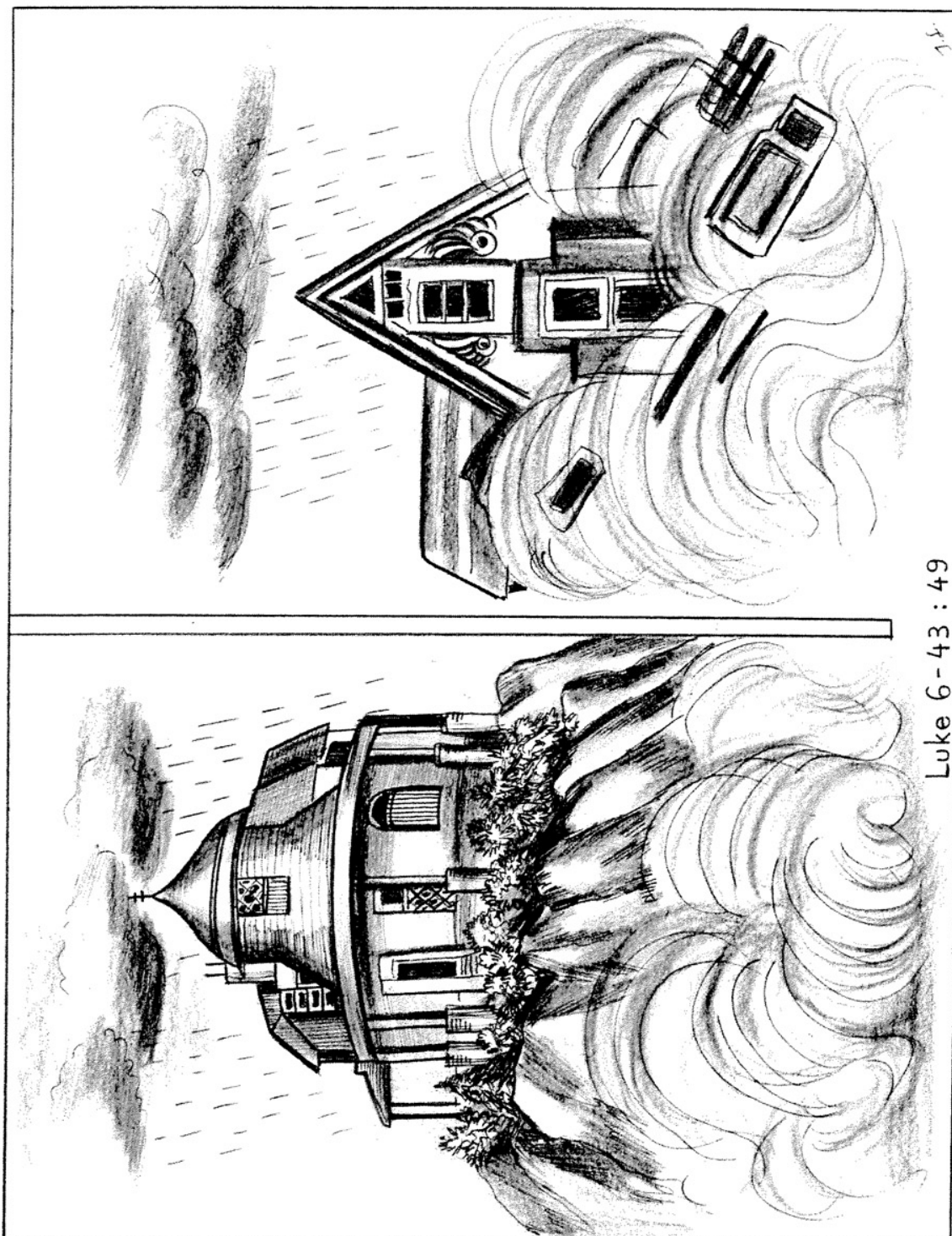
SONGS

PSALM 150

Praise God, in all His saints
Praise Him, in the firmament of His power.
Praise Him, for His mighty acts.
Praise Him, according to the multitudes of His greatness.
Praise Him, with the sound of the trumpet
Praise Him, with psaltery and harp
Praise Him, with timbrel and chorus
Praise Him, with strings and organs
Praise Him, with pleasant-sounding cymbals
Praise Him, upon the cymbals of joy.
Let every thing that has breath praise the name of the Lord our God. Alleluia
Glory be to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Now and forever and to the ages of ages, Amen Alleluia, Alleluia
Glory be to Thee, our God . Alleluia.
Glory be to our God. Alleluia
O Jesus Christ, the Son of God, hear us and have mercy upon us.

