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FIRST SECTION

PREPARATION MATERIALS:

- 1. *Introduction to the series***
- 2. *Classroom setup and rules***
- 3. *Themes of grades 1-5***
- 4. *Characters of first grade students***
- 5. *The year Calendar***
- 6. *Teaching Schedule table***
- 7. *Theological Background***
 - A. *Summary of St Athanasius book “on the incarnation”***
 - B. *Summary of St. Gregory of Nazianza “Orations on the Holy Trinity”***
 - C. *Summary of “the Revelation of God”***



1. INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES

Although Sunday school is relatively a recent vocabulary in our Church, its existence is very old. The school of Alexandria is the most ancient of all the Christian seminaries. According to church history, the school of Alexandria was established by St. Mark to teach the new converts the faith before it became the famous theological institute.

THE RITE OF BAPTISM IS THE MODEL

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

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

The second stage is the stage of the movement of the heart, marked by the oil of Joy, “to be planted in the fruitful olive tree that is the Holy church of God.” The joy of Christ is what carries on with the Christians all their lives. No one can take that joy away from them. It is the joy of Knowing Christ and being in Him. The Joy that fills the heart more than oil and fat can satisfy the body. Our Lord becomes to -the believer in him- the food and the drink of the spirit in the

journey through the earthly life. Before the anointment with the oil of joy, the catechumen is asked to make the oath. The oath is renouncing Satan and accepting Christ. The baptized here is a spouse of Christ, pledging fidelity. It is verbalizing what he or she feels in the heart and knows in the mind. Here the Spirit brings life to the heart and satisfaction that no other can bring.

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

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

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

THE CURRICULUM IS TRINITY-CENTERED

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

THE CURRICULUM IS BIBLE BASED

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

THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IS A REVOLVING PROCESS

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

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

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

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

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

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

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

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

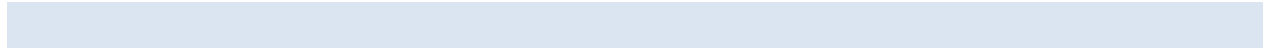
The units are each made up of several lessons. Each lesson brings out the unit topic from a different perspective. When teaching the lessons, the servant should bear in mind that the lesson and the story are told from the perspective of the purpose of the unit. For example, the story of the flood can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

LESSON STRUCTURE

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

language of the fifth graders. This section is concluded with a review questions and a verse to remember. There is an empty note at the end of each lesson for the teachers to write their own notes. The notes will be helpful to the teachers and gives a good feedback.

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



2. CLASSROOM SETUP AND RULES

CLASSROOM SETUP:

The classroom should be uncluttered, well ventilated and well lit. Colors should be bright and cheering....The classroom should have a white dry eraser board and if possible a projector and screen at one end of the room.

CLASS STRUCTURE AND RULES:

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

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

-
-
-
- Conclusion (5 minutes)
- Prayer (5 minutes)
- Maintain an accurate attendance list and contact information for parents

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

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

PROGRESS CHARTS:

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

DISCIPLINE:

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

HYPERACTIVE CHILDREN:

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

	<u>Theme</u>	<u>Faith</u>	<u>Scriptures</u>	<u>Church</u>	<u>Virtues</u>	<u>Spiritual Life</u>
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3. Themes of Grades 1-5

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

+

4. CHARACTERISTICS OF FIFTH GRADE STUDENTS

YEAR OLDS (5TH GRADE)

The children need to perceive the likeness between their personal experience and the experience of the children of God, in the past and at present. In this way they perceive the continuous work of God in them. The students of grade 5 will still enjoy stories with visual aids but they are more critical of what they hear. They particularly like to ask logical questions and like to hear logical answers. The main theme to be conveyed at this age is that they are loved and respected. The child is sensitive in this age to his teacher's image. It is also a critical stage for developing their self-esteem.

1. They respond although they are indifferent sometimes.
2. They perfect what they do and like to receive information.
3. They like movement in work and tend to be independent.
4. Boys like to play with boys and girls like to play with girls. This is important to observe in journeys, in clubs and outdoor activities.
5. They like to perform their work secretly (personal matters, unknown places, writing autobiography). Hence they form groups in which they discuss their social concerns. They form theories, which may be wrong or right.

5. YEAR CALENDAR

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

7. THEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

SECOND SECTION: CORE MATERIALS

FIFTH GRADE CURRICULUM THEME AND OBJECTIVES

God called Us to be Holy

Lesson List (39 lessons)

During the Fifth Year

UNIT I: GOD REVEALS HIMSELF TO US (5 LESSONS)

Purpose: The purpose of this unit is to examine the ways God the Father reveals Himself to us. It includes: His Son and His Spirit, Nature, the Word of God and the Church.

1. God reveals Himself to us through Nature
2. God reveals Himself to us through His Son and His Spirit
3. God reveals Himself to us through Scripture
4. God reveals Himself to us through the Church
5. We receive God's Eternal life and forgiveness in the Eucharist

UNIT II: GOD CALLED A PEOPLE (12 LESSONS)

Purpose:

6. Introduction
7. God prepared a savior
8. God sends the savior
9. God prepared to take His people out of Egypt
10. The Passover
11. God Baptizes His people: the Red Sea
12. The Manna & the Quails
13. The Water from the Rock
14. The 10 Commandments
 - Emphasizing the fear of God - God is awesome and fearful, but not in a scary and frightening way. God is powerful
 - God is loving - shown when he saved the Israelites from many of the tribulations that they faced).
 - **Communication of glory** - God chose Moses to receive his commandments.
15. The Golden Calf & Change of Priesthood
16. The Tabernacle
17. Unit Review

UNIT III: THE JOURNEY OF LENT (6 LESSONS)

Purpose:

18. Intro to Lent
19. Our Lord Jesus Christ leads us to offer fasting to God
20. The power of fasting
21. We give Cheerfully
22. Holy Week part 1
23. Holy Week part 2

UNIT IV: THE BEATITUDES (10 LESSONS)

Purpose:

24. Introduction to the Beatitudes
25. Blessed are the Poor in Spirit
26. Blessed are those who Mourn
27. Blessed are the Meek
28. Blessed are those who Hunger & Thirst for Righteousness
29. Blessed are the Merciful
30. Blessed are the Pure in Heart
31. Blessed are the Peacemakers
32. Persecuted & House on the Rock
33. Unit Review

UNIT V: GOD CALLED US TO BE HOLY (6 LESSONS)

Purpose:

34. Introduction to Sanctification
 - Explain to the children how and why we are set apart- but do not make them feel we are better than everyone
 - Teach the children how to show God's love to us through serving others, even those who are not kind to us. This is how people will know we are Christians. We cannot be like everyone else because we are not like everyone else. We are sanctified
 - Make sure they understand the importance of keeping this Holiness
35. Our Lord invites us to receive God's mercy
 - Review the Mystery of repentance and confession
 - Review the examination of conscience
 - Explain the fruits of repentance and confession
 - How we should forgive others because we are forgiven
36. Our Lord Jesus Christ called us to follow Him (putting on Christ)
37. God gives us laws to live by
38. God invites us to worship Him
39. We protect God's gift of Holiness

Fifth Grade Curriculum:

God called Us to be Holy

UNIT I: GOD REVEALS HIMSELF TO US (5 LESSONS)

Purpose: The purpose of this unit is to examine the ways God the Father reveals Himself to us. It includes: His Son and His Spirit, Nature, the Word of God and the Church. We live in a very overwhelming, materialistic environment and we are very far removed from nature. For example, we eat meat and don't even think that there was an animal who lived and grew and ate and then was killed so we can eat it. We think the animal was manufactured. During Passover, God asked the Israelites to keep the animal for four days so they could feel like it was a part of their lives and they could feel the loss when it was killed. We are completely distant from nature because we live in a man-made world. The more man works on things, the more distant we are from God, the more likely it is for one to think God doesn't exist.

This unit is important to wake up the senses and look and see God in everything. We live in a capsule made by us to protect us, allows us to go back and say that maybe he doesn't exist. We are suffocated, enclosed and removed. Nature is something that is made for humans to enjoy and enrich them – the sea, the sky, the nature, the sand in the desert is so touching and so rich. That's why Jesus used to go out in the open spaces all the time

This is one way God reveals Himself. Add to nature the Bible and Communion then we're in Heaven. How can we give to others if we don't have? We take from God and give to people the attention, care, freedom.

LESSON 1: GOD REVEALS HIMSELF TO US THROUGH NATURE

LESSON 2: GOD REVEALS HIMSELF TO US THROUGH HIS SON AND HIS SPIRIT

LESSON 3: GOD REVEALS HIMSELF TO US THROUGH SCRIPTURE

LESSON 4: GOD REVEALS HIMSELF TO US THROUGH THE CHURCH

LESSON 5: WE RECEIVE GOD'S ETERNAL LIFE AND FORGIVENESS IN THE EUCHARIST

Unit I: God Reveals Himself to Us

Purpose: The purpose of this unit is to examine the ways God the Father reveals Himself to us. It includes: His Son and His Spirit, Nature, the Word of God and the Church.

LESSON 1: GOD REVEALS HIMSELF TO US THROUGH NATURE

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

REFLECTION:

How does God allow us to die when we were created for life? Viruses came out from corruption of nature – all the nature got corrupted with the fall of man. St. Paul said “All nature has been subjected to futility” because man, the reason of creation, has fallen. Let creation get corrupted too.

Living in the city makes nature very far away. All you see is human, man-made stuff. You’re so removed from God’s creation, cut off from God’s nature. Who can see the stars in downtown Boston? Think about Abraham, Lot specifically wanted to live within the walls of a city in a house. Abraham refused and lived in a tent outside the city. The people of God chose the wilderness, desert, fields. The people of the world chose the cities. The first city ever built was built by Cain and called it Enoch, his son, Genesis 4.

People who are into hiking and nature, even if they are not religious, are less likely to get involved in bad things because they are in nature, which is connecting them God.

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

Third Hoos:

Bless the Lord, all you waters above the heaven, praise Him and exalt Him, above all forever.

Bless the Lord, all you powers of the Lord, praise Him and exalt Him, above all forever.

Bless the Lord, O sun and moon, praise Him and exalt Him, above all forever.

Bless the Lord, all you stars of heaven, praise Him and exalt Him. . .

Bless the Lord, O you rain and dew. Praise Him and exalt Him. . .

Bless the Lord, O you clouds and winds, praise Him and exalt Him. . .

Bless the Lord, all you spirits, praise Him and exalt Him. . .

Bless the Lord, O fire and heat, praise Him and exalt Him. . .

Bless the Lord, O cold and heat, praise Him and exalt Him. . .

Bless the Lord, O you dew and winds, praise Him and exalt Him. . .

Bless the Lord, O you night and days, praise Him and exalt Him. . .

Bless the Lord, O light and darkness, praise Him and exalt Him. . .

Bless the Lord, O frost and cold, praise Him and exalt Him, above all forever

Bless the Lord, O snow and ice, praise Him and exalt Him. . .

Bless the Lord, O you lightning's and clouds, praise Him and exalt Him. . .

Bless the Lord, all the earth, praise Him and exalt Him. . .

Bless the Lord, O you mountains and all hills, praise Him and exalt Him. . .

Bless the Lord, all you things that spring upon the earth, praise Him and . . .

Bless the Lord, O you fountains, praise Him and exalt Him. . .

Bless the Lord, O you seas and rivers, praise Him and exalt Him. . .

Bless the Lord, O you whales and all that moves in the waters, praise Him. . .

Bless the Lord, all you birds of the sky, praise Him and exalt Him. . .

Bless the Lord, all you wild beasts and cattle, praise Him and exalt Him. . .

Bless the Lord, O you sons of men, worship the Lord, praise Him and . . .

Second Hoos also works

VOCABULARY:

Contemplation

INTRODUCTION

Last week we discussed the Cross. We discuss how it was found and how important it is in our lives and how it is the only thing we can be proud of. It is a symbol of our faith

We're going to begin a unit that will help us learn more about God. Since we're sons and daughters of God, we should always be trying to learn more about God and trying to get closer to Him. Nature is one of the first ways we can learn about God:

Since God created everything, everything around us can tell us something about God. It reveals some aspect of God to us.

LESSON BODY:

THE CREATION

Read beginning of Genesis 1.

In the beginning there was nothing except for God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. From the first verses of the Bible in the Book of Genesis, we know that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit always work together. God the Father was the creator. God the Son is the "Word of God" (John 1:1 – in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God). God the Spirit "hovered over the waters." "Let *us* create man in *our* image"

Example: there is an owner of a building, an architect and a laborer. Each one can say *I* built the house. The Father is the owner, the Son is the architect and the Spirit is the laborer.

CONTEMPLATION

It's important to spend some time **contemplating** nature. Contemplation means being still and receiving; deep consideration and reflection; focused thinking; and an awareness of God. We need to spend time contemplating the beauty of nature because it *connects* us to God and makes us experience His glory. In nature we are immersed in God. It shows us how much God loves us that He created all of this for us.

Ask: Has anyone here ever noticed anything beautiful about nature? How did that make you feel? What is a place you felt inspired/felt good about visiting. What do you feel when you see nature.

NATURE TEACHES US ABOUT GOD

We know from nature that God is peaceful, beautiful, strong, loyal, caring from thinking about a sunset, a lion, a dog, and an elephant.

Show pictures of nature and animals and ask the kids what they can teach us about God.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- *Pictures of nature and animals*

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever. Psalm 118:1

DAILY READINGS

Unit I: God Reveals Himself to us

Purpose: The purpose of this unit is to examine the ways God the Father reveals Himself to us. It includes: His Son and His Spirit, Nature, the Word of God and the Church.

LESSON 2: GOD REVEALS HIMSELF THROUGH HIS SON AND HIS SPIRIT

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST

“In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ² and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!” ³ For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying:

“ The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

‘ Prepare the way of the LORD;

Make His paths straight.’”

⁴ Now John himself was clothed in camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him ⁶and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.

⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, ⁹ and do not think to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. ¹⁰ And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ¹¹ I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

¹³ Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. ¹⁴ And John tried to prevent Him, saying, “I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?”

¹⁵ But Jesus answered and said to him, “Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he allowed Him.

¹⁶ When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He^[c] saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. ¹⁷ And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Matthew 3)

THE CREATION

¹In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ² The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was^[a] on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

³ Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. ⁴ And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day. Genesis (1:1-5)

REFLECTION:

Whenever the Bible speaks about the Arm/Hand of God, it is speaking about Jesus Christ. Whenever the Bible speaks about the Finger of God, it is the Holy Spirit, Jesus said “if I, by the Finger of God cast out demons.” Moses received the 10 Commandments by the “Finger of God.”

The Son and the Spirit are the 2 arms of the Father, and He collects the world to Him through them.

If God is going to support me from within and without, then Christ supports me from without and the Spirit supports me from within. When the disciples received the Holy Spirit as fire, they received it in their hearts.

We experience God and He reveals Himself to us through His Son and His Spirit.

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

Father I adore You
I lay my life before You
How I love You

Jesus I adore You
I lay my life before You
How I love You

Spirit I adore You
I lay my life before You
How I love You

VOCABULARY:

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW PREVIOUS LESSON:

Nature is one of the first ways we can learn about God:

Since no one has seen God the father, nature can tell us about the Father. Since God created everything, everything around us can tell us something about God. It reveals some aspect of God to us. Have kids talk about things that they see or love about nature. We know from nature that God is peaceful, beautiful, strong, loyal, caring from thinking about a sunset, a lion, a dog, and an elephant.

LESSON BODY

THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST REVEALS THE FATHER TO US

Have the kids act out the Baptism:

Narrator: In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea

St. John the Baptist: Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"

Narrator: Now John himself was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them,

St. John the Baptist: Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as *our* father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

Narrator: Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John *tried* to prevent Him.

St. John the Baptist: I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?

Jesus: Permit *it to be so* now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.

Narrator: And then St. John the Baptist baptized Jesus. When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, 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...

Father: This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased

GOD IS A TRINITY OF THREE PERSONS

God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit: God the Father is the goal, we want to know Him. He's never been seen. The Son and the Spirit are the means to seeing the Father.

We know about God the Father through the creation, nature, and from the Old Testament. We also know about God the Father through the Son. Christ came down to earth and lived on earth, He had disciples and apostles who knew Him and spent so much time with Him. We know the Holy Spirit through the sacraments of Baptism and Chrismation.