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.





**AUGUST
FIRST SUNDAY**

**OUR BEHAVIOUR – (I)
WE MUST HEAR AND DO**

Please read Luke 6:43-49, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that we must have consistent behaviour in our life. We must do good deeds that would tell that we are good Christians i.e. show and tell Christianity.

MEMORY VERSE:

"A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good"
Luke 6:45

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) How can we tell if a Christian person is good or bad?
- 2) Describe some of the behaviours that a good Christian should have?

✝ Our Saviour Jesus Christ taught His Disciples His commandments as mentioned in Luke 6:20-42. Then He declared to them that it is not enough to listen to His commandments and teachings without applying them to their lives. He

said "But why do you call me 'Lord, Lord", and do not do the things which I say" (Luke 6:46).

† Everyone of us has spiritual practices: we come to church every Sunday, we pray every day in the morning, we pray every day at night before we sleep and we pray before every meal. **Now the real test comes:**

† Our younger brother is really causing us a lot of problems because of his noise. Do we go out and slap him on the face? What shall we do? We should be patient with our younger ones.

† We broke the window while we were playing ball in the backyard. No body saw us. Later on our mother came and saw the window. She was mad and asked who did that? What shall we do? Remember no one saw us. God looks and everything is clear in His sight. If we lie, it is a sin and we will be punished for it by God. So, the Bible is teaching us not to lie and in a situation like this we must not lie. We must tell the truth and apologize for what had happened.

† In school, the student beside me is being silly. He is cutting my papers. Oh I am getting mad. Shall I slap him on the face? What shall I do?

† In the part of the Bible mentioned above: Luke 6:43-49, there are two examples:

(a) **Tree**

† The good tree brings good fruits.

† The fig tree brings fig, and so on.

A Christian is like a tree. If the Christian is a good Christian, then his deeds must be good.

(b) **Building**

what is done to have a building? The first thing is to dig deep and lay the foundation. When the wind or the flood comes, it cannot break that house. Similarly, if we build our life on the foundation of faith in the Saviour Jesus Christ, then, when the devil comes along to destroy our life, he cannot because we are with our Father in heaven.

✝ A good example of the people who did not have a consistent life, i.e., the inside is the same as the outside, were the Pharisees and lawyers. Our Lord Jesus said to them, "Now you Pharisees make the outside of the cup and dish clean, but your inward part is full of greed and wickedness." (Luke 11:39). Then the Lord said, "But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass by justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone" (Luke 11:42).

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) We must be consistent in our life. If we truly love our Saviour Jesus Christ we have various spiritual practices, we must then behave well at home and at school.
- (2) When we read the Holy Bible or listen to a Sunday school lesson we must apply what we learn in our daily life. Even the Lord Jesus did what He taught.

SONGS

PSALM 150

Praise God, in all His saints
Praise Him, in the firmament of His power.
Praise Him, for His mighty acts.
Praise Him, according to the multitudes of His greatness.
Praise Him, with the sound of the trumpet
Praise Him, with psaltery and harp
Praise Him, with timbrel and chorus
Praise Him, with strings and organs
Praise Him, with pleasant-sounding cymbals
Praise Him, upon the cymbals of joy.
Let every thing that has breath praise the name of the Lord our God. Alleluia
Glory be to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Now and forever and to the ages of ages, Amen Alleluia, Alleluia
Glory be to Thee, our God . Alleluia.
Glory be to our God. Alleluia
O Jesus Christ, the Son of God, hear us and have mercy upon us.

Recitation Curriculum:

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**AUGUST
SECOND SUNDAY**

OUR BEHAVIOUR – (II)

THE TONGUE

Please read James 3:1-12, and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that controlling the tongue requires our utmost attention for our own benefit as well as others. If what we are going to say is not constructive, we do not have to say anything.

MEMORY VERSE:

"If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless"
James 1:26

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) In your opinion, what is easiest type of sin that a person can sometimes do without even noticing?
- 2) What should we do in order to stop our tongue from saying bad words?

✠ Start by reading the Bible from James 3:1-12 and then verse 2 explaining what it says about the tongue.

✠ Our Lord Jesus said, “Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man, but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man” (Matthew 15:11). Therefore, saying any bad words, not only it is a sin, but it also defiles us.

✠ We must train ourselves to control our tongue. St. James emphasizes that a religious person without controlling his tongue is nothing.

✠ The people who wrote the Bible used to dedicate one pen to write the word “God”. This pen is used exclusively to write the word “God”. In the same way, the tongue that is used to take communion and praise the Lord should not be used to say bad words.