Through the Son and Spirit we realize our connection to God. We receive the Son and the Spirit through the mysteries. The content of the mysteries, what they give us, is love and power (the

Son) and the sonship and connection (the Spirit). Through the Son and the Spirit God reveals Himself to me.

HOW WE KNOW THE SON AND THE SPIRIT

1. The Son: we get in touch with our Lord Jesus Christ through the **Mysteries:** we gain forgiveness of our sins in Confession and we unite ourselves with Christ in the Eucharist. We are healed in the Mystery of the unction of the sick. By approaching the Mysteries you are taking the Son inside you, you are united with the Son, so you will be closer to the Father, you will get closer to the Father. The Son reveals the Father to us.

2. The Spirit: 2 mysteries we take the Holy Spirit: Baptism and Confirmation – we are united with the Holy Spirit and we come closer to the Father. We are filled with the Spirit of God in prayer - **Prayer** is direct communication with God. Through prayer we develop a relationship with God. We turn to Him when we are troubled and thank Him for our blessings. The Holy Spirit gives us the feeling of the child talking to her father. God gave us the **Word of God** (reading the Bible) so that we can read and know him and be filled with His Spirit.

CHRIST SHOWS THE FATHER THROUGH 2 BIG ACTIONS – THE CROSS AND THE RESURRECTION.

Through His Son God showed us His **love** and His **power**, in a very simple way.

The Cross: John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. When Christ goes to the Cross, he's revealing the love of the Father. When Christ goes to the cross, He's glorifying His Father – Glory be to the Father who loved me enough to give me His son.

The Resurrection: Christ showed the world that His Father is bigger than death and nothing is going to stand in His way.

Ask the kids: why are people always in a hurry to get done with things? They're in a rush to get married, to finish school? We're racing time because death is hanging over us in the back of our minds and dictates how we behave and everything we do. Who broke that? God. Death is the "boogeyman" of humanity. God the Father, in His Son, broke the slavery of death.

THE SPIRIT CONNECTS US WITH GOD:

Romans 8: 15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.” The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

The Spirit of God gives us **sonship** and **adoption**. When you have the Spirit you realize that you belong to Him, you realize the connection.

THE FATHER, SON AND HOLY SPIRIT CREATED EVERYTHING TOGETHER

Discuss the creation story briefly:

In the beginning there was nothing except for God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. From the first verses of the Bible in the Book of Genesis, we know that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit always work together. God the Father was the creator. God the Son is the “Word of God” (John 1:1 – in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God). God the Spirit “hovered over the waters.”

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

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CONCLUSION

Are we ever going to know God the Father? Yes, He is the goal of all of this. We need to prepare to see Him, the Son and the Spirit are what prepares us.

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

“He who sees Me sees Him who sent Me.” John 12:45

“You received a spirit of adoption, through which we cry, ‘Abba, Father!’, the Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God” Romans 8:16

Unit I: God Reveals Himself to us

Purpose: The purpose of this unit is to examine the ways God the Father reveals Himself to us. It includes: His Son and His Spirit, Nature, the Word of God and the Church.

LESSON 3: GOD REVEALS HIMSELF TO US THROUGH SCRIPTURE

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSES & REFERENCES:

Story of St. Samuel: where Samuel said “speak Lord because your servant is listening” so God talked to him – can hear God when you’re attentive

“For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.” Hebrews 5:13-14

CHURCH FATHERS:

St. John Chrysostom’s introduction to St. Matthew - we should have not needed the Bible. If God were to speak to our hearts through His Spirit, the Bible wouldn’t have been needed. That’s the way God spoke to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses. The Holy Spirit spoke to them, they were in direct connection. When the Israelites fell into sin, they lost the connection so they needed the written word, Moses had to write it. If God gave us a second good way to connect to us, and we ignore it, how would that be? How is God going to be speaking to us?

REFLECTION:

God is not moody, the Holy Bible shows us the law.

When we sin we are separated from the source of life, so there had to be an end to their life. Before sin, they had the glory of God. When they sinned, the glory came off. Adam and Eve – couldn’t go to the tree of life until they were washed from sin, which happened when Christ came.

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

Covenant

INTRODUCTION

CONNECTION POINT:

In our daily portion of reading the Bible, we get a message from God. Consistent learning, consistent hearing of the Bible, is how we get our message from God. By learning consistently and reading consistently, we know God's will and what He wants in every situation. When we do it randomly, only when we're stressed out, it's not concrete, it's shaky. The more consistently we read, the more discerning and understanding we become.

LESSON BODY:

WHAT IS THE BIBLE

Introduce the Bible as the most important book on the history of mankind. It is the most printed, most read and most analyzed book in history. It was the first book to be printed. The Bible fully translated into 438 languages and parts of the Bible is translated in 2,454 languages

The Bible is a book written by the Holy Spirit through 40 men over a period of about 1600 years dating from 1500 BC to about 100 years after Christ. The Holy Spirit inspired each writer with the Holy scripture; meaning:

- There are no mistakes in the Bible
- The writer may prophesy with things that will happen in the future

The bible is a family story/tree – shows us where we're coming from and where we're going

WHAT THE BIBLE REVEALS TO US

- **Who is God** – how we meet with God. For example, if the president sent you a letter, what would you do with it? We would all open it, read it and reread it to see what the president wants with us. The scripture is an encounter with God, we meet Him in the scriptures. When we read it, we know His mind, what He wants and His message to us.
- **Who we are**
- **Our relationship**

The Bible has two parts

- The Old testament: The stories of the Israelites and the prophets before Christ.
- The New Testament: Contains the 4 Gospels (the story of Jesus Christ) the acts of the Apostles and the epistles (letters) of the Apostles

BIBLE STORIES SHOWING GOD THE FATHER'S CHARACTERISTICS

Give them the story, example of the flood, and ask the kids what this tells us about God.

Noah & the flood – shows that God is very **powerful**. God is **holy** – he explains a spiritual rule: when we sin, we eat up our days, our lives will be shorter. The people on earth during the flood exhausted their life credit.

God with Moses and the Israelites- when they were sinning, God couldn't walk with them anymore.

The 10 Commandments – they aren't rules, they are not what God likes - they are what God is. God says do not kill, God is life. God says do not commit adultery, God is pure. God says do not lie, God is truth.

Stories showing that God accepts the prayers of saints and responds to them. The psalms say that God does the will of His saints. God is **humble**

- Elijah – God will stop the rain
- Joshua – God will hide the sun

God's love and compassion – David and Goliath,

- Elijah and the widow – the widow had faith and God knew that she had faith and sent Elijah to her to save her. Emphasize that she was not an Israelite and she had faith, she was Lebanese.

THE CHURCH VENERATES THE BIBLE

We have 5 readings in the beginning of the Liturgy (come early!!!!) It is called the Liturgy of the Word

The most Holy times in the Liturgy is when God reveals himself in the Gospel reading and during Communion

Only well-trained deacons read the Gospel

The candles represent that the bible is our light and guidance

Nobody can move or talk during Gospel reading

Abouna prays special prayers and raises incense during Gospel reading

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

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CONCLUSION

Nothing happens by accident. The Hand of God is there from the Old to the New Testament and our lives are in the Hand of God. If we're patient and wait, God doesn't follow our own ideas, we will see His bigger plan.

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Hebrews 4:12

Unit I: God reveals Himself to Us

Purpose: The purpose of this unit is to examine the ways God the Father reveals Himself to us. It includes: His Son and His Spirit, Nature, the Word of God and the Church.

LESSON 4: GOD REVEALS HIMSELF THROUGH THE CHURCH

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Therefore take heed for yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. Acts 20:28

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

How Lovely

(How lovely it is to get together in love our Lord teaches us
When two meet in my name together
I will always be in between their gather) (2x)

R- (O Lord come now and join us here
We ask you to come and give us cheer
Fill us with joy from your Holy Spirit
And peace no riches can provide) (2x)

2- (The Lord is here always with us
How lovely he is, how content we are,
We talk to him and he always listens
He'll always be with us in us) (2x)

VOCABULARY:

Holy Synod

INTRODUCTION

CONNECTION POINT:

At the end of the lesson the kids should be inspired to pray. They should understand that when you enter a church you are truly inspired because the things in the church have a true meaning and are not just symbols. We should all be inspired to feel God's presence

LESSON BODY:

EVERYTHING IN THE CHURCH TELLS US SOMETHING ABOUT GOD

Ask the kids what they see in the church. Everything in the church reveals something about God. Ask the kids how they see God in the things in the church.

Direction of the church: The church is built facing the east (the sun, or our Christ, shines from the east, star appearing to the wise men from the east, Christ ascended towards the East, and will return from the East)

When we start to practice facing the east: when you face the east, you make a proclamation that Christ is coming. Before you talk about WHERE He's coming from, you're making a statement that He IS coming – it's an expectation. We're an expectation church "we await the resurrection of the dead.."

We even bury the dead with their feet towards the east. So when they stand, they're facing the east at Christ's coming at the general resurrection

East represents life and light

Shape of the church: The Church can be built in 1 of 3 different designs. Ask the kids if they know the possible shapes. Ark, Circle, or Cross. The ark and cross are signs of salvation – shows that God is going to save us.

Round buildings: it's a circle, because God is eternal. He has no beginning or end

Cross: we're saved by the Cross.

Ark: We are travelers in this world.

Naming the church: after a saint or an archangel - we honor the namesake of those who honored God

Trinity in the church: the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are all remembered in the church building itself.

Bosom of the Father: the whole area of the holy belongs to the father. On the altar, I offer (1) incense and (2) His Son. It's called the "Temple of God the Father"

The podium belongs to the Son – He's the Word and the altar where you offer Him

Offering Incense: remembering the Spirit

Icons: we see God through these saints, martyrs, and angels. A *writer* of icons is actually bringing out the picture the Holy Spirit is putting in him. Eyes and ears of the icons: eyes are usually big and ears are usually big "blessed are your eyes to see . . . Blessed are your ears to hear"

Icons inspire us to pray. When I sit before a beautiful icon it gives me a feeling that I belong to the heavenly Father and it teaches me about the saint.

Icons speak to us about God. We are driven to meditation and contemplation of the Divine and spiritual matters through the visible Icons, each according to his spiritual needs. We acquire Icons of the Savior, the Mother of the Lord, the angels and the Saints in order to keep their images in our hearts and minds, and to supplement our deep love for them

Iconostasis: The bosom of the Father, located in front of the altar portrays The Pantocrator/ Christ sits on his throne facing us "Coming from the East." To His right, located on the iconostasis, is the Theotokos. The Theotokos icon with the child Jesus: The Orthodox Church believes that Mary is the human being closest (relationship wise) to God. This icon recalls her important role in the Incarnation of the Son of God. The icon is also an image of the Church. It reminds us of our responsibility to give birth to Christ's presence in our lives.

To the right of that icon is the saint of the church. On our right side, we see Christ on his throne or Christ as the Good Shepherd. To the right of that is His Baptism. Above the altar is the Last Supper. For the Altar is where we institute the last supper that our Lord taught us and blessed us with on Holy Thursday. If it wasn't for the Last Supper, This altar would not be what it is today. To the right and left of that icon, you will see the 12 Apostles.

Ostrich Egg: Ostrich egg (symbolize steadfast watchfulness. They bring to mind the way the ostrich buries her eggs in the sand and keeps her eyes fixed on the spot) Heaven & God is looking at us – WE'RE the egg.

-Hung always just in front of the iconostasis: one of the symbols in the church. The saints on the iconostasis are looking at the egg. When a bird comes out of an egg, it flies towards heaven. The saints are watching us – we're the egg and the saints are watching us until we hatch and go be with them

Colors: When Easter comes, the Church is decorated in Red and White. The red color reminds us of the precious blood, the white is a reminder of peace and victory

Baptism: why it's on the left side of the church? Because we move from the left to the right.

THE BEGINNING OF THE CHURCH

The movement of the Apostles established the Church of Christ on this day of Pentecost, which is regarded as the birthday of the Christian Church. The Apostles became missionaries in their own land and abroad. The power of preaching and sanctifying was shared by other preachers and deacons.

“So continuing daily with one according 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

When the number of Christians grew and grew it was too much work for just the 12 so they began ordaining deacons and priests in many cities and churches around the world to help take on some of the work and to stay organized. Depending on the talents of the people, different people were given different tasks to perform

HIERARCHY IN THE CHURCH

There is organization and hierarchy in the church. Includes the **Holy Synod**, the patriarch, the patriarchal secretary, metropolitans and bishops, priests, deacons (archdeacon, deacon, sub deacon, reader. Psalter). The **Holy Synod** meets yearly around the Pentecost and makes decisions regarding the church e.g. no Bible studies should be made in homes, because people used to do this and come up with a lot of heresies and wrong teachings

The unity of the church reflects the unity of the Trinity – see Ephesians verse below. God gave us unity

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

Ephesians 4:1-6 "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all

Unit 1: God reveals Himself to us

Purpose: The purpose of this unit is to examine the ways God the Father reveals Himself to us. It includes: His Son and His Spirit, Nature, the Word of God and the Church.

LESSON 5: WE RECEIVE GOD'S ETERNAL LIFE AND FORGIVENESS IN THE EUCHARIST

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

“And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God and Jesus Christ” John 17:3

“For the Kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” Romans 14:17

Salvation in the church: it means remission of sins and eternal life. That my sins are forgiven and based on this forgiveness I was granted eternal life.

This mission of Christ was to remit sin and grant eternal life. What was the main purpose the Father sent His Christ? John 20:21 “as the Father has sent me, I send you...those whose sins you forgive, they will be forgiven ...” The purpose of Christ’s mission: forgiveness of sins and granting eternal life.

Forgiveness of sins (mystery of repentance and confession) and eternal life (mystery of the Eucharist) are the core of the work of Christ. When I sin I’m bringing about a virus on me that will kill me. It has nothing to do with God’s love. God loves the sinner, He will never stop loving us. When Christ says “my God my God why have you forsaken me?” Psalm 22. 22:24 “For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; Nor has He hidden His face from Him” – although it seems like this is how Christ was feeling, God never left Him alone.

Christ died to grant us an antidote for sin and an antidote for death. He took upon sin, to make an end to it on the cross. When we’re baptized, we take on the death of the cross. Christ stops sin by death and stops death by resurrection. When I approach confession and take Him in the Eucharist, I’m taking the 2 antidotes. The Eucharist: come taste the fountain of immortality.

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

Eternal life

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW PREVIOUS LESSON

As a church we act in unity (one part, one family, one pope, bishops, congregation- one body)
As a united church we have one faith....

But *what is faith?*

- Belief, trust, in what? In what we can't see.....
- We believe in one God , the Trinity, The Son became flesh to save us {incarnation}.....
- We believe in the resurrection of the dead and eternal life

We receive God's love through scriptures, nature and church you then show that love to others

LESSON BODY:

WHAT IS ETERNAL LIFE

Eternal life is to live with God in eternity- After we die, we will be raised with a different body and be with God for eternity in heaven. There is no badness, no hunger, no tiredness, only joy, happiness, peace, love and righteousness

It is to be with God in His kingdom

Jesus talked to us about eternal life. He said: "And this is eternal life that they may know You, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."(John17:3)

EXPERIENCING ETERNAL LIFE HERE ON EARTH

Can eternal life start now? Can you experience living in Gods' kingdom during your day? How about when you do something good, as in helping someone

Think about what Christ told us. Eternal life is that we know God the Father and Jesus Christ, whom the Father sent to us. How do we know God? To know God means to experience Him first hand. What are some of the ways we can do this?

Think about the life in heaven with Joy , Peace and righteousness, how you will be able to experience this life here on earth. Think about ways or times you do something and feel inner happiness and joy. St. Paul told us: "For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness, peace and joy" Romans14:17

We receive God's love through nature, the scripture and the church. Nature is something that is made for human to enjoy and enrich them... the sea , the sky , the sand in the desert all are so touching and rich. Add to the nature the bible and the communion then we're in heaven.

We should then show that love to others – always watch for someone in need for your help, Kids who are left out, a friend doing something wrong. Help each other in church by keeping quiet – when you talk and text, you are giving a bad example to others. When you do something to serve and help others, you will feel joy and peace.