✠ It is not easy to control the tongue. We have to give it so much attention. St. James said, “No human being can tame the tongue.” We must observe what we say. If we do not know what to say, we should be silent.

✠ When we speak in a kind manner to other people, our words normally have good effect on them. Actually it pays to be kind. Please tell the story of Jacob and Esau and read here the good words that Jacob said to his brother Esau and the effect they had (Genesis 33:1-20). Jacob said to Esau about his children, “The children whom God has graciously given your servant” (Genesis 33:5).

✠ St. Paul wrote to his disciple Timothy saying “Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12).

✠ Whatever is expressed by the tongue expresses what is in the heart. Our Saviour Jesus Christ said. “Beware of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things” (Matthew 12:34-35).

✠ A small sin by the tongue can be a serious thing. It can be the start of a bad road that leads to losing eternal life. A story to illustrate that a small thing can lead to a serious problem: A man passed away; one of his friends came to his funeral and asked one of the relatives “was the dead man sick?” The relative answered, “He only had a cold,” This example showed that a man died without being seriously ill; he only had a cold. Also, a man can lose eternal life just by neglecting to control his tongue and getting used to say some bad words.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) We must remember in our prayers to seek the Lord's help in purifying our hearts and our tongues. We must also try our best to control our tongues. We have to make sure that we only say constructive things.
- (2) We must think first before we talk. We must listen to others and give them enough chance to express their opinion without interrupting them.

SONGS

HAIL TO MARY

“For behold, henceforth generations will call me blessed.” (Lk 1:48)

Hail to Mary Mother of God
Magnify her, glorify her

whenever you see the sun
she was chosen to bear the Son

Before God even the heavens
Higher than heaven is St. Mary

are not pure in His holy sight
who became Mother of the true Light

She is above the angels
Over the saints and Apostles

in the heaven her light does shine
is the Mother of the true vine

David said in his Psalm
God chose her, queen of us all

Mary is seen as a golden dove
to her we give our deepest love.

As we call her to help us
On the rocky road of living

we will find her by our side
she will hold our hands to guide

As we gaze up to the heavens
In trials and tribulations

and raise our eyes to the sky
on her always we can rely.

Virgin Mary as we stand here
Of the Lord we ask through you

seeking thy presence this hour
to fill us with holy power

Chanting of her endless virtues
With adoration and love to Mary

give her always unceasing praise
our voices to her praise

Hail to Mary , queen of heaven

on the right side of the King

All the nations and forever praise to her we always sing

You are the Mother of us all your protection on us impart

We shall always praise your majesty and keep you in our heart

Recitation Curriculum:

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**AUGUST
THIRD SUNDAY**

**SUMMARY OF THE VIRGIN MARY'S LIFE
AND THE TREE OF THE VIRGIN MARY IN MATARIEH**

Please read the attached sheet entitled "El-Matarieh and the Tree of St. Mary", and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To review the life of the Virgin Mary and learn from it for our spiritual growth. Also talk about the Matarieh tree in Egypt.

MEMORY VERSE:

*"For that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit"
Matthew 1:20*

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) St. Mary is one of the greatest saints that we should always ask for her intercession whenever we need help from God.
 - 2) What do we know about the life of St. Mary?
- ✚ Tell in a story fashion a summary of the life of the Virgin Mary as mentioned here below.

✝ St. Mary is the daughter of Joachim and Anne. She is from the tribe of Judah (there were 12 tribes of Israel). She is from the house of David the king.

✝ Her mother was barren but she kept praying to God to help her and give her a son or daughter. She made a promise that if God gave her a son or a daughter, she would dedicate him or her to serve God.

✝ God accepted Anne's prayers and He gave her a daughter. She named her Mary. When Mary was only three years old, her mother gave her in to the altar as she had promised God. When St. Mary was 6 years old, her father passed away and when she was 8 years old her mother passed away.

✝ St. Mary lived close to the altar until she was twelve. She was living a life of prayer.

✝ St. Joseph, who was an old man, got engaged to the Virgin Mary and took her to his house. The Angel Gabriel came to her and told her that she will conceive of the Holy Spirit. She believed and obeyed him.

✝ St. Mary went and served Elizabeth for 3 months. St. Mary went by her own initiative without being asked. This is the spirit of service that we should have. We should serve others at home, at school and at church by our own initiative,

✝ St. Mary gave birth to the Lord Jesus in a manger.

✝ St. Mary, baby Jesus and St. Joseph had to escape to Egypt because king Herod wanted to kill all the children in Bethlehem up to 2 years of age after he did not hear from the wise-men.

✝ In their trip to Egypt, the Holy Family gave Egypt a very special blessing. This was God's intention to lead them to go to Egypt, very far from their homeland,

✝ **The Matarieh Tree of the Virgin Mary:**

- † Start by giving some brief information about the history of the city of El-Matarieh.
- † After a very long journey, the Holy Family came to rest under a sycamore tree in the town of Matarieh. It was a complete desert at that time.

- † The sycamore tree helped in hiding baby Jesus and His family from the messengers of King Herod whom he sent to kill baby Jesus in Egypt.
- † This sycamore tree still exists until now in El-Matarieh (Egypt) and people go to see it and some of them are cured by the intercession of the Virgin Mary.
- † After washing the clothes of baby Jesus, St. Mary poured the water on the ground. There God planted the "balsam tree" which never grew except in that place. The balsam perfume was extracted from that plant and was one of the valuable presents to Christian kings.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

- (1) As St. Anne did, we should present all our needs in our prayers. If we made a promise to God, we must do it. It is better not to promise rather than promising and not doing.
- (2) The Virgin Mary is the Mother of all believers. We must ask her to intercede on our behalf so our Lord Jesus Christ may help us and forgive our sins.

SONGS

HAIL TO MARY

“For behold, henceforth generations will call me blessed.” (Lk 1:48)

Hail to Mary Mother of God Magnify her, glorify her	whenever you see the sun she was chosen to bear the Son
Before God even the heavens Higher than heaven is St. Mary	are not pure in His holy sight who became Mother of the true Light
She is above the angels Over the saints and Apostles	in the heaven her light does shine is the Mother of the true vine
David said in his Psalm God chose her, queen of us all	Mary is seen as a golden dove to her we give our deepest love.
As we call her to help us On the rocky road of living	we will find her by our side she will hold our hands to guide
As we gaze up to the heavens In trials and tribulations	and raise our eyes to the sky on her always we can rely.
Virgin Mary as we stand here Of the Lord we ask through you	seeking thy presence this hour to fill us with holy power
Chanting of her endless virtues With adoration and love to Mary	give her always unceasing praise our voices to her praise
Hail to Mary , queen of heaven All the nations and forever	on the right side of the King praise to her we always sing
You are the Mother of us all We shall always praise your majesty	your protection on us impart and keep you in our heart

Recitation Curriculum :

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.

EL-MATARIEH AND THE TREE OF ST.MARY

It is that village which was erected on the ruins of the ancient city, Heliopolis, near its famous obelisk, which still now exists. Heliopolis has been the oldest Egyptian city and the center of the heathen worship, probably before the apparition of the ancient capital of Egypt, Memphis. It was the residence of many kings of the pharaohs; it is called the city of "On" which means "column", and its sacred name was "Pi-Ra", that signifies "The dwelling of the God Ra", where its splendid temple, dedicated to its worship, has been established. But Heliopolis which means the city of the sun has lately been adopted by the Greeks. From the remotest days, it was famous for its high universities which attracted tremendous numbers of children and scholars of the Egyptian priests whose reputation was unmatched in teaching all the branches of knowledge and wisdom especially philosophy, astronomy, astrology, medicine and history of the old world.

Several young princes, the sons of the noble families and of the high officials of Egypt were annexed to those universities in order to gain the sufficient learning and culture and prepare themselves for the management of the important affairs in the high ranks of the palace and the big cities of the country. It is note worthy that the famous Greek historian Manithon wrote the history of the ancient Egyptian dynasties, depending upon the registers, the rolls of papyrus and the archives which had been immaginezined among the halls of its temple. It has also been stated that the remarkable philosopher Plato came to Heliopolis, where he prepared his philosophic bibliographies. Solon, too, the renowned Greek legislator collected from it his reputed laws which he published and employed in his country after his return.