LIVES OF SAINTS AS EXAMPLES OF LIVING ETERNAL LIFE ON EARTH

Saints are a great example of people who lived eternal life here on earth because they were extremely happy living close to God, living a life of prayer and a life of giving. Even though many of the saints have left everything, they feel content, satisfied and joyful.

Tell the story of St. Peter

STORY

A long time ago, kids would get diseases that couldn't be cured. Diphtheria and tetanus – 2 bacteria that kill babies. They found a cure! They found that horses have the strongest immune system so they would take the bacteria and inject it into the horse. The horse would get very sick, feverish and collapse. They would wait 1 week and the horse would recover by producing a huge amount of antibodies and they were cured. They would draw the blood of the horse and take the serum and inject that into a dying child. Within 15 minutes, maximum, the child would recover because the bacteria is destroyed by the strong immune system

Christ has the strongest immunity against sin and death. He can never be conquered by them. Why would he put them on? Because He can take it. So what do we need to do? Take his blood and flesh so we can counteract sin and death.

Why was God so sorrowful in Gethsemane, after the 1st Eucharist? He's not giving a dead body, He's giving His living body to them. He became connected to them. Once this connection happened, he felt our sin and weakness.

DURING THE EUCHARIST WE RECEIVE GOD'S FORGIVENESS & ETERNAL LIFE

During the Eucharist we are very close to God. We can see Him and taste Him.

Tell the story of the two disciples on the way to Emmaus (Luke 24: 13-35). They could not recognize Christ despite the fact that their hearts were on fire while he explained to them the scripture. Their eyes were open when he broke the bread. In the Eucharist, our eyes are open and our heart is ready to listen to Christ as He talks. Our heart will start to burn and when we take Communion our eyes will be open.

During the liturgy, Jesus continues to walk by our side, opening to us the Scriptures and leading us to a deeper understanding of the mysteries of God. We remember everything God does, the story of salvation. It is a group prayer and we are meditating on nature, the church and scripture. When we meet him fully, during the communion, we will pass from the light of the Word to the light streaming from the "Bread of life", the supreme fulfillment of his promise to "be with us always, to the end of the age" (cf. Mt 28:20).

We receive eternal life in the Eucharist because Christ said: *Whenever you eat of this Bread and drink of this cup, you preach My death and confess My Resurrection and remember Me until I come back.*

CONCLUSION

WE MUST PREPARE OURSELVES FOR THE EUCHARIST

The Eucharist was called the breaking of bread in early Christianity. It is the center of the church's life. It is very important to be well prepared to partake the Body and Blood of Christ. We need to follow all of the directions that are given to us inside the Church in order to learn how to receive the Eucharist

Clean heart, clean mind, clean body

- Self examination
- Repentance & confession

Practice the church faith: prayers, asheya, fasting

We come out of the Eucharist filled with light, love, joy and righteousness. Will we be able to give others what we were filled with?

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

“Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day” John 6:54

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Fifth Grade Curriculum:

God called Us to be Holy

UNIT II: GOD SANCTIFIED A PEOPLE (12 LESSONS)

Purpose: To study the Exodus story as the biblical example of how God make holy people. It is the story of the covenant by blood in which God take His people out of the world and sanctify them in a specific process of transformation.

LESSON 6: INTRODUCTION

LESSON 7: GOD PREPARES A SAVIOR

LESSON 8: GOD SENDS THE SAVIOR

LESSON 9: GOD PREPARED TO TAKE HIS PEOPLE OUT OF EGYPT

LESSON 10: THE PASSOVER

LESSON 11: GOD BAPTIZES HIS PEOPLE: THE RED SEA

LESSON 12: THE MANNA AND THE QUAILS

LESSON 13: THE WATER FROM THE ROCK

LESSON 14: THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

LESSON 15: THE GOLDEN CALF & THE CHANGE OF PRIESTHOOD

LESSON 16: THE TABERNACLE

LESSON 17: UNIT REVIEW

Unit II: God sanctified a people

Purpose: introduce the students to the Book of Exodus as a story of sanctification

LESSON 6: INTRODUCTION

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Genesis 15

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

First Ode Lobsh

VOCABULARY:

Israelite, salvation, sanctification

INTRODUCTION

LESSON BODY:

GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE

Discuss who are God's chosen people in the Old Testament. The **Israelites** were God's chosen, special people in the Old Testament. We're going to be talking about who they are during this lesson.

Who are God's chosen people now? Us! "But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9)

GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

God created Adam and Eve to enjoy His love. But they sinned and needed salvation! God's plan of salvation started from the beginning. God was working from the beginning

Salvation: bringing us back to a place where we belong. Adam & Eve in paradise, the Israelites in the promised land, us with Christ in Heaven.

God's plan was to create a SPECIAL nation where he can be born amongst them. When God chose His people, he wants them to be **sanctified**: sets them apart and filled with His Holiness. Whenever God finds His people mixed with the world, He takes them out.

ABRAHAM TO MOSES

God called Abraham AWAY from his family and put a covenant on him (filled him). God promised Abraham a big nation but it was not the right time to give Abraham's people the land, it was not ready. God had a plan to bring the Israelites to the Promised Land but it would take a long time. If the people who lived in the Promised Land knew that Abraham's family was growing bigger and bigger, they would kill them before they were big enough to take over. God's plan was perfect because Abraham's family grew in a land far away, and it got very big, but the people who lived in the Promised Land didn't know this was happening.

How did Abraham's family move to a different country? Abraham had a son named Isaac, who had a son named Jacob who had Joseph and his 11 brothers. Who remembers the story of Joseph?

Joseph's brothers were jealous of him and sold him as a slave. Joseph was a slave in Egypt for a long time. He even ended up in prison after he refused to sin. His Honesty and God's grace propelled him to become pharaoh's right hand man. A famine forces Jacob family to buy wheat from Egypt where they meet Joseph. Pharaoh honored Joseph by inviting all his family to come and live in Egypt (80 people). They lived in Egypt for 400 years.

A new king who didn't know Joseph came into power and enslaved the Israelites. The king commissioned them to build mortar and bricks. God, however, had a plan to save His people. God was in charge and planning everything. He was the one who gave Joseph the gift of interpreting dreams so he would be in charge when the famine came. God prepared the famine so Joseph's whole family would move to Egypt.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

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CONCLUSION

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)

Unit II: God Sanctified a people

Purpose: introduce the students to the Book of Exodus as a story of sanctification

LESSON 7: GOD PREPARED A SAVIOR

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

First Ode Lobsh

VOCABULARY:

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW PREVIOUS LESSON

We're starting a new unit. Who remembers the lesson from last week? We will be talking about "God called a people." God chose the children of Israel as his people because the faith of their fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as the Savior of the whole world will come from among them.

Before God started to prepare the people, He needed to prepare a leader. A leader who will be able to lead them to Him as a sanctified or special people.

Who were God's chosen People?

How did God prepare them to be his people (the great Exodus = getting out)

Who was their leader? (Moses)

Did Moses need preparation to lead his people? In what aspects??(Challenge the kids to tell you a story from Moses' life that prepared him to lead the people.)

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)

CONNECTION POINT:

LESSON BODY:

QUALITIES OF A GOOD LEADER

Patience: Was Moses always patient? (No, he killed the Egyptian) What did God do about it? (He sent him to learn patience in the desert for 40 days). After that Moses was the most patient person as the bible says

Leadership and understanding. Moses grew up in Pharaoh's house, he learned all the wisdom of the Egyptians, he needed that to lead the very stubborn nation of Israel. He used it also when he needed to talk with Pharaoh.

God was working throughout Moses' life to prepare him to lead God's people out of Israel. He planned for Moses to become the grandson of Pharaoh to learn wisdom and leadership. He led Moses to the desert for 40 years to learn patience and obedience. Most importantly, God sanctified Moses by setting him apart from the world then filling him with His holiness.

DIVINE PROVIDENCE

God set Moses apart from the world. Moses was very special, all throughout Moses' life you see God working to show how special Moses...we'll review that now

An invisible hand had reached into Moses' mother's womb and made the baby's face so beautiful she couldn't kill him, she didn't care if she'd be killed – she knew God wanted to save Moses just by looking at him. After taking care of Moses for 3 months, she couldn't do it anymore so

she put him in a basket. The same invisible hand made the basket stuck on the bushes. The same invisible hand closes the womb of a different woman, who really wanted a child. The same invisible hand made the weather so hot the day the basket is in the water that the barren woman is in the water too.

The woman hears crying, sees the baby and recognizes it as a Hebrew baby. She knows the decree that the baby should be killed. But the baby is so beautiful – the invisible hand knew exactly what would impress this woman so much that she wouldn't want to kill the baby. On the same day the baby goes back to his mother with a new name and a new title New title = son of pharaoh

Divine providence: every action seems so natural, yet every single piece fits together. In what looks like everyday normal occurrences are miracles. The invisible hand of God is following me and it shows how much God cares about me. He doesn't shake the universe, he gently moves it so "everything works for the best for those who love God"

BAPTISM

What is this Mystery? A mother brings baby to the water, then receives the baby again the same day with a new name and a new identity = baptism = sanctification

The word Moses means son of water - He was saved by the water twice

EXAMPLES OF GOD'S SANCTIFICATION

Abraham "Now the LORD had said to Abram:

"Get out of your country,
From your family
And from your father's house,
To a land that I will show you." (Gen12:1)

Moses

Priests take a 40 day seclusion period in a Monastery to be set apart from the world and be filled with God's holiness.

Bishops are chosen among Monks who were set apart from the world and filled with holiness. This enables them to serve God's people

Jesus, he went alone in the desert for 40 days before he begins his ministry to teach us to do that as well

We are: We too are special. God called us by name. We are His. We are separated from the world unto God. When we are baptized God separates us as His children.

Our calling is the same that God told the Israelites: *But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;*" (1 Peter 2:9) *"Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. ⁶And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation"* (Exodus 19:5)

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

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CONCLUSION

As for us, we were already set aside to God from the world when our parents left us in God's hand in the Baptismal Font. We are a special people, a sanctified people for God.

God prepares leaders for his people, nothing in your life is happening for no reason. It is God who is weaving all these things together to prepare leader to lead his people.

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Unit II: God sanctified a people

Purpose: introduce the students to the Book of Exodus as a story of sanctification

LESSON 8: GOD SENDS THE SAVIOR

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Exodus 3,4

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

First Ode Lobsh

VOCABULARY:

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW PREVIOUS LESSONS

What have we been talking about? The Israelites were slaves in Egypt for 400 years before it was time for them to leave. They were slaves and treated horribly so they needed a strong leader to bring them out.

How God prepares Spiritual Leaders. What are some of the qualities they need? **Wisdom & leadership, patience and SANCTIFICATION**

How was Moses separated? From his family, from pharaoh's family and went to the desert. This week we will talk about how Moses was filled with holiness. He had to be filled with holiness before leading his people to freedom.

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)

CONNECTION POINT:

God sanctifies us through special encounters/special places where I need to be REALLY attentive → we are made holy/pure/clean by these things:

- Gospel
- Communion
- Prayer

My taking off my shoes is a signal to me that I need to pay great attention and respect → practicing the fear of God = greatest respect and attention. Taking off our shoes is a great sign in our Church

When Moses saw burning bush it took his full attention

LESSON BODY:

THE BURNING BUSH

After killing the Egyptian Moses fled to the desert. One day he was taking care of a flock of sheep he went up a mountain. And Moses saw a huge fire in a bush BUT the bush was not burning! Moses got closer to see and he heard a voice saying

MOSES! MOSES!

And Moses answered: *Here I am*

“Moses” God spoke from the bush “take off your shoes because the ground you are standing on is holy ground. I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.”

Moses hid his face, he was afraid to look upon God

“I have seen My people’s sufferings and have heard their cry, I know their sorrows and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and bring them to the promised land, a land flowing with milk and honey. I will send YOU, Moses, to pharaoh so that you can lead My children out of Egypt”

Moses said: who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh?

God said “I will be with you Moses, and when you bring My people out of Egypt you will worship on this mountain.” And God told Moses Pharaoh would not let the Israelites go and God told Moses that God would smite the Egyptians and then Pharaoh would let them go and they would go with lots of jewels and precious things from the Egyptians. Moses asked God what he should do if the people didn’t believe him. God told Moses to take his rod and throw it on the ground and it would become a snake and if he were to pick it up again it would become a rod. God also told Moses to put his hand in his cloak and when he took it out it became like a leper’s hand – white as snow. Then if Moses put his hand back in his cloak it would return to normal. God told Moses to perform these signs so the Israelites would follow him. God gave Moses a 3rd sign to do: take water out of the river and put it on the land and it would become blood

WHY GOD USES SIGNS

God uses signs so people can have faith. Signs are familiar things to people – everyone has their own unique sign. When God is about to do something really big, he gives them a sign.

In Moses’ encounter with God: God gave Moses, the Israelites, and the Egyptians signs. What do you think the sign was for the Egyptians and for Moses’s people? Moses’ hand and staff. What do you think was Moses’ sign? *you will bring the people back to worship on this mountain*

E.g. Nativity: the sign is that a Virgin will give birth to the Son of God. Everyone had a sign to believe this miraculous event was taking place. Zacharias? his sign is that he became mute. St. Mary? her cousin, who she knows and is old, is pregnant. St. Elizabeth? she heard St. Mary’s greeting, the baby leapt in her womb. The shepherds? the manger, it should have food not a baby. The wise men? the star

WE ENCOUNTER THE BURNING BUSH DURING COMMUNION, WHEN WE PRAY AND WHEN THE GOSPEL IS BEING READ

The Burning Bush was a place where God talked to Moses and God and Moses were very close. When does Christ talk to us? What was the 1st thing Moses did when he met God? He took off his shoes. When we meet God and are filled with His holiness we too need to take off our shoes → it's a sign to me that I need to pay a lot of attention because we are practicing the fear of God. These events require the greatest respect and attention.

(1) Communion – when we take communion we become like the burning bush because we're filled with Jesus Christ, God is dwelling inside us

(2) Prayer

(3) Reading the Gospel – Abouna stands with the censer offering incense. 2 deacons with candles. When the Gospel is being read, we might take off our shoes, we don't talk, we pay great attention, we don't move – they wait to sit until it's done. If you walk in when someone's reading the Gospel, stand in the door and don't move. We all stand

These 3 encounters with God are VERY important: we are sanctified through these special encounters with God. That means that I need to pay a lot of attention and be very focused during these times. Like Moses gave the burning bush a lot of attention, we need to give God a lot of attention during these times.

These encounters also make me holy and we need to keep ourselves holy – our body, tongue and senses.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- **Mountain of fire DVD chapter 15** – places where they show the tree

CONCLUSION

Take away sandals meditation: we put on shoes because the ground is very hostile since the cursing – shoes as protection. When you take off your shoes you are admitting the land in this place is not cursed – you are going into a very special and very holy land that will give you a lot of good, not bad.

Where do you take off your shoes? Your BED – safest, best place. Take off your shoes where you're most comfortable

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Unit II: God sanctified a people

Purpose: introduce the students to the Book of Exodus as a story of sanctification

LESSON 9: GOD PREPARED TO TAKE HIS PEOPLE OUT OF EGYPT

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Exodus 5-10;

Matthew 27:45 Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land.”;

Matthew 24:29 “Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken”

Zechariah 14: 6- 7 “It shall come to pass in that day / *That* there will be no light; The lights will diminish. It shall be one day / Which is known to the LORD— Neither day nor night. But at evening time it shall happen / *That* it will be light.

Amos 8:9 “And it shall come to pass in that day,” says the Lord GOD “That I will make the sun go down at noon, And I will darken the earth in broad daylight

REFLECTION:

Think about each plague a little deeper. The water turned into blood symbolizes the struggle to get closer to God and the necessity of changing our hearts. The plague of the frogs symbolizes a lot of talking nonsense/talking for no reason. The darkness calls to the darkness within and our need for real light in our everyday lives (reference book).