El-Matarieh which replaced Heliopolis, was visited by the Geographer Strabo at the beginning of the FIRSTcentury A.D. He recorded nothing about it. This assures that the village might have been wholly uninhabited and become a desolate place. But the little village began to revive and soon regained its former reputation and became extremely renowned in many countries of the world -cause of the arrival of the Holy Family into that spot. When the Holy Family began its journey from Palestine into Egypt escaping from the brutality of Herod, king of the Jews who tried to destroy the Holy Child, they probably passed through the route, neighbouring the Mediterranean shore which might have been the ancient way followed by the caravans and armies coming from Palestine to Egypt. But they undoubtedly avoided, as much as possible, the clear usual route to be in safe. The way was extremely troublesome and hazardous either from shortage of food and water, or the horror of the kings' attendants and wild beasts, however God's eye has

always been watching them. They continued their journey several days until they became wholly fatigued. They were forced to search for a calm spot for rest and they came under an old branchy sycamore tree that protected them from the heat of the sun, This was near the village of El-Matarieh, which had probably been as a desert at that time. Owing to the wonders and miracles which took place by the Holy Child during the journey, such tidings spread everywhere and became known to Herod and exasperated him very much. He sent his well-weaponed soldiers with full recommendations to the rulers of Egypt to search carefully about the Child and His mother everywhere. Through the continual and accurate search for the Family, the soldiers could collect some of the news, that the Family reached the village of El-Matarieh, they tried to catch them near that spot. They were about to succeed in catching the Child when He was under the tree. No sooner did the Virgin feel the soldiers' approach, than she hid together with her Son among the branches of the tree. In another tale, it was related that the miraculous tree bent with its branches until it hid the Holy Family from Herod's soldiers and they were saved from their danger.

In a third story, it was said that the spider played its role in weaving its threads, which acted as a curtain to protect them from the enemies' eyes. From those tales, people have naturally sacrificed that tree and also the spot which sheltered and protected them. The Islamic historian Takii el-Din-el-Makirizi in 1441 A.D. mentioned that the Holy Family arrived near Heliopolis, at the place of ElMatarieh, where they rested near a fountain from which St. Mary washed from that water the unclean clothes of Jesus, and threw the water around that land in which God planted that Balsam which never grew except in that place. That plant used to be watered from a well glorified by Christians who used to come to be washed from its water and cured. He stated that the Balsam perfume was extracted from that plant, and it was one of the valuable presents exported to Christian kings of Ethiopia, Greece and the Franks, being essential to them in order to be added in performing baptism in remote days. It was also employed in the consecration of cathedrals and churches.

Amelineau, the author of the book of Geography of Egypt in the Coptic Era, also reported that the small village of El-Matarieh was not mentioned in the history of the Coptic church except because of the journey of the Holy Family into Egypt. It was stated the passage of the Family at Matarieh, the rest, the bath from the fountain that became benevolent and sacred at the spot, the growth of the fragrant balsam plant which was used in baptism and consecrating churches, as a curing medicine for some diseases and as royal presents exported to Christian kings. Because of this traditional legendry, the town of El-Mataria has become one of the

most renowned places in Egypt, and tourists of various countries and of different creeds and religions to its visit.

Although the gardens of that site ceased to produce this perfume from a long time, and the sacred tree has been dislocated from its place, the same spot is still glorified, revered and distinguished by an everlasting memory of its sanctity. The original Virgin-Tree near which the Holy Family rested for some time became so weakened and worn that it has fallen down in 1656, and a group of the Franciscan Fathers gathered its branches. But the tree which grew in its place, and which might probably be from the stem of the former tree went back to the date 1672. It is also said that in the same place there existed a Sakia or an elevation - machine destined for the distribution of water from several fountains to irrigate the gardens around the site. In the area, a place for praying was erected in the Middle Ages, and it has been transferred into a mosque. In 1700 the place included a mosque and a church beside it; both the Islamic and Christian rites have been performing in complete harmony.

The Matarieh-garden remained famous several centuries as one of the sacred centers in the Orient. Thus multitudes of pilgrims of the whole world especially the credulous people longed extremely for visiting the place. It was known as the balsam gardens where the fountain supplied the Holy Family with water during their sojourn. It has also been natural that all places inhabited by the Holy Child and his Mother should be distinguished by a special esteem and reverence. According to the ancient traditions, pilgrims regarded that the visit of El-Matarieh was very essential, owing to its sublime souvenirs and its high religious situation. During the early periods of Christianity, the Copts established a big cathedral in the area, where annual celebrations for the glorification of the memorial arrival of the Holy Family into Egypt have been performed. The Coptic Church still acts this benevolent celebration annually for the same idea on the FIRST of June.