Why does God harden their hearts: Isaiah 6:10; 64. God is requiring a humble heart. We sometimes think that God can control the outside but He has no power over my heart, I have all

the power over my heart. Pharaoh and the Israelites should have gone to God and asked Him to change us and manage the insides of our hearts. When God says “harden their hearts” it just means that God is not giving him grace. If we don’t ask God to soften our heart, there is no way it will be softened

Humility: asking God to break our hearts, teach us to obey Him, change my heart → it’s our free will, we cannot make our hearts go after God, I have the freedom to ask God to come and make the change. Here, God knows that they’re not acknowledging Him, He leaves them

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

Humble yourself before the Lord

1-Humble yourself before the Lord (echo) 2x

And He (echo)

Shall lift (echo)

You up

1. Higher and higher

2. Into the heavens

And He shall lift you up

Refrain:

Our God is an awesome God

He reigns from Heaven above

With wisdom, power, and love

Our God is an awesome God

2-Serve the Lord with all your heart (echo) 2x

And He (echo)

Shall lift (echo)

You up

1. Higher and higher
2. Into the heavens

And He shall lift you up

3-Love your neighbor as yourself (echo) 2x

And He (echo)

Shall lift (echo)

You up

1. Higher and higher
2. Into the heavens

And He shall lift you up

VOCABULARY:

Exodus, plague

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Who were God's chosen people in the Old Testament? : **Israelites**

Who were they? : **Descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**

How did they get to Egypt? : through **Joseph**

How long did they live there? : **400 years**

God wanted to **sanctify** His people...what does that mean? : to set apart and to fill with holiness

Who was His chosen leader and how did he sanctify him?

Moses has to go to Egypt to separate the Israelites, God's chosen people. This takes place in the book of Exodus. What is an **Exodus** = going out departure. There are 3 exoduses in the Bible: Israelites from Egypt, Exodus of Christ to the Father, and the last Exodus of the Church to the age to come. All 3 always have plagues. Jesus had miracles, the last exodus it says Heaven and earth will be shaken, like labor pains.

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)

CONNECTION POINT:

Know that God can control everything around me, but He can't work within me because I have free will. I have to humble myself and ask God to come and work within me.

We must ask God daily to come and change us. When we don't acknowledge God as the God of our hearts, things can go badly. Every day I have to bring my heart to God and ask God to let his Holy Spirit fix me

Blessed is the man who always fears the Lord, but he who hardens his heart falls into trouble
Proverbs 28:14

LESSON BODY:

WHY THE 10 PLAGUES?

Exodus 5 - ¹ Afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness.'" ² And Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, nor will I let Israel go."

WHY?: God chose to do all this to show His power to both the Egyptians and the Israelites. All the plagues were against the Egyptian gods to show their weaknesses, their magic could not compete. God is using the plagues to prepare to take His people out of Egypt to the Holy Land. This is important because the Israelites were in slavery for 400 years. There had been abused and living in slavery, God did not want them looking back after they left so the Israelites had to see His power. Shows that God is loving, but not weak.

The Israelites were not touched during the plagues because they were **sanctified** by God. They were separated from the Egyptians.

THE PLAGUES – 1ST EIGHT

What is a **plague**? any widespread affliction, calamity, or evil. Especially one regarded as a direct punishment by God.

Water to Blood: the Egyptians used to worship the Nile so God changed it from good water to rotten/bad so they were not able to use it at all

Frogs – refers to an Egyptian god (oserees) when the frog expands its jaw it was thought to be a godly act from this god. God meant to show them that the frogs can actually cause damage and harm

Gnats (lice) – the Egyptian priest used to be very clean/careful. The lice was **created** from dust and the Egyptian magicians couldn't mimic this plague. God is the only one who can create things. The magicians even commented that this must be the finger of God working

Flies – the Egyptians believed in gods that killed all the flies/don't let flies bother them/responsible for cleaning Egypt from the flies. He was showing them their god was nothing

Death of livestock - Egyptians used to worship some of the animals like the calf, so again God showed the weakness of their gods

Boils - the Egyptians used to do human sacrifices to their gods and spread the ashes of these people around the country for blessings and they used to use Israelites for these sacrifices. God commanded Moses to use ashes to cause the boils to show that this was not a blessing

Hail - it shows the warning/power of God

Locusts - shows the weaknesses of the Egyptian gods because the locusts killed all the crops which were very important for the Egyptians. Weaknesses of the Egyptian gods because they were not able to feed their people

1st two plagues: magicians were doing exactly what Moses was doing

3rd Plague: do not do it – said it was the Finger of God

4th Plague: they had it on them – begged Pharaoh to let Israelites go

THE NINTH PLAGUE: DARKNESS

Darkness - came as a sign to prepare the Israelites that they were leaving and the Egyptians that the coming plague was the last and final blow.

We know time by the cycle of light. Light is the source of time. Making darkness tells the people who work on the cycle of time that their time is done - telling Egypt that its over, their time is done. The coming plague is the final one. In Genesis God made the light and darkness for times, seasons, and signs.

In the Bible we can actually find two other Exodus journeys - two big events that come with warning signs similar to these plagues - 1) Jesus on the Cross (Exodus of Christ to the Father) where first He did miracles that resembled the plagues and it was dark from the 3rd to the 6th hours. Time is up 2) the Exodus of the Church to Heaven at the end of times where there is first "labor pains" similar to the plagues.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- **Pictures of plagues**

CONCLUSION

Next week we'll be discussing the 10th plague: First born – **Passover** = the beginning of months. Take an unblemished lamb, a male of the first year. Kill it at twilight. Put some of its blood on the doorposts. They shall eat the flesh on that night, roasted, with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Let none remain.

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Unit II: God sanctified a people

Purpose: introduce the students to the Book of Exodus as a story of sanctification

LESSON 10: THE PASSOVER

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Movie the Messiah: Prophecy Fulfilled part 2

(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iQRlAA4gAZ8>) Explains Passover – time for whole family to gather together. Prepare by 1st taking out the yeast from the house (leavened bread) job of older person in house to clean it. 2nd between 3-5pm they sit at the table oldest next to youngest. The youngest asks the questions – “why is the night so special, more than any other night?” “This is the night our Lord delivered **us**” (not our ancestors because if God didn’t deliver our ancestors we would still be there). Must ask “us”. If “**they**” = stubborn, doesn’t want to be counted as one of the family. Is then later excluded

Taking the yeast out of the house is the 1st part of sanctification: stopping to see my sin, which leads to repentance and confession. Zephaniah 1:12 – the priest of the church has to find out what’s wrong with the people and rebuke the people and clean it. How can we clean the leaven in the church, what is our Passover? The Eucharist.

Corinthians 5:6 – leaven is a common theme in the Bible, “malice and wickedness” as old leaven.

This is a preparation for the golden calf lesson. Moses gets frustrated and breaks the two stone tables and says whoever belongs to God let him come to me = the first born, the ones God bought who should have been dead. The first born didn’t come but the Levites did come and replaced the first born. 1st Numbers = counting first born, 2nd Numbers = replacing first born with Levites.

REFLECTION:

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

You are My All in All

You are my strength when I am weak

You are the treasure that I seek

You are my all in all

Seeking You as a precious jewel

Lord, to give up I'd be a fool

You are my all in all

Jesus, Lamb of God

Worthy is Your name

Jesus, Lamb of God

Worthy is Your name

Taking my sin, my cross, my shame

Rising up again I bless Your name

You are my all in all

When I fall down You pick me up

When I am dry You fill my cup

You are my all in all

Jesus, Lamb of God

Worthy is Your name

Jesus, Lamb of God

Worthy is Your name

VOCABULARY:

Passover

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)

CONNECTION POINT:

We try our best not to sin, but we're not perfect. God gives us the means to sanctify ourselves.

Focus on repentance/confession & Eucharist. How are we sanctified? By being set apart and being united with God. This is the 1st part.

We are holy because we are sanctified and consecrated. Discuss boundaries with the kids.

LESSON BODY:

WHAT IS THE PASSOVER

It is a Jewish holiday that commemorates when the Israelites in Egypt were freed from 430 years of slavery.

“Every firstborn son of Egypt will die, from the firstborn son of Pharaoh, who sits on the throne, to the first born son of the slave girl, who is at her hand mill, and all the first born of the cattle as well.” (Ex11:5). The first born could be a little baby, a teenager, a father, a grandfather, a great-grandfather! Four or five generations were killed on one night including slaves and animals. The first born is the leader, the power of the family and will carry on the family. With animals, the 1st born is the strongest.

When the angel saw the blood on the homes of the Hebrews, he passed over without harming anyone or killing their first born or cattle.

WHAT GOD ASKED THE HEBREWS TO DO

1. Mark this day on the calendar, keep it as a ceremony every year, and pass it down to your children. (Ex12:25-27)
2. Take a lamb or a goat one year old, no blemish, from the 10th of the month and keep it till the 14th.
3. Slaughter them at twilight, save the blood in a basin.
4. Do not break any of its bones
5. Use hyssop to sprinkle some of the blood over the doorpost (overhead frames and sides)
6. Eat the meat roasted over the fire, bitter and herbs.
7. Burn any left over.
8. Eat in a hurry, wearing your clothes, belt, shoes or sandals, staff in your hand, packed ready to leave.
9. Eat unleavened bread for 7 days. Unleavened bread = bread without yeast.

THE PASSOVER LAMB IN RELATION TO CHRIST AND THE EUCHARIST

The Passover lamb was a symbol of Christ in many aspects, it was the prophecy for Jesus crucifixion and salvation. We want to link or connect the Passover lamb with Christ fulfilling the prophecy for our salvation. We will apply that with our practice in the liturgy, commemorating Jesus' sacrifice.

When the Jews celebrate Passover, they are not thinking of it as a memorial but they are actually part of the Exodus, sharing in the Exodus. If they don't do it, they are not counted as people of God. The Passover makes them part of a big family, they are taking the same meat and food at the same table as their ancestors. We likewise believe that we become one with the disciples at the Last Supper. We are not repeating what they did, we are partaking of it

Removing the yeast from the house: The elder of the family searches everywhere in the house with a lamp for yeast. He makes sure there is none of it

- The yeast represents sin.
- Jesus is without sin.

- We need to get rid of all sin before approaching communion. The Holy Spirit is looking at my heart, sees what's not right and that is what actually cleanses me. We must pray for this in liturgy over and over. I don't know what's wrong with me, Holy Spirit please come and show me.

Each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household but if any household is too small for a whole lamb, they must share one with their nearest neighbor

- Everybody takes Communion
- Abouna splits the Body of Christ for us to share

The lamb is without blemish:

- Jesus who was without fault.
- In the liturgy, Abouna chooses the loaf of bread without any burns it has to be perfect

The chosen lamb should be 1 yrs old: the prime of the lamb's life, is fully developed and not premature.

- Jesus died when he was in the prime of his youth 33 year old
- In the Liturgy we offer God the prime time of the day, the early morning.

No bones should be broken in the lamb and the lamb should not be sick

- Jesus was healthy and perfect and they didn't break his bones. As Jesus died with his own will, he laid his own life for us.
- The bread should be perfect (well rounded and well baked)

The family has to finish eating the whole lamb, nothing would be a leftover

- Likewise, Jesus was not left on the Cross, he was buried the same night.
- We also finish the whole body of Christ in the Eucharist

The lamb is kept for 5 days in the house - he becomes a part of the family

- Likewise Jesus is so precious to us and he was in Jerusalem from the palm Sunday till his crucifixion
- We spend time in the liturgy with Jesus, which is why we spend 3 hours with Him.

The Lamb saved the Hebrews and gave them freedom

- It's a symbol of Jesus who saved us and gave us eternal life.
- In the Liturgy we celebrate eternal life - obtain salvation, remission of sins and eternal life to whomever partakes of Him

Blood on door posts: they were physically set apart (sanctified). The homes were set apart by blood. This blood stayed on the doors when they left. Imagine an empty city with blood on the doorposts.

- Blood of the lamb on the door is in the shape of the cross.
- We also have a mark, because of the Body and Blood that we eat. The Angel of God knows and can see our mark.

EXODUS

Exodus means come out of. It is the 2nd book in the old Testament, and the Biography of the life of Moses.

When Pharaoh and the Egyptians asked the Hebrews to leave, the Hebrews left without a plan to where they will move, completely trust and obedience to every word God said.

Never was obedience more clear than here, the ones obeyed lived and were free, the ones who disobeyed perished.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- **Activity sheet**
- **Matzo, better herbs to dip in vinegar for the kids to taste**
- **Assign to households:** divide the kids into groups and give them Jewish names for each household. They can also wear robes as costumes. Take the 1st born from each household and give him/her the rules of the Passover to tell their family.

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. What happened to the people of God during the plagues?
2. How could the Hebrews be saved from the last plague?
3. What does the slain lamb remind us of today? What does it symbolizes?
4. Can the lamb be old or weak, have a blemish or a broken leg?
5. Could the Hebrews keep the leftover lamb to eat the next day?
6. Did they have time to bake their bread for the journey?
7. Why do you think that the Egyptians urged the Hebrews to leave quickly giving them gold and silver?
8. How do you think the Hebrews felt when they left Egypt?

9. They carried with them the bones of _____, a son of Jacob.

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Unit II: God sanctified a people

Purpose: introduce the students to the Book of Exodus as a story of sanctification

LESSON 11: GOD BAPTIZES HIS PEOPLE: THE RED SEA

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

“As many as have been baptized onto Christ have put on Christ” Galatians 3:27

Romans 6

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

Providence

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

The Passover and the crossing of the red sea are the 2 most important events in the history of the Jewish, in the Old Testament for the Christians, and the whole world too.

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)

CONNECTION POINT:

The children should understand there is not friendship or union between God and the world. Unity with the world would be as if an Israelite stayed behind and tried to help the Egyptians – this would lead to death of the Israelite and the Egyptian. E.g. Noah, he could either build the ark and be made fun of, or give up making the ark and become like the others and die with them.

We have a fear of being alone. We can only separate from the world if we have courage and strength from God. We know that separation from the world isn't easy, it wasn't easy for the Israelites either. The separation comes from a realization that we're not one of them. You need a father of confession and a relationship with God.

People aren't "good" and "bad" they're either in the church or not in the church (we shouldn't judge anyone). We need to separate from the people not in the church. When you eat something different, when you won't do drugs, go on a date etc. the kids will make fun of you (you will be persecuted) and you have to know right then that you are different. If you don't know that you're different, you're going to be in trouble.

When you have the Chalice and Patten: would you let anyone from the street come and use it? Same with us – but the point is what would you do when the sanctification is threatened? If people want to take my body or my mind, or my eyes or my ears and make them regular? Are you going to stand by and watch or are you going to defend? What happens when you defend? They're will be a fight, and you'll get hurt - You're identity will be threatened, how will you defend yourself

LESSON BODY:

THE ROUTE OF THE EXODUS

Show maps of the route of the Exodus. Explain to the kids how God led them - a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of smoke by day. "By day the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in the pillar of fire to give them light." Ex13:21

God led the people through Egypt towards the Promised Land. He led them to a place and it looked like they were blocked in.

THE ISRAELITES APPEAR TO BE TRAPPED

God cornered the Israelites by bringing them to the Red Sea. Pharaoh thinks they got lost so he saw it as a perfect opportunity to charge but actually God brought them to the only part where they could actually cross the Red Sea, where the slope was gentle enough that they could cross

When the Hebrews were blocked in between the Red Sea, the desert and the Egyptians, they were terrified, and started to blame Moses. Moses answered, "Fear not, stand firm and see the salvation of the Lord. The Lord will fight for you and you have only to be still." Ex14:14. God actually brought them to the only part where they could actually cross the Red Sea, where the slope was gentle enough that they could cross

Moses asked the people to (1) not be afraid (2) stand firm (3) watch what the Lord will do (4) be still, hold your peace

God's **providence**. Sometimes when I feel trapped, it might be the only way for an exit. The things that make us scared are the things that God uses to help us. When we stick to God and don't yield to temptation, God sticks with us

GOD SAVED THE ISRAELITES

God did many things to save the Israelites when they thought they were trapped. First, he told them to move forward: "Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on." Ex14:15

He moved the cloud from above them to behind them, coming between the armies of Egypt and Israel. He opened a path through the red sea, and sent a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. Lastly, He brought confusion to the Egyptians. "He made the wheels of their chariots come off, so that they had difficulty driving. And the Egyptians said, 'Let's get away from the Israelites! The Lord is fighting for them against Egypt.'" Ex14:25

THE ISRAELITES WERE BAPTIZED BY CROSSING THE RED SEA

The cloud of water vapor above them and two walls of water on the side show how they were completely immersed in Red Sea. This also shows that the good that God wants to preserve is continuing through (the Israelites) and the bad (the Egyptians) are destroyed.