Among the tales and legends which spread during the Holy Family's arrival into Egypt it is mentioned that many statues and idols which flourished everywhere in Egypt, soon fell down and collapsed directly after the apparition of the Holy Child, many miraculous events happened and several individuals suffering from incurable illness were healed in the spot. Such miracles undoubtedly attracted the population to the Family to whom many services were offered willingly. It is noteworthy to be mentioned that Napoleon after his departure from Egypt to France, left the leadership of his French troops to his general Keleber, who was obliged to fight against the innumerable Turkish troops. In a pitched battle, at Ein Shams, Keleber gained a complete victory over the Turkish troops. The French troops after the victorious battle, they marched on their way near the Virgin-Tree. Many of them

carved their names on its stem and branches by the tips of their swords and lances. Some of them were cured of their eye-diseases after having been washed from the fountain of El-Mataria. Some also mentioned that all the diseases from which they had suffered were all healed after their visit to the Virgin-Tree, and they offered their hot prayers thanking God for that cure.

It is stated in the history of the Coptic church, namely the Synaxarium, that the church of the Virgin, the miraculous fountain at Heliopolis, had at times occupied the most important and glorified Episcopal seats especially in the ecumenical congregation of Ephesus held in 431 A.D. It is curious to remark that the people of the Occident and their pilgrims have been well acquainted with the importance of that site, its distinguished souvenirs, its religious and revered situation much more than its own inhabitants. Some months ago, it happened that a group of noble ladies, dwelling near El-Mataria, decided to pay a visit to the spot of the Virgin-Tree. They were extremely blocked by what they have seen of how shameful, nasty, dusty and very dirty the place was! In olden times, the site was so beautiful, clean and attractive, that it induced thousands of tourists of both foreigners and Egyptians to the visit.

Extremely furious and ashamed of what has taken place to a dear and wonderful glorified spot of their native land, through carelessness and disgraceful negligence, those noble zealous ladies decided to take all the essential measures, however troublesome and costly they might have been in order to regain its remarkable biblical fame and vitality and revive its ancient and sublime glory. Through their continual efforts, energy, perseverance and keen watching and cleaning the site, they were successful in their decision and the place began to revive and in all probability through the courage and care of the government, it will resume its former biblical touristic situation.

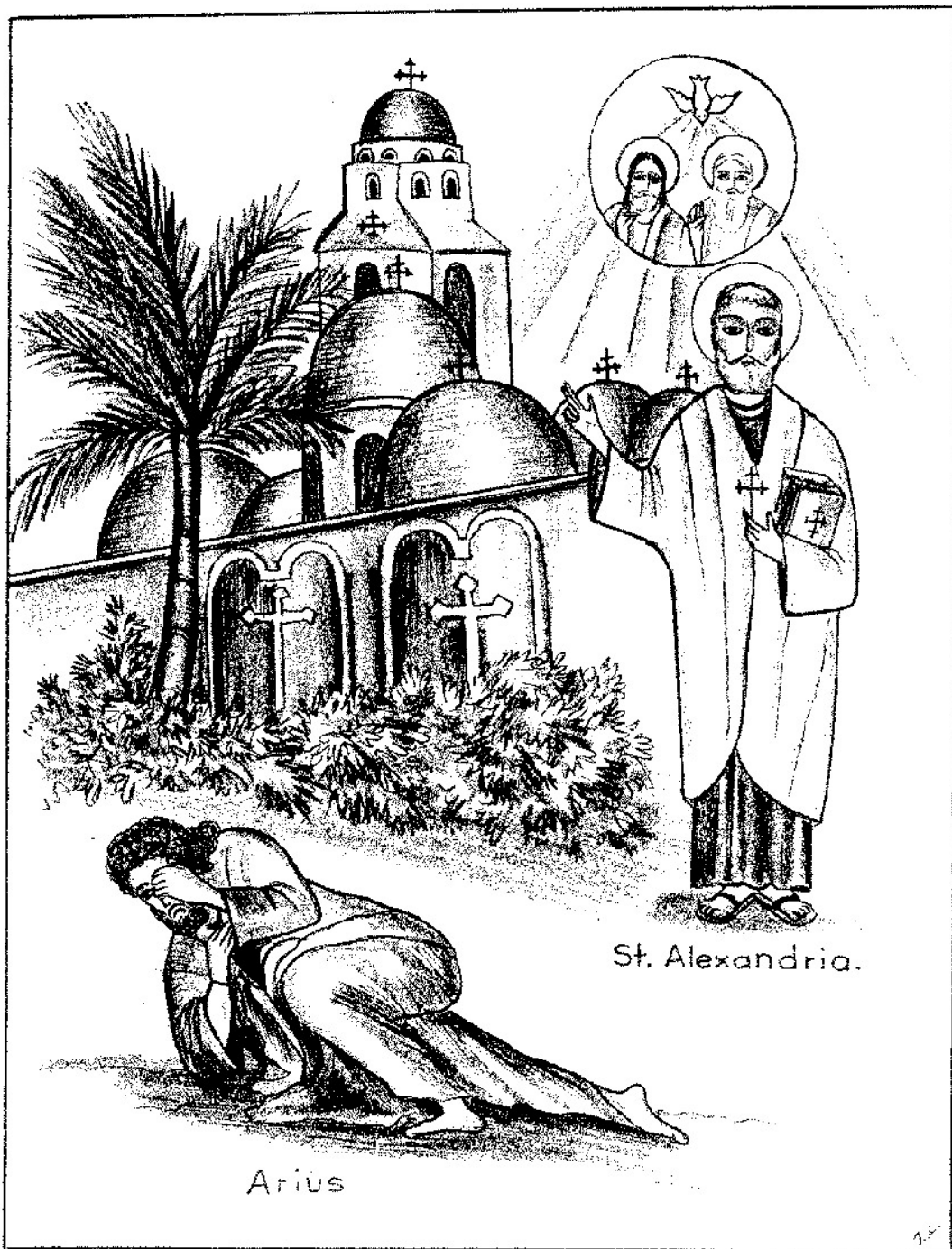
It has been an amazing and sacred coincidence that the place which has lately been honoured by the wonderful apparition of the Virgin and remarked by enormous multitudes of people of different nationalities over the towers and domes of Zaitoun church from the SECOND of April 1968, that place of this church might have been one of the blessed areas near which the Holy Family passed on arriving into Egypt, especially if we know that the site is neighbouring to the town of El-Mataria which sheltered the Holy Family for a time at the beginning of the arrival. We must also bear in mind that many miraculous events and several healing cases of serious and incurable diseases and patients have suddenly been cured during the Holy Apparition.



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**AUGUST
FOURTH SUNDAY**

GOD PROTECTS THE CHURCH FROM HERESIES:

"THE PASS AWAY OF ST. ALEXANDRIUS

PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE"

Please read the attached material entitled "The Pass away of St. Alexandrius, Patriarch of Constantinople", and give the lesson with emphasis on the points below.

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON:

To learn that our faith has flourished because the Lord protected the church from heresies. We learn this from the life of St. Alexandrius.

MEMORY VERSE:

"I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" Matthew 16:18

PLEASE EMPHASIZE:

Opening Questions:

- 1) What does the word "Heresies" mean?
- 2) Would God ever allow heresies to attack the faith of his people and change the church?
- 3) Introduce the story of Arius and St. Alexandrius' prayers to protect the church.

✝ Arius and his followers denied that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God and is one with the Father in essence. He was excommunicated from the church. Arius wanted to be confirmed again in the church, but not by changing his belief.

✝ Through the inquiry of king Constantine, St. Alexandrius took what Arms did on face value. Arius said and wrote that he believes in the Holy Trinity, but he was a liar, "If he is a liar, the Holy Spirit will do something to protect the church from him", said St. Alexandrius.

✝ St. Alexandrius fasted with his people for 7 days and prayed to the Lord to protect the church from Anus. The power of prayer and fasting is always great.

✝ At the end of 7 days Arius entered the church and sat in front of the altar with the other priests. Then St. Alexandrius came into the church sadly. But as soon as the Mass started, Arius got a stomach ache and went to the washrooms where his intestines fell out. When his followers found him, he was already dead.

✝ Please tell in a story fashion the story of Ananias and Saphira. Ananias and his wife Saphira when they lied to St. Peter by giving a small price for the farm, both were found dead. Please read Acts 5:1-6 in the class.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS LESSON?

(1) The faith that we have now is protect by God from heresies. The Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of God has guided the church to stand against any heresies and maintain our faith as is.

(2) St. Alexandrius's prayers and fasting were acceptable to God and God helped him to solve the problem of Arius.

SONGS

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

“I am the good shepherd; and I know my sheep.” (Jn 10:14)

REFRAIN

The Lord is my shepherd
Come to Him all who labour

I shall not want
and He will give you rest

Whenever I am weary
Whenever I am anxious

You wipe away my tears
You calm all my fears.

Whenever I am restless
On the cross You died

You listen and care
and my sins You did bare

Whenever I am homeless
In a strange country

You open Your door
no one can care more

Whenever I am hungry
Whenever I am thirsty

You give me Your food
You give me Your blood

Whenever I am scorned
Whenever I am happy

You stretch out Your hand
by my side You stand

Recitation Curriculum:

Please look at the recitation curriculum at the end of this book.