A baby goes into baptism and is preserved while the bad things are destroyed. The Israelites were cut out from Egypt. We are cut out from the world (separated) by our Baptism. The Israelites were baptized with Moses so they had complete union with Moses (1 Cor 1:1-2 *all were baptized onto Moses*). It's like a marriage, they became one- Moses can never leave them and they cannot leave him. Likewise, when we are baptized with Christ we become one with Him. Whatever He does, we will do, whatever you do, He does. We are linked with Christ

“As many as have been baptized onto Christ have put on Christ” Galatians 3:27

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- **Maps of the route of the Exodus**
- **Exodus Revealed** – chapter 8, about 45-50 minutes in. the crossing site has been prepared for thousands of years. The spot they were standing on is the only place where they were safe and they didn't know it.

CONCLUSION

The powerful God who divided the Red Sea is the same powerful God of the resurrection. If we obey, follow the rules and pray with reverence and attendance we will live through the life of the Lord through the Liturgy. Through the blood of the lamb we will pass from disobedience to obedience, from chaos to order, from intendance and disrespect to complete reverence and respecting the presence of God.

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. Why did Pharaoh follow the people?

Q. How were the people rescued?

Q. Who was really trapped?

Q. What does Pharaoh stand for? Who do the Hebrews stand for?

When evil men fight against God, they will receive their justice.

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Unit II: God sanctified a people

Purpose: introduce the students to the Book of Exodus as a story of sanctification

LESSON 12: THE MANNA AND THE QUAILS

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Exodus 16

John 6:22-71

- John 6: 35: *And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."*
- John 6:27 *Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.*
- John 6:49 *Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. ⁵⁰ This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die.*

Potato flakes meditation: What stinks and brings worms = meat, not potato flakes. The Eucharist is the same as the manna, it is the same material as Christ's body and blood but in a different form. "you are what you eat"= if you eat something it actually turns into your body. If I eat the manna but do not have faith then the next day our flesh will be like the rotting Manna. We do not trust in God that He will provide everyday, your own flesh that is eating the manna will be dead/rotting and bringing worms (do not worry)

REFLECTION:

The Lord provided his people with food and water even when they were in the desert for 40 years. We are in a much better position today in our lives and we still have lack of faith in Christ. I must always remember that no matter what situation I am in, God is always watching over me, taking care of me and providing for me my needs. I must also remember that eternal life is through communion and it is a big blessing that we are given this privilege.

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Ask the students about the previous week's lesson on crossing the red sea, how was this related to the sacraments of the church? What did they learn from last week's lesson?

Just as they Israelites had to trust in God and believe that He would save them from the Egyptians, they also had to trust in God and believe that He would provide them food in the desert.

How our Bread from Heaven is actually Communion given by Abouna.

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)

CONNECTION POINT:

Trust in God/Faith. Special focus in the Eucharist: if we believe God will provide for us, He'll provide for us food to live forever.

LESSON BODY:

THE MANNA FROM HEAVEN

Every Sunday we go to liturgy and come to class and we have food, right? Well can you imagine if you were an Israelite and you had just run away from Pharaoh and you're now in the desert...what do you do??? There are no fast food restaurants to go to!

When the Israelites went into the desert they began to lose faith in God and they started to complain! God heard their prayers and he provided them food—What did the Lord provide them??

Have the students read the story in Exodus of the manna and the quails. Manna will rain down from heaven. They had to completely trust that God would give them what they needed and none of them would go hungry as long as they obeyed the rules.

And they journeyed from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came to the Wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they departed from the land of Egypt. ² Then the whole congregation of the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. ³ And the children of Israel said to them, "Oh, that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat and when we ate bread to the full! For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger." Exodus 1-3

⁶ Then Moses and Aaron said to all the children of Israel, "At evening you shall know that the Lord has brought you out of the land of Egypt. ⁷ And in the morning you shall see the glory of the Lord; for He hears your complaints against the Lord. But what are we, that you complain against us?" ⁸ Also Moses said, "This shall be seen when the Lord gives you meat to eat in the evening, and in the morning bread to the full; for the Lord hears your complaints which you make against Him. And what are we? Your complaints are not against us but against the Lord."

⁹ Then Moses spoke to Aaron, "Say to all the congregation of the children of Israel, 'Come near before the LORD, for He has heard your complaints.'" ¹⁰ Now it came to pass, as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud.

¹¹ And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ¹² "I have heard the complaints of the children of Israel. Speak to them, saying, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. And you shall know that I am the Lord your God.'"

¹³ So it was that quails came up at evening and covered the camp, and in the morning the dew lay all around the camp. ¹⁴ And when the layer of dew lifted, there, on the surface of the wilderness, was a small round substance, as fine as frost on the ground. ¹⁵ So when the children of Israel saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was.

And Moses said to them, "This is the bread which the Lord has given you to eat Exodus 16: 6-15

...

"And the house of Israel called its name manna, and it was white like coriander seed, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey." Exodus 16: 31

...

³⁵ And the children of Israel ate manna forty years, until they came to an inhabited land; they ate manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan. Exodus 16:35

COLLECTING THE MANNA

Pay special attention to the rules associated with collecting the manna.

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you. And the people shall go out and gather a certain quota every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in My law or not. ⁵ And it shall be on the sixth day that they shall prepare what they bring in, and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily." Exodus 16:4

...

¹⁶ This is the thing which the Lord has commanded: 'Let every man gather it according to each one's need, one omer for each person, according to the number of persons; let every man take for those who are in his tent.'"

¹⁷ Then the children of Israel did so and gathered, some more, some less. ¹⁸ So when they measured it by omers, he who gathered much had nothing left over, and he who gathered little had no lack. Every man had gathered according to each one's need. ¹⁹ And Moses said, "Let no one leave any of it till morning." ²⁰ Notwithstanding they did not heed Moses. But some of them left part of it until morning, and it bred worms and stank. And Moses was angry with them. ²¹ So they gathered it every morning, every man according to his need. And when the sun became hot, it melted.

²² And so it was, on the sixth day, that they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for each one. And all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. ²³ Then he said to them, "This is what the Lord has said: 'Tomorrow is a Sabbath rest, a holy Sabbath to the Lord. Bake what you will bake today, and boil what you will boil; and lay up for yourselves all that remains, to be kept until morning.'" ²⁴ So they laid it up till morning, as Moses commanded; and it did not stink, nor were there any worms in it. ²⁵ Then Moses said, "Eat that today, for today is a Sabbath

to the Lord; today you will not find it in the field. ²⁶ Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will be none."

²⁷ Now it happened that some of the people went out on the seventh day to gather, but they found none. ²⁸ And the Lord said to Moses, "How long do you refuse to keep My commandments and My laws? ²⁹ See! For the Lord has given you the Sabbath; therefore He gives you on the sixth day bread for two days. Let every man remain in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day."³⁰ So the people rested on the seventh day. Exodus 16: 16-30

Review the important rules for collecting the manna: (1) the fathers collect it for the family (2) none can remain until the next day or it will rot (3) there is always enough (4) they can't collect any on the Sabbath so on the 6th day they collect twice as much and it won't rot the next day

The Israelites had to trust in God, if you take more than what you need it won't last. If you know that God gave you a commandment not to work on Saturday do you expect God will send manna on Saturday? Shows belief that God won't do things he says he won't – they'll go out and not find anything

Talking about faith - if you get your days portion, trust God will give you the next day. If you don't trust him then you see the visible results of not trusting in God – we'll rot

THE MANNA AND THE EUCHARIST

Ask the kids what sacrament the manna reminds them of. Compare the four rules for the manna mentioned above with four rules of the Eucharist:

- 1) Abouna, the Father, gives communion
- 2) None of the Eucharist remains until the next day, Abouna always finishes it all
- 3) There is always enough Blood and Body
- 4) We keep the holy day, holy – we must keep Sunday for Christ – commandment of keeping the Sabbath Holy came before the manna, God wanted to keep this first covenant which came before food. This means that we keep Sunday holy and come to church, we don't work but the Church works for us.

THE MANNA THAT WILL NEVER SPOIL

Then Moses said, "This is the thing which the Lord has commanded: 'Fill an omer with it, to be kept for your generations, that they may see the bread with which I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.'" ³³ And Moses said to Aaron, "Take a pot and put an omer of manna in it, and lay it up before the Lord, to be kept for your generations."³⁴ As

the Lord commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept. Exodus 16:32-34

Why was this portion left in the Ark? So they can see with their senses what will happen when people don't trust God and we don't have faith we'll rot like the extra manna

The portion that stays in the Ark of the Covenant that will stay forever: communion. The Jews can't take from it because Jesus didn't come yet, talks about the food that people will eat and stay forever. In the Ark of the Covenant is the rod, tablet, manna- different messages- priesthood (Israelites could not get it), food kept for eternity (Israelites could not get it- Eucharist),

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- **Frosted Flakes and cups** – pass out Frosted Flakes to each of the kids. Tell the kids to only take what they think they will eat and not to have any leftover!

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Why did God send the manna to the Israelites?

What happened when someone tried to take more manna than needed?

How is the manna like Communion?

What do we need to do to be able to receive Communion?

The Lord will always provide for you. The Body and Blood of Christ will give you eternal life. He who eats of His flesh and drinks from his blood shall not perish but have eternal life.

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Unit II: God sanctified a people

Purpose: introduce the students to the Book of Exodus as a story of sanctification

LESSON 13: THE WATER FROM THE ROCK

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Samaritan woman

John 7:37 – 39 living water

John 19:31-37 - not one of His bones shall be broken. By the death of Christ and piercing of His side the disciples got their sign, were assured that the Holy Spirit would be given to them, whatever He promised would be given out of His own body and spirit

CHURCH FATHERS:

St. John the celibate: our way of being quenched is discovering Christ through liturgy. Started with baptism, being one with Christ. We offer all our prayers to Christ- agpeya- each hour is a meeting with Christ; -liturgy is what the Israelites were doing by the rock; waiting to be quenched by the water as we participate in liturgy to be quenched in the end by communion. The first 15 minutes after communion is when God is permeating the body with grace. It's like He's settling in.

REFLECTION:

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Last class we talked about how the Israelites complained and God sent them manna and quails but it says in the NT that the Israelites ate the manna in the wilderness and died but Jesus is the bread of life, all who eat of Him shall not die, but live. Eucharist is the bread that comes from Heaven. Also taught us to trust in God and to have faith:

2 weeks ago we talked about how God Baptizes His people: Crossing of the Red Sea. This is where God really separated His people from the Egyptians. We talked about how we have to really separate ourselves from the world as well. Like the Israelites couldn't remain with the Egyptians and go through the Red Sea, we can't remain friends/united to the world and with God. Separation from the world isn't easy

We're like sponges that are dry. Either we can be filled with good clean water or we can be filled with dirty water. Either way, we're going to be filled because we have a need inside of us. And it is up to us, with guidance from our Father of Confession, on how to be filled. We're going to talk a lot more about this today, so keep it in mind.

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)

CONNECTION POINT:

Jesus is the source of quenching, answer to the separation. When we feel lonely, when we feel pressured by the world to mingle, when we feel not good enough → our closeness to Jesus is the solution.

LESSON BODY:

THE ISRAELITES WERE THIRSTY

We're continuing our journey with Moses and the Israelites and so the next thing that happened was

One day, Moses was leading the children of Israel from the Wilderness of Sin as the Lord commanded him. When they stopped to camp for the night, there was no water for the people to drink.

Israelite 1 (says to Moses): Moses! We have traveled long and far. We are thirsty and have searched for water but we can't find any!

Israelite 2 (also to Moses): Yea! Come on Moses! Give us water to drink!

Moses: Why do you test me? Most importantly, why are you tempting the Lord?

Israelite 3: What do you mean Moses? We are thirsty! We followed you out of Egypt to be saved.

Israelite 4: What are you trying to do? Kill us with our children and our livestock! We would have been better off in Egypt Moses. It's true, we were slaves, but at least we had water to drink!

Moses (turns away from them and says): Lord, what shall I do with these people?! They are almost ready to stone me!

Narrator: And the Lord said to Moses "Go on before the people and take with you some of the elders of Israel. Also take in your hand your rod with which you struck the river and go. Behold I will stand before you there on the rock, and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it that the people may drink."

Moses strikes the "rock" and water comes out.

Moses: Surely, we should never tempt the Lord saying "Is the Lord among us or not". The Lord is always here protecting us and when we thirst, he will give us the water to drink.

This story seems very similar to the story about the manna and the quails – it shows that the Israelites lacked faith that God would take care of them and it teaches us to always trust in God and turn to Him when we are in need of anything. BUT we compared the manna to the body of Christ.

LIVING WATER IN THE NEW TESTAMENT – THE SAMARITAN WOMAN

Water has a very special significance in the New Testament, because of what happened here. Does anyone have any idea where water, and especially someone thirsty for water comes into play? The Samaritan Woman

Summary of the story: Jesus left Judea and went to travel to Galilee. In order to get there, he needed to go through Samaria. When he arrived to Sychar, which was a city of Samaria, he was wearied from his journey and sat by the well. It was the sixth hour (about 12 noon).

A woman of Samaria came to draw water from the well and Jesus said to her, give me a drink. Then the Samaritan woman said to him, wondering “How is it that You being a Jew ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?” because at this time, Jews did not deal with Samaritans.

Jesus said to her, if you knew who this is who asks you for a drink, you would have asked Him and He would have given you the living water.

The Samaritan woman, still unsure and doubting of who Jesus was said, “Sir, you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where then do you get that living water?”

Jesus tells her “whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.”

The Samaritan woman asks Jesus to give her this water so that she may not thirst, and Jesus says to her, “Go call your husband”

She says “I have no husband”. And Jesus answered saying “You have spoken well when you say ‘I have no husband’ for you have had five husbands and the one whom you now have in not your husband; in that you spoke truly.”

She then asks if he is a prophet. She then says, “I know that the Messiah is coming. When he comes, He will tell us all things”

Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you, am He”

Then the disciples came and saw Jesus and thought, “why is he talking to that woman?”

Then she went out and told everyone “Come see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?”

SOURCE OF WATER

In the story, Jesus quenched the woman’s need for love because He is the source of unconditional love. Jesus is the SOURCE of this water but the water itself, what quenches us is the Holy Spirit

Jesus is like the Rock, because when He was on the Cross – out of Him came water and blood. When Christ was pierced on the Cross, it was a sign that He was the new rock for us

The water is the Holy Spirit

Where did Jesus give us this living water? Pentecost

WE ARE SPONGES

Remember earlier I said we were like sponges? And we can be filled with clean water or dirty water? This clean water is the Holy Spirit. How are we refilled with the Holy Spirit?

When we separate ourselves from the world, we will have a need within us. We'll feel empty and like a sponge, need water to quench us. By coming closer to Christ, the rock, we will be filled with the Holy Spirit and be quenched.

The spiritual quench comes from God through sacrament and prayer:

Communion- We are quenched when we receive Christ. When Jesus was on the cross and his side was pierced, water and blood came forth. One of the kids asks “if this water is so important, why isn't water a part of communion?”

The answer would be that water is in fact a very important part of communion because when preparing the blood, we mix both wine and water

We should try to remain quiet and still after taking communion, to really feel and meditate on Christ within us

Prayer and Worship- In order to receive Christ, we need to be ‘thirsty’. The Israelites were thirsty for the physical water. The Samaritan woman was thirsty for the true and perfect love (spiritual water). In both cases, they asked of God for this water. Moses cried out to the Lord in prayer and the Samaritan woman asked the Lord herself “where can I get this living water?” These are parallels for our prayer. We need to ask and request that the Lord relieve us from the agony and emptiness of thirst and to fill us with his fountain of quenching love that is eternal.
→ Especially praying with the agpeya. Every hour is a cupful of water thrown on us

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- **Mountain of Fire DVD chapter 16** – show scene of split rock

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Unit II: God sanctified a people

Purpose: introduce the students to the Book of Exodus as a story of sanctification

LESSON 14: THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Exodus 19-20

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

God's chosen people in the Old Testament were sanctified

Q. Who are God's chosen people in the Old Testament?

Q. What does Sanctification mean?

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)

CONNECTION POINT:

The Jews would view the commandments as the first tool of sanctification. By the commandments God sets them apart. In America the Jewish people are set apart by the Sabbath – can't use any machinery, have to walk to the church no matter how far they live – compel them stay close to the temple, they are the only people living around their sanctuary, have places that are very Jewish. By the Sabbath they are set apart, sanctified

Talk about the fear of God: Israelites couldn't tolerate the voice of God, they weren't prepared. Moses was the only who was prepared and could take it in.