THE PASSAWAY OF ST. ALEXANDRIUS PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE

He was a saint, who suffered from Arius' followers. When Arius was excommunicated by St. Athanasius, Pope of Alexandria, he went to see the king Constantinos, son of the king Constantine, asking him to intervene on his behalf to St. Athanasius, who refused. So the king told St. Alexandrius to accept Arius in the church by saying "Athanasius disobeyed us, and you know that we gave you this position, so accept Arius." St. Alexandrius answered "The church cannot accept him because he does not adore the Holy Trinity." The king said, "He declared his faith in front of me, and acknowledged that the Son is consubstantial with the Father." The Patriarch said, "If he said so, let him write it down." So Arius wrote the true faith, against his belief, and swore on the Bible that what he wrote was his faith. St. Alexandrius requested from the king to delay the matter one week to ensure that Arius was not going to change. Then he asked his people to fast with him seven days and pray to the Lord to protect the church from Arius. On the seventh day, Arius entered the church and sat in front of the altar with the other priests. Then St. Alexandrius came into the church sadly. But as soon as the Mass started, Arius got a stomach ache and went to the washrooms where his intestines fell out. When his followers found him, he was already dead. The faithful glorified the Lord because He protected his church. St. Alexandrius had a godly life, and passed away in peace. May his prayers be with all of us. AMEN.



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Recitation Curriculum

In addition to all the memory verses and songs in the lessons, please teach the following recitation items throughout the year:

Recitation 1

Let us sing with the angels saying:

"Glory be to God in the highest, on earth peace, and goodwill to men." We praise Thee; we bless Thee; we serve Thee; we worship Thee; we confess to Thee; we proclaim Thy glory. O Lord, King of the Heavens, God, the Father Almighty, and the Lord, the Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit; O Lord God, the Lamb of God, the Son of the Father, who takes away the sins of the world have mercy on us. O Thou, bearer of the sins of the world, accept unto Thee our prayers. O Thou, who sits at the right hand of His Father, have mercy on us. Thou alone art Holy; Thou alone art the Highest, my Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Glory be to God the Father, Amen.

Recitation 2

The Trisagion

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, who was born of the Virgin, have mercy on us. Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, who was crucified for us, have mercy on us. Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, who arose from the dead and ascended into heaven, have mercy on us. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages, Amen.

O Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, Forgive us our sins. Lord, forgive us our iniquities. Lord, forgive us our trespasses. Lord, attend to the sick of Thy people, heal them for the sake of Thy Holy Name. Our fathers and brothers who have slept, rest their souls. O Thou who art sinless, Lord, forgive us our sins. O Thou who art sinless, Lord, help us and accept our prayers unto Thee. For Thine is the glory, dominion, and triple holiness; Lord have mercy, Lord bless us. Amen.

Recitation 3

Prayer of the Hours:

Have mercy on us God, and have mercy on us. Thou who, at all times, and at every hour, in Heaven and on earth art worshipped and glorified. The Christ, our God, who art long-suffering, plenteous in mercy and compassion, who loves the just and shows mercy to sinners among whom I am the first. Who does not wish the death of the sinner, but to repent and to live.

Thou who calls all men to salvation through the promise of good things to come, do Thou the same, Lord, receive also our supplications at this hour and at every hour; facilitate our present lives and direct us to act according to Thy commandments. Sanctify our souls, purify our bodies, set aright our reasoning, cleanse our thoughts, heal our sickness, remit our sins, and deliver us from all wrath and distress. Surround us with Thy holy angels; that guided and guarded by their host we may attain the unity of faith and the comprehension of Thine imperceptible and infinite glory, for blessed art Thou unto all ages. Amen.

*Note: It will be beneficial if the teacher can include the recitation items of the previous years as well.

MAJOR REFERENCES

(with permission)

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- (2) El-Keraza Magazine, head publisher: His Holiness Pope Shenouda III, all issues up to March 2005.
- (3) Recorded Sermons by His Grace Bishop Rowiss up to March 2005.
- (4) Books by His Grace Bishop Moussa up to March 2005
- (5) All books by Mr. Kamal Habib (Late Bishop Biman Bishop of Mallawi)
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- (9) Books by Father Tadros Y. Malaty, St. George Coptic Church, Alexandria, Egypt, up to March 2005.
- (10) “Bahgat El-Aiad” by Yassa Mansour, 1970.
- (11) “The Seven Church Sacraments” by Late Mr. Habib Girgis, 1968.
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THE FOLLOWING TABLES
OF CONTENTS REFLECT
THE CHANGES IN THE
TIMING OF EASTER AND
THE ASSOCIATED,
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