LESSON BODY:

GOD WANTS TO SPEAK TO THE ISRAELITES

Exodus 19-20

The Israelites were walking through desert for a long time and God was leading them and guiding them. God told Moses to tell the people: *"Now therefore, if you keep My covenant, you shall be a special people to Me above all nations; for all the earth is Mine. You shall be to Me a royal priesthood and a holy nation."* (Exodus 19:5-6)

So Moses went to the people and told them all that God told him. The people responded and said, everything God says to do, we will do. *And the Lord said to Moses "Behold, I come to you in the thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and believe you forever."* (Exodus 19:9). Moses told the people that the Lord was going to speak to them but they had to get ready first.

THE ISRAELITES PREPARE TO HEAR GOD

Exodus 9:10-15

¹⁰ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes. ¹¹ And let them be ready for the third day. For on the third day the LORD will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. ¹² You shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, 'Take heed to yourselves that you do not go up to the mountain or touch its base. Whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death. ¹³ Not a hand shall touch him, but he shall surely be stoned or shot with an

arrow; whether man or beast, he shall not live.' When the trumpet sounds long, they shall come near the mountain."

¹⁴ So Moses went down from the mountain to the people and sanctified the people, and they washed their clothes. ¹⁵ And he said to the people, "Be ready for the third day; do not come near your wives."

GOD SPEAKS TO THE ISRAELITES

Exodus 19:16-20

¹⁶ Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. ¹⁷ And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. ¹⁸ Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain^[a] quaked greatly. ¹⁹ And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice. ²⁰ Then the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain. And the Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.

The Lord then spoke the 10 Commandments to the people but they were very afraid.

¹⁸ Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood afar off. ¹⁹ Then they said to Moses, "You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die."

²⁰ And Moses said to the people, "Do not fear; for God has come to test you, and that His fear may be before you, so that you may not sin." ²¹ So the people stood afar off, but Moses drew near the thick darkness where God was. Exodus 20-18:21

This shows that the Israelites who were with Moses were so very afraid after what they saw and were afraid that God was going to kill them, but Moses told them not to fear and that God shows his power to keep us in fear away from sin, but not away from God.

We have fear of God that motivates us to be fearful of sin as well but this same God that they feared was the God that provided the food for them and the water when they were thirsty.

We must remember that the fear of God is a loving fear and knowledge of God's capacity of power but also his capacity of love.

The most important thing for us to remember is that God has the power to do anything. When we love him and obey his commandments we will be in the favor of this power. When we are sinful and disobey his commandments, we risk ourselves in being condemned by this

power. And just as God has the power to bless and to condemn, he has the perfect and generous love to forgive when we disobey his commandments.

THE COMMANDMENTS

Part Two: The commandments:

Ask the kids: Where are the commandments? The Commandments are now engraved on our hearts to have in front of us at all times, meaning they were given for us all and not just for those back in the time of Moses. There

Compare Jesus and Moses: Moses was given the commandments, but he couldn't get the people ready to receive them. Christ prepared us to receive the Holy Spirit which then allowed us to receive the commandments on our hearts conscience tells us what's right and wrong

What are the Commandments? They are a covenant between God and man. Sometimes referred to as "the tablets of the covenant" (Deut. 9:11) and "the book of the covenant (ex. 24:7)

What are some examples of the number 10 in other parts of the bible, agpeya, liturgy, etc? 1- represents PERFECTION in the law. The **10 Virgins** at the Wedding (Matthew 25 and in the first watch of the midnight hour in the agpeya) refer to the whole world. **Tithes** (man should give God one tenth of his wealth). Applies to its multiples, too (grading is out of 100 in school)

THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

Each commandment can apply to us today and can even help us when we go to confess to Abouna.

Ask the kids if they remember the theme for the 1st 4 commandments. They govern our relationship with God.

Ask the kids if they remember the theme for the last 6 commandments. They govern our relationship with other people.

1st Commandment: **I am the Lord your God, you shall have no other gods before me** - Facebook, Money, etc.

2nd Commandment: **You shall not make for yourself an idol** - Images: computers (e.g. facebook), videogames, TV → all images that attract people and take over their hearts and we worship these images. We worship them by spending our life in front of them

3rd Commandment: **Do not take the name of the Lord in vain** - Oh my God!, Jesus Christ!, etc. When the name is uttered for any reason other than worshipping God.

4th Commandment: **Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy** - No work should be done on Sunday. All of your hw should be done before hand so the day can be spent praising God and with family and friends. You should also not be alone on Sunday, playing a computer game or video game by yourself. You should spend this time with God and family.

5th Commandment: **Honor your father and mother** - Obey your parents!

6th Commandment: **You shall not kill** - doesn't have to be a literal murder but can be throwing someone down (making fun of them → killing self-esteem)

7th Commandment: **You shall not commit adultery** - boyfriend and girlfriend – represents the idea of everything having certain time and place

8th Commandment: **You shall not steal** - taking things without permission – give it to the person in charge

9th Commandment: **You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor** - lying is never the answer because as we've learned the devil is the father of lies

10th Commandment: **You shall not covet your neighbor's wife or anything that belongs to your neighbor** - be grateful for what you have and thank God. Shouldn't say that I wish I had a bigger house like my friend because there are some people that aren't lucky enough to even have a house

These commandments show us who God *is*. He says don't kill, He's the source of life; He says don't commit adultery, He's never tempted. The commandments speak of God's nature. When we break a commandment, we are breaking God's law, which is a law of love and we're going against God's nature.

THE NEW COMMANDMENT

The old law, the 10 commandments, can be summarized in a two verses. Ask the kids if they know the verses. *“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and*

with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ (Matthew 22:37-40)

The new commandment is: *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.* John 13:34

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

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CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Have the kids recite the 10 Commandments and the new commandment

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Unit II: God sanctified a people

Purpose: introduce the students to the Book of Exodus as a story of sanctification

LESSON 15: THE GOLDEN CALF AND THE CHANGE OF PRIESTHOOD

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Exodus 32:1-35

Now when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, "Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him."

²And Aaron said to them, "Break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me." ³So all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron. ⁴And he received the gold from their hand, and he fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molded calf.

Then they said, "This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!"

⁵So when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, "Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD." ⁶Then they rose early on the next day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

⁷And the LORD said to Moses, "Go, get down! For your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves. ⁸They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them. They have made themselves a molded calf, and worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, "This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!" ⁹And the LORD said to Moses, "I have seen this people, and indeed it is a stiff-necked people! ¹⁰Now therefore, let Me alone, that My wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them. And I will make of you a great nation."

¹¹Then Moses pleaded with the LORD his God, and said: "LORD, why does Your wrath burn hot against Your people whom You have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? ¹²Why should the Egyptians speak, and say, "He brought them out to harm them, to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from Your fierce wrath, and relent from this harm to Your people. ¹³Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self, and said to them, "I will multiply

your descendants as the stars of heaven; and all this land that I have spoken of I give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever."

*14*So the LORD relented from the harm which He said He would do to His people.

*15*And Moses turned and went down from the mountain, and the two tablets of the Testimony were in his hand. The tablets were written on both sides; on the one side and on the other they were written. *16*Now the tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God engraved on the tablets.

*17*And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said to Moses, "There is a noise of war in the camp."

*18*But he said:

*"It is not the noise of the shout of victory,
Nor the noise of the cry of defeat,
But the sound of singing I hear."*

*19*So it was, as soon as he came near the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing. So Moses' anger became hot, and he cast the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain. *20*Then he took the calf which they had made, burned it in the fire, and ground it to powder; and he scattered it on the water and made the children of Israel drink it. *21*And Moses said to Aaron, "What did this people do to you that you have brought so great a sin upon them?"

*22*So Aaron said, "Do not let the anger of my lord become hot. You know the people, that they are set on evil. *23*For they said to me, "Make us gods that shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.'

*24*And I said to them, "Whoever has any gold, let them break it off.' So they gave it to me, and I cast it into the fire, and this calf came out."

*25*Now when Moses saw that the people were unrestrained (for Aaron had not restrained them, to their shame among their enemies), *26*then Moses stood in the entrance of the camp, and said, "Whoever is on the LORD's side--come to me!" And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him. *27*And he said to them, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: "Let every man put his sword on his side, and go in and out from entrance to entrance throughout the camp, and let every man kill his brother, every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.'" *28*So the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And about three thousand men of the people fell that day. *29*Then Moses said, "Consecrate yourselves today to the LORD, that He may bestow on you a blessing this day, for every man has opposed his son and his brother." *30*Now it came to pass on the next day that Moses said to the people, "You have committed a great sin. So now I will go up to the LORD; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin."

*31*Then Moses returned to the LORD and said, "Oh, these people have committed a great sin, and have made for themselves a god of gold! *32*Yet now, if You will forgive their sin--but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written."

*33*And the LORD said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book.

*34*Now therefore, go, lead the people to the place of which I have spoken to you. Behold, My Angel shall go before you. Nevertheless, in the day when I visit for punishment, I will visit punishment upon them for their sin."

*35*So the LORD plagued the people because of what they did with the calf which Aaron made.

Matthew 21:43

Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

Gentiles

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What are the 10 Commandments?

A.

Q. How did God appear to the Israelites?

A. *Mountain shaking with fire and trumpets.*

Q. Where they able to see Him?

A.

Q. In what aspects of our lives do we respect God?

A. *At Church, at home; He is the focus of our life.*

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)

CONNECTION POINT:

Moses went up to the mountain to receive the 10 commandments from God. He was there for 40 days and nights. The people were down at the camp with Aaron the priest, his brother. God sent Moses down from the mountain because there was a problem with the people...

LESSON BODY:

THE GOLDEN CALF

After God appeared to Moses and the Israelites, Moses ascended to the top of Mt. Sinai. He stayed up there with God for 40 days and nights. This is a long time! Longer than a month. Moses was a very great prophet because he spoke to God "face to face." It says in the Bible that God and Moses were friends and they talked as friends.

But the Hebrews who were waiting at the base of the mountain for Moses grew impatient: *Now when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, "Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him."* (Exodus 32:1)

So Aaron listened to the voice of the people. He told the people, *"Break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives ... and your daughters, and bring them to me." So all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron. And he received the gold from their hand, and he fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molded calf.*

Then they said, "This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!" Wow, look at how much they left the true God – they even said that a golden statue had delivered them from the Egyptians, their enslavers.

God, Who sees us always, saw what the people were doing. He told Moses to go down. When Moses came down from the Mountain and saw the Israelites worshipping the golden calf he became very upset and angry. Then Moses did something really interesting. He stood at the entrance of the camp and said, *"Whoever is on the Lord's side, come to me."* Moses called God's true people out from the crowds.

[Option: this may be a good time to discuss impatience and the virtue of patience.]

We can see the overlap between this story and the story of Adam and Eve. *“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”* (Genesis 2:16) - They were only limited in eating a single thing but could not have the focus to not be led astray. In the Gregorian liturgy, the priest says “Of one plant have You forbidden me to eat, that of which You have said to me, “Of it only do not eat.” But according to my will, I did eat. I put Your law behind me by my own counsel, and became slothful toward your commandments.” Likewise, although the Israelites were able to see the glory of God, they became distracted and thus fell into sin.

In the end, they were to make a decision: When Moses returned from the Mount, does anyone remember what was the option that was given? *“then Moses stood in the entrance of the camp, and said, “Whoever is on the LORD’s side—come to me!” And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him.”* (Exodus 32: 26)

[Note: Only if the kids ask what happens to those who worshipped the calf, explain that they died. Why? Those who kept worshipping the calf would keep corrupting the other people. The Egyptians worshipped the calf, which is where the Israelites got the idea to make this image. Those who worshipped the calf were treated just like the Egyptians.]

Just a little note about Moses: even though the people had done this horrible thing, Moses asked God to forgive the people their sins. Moses was a great prophet of the Old Testament – He truly loved the people, although he hated their sin.

CHANGE OF PRIESTHOOD

Before we go on with what happened in the story, we need to remember one important detail from the Bible that will help us understand. I want us to quickly go over the last plague, the one that allowed the Israelites to leave Egypt. What happened? [Wait for a student to say Passover, then ask them explain the story – make sure they hit on the following key point: by putting blood on the door the angel of God skipped that house and did not kill the first born there. The Passover lamb took the place of the firstborn. The firstborn should have died, had God not told Moses how to save him.]

[Suggestion for activity: Ask all the older siblings in the room to move to one side and the younger siblings to move to the other side. Tell the younger siblings they are safe from all harm. Tell the older ones to imagine that they heard they would die during the night. But instead of them dying God would save them if they killed a lamb, put its blood on the door and did all rites

of Passover. Would they do it? Would they thank God for saving them? When God did this, He bought the firstborn Israelites with the blood of the lamb.]

After reviewing this story, who do you think should have been the first people to run to Moses when he called for God's people? While God saved all the people of Israel, who did God especially save? Who should have been the first to Moses?

The firstborn were meant to be God's chosen ones. They were supposed to have run to Moses first and they were supposed to be the priests, they were at the heart of salvation. But, they did not come. They turned away from God's call. People of God, like the firstborn, can also turn away from sanctification.

Instead of the firstborn, Moses' own tribe came to him – the Levites. For this reason the Levites became the priests (in the OT). Priests are very important to God's plan of salvation; God has always had them. We can't be saved without priests.

CHRIST CAME FOR US

There is a link between this story from the Old Testament, and what happened when our Lord Jesus Christ came to save us. When Jesus Christ came down from Heaven to save us, who did He come to first? What group of people did He first deliver the message of salvation to? [the Jews].

When the Jewish people did not head His commandments, they rejected His salvation and therefore rejected His Kingdom. Christ's message was then spread to everyone – Christ's Kingdom is available to all who are obedient to Him (both Jews and Gentiles). It was the first time that God's message was spread throughout the whole world (the Gentile nations) because Jesus Christ came to save us all.

Matthew 21:43 "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it."

Even though He came first for the Jews, He still came to save everyone. He bought us with His blood just as God bought the firstborn with the blood of the lamb. This is why we say that Jesus is like a lamb going to the slaughter. Even though He has done all this, some people reject Him, as some of the Israelites rejected the God who saved them from 400 years of slavery in the land of the Egyptians. Those who follow Him, on the other hand, and accept Him and love Him with all their hearts and recognize Him as the One who frees them (like the tribe of the Levites) will be called a "holy nation" and children of God.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

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CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)

CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Unit II: God sanctified a people

Purpose: introduce the students to the Book of Exodus as a story of sanctification

LESSON 16: THE TABERNACLE

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Exodus 25-31

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

Tabernacle

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

REVIEW PREVIOUS LESSONS:

From the beginning God saved the Israelites from the Egyptians. He led them out of Egypt and through the desert and he NEVER left them without anything...food, water, safety.

He always told them what to do in times in trouble. He protected them with the Passover and gave them specific directions on what to do.

When Moses was given the 10 commandments, only a part of the Israelites followed. They were also given special instructions on how to worship Him. This is what we call the Tabernacle.

To understand this lesson on the tabernacle, you must think of the Israelites' journey from the very beginning of their journey.

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)

LESSON BODY:

WHAT IS A TABERNACLE

Tabernacle means “tent,” “place of dwelling” or “sanctuary.” It was a sacred place where God chose to meet His people, the Israelites, during the 40 years they wandered in the desert under Moses' leadership.

“...make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them.” (Exodus 25:8)

“Then I will dwell among the Israelites and be their God. They will know that I am the Lord their God, who brought them out of Egypt so that I might dwell among them.” (Exodus 29:45-46)

And so God dwelled among His people in the tabernacle in the wilderness. He appeared as a pillar of cloud over the tabernacle by day and a pillar of fire by night in the sight of all Israel.

Note: In the New Testament, John writes: “The Word became flesh and made his *dwelling* among us.” (John 1:14) This word “dwelling” is the same word for “tabernacle” in the Old Testament. In other words, God came in living flesh to *dwell* or to *tabernacle* among His

people. As He walked upon the earth and lived among the Jews, Jesus Christ Himself fulfilled the picture of the **Old Testament tabernacle**.

The tabernacle tells the story of Exodus – we will discuss this. There is also a relation to the New Testament. We will go through every part of the tabernacle and look at both these things.

THE GATE

In the tabernacle, there was only one gate = only one entrance. 30 feet wide, located on the east end, covered by a curtain

Christ connection: it can represent Christ as the only way towards our fellowship with God: *“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14:6)*

THE BRAZEN ALTER

Inside the courtyard upon entering the gate. The altar was the place for burning animal sacrifices - first step for sinful men to approach a holy God was to be cleansed by the blood of an innocent creature – by laying hand upon head of the offering, the person’s sin and guilt was being moved to the animal. The priest would then slaughter the animal, sprinkle its blood in front of the veil of the Holy Place, burn the sacrifice, and pour the rest of it at the bottom of the altar

Israelites journey: the Israelites exposed to a sacrifice during The Passover! The bronze altar reminds them of when God saved their first born.

Christ connection: raised on a mound of earth, like a projection of Christ, our sacrifice, lifted up on the cross on Golgotha

Why don’t we sacrifice anymore? Christ, the Lamb of God, came as the ultimate and last sacrifice for mankind

THE BASIN/LAVER

Large bowl filled with water located halfway between the brazen altar and the Holy Place. Made of bronze. The priests cleansed themselves at the laver before serving the Holy Place, so that they would be pure

Israelites journey: the people were “washed” during the crossing of the Red Sea

Christ connection: we are forgiven through Christ's work on the cross, but we are washed through His Word and through confession

Now we move on to the inside, which is called the Holy > first room in the tent of the Tabernacle- it had 3 pieces of furniture: The golden lamp stand, the altar of incense, and the showbread table

THE GOLDEN LAMP STAND & THE ALTER OF INCENSE

The golden lampstand stood at the left of the Holy Place. 1 piece of pure gold, had a central branch with 3 branches on each side – seven lamps holding olive oil and wicks. Had to keep them burning continuously – only source of light in the Holy Place

Altar of Incense sat in front of the curtain that separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. Burned incense every morning and evening at the same time as the daily burnt offerings. Symbol of prayers and intercession of the people going up to God

Israelites journey: God always accompanied them with the pillar of light and the pillar of smoke to lead their way

Christ connection: The lampstand is like Christ, who is the “true light that gives light to every man,” while the golden altar represents Christ as an intercessor before God the Father

TABLE OF SHOWBREAD

Small table that stood on the right side of the Holy place that held 12 loaves of bread = 12 tribes of Israel. Every Sabbath the priest would remove it, eat it in the Holy Place, and put fresh bread on the table. It's a picture of God's willingness to fellowship and communion with man

Israelites journey: like the manna that God gave them while they were traveling

Christ connection: Christ says “I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty “

HOLY OF HOLIES

A thick veil curtain called the veil separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place – it is shielding a holy God from sinful man. Only the high priest could enter, once a year on the Day of Atonement, it's a representation of Heaven Itself

The “Ark of the Covenant” – a golden ark with three important items inside. The items important because they symbolized the new things to come to the Israelites

- First pot of manna: symbolizes the Eucharist – first pot did not ever rot but was kept as a reminder for them for what is to come
- The tablets of stone with the 10 Commandments: symbolizes the new covenant between the Israelites and God
- The Rod of Aaron: symbolizes the new priesthood which Jesus will establish

Presence of God remained shielded from man behind a thick curtain during the history of Israel. Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross changed that. When He died, the curtain in the Jerusalem temple was torn in half, from the top to the bottom. As the veil was torn, the Holy of Holies was exposed. God's presence was now accessible to all.

Do we understand the difference between the New Testament and the Old Testament? The Old Testament is before Christ and the New Testament is after Christ came. The Holy of the Holies, the Ark of the Covenant and its contents represent the things the Jews were waiting for but could not access yet. It would be given to them in the New Testament with Christ's coming.

“Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body ...let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith.” (Hebrews 10:19-22)

In the same way we can think about progression in our lives. 1) we are sinful, but go into the altar and confess these sins. 2) the actions are gone but the thoughts are there, like hate, etc. 3) when we are blameless, we can finally see God

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- **Movie: Tabernacle** – shows Pillar of Fire and 12 tribes around Tabernacle and goes around Holy of Holies
- Kit of Tabernacle

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

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VERSE TO REMEMBER:

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But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9)

UNIT II REVIEW LESSON

Fifth Grade Curriculum:

God called Us to Be Holy

UNIT III: THE JOURNEY OF LENT (6 LESSONS)

Purpose: The study of the Gospel themes of Lent as a journey sanctification that leads us to the holy week.

Lesson 18: Introduction to Lent, Seasons & Days of Fasting

Lesson 19: Our Lord Jesus Christ leads us to offer fasting to God

Lesson 20: The power of fasting

Lesson 21: We give cheerfully

Lesson 22: Holy Week Part 1

Lesson 23: Holy Week Part 2

Unit III: The Journey of the Holy Lent

Purpose: The study of the Gospel themes of Lent as a journey sanctification that leads us to the holy week.

LESSON 18: INTRODUCTION TO LENT

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Daniel 1:3-21

³Then the king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, to bring some of the children of Israel and some of the king's descendants and some of the nobles, ⁴young men in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans.

⁵And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king's delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of that time they might serve before the king. ⁶Now from among those of the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

⁷To them the chief of the eunuchs gave names: he gave Daniel the name Beltshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abed-Nego.

⁸But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. ⁹Now God had brought Daniel into the favor and goodwill of the chief of the eunuchs. ¹⁰And the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who has appointed your food and drink. For why should he see your faces looking worse than the young men who are your age? Then you would endanger my head before the king."

¹¹So Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, ¹²"Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink. ¹³Then let our appearance be examined before you, and the appearance of the young men who eat the portion of the king's delicacies; and as you see fit, so deal with your servants."

¹⁴So he consented with them in this matter, and tested them ten days.

15And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king's delicacies. 16Thus the steward took away their portion of delicacies and the wine that they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.

17As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

18Now at the end of the days, when the king had said that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. 19Then the king interviewed them, and among them all none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore they served before the king. 20And in all matters of wisdom and understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were in all his realm. 21Thus Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus.

CHURCH FATHERS:

REFLECTION:

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

INTRODUCTION

LESSON BODY:

WHAT IS FASTING?

If you read the word break-fast, what do you think it is saying? [Give the kids a chance to try to figure it out]. It does mean that it is the first meal we eat after fasting for a period of time. We break our fast.

“Fasting” is a period of time where someone stops eating or drinking and doesn’t eat dairy or meat.

Why do we only eat vegetarian food? To go back to the first nature of human beings, like Adam and Eve when they were living in the Garden and were close to God.

But fasting is not only about what we eat. . .

WHY DO WE FAST?

Preparation for the feasts → we do not prepare for feasts by buying gifts, or clothes or by going shopping. We prepare for the feasts in our church by fasting so that we are spiritually prepared, not just physically prepared.

We fast not for ourselves, but as an offering to God. Fasting is giving ourselves to God. We offer up to God our prayers and our fasting.

HOW DO WE BENEFIT FROM FASTING?

Tell the story of Daniel and the three young men; the fasting they did led them to be more successful than any other person:

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were Israelites who had been carried off to Babylon with many other Israelites during a war. They were forced to live there, in a foreign land, separated from their homes, their Temple where they worshiped God, and all the ways of life they were used to. On top of all this, they were surrounded by people who worshiped idols; when they had lived in Israel, everyone worshiped God. Here, they were surrounded by people who did not even know God.

Now, the king of Babylon (Nebuchadnezzar) ordered his servant to bring him some of the children of Israel – the best there were, young men in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand – who would be able to serve in the king’s palace and who could be taught the language and literature of the Babylonians. The king also appointed for them to eat the best food: meats and cheeses, and delicious fruit and everything which looked good to eat. He did this so that at the end of their three years of training, they would be able to serve him.

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were among those chosen.

But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the [servants] that he might not defile himself. Now God had brought Daniel into the favor and goodwill of the chief of the [servants]. And the chief of the [servants] said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who has appointed your food and drink. For why should he see your faces looking worse than the young men who are your age? Then you would endanger my head before the king."

So Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the [servants] had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, "Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then let our appearance be examined before you, and the appearance

of the young men who eat the portion of the king's delicacies; and as you see fit, so deal with your servants."

So he consented with them in this matter, and tested them ten days.

And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king's delicacies. Thus the steward took away their portion of delicacies and the wine that they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.

As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

Now at the end of the days, when the king had said that they should be brought in, the chief of the [servants] brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. Then the king interviewed them, and among them all none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore they served before the king. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were in all his realm.

Wow. Notice, Daniel and his friends were the *only* ones who chose to fast, and they ended up being the *best* out of all of them. What does this tell us? [Let the kids offer their thoughts]. This tells us something: when I fast, truly offering my life to God, things are going to happen and to change in me.

Firstly, I will overcome sin; I will receive the power from God to overcome my sins. Daniel and his friends were found to be the *best* out of all the young men chosen. What does that mean? It means there was nothing wrong with them; there was no sin in them.

I also grow closer to God when I fast. Daniel was so close to God, that God gave him to be able to understand all dreams and visions.

Also, when we fast, it does not mean that we are going to become weak because we are not eating meat. What happened to Daniel and his friends when they fasted? *And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king's delicacies.* This is a miracle – there is no way that could happen naturally.

WHY IS THE GREAT LENT SO IMPORTANT IN OUR CHURCH?

We fast many times during the year, but let us talk about the Holy Great Lent, which we fast before we celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the Great Lent, we fast the forty days that our Lord Jesus Christ fasted before He started His service (remember that after He was baptized, our Lord was led by the Spirit into the wilderness and spent 40 days and nights without eating or drinking anything). 40 is a special number in the Bible: it is the time of preparation and cleansing. It rained for 40 days and nights during the flood while God cleansed the world. The children of Israel wandered in the desert for 40 years while God cleansed them of their rebellion. Christ fasted for 40 days to prepare for His ministry.

But the Great Lent is 55 days, so what are we missing? The week before is called the preparation week and the last week is Holy Week; in it, we remember the passion of Christ and the salvation on the Cross.

THEMES OF LENT

For each week of Lent, there is a special theme that is reflected in the Bible reading for that Sunday; each theme is meant to guide us to go deeper into our relationship with God.

First Sunday: Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 6:19-33)

- Do not focus on the earthly, but rather on the heavenly
- "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures in earth, where moth or rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Second Sunday: Temptation on the Mount (Matthew 4:1-11)

- The importance of fasting in overcoming temptation and sin
- We are tempted with food (stone to bread), testing God (jump off the temple), and worship idols (worship Satan)
- Are we similarly tempted?

Third Sunday: Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32)

- Confession and repentance, arrogance and humility, and the loving father

Fourth Sunday: Samaritan Woman (John 4:1-42)

- Repentance results in freedom from the slavery of sin
- The love in Christ – He does not condemn or accuse, but encourages and supports

Fifth Sunday: Paralyzed Man at Bethesda (John 5:1-18)

- Illustrates a sinner's helplessness without God (38 years)
- Jesus asks the man if he wants to be healed: He gives us and respects our free will: Christ will forgive when we are willing to repent.

Sixth Sunday: Man Born Blind (John 9:1-38)

- God's glory is revealed – the blind man is a symbol of humanity who are blind to Christ and are in need of illumination from Christ

- Describes the difference between those who see and those who don't (Blind man versus the Pharisees)

Seventh Sunday: Palm Sunday

Lent ends with the Holy Resurrection – one of the greatest pillars of our faith: death itself cannot conquer Christ, and therefore will not conquer those who are His.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO DURING LENT?

Jesus Himself fasted as an example. Fasting is not only abstaining from food but also a road towards spiritual growth. It is an opportunity to build on our personal relationship with God. This is a time of prayer (prayer and fasting always go hand in hand). We must repent as a third part to this combination. We can then lead a life of purity, holiness and peace with our Lord.

Unit III: The Journey of the Holy Lent

Purpose: The study of the Gospel themes of Lent as a journey sanctification that leads us to the holy week.

LESSON 19: OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST LEADS US TO OFFER FASTING TO GOD

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Acts 12:3-19

³And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize Peter also. Now it was during the Days of Unleavened Bread. ⁴So when he had arrested him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four squads of soldiers to keep him, intending to bring him before the people after Passover.

⁵Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church. ⁶And when Herod was about to bring him out, that night Peter was sleeping, bound with two chains between two soldiers; and the guards before the door were keeping the prison. ⁷Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, "Arise quickly!" And his chains fell off his hands. ⁸Then the angel said to him, "Gird yourself and tie on your sandals"; and so he did. And he said to him, "Put on your garment and follow me." ⁹So he went out and followed him, and did not know that what was done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. ¹⁰When they were past the first and the second guard posts, they came to the iron gate that leads to the city, which opened to them of its own accord; and they went out and went down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him.

¹¹And when Peter had come to himself, he said, "Now I know for certain that the Lord has sent His angel, and has delivered me from the hand of Herod and from all the expectation of the Jewish people."

¹²So, when he had considered this, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying. ¹³And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a girl named Rhoda came to answer. ¹⁴When she recognized Peter's voice, because of her gladness she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter stood before the gate. ¹⁵But they said to her, "You are beside yourself!" Yet she kept insisting that it was so. So they said, "It is his angel."

16Now Peter continued knocking; and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished. 17But motioning to them with his hand to keep silent, he declared to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "Go, tell these things to James and to the brethren." And he departed and went to another place.

18Then, as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers about what had become of Peter. 19But when Herod had searched for him and not found him, he examined the guards and commanded that they should be put to death. And he went down from Judea to Caesarea, and stayed there.

CHURCH FATHERS:

St Athanasius:

"Behold my brothers, how much a fast can do, and in what manner the law commands us to fast. It is required that not only with the body should we fast, but with the soul. Now the soul is humbled when it does not follow wicked opinions, but feeds on becoming virtues. For virtues and vices are the food of the soul and it can eat either of these two meats, and incline to either of the two, according to its own will. If it is bent toward virtue, it will be nourished by virtues, by righteousness, by temperance, by meekness and by fortitude. Such was the case with our Lord, Who said, 'My food is to do the will of My Father Who is in heaven' (Jn. 4:34). But if it is not thus with the soul, and it inclines downwards, it is then nourished by nothing but sin."

LESSON PREPARATION:

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW THE IMPORTANCE OF FASTING

Show pictures of gun, sword, and grenade, then picture of Daniel fasting and praying. Ask what is the similarity – all are weapons. Fasting is a weapon against the darkness and against sin and temptations. God gave us the powerful weapons of prayer and fasting, they go hand in hand.

Review what physical fasting means.

LESSON BODY:

WHY DO WE FAST?

Does God NEED our fasting? What would God benefit from the offering of anything?

We fast to show God our love

- To overcome temptation and sin
- To weaken the body and elevate the soul
- To raise our spiritual awareness

THE POWER OF FASTING: ST PETER FREED FROM PRISON

³And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize Peter also. Now it was during the Days of Unleavened Bread. ⁴So when he had arrested him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four squads of soldiers to keep him, intending to bring him before the people after Passover.

⁵Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church. ⁶And when Herod was about to bring him out, that night Peter was sleeping, bound with two chains between two soldiers; and the guards before the door were keeping the prison. ⁷Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, "Arise quickly!" And his chains fell off his hands. ⁸Then the angel said to him, "Gird yourself and tie on your sandals"; and so he did. And he said to him, "Put on your garment and follow me." ⁹So he went out and followed him, and did not know that what was done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. ¹⁰When they were past the first and the second guard posts, they came to the iron gate that leads to the city, which opened to them of its own accord; and they went out and went down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him.

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¹²So, when he had considered this, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying. ¹³And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a girl named Rhoda came to answer. ¹⁴When she recognized Peter's voice, because of her gladness she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter stood before the gate. ¹⁵But they said to her, "You are beside yourself!" Yet she kept insisting that it was so. So they said, "It is his angel."

¹⁶Now Peter continued knocking; and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished. ¹⁷But motioning to them with his hand to keep silent, he declared to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "Go, tell these things to James and to the brethren." And he departed and went to another place.

¹⁸Then, as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers about what had become of Peter. ¹⁹But when Herod had searched for him and not found him, he examined the guards and commanded that they should be put to death.

And he went down from Judea to Caesarea, and stayed there.

FASTING ISN'T JUST ABOUT FOOD

Would it mean anything if we fast from certain food but spend our days lying, cursing, and doing wrong things? What is there to gain from that?

Saint John Chrysostom said, “Do you fast? Give me proof of it by your works. If you see a poor man, take pity on him. If you see an enemy, be reconciled with him. If you see a friend gaining honor, do not be jealous of him. And let not only the mouth fast, but also the eye and the ear and the feet and the hands and all members of your bodies.” What do you think that means? [Let the kids give their answers].

Our Lord said, *Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.* (Matthew 6:16-18)

What do you think that means, “and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly”? How does God reward us openly? [Tell them that you will leave this question for them to think about in their own lives. Do not answer it for them].

FRACTION OF HOLY LENT

Discuss (briefly) the fraction of Holy Lent to show the importance of fasting & prayer.

Unit III: The Journey of the Holy Lent

Purpose: The study of the Gospel themes of Lent as a journey sanctification that leads us to the holy week.

LESSON 20: THE POWER OF FASTING

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

1 Kings 19:1-9

And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, also how he had executed all the prophets with the sword. ²Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time." ³And when he saw that, he arose and ran for his life, and went to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.

⁴But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he prayed that he might die, and said, "It is enough! Now, LORD, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers!"

⁵Then as he lay and slept under a broom tree, suddenly an angel touched him, and said to him, "Arise and eat." ⁶Then he looked, and there by his head was a cake baked on coals, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank, and lay down again.

⁷And the angel of the LORD came back the second time, and touched him, and said, "Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for you." ⁸So he arose, and ate and drank; and he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights as far as Horeb, the mountain of God.

⁹And there he went into a cave, and spent the night in that place; and behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and He said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

LESSON PREPARATION:

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

LESSON BODY:

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

-

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS:

Unit III: The Journey of the Holy Lent

Purpose: The study of the Gospel themes of Lent as a journey sanctification that leads us to the holy week.

LESSON 21: WE GIVE GLADLY

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Matthew 6:1-4

"Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. ²Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. ³But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.

James 1:17

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning."

2 Corinthians 9:1-15

Now concerning the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you; ²for I know your willingness, about which I boast of you to the Macedonians, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal has stirred up the majority. ³Yet I have sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this respect, that, as I said, you may be ready; ⁴lest if some Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we (not to mention you!) should be ashamed of this confident boasting. ⁵Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren to go to you ahead of time, and prepare your generous gift beforehand, which you had previously promised, that it may be ready as a matter of generosity and not as a grudging obligation. ⁶But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of

necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. ⁹As it is written:

"He has dispersed abroad,

He has given to the poor;

His righteousness endures forever."

¹⁰Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness, ¹¹while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God. ¹²For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God, ¹³while, through the proof of this ministry, they glorify God for the obedience of your confession to the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal sharing with them and all men, ¹⁴and by their prayer for you, who long for you because of the exceeding grace of God in you. ¹⁵Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!

The Twenty Fifth Day Of The Blessed Month Of Bashans

1. *The Martyrdom of St. Colluthus of Antinoe (Known as Abu Colta).*

2. *The Departure of the most honored Layman Ibrahim El-Gohari.*

2. On this day also of the year 1511 A.M. (1795 A.D.), the great layman Ibrahim El-Gohari, departed. He was born in the eighteenth century, and his parents were poor. His father's name was Yousef El-Gohari whose trade was making clothing in Kalube. They taught him writing and arithmetic, and he excelled in them. He used to transcribe the religion books, and distribute them to the church at his own expense. He brought the books to Pope John (Youhanna) the Eighteenth, and 107th patriarch of Alexandria Who was enthroned from 1486-1512 A.M. (1769-1796 A.D.) The many books presented to the church by Ibrahim El-Gohari got the attention of the pope, together with the high cost of transcribing the books and binding them. The pope asked Ibrahim about his resource, and Ibrahim revealed to them his zealously and his godly life. The pope blessed him saying:"may the Lord uplift your name and bless your work, and keep your memory forever." The relation between Ibrahim El-Gohari and the pope became stronger from that time.

When he started to work, Ibrahim was a scribe to one of the mamalik- The pope mediated with Moalem Rizk the chief scribe, and he took him as his private scribe. He continued in his position until the end of Ali Bek El-Kebir when Mohammed Abu- El-Daheb became the governor, and Ibrahim El-Gohari became the chief scribe of all of egypt, a position which is equal to prime minister today.

Ibrahim El-Gohari became more humble, generous, and charitable. He attracted to him the hearts of all the people. Ibrahim then married a righteous woman who shared with him his good nature and character. She helped him in his charitable deeds, and encouraged him to build and maintain

churches. A son was born to them whom they called Joseph, and a daughter whom they called Demiana. They lived in a place called "Kantaret-ElDekka".

When his son grew up, his father prepared for him a private home furnished with the best of furniture, and prepared for his wedding day. But God chose that his son be with him before his marriage, and Ibrahim was greatly grieved. He then closed the home, and it remained closed.

The death of his son was the most shocking event in his life, but his desire to help the widows, the orphans and the poor intensely increased. Everyone was so astonished for his endurance, patience, and his great control over his disappointment. When his wife resented the will of God, St. Anthony the great appeared to her in a dream, and comforted her saying, "you must know that God loved your son, and he took him in his youth, and he loves his father for a reason, to keep his name pure, for the popularity of his father might have caused his son to shame him and ruin his reputation. This is a reward from God to your husband for his godliness and his righteousness. Be comforted, and continue in your good deeds." St. Anthony also appeared to Ibrahim El-Gohari, and he comforted him and strengthened his faith. When his wife rose up, and told her husband about her dream, he told her that he also saw the same dream that same night. They surrendered their will to God, and they changed their mourning clothes, and put on regular clothes. Their hearts were filled with comfort, and continued in their good and charitable deeds. Their Daughter Demiana also died shortly afterwards and she was a young virgin.

Ibrahim El-Gohari remained in his office until a coup occurred which forced Ibrahim Bek and Murad Bek together with Ibrahim El-Gohari to flee to upper Egypt. The new Governor Hasan Qubtan persecuted the Copts and forbade them to ride horses with saddles, and forbade them to use Muslims as servants in their homes, and did not allow them to buy slaves. The Copts responded by hiding in their homes and not leaving for many days. He also ordered to have an account of the endowments that Ibrahim El-Gohari's wife hid herself in a Muslim home to which she had made great favors. But some of those who did not honor his favors, betrayed him by telling his wife was hiding. The governor forced her to tell him about the places they hid their possessions, and they confiscated all the silver and gold utensils and their horses saddles, and sold them for low prices. Some also guided the governor to the house of his son which was looked after his death, and they also confiscated all its contents of furniture, and took them many days to sell them for they were plenty. The governor was called back to Istanbul, and Ibrahim Bek and Mourad Bek returned to Cairo on August 7, 1791 A.D. and Ibrahim El-Gohari returned to his former position, but he did not continue for more than four years, and he was loved by everyone.

The people called Ibrahim El-Gohari the "The Sultan of the Copts" as it is indicated on the iconostasis of one of the churches in the monastery of St. Paula in the eastern desert, and also in the "Katamares" kept in the same monastery.

The famous historian El-Gabarty said about him: "He had made Egypt great by his capability which endured for long time. He was one of the great world statesmen with a great decisive mind.

He treated everyone according to their abilities, and did things that attracted the hearts and the love of the people to him. In Ramadan, he used to send gifts to prominent and non-prominent Muslims. In his days, many churches and monasteries were built and maintained, and many endowments of the best of land were given, with the necessary provisions and salaries.

Anba Yousab the bishop of Girga and Ekhmim said about him: "He was one of the great people of his day, who was God-loving, giving all his possessions to the poor, and caring about the construction of churches. He loved all people of different religions, making peace with all, filling all the needs of everyone without prejudice."

His religious work is as follows: Ibrahim El-Gohari was famous for his love of the construction of churches and monasteries, and repairing what was destroyed by the evil hands. Because of his influential position in the government, and his great favor to the moslem rulers, he was able to issue regulations (Fatawi) to permit Copts to rebuild the destroyed churches and monasteries. He also donated many endowment of good land and money for the reconstruction, that amounted to 238 endowments as documented in the patriarchate.

He was also popular for the trans-scrubbing of rare books, and giving them as gifts to the churches and monasteries.

He was the first to build St. Mark cathedral in El-Azbakiya. The Copts were not allowed to build new churches or to repair the old ones, unless they get permission from the government, which were rarely granted.

One of the princesses came from Istanbul (Estana) on a pilgrimage to Mecca passing by Egypt, Ibrahim El-Gohari made everything possible to her comfort during her stay, and offered her many gifts. She wanted to reward him, and he asked her to get an order from the Sultan (Faraman) to permit the construction of a church in El-Azbakiya where he lived, and asked her about some other things needed by the Copts. The Sultan issued the permit, but he died before the construction of the church, and his brother Girgis El-Gohari completed it.

In order that the time of prayers be maintained in the church of the Virgin in Haret-Zoweila, he built a small church after the name of St. Mercurius (Abu-Saifain) beside it. This allowed him and the government Christian employees to attend the services and return to their work as the government allowed.

He also prepared the materials for the oil of Chrism (Myroun) from his own money, and his brother Girgis carried them to the Pope.

In 1499 A.M. (1783 A.D.), Ibrahim El-Gohari built all the northern wall of St. Antonios monastery, and built a water wheel. He built before that the southern and the western walls in 1498 A.M. The wall is known until today as El-Gohari's wall. He also renovated the building of the church of the Virgin in Haret El-Roum in 1508 A.M. (1792 A.D.). He also built the church of Abu Saifain in the monastery of St. Paula in the Eastern desert, and in the monastery of El-Baramouse, he built the church of Sts. Apollo and Abib (The church was demolished in 1881 A.D. to enlarge the church of St. John). He also built palaces to the Lady Virgin in El-Baramouse and the Syrian monastery. He also built an extension to the southern end of the monastery of El-Baramouse, with a wall around it, and the extension was about 2400 square meter.

In summary, he built and maintained many churches and monasteries. He took care of the monks, and offered many offerings, candles, oil, veils, and church books to all the churches of Egypt. He also distributed charities among the poor and the needy everywhere, and gave them food and clothing. He gave special attention to widows and the orphans who had no one to help them, and provided monthly provisions for all their needs. his deeds were made known in his funeral eulogy by Pope Youannis, the 107th Patriarch. He departed to his eternal home on Monday the 25th of Bashans, 1511 A.M. (May 31st, 1795 A.D.) Everyone grieved his departure

including the governor Ibrahim Bek who walked in his funeral procession to honor him as he had honored him before his death. Pope Youannis eulogized him for his great love to him. He was buried in the private tomb that he built for himself beside the church of St. George in Old Cairo which had an oil lamp that was lit day and night. He died without leaving a posterity, but his memory lives forever.

The society for the revival of the Coptic churches in Cairo took action to renovate his tomb in Old Cairo, and it has become a tourist attraction to all those who have heard about Ibrahim and his brother Girgis El-Gohari.

The biography of his brother Girgis is under the 17th day of the month of Tute. He departed on the 17th of Tute, 1557 A.M. (September 27th., 1810 A.D.)

May their prayers be with us, and glory be to God forever. Amen.

INTRODUCTION:

REVIEW PREVIOUS LESSONS:

Review the Weeks of Lent

1. Pre-Lent Sunday
2. Treasure of Heaven
3. Prodigal Son
4. Samaritan Woman
5. Paralyzed Man
6. Man Born Blind
7. Palm Sunday
8. Easter Sunday!

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

INTRODUCTION GAME:

Puzzle game- we have been discussing the importance of giving and today we'll see that when we give we help the community together and we build a foundation for the church. Whenever

you answer a question correctly, I'll give you a piece of a puzzle and at the end we'll see why it's important

CONNECTION POINT:

LESSON BODY:

Remind the kids of the saint of the class, St. Abraam

GIVE, GIVE, GIVE, GIVE

Give generously

Give enthusiastically

Give willingly

Give in secret

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO GIVE?

Ask the kids what it means to give? What are different ways we can give to each other? Yes we can give money, clothes, food; but we can also spend time with a friend, help someone, visit the sick, visit the lonely, talk to someone who is upset etc.

THE ULTIMATE EXAMPLE OF GIVING

Ask the kids what is the ULTIMATE example of giving? We talked about a lot of saints, but there is one example I am thinking of. Jesus Christ. How did he give?

- By dying on the cross for us? Yes this was a huge sacrifice! but that wasn't the first way he gave...
- By being born in a manger? Yes, He is a KING and he was born in a stable....but that wasn't the first way
- The first way he gave was by coming down to earth to live like us in order to save us. He left the glory of heaven for earth

IT'S IMPORTANT FOR US TO GIVE

During lent we are to reflect on our lives. We must give ourselves to God and to others, and if we give ourselves to God then we have no problem giving our offerings to God. He gave Himself to us so we should give ourselves to Him, no?

We should also be sure to act on our desire to give. It's not just the thought that counts. St James said *What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works/ can that faith save him?* James 2:14. We cannot just say we believe in God but not do the things that show that we believe in Him. We can't just say we'll give this and that and not do it.

Giving also shows that we love one another. St John said *By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers....Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth* John. 3-16-18

God will always give you what you need. Who can think of an example we talked about this year? The Israelites and the manna! Those who took more than what they needed found that the manna rotted. And no one was ever left hungry. When you take more than you need, you spoil your blessings.

God has given us all talents and we must use these talents to help each other and give to one another. For example, think of a baseball game (explain the game and the rules to those who don't know). When you get the ball, are you going to keep it for yourself? Or will you throw it to who you need to? Do you wonder whose ball it is and where it came from?

God will reward you and multiply your blessings. Show the kids a piece of paper - this paper has four corners. But if I cut a corner here and give it to you, it now has 5 corners. And if I cut another corner here and give it to you, it now has 6 corners...(keep going with this example).

EXAMPLES OF SAINTS: STORY OF IBRAHIM EL-GOHARI

Tell the story of Ibrahim El-Gohari

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- **A puzzle**
- **Piece of paper**
- **Scissors**

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

Corinthians 9:7

“So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver”

CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS:

Unit III

Purpose:

LESSON 22: HOLY WEEK: PART 1

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

CHURCH FATHERS:

REFLECTION:

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

Epouro of the holy week conclusion

LESSON BODY:

WHAT IS HOLY WEEK?

Holy Week, or Pascha, is the week before Easter - Jesus Christ's resurrection from the dead. The last week of our Lord's ministry including: His suffering, death & resurrection. It is the fulfillment of all prophecies.

What is Pascha? It literally means "passing over"

Where did we get this term from? It is a reminder for when the angel of death passed over the Israelites during the 10th plague and did not kill them.

So with Jesus, in Him and through Him, we passed over death to eternal life. Jesus came to conquer death for us so that we may live eternally with him.

We're going to review the days of Holy Week today. We'll start with the Saturday before Palm Sunday.

LAZARUS SATURDAY

Lazarus Saturday: It is the last big and public miracle the Lord performed before His last journey to Jerusalem. Jesus gave life back to Lazarus at Bethany. How long was Lazarus dead for?

When does Palm Sunday begin? It actually begins Saturday night during the vespers when the church gives us palms to celebrate the next day

PALM SUNDAY

Palm Sunday: Christ entered into Jerusalem riding on a donkey and people laid clothes and palm branches. Do you know what they were shouting? "Hosanna King of David, Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord"

Jesus is a king but not of this world. We'll talk much more about Palm Sunday next week.

Sunday Night: Cleansed the temple When the Lord entered into the temple, He drove out those who were buying and selling.

Who remembers what happened Holy Monday?

HOLY MONDAY

Jesus cursed the Fig tree. On the way from Bethany to the temple He cursed the fig tree because it had nothing but leaves –

- (1) it immediately dies because it is fruitless. It is a warning to us of what will happen to those who do not follow and listen to Christ.
- (2) It is also a symbol of hypocrisy: usually when a tree has a lot of leaves, it should also have fruit with it. but this tree had just leaves and no fruit – it was showing off, pretending to be something it wasn't

Teaches us to have faith in God: as soon as Christ cursed it, it withered away and the disciples were shocked. Jesus told the disciples that if they have faith, whatever you ask when you pray, you will receive

HOLY TUESDAY

Jesus is tested by many people and He is able to answer each one of them while talking to us about Salvation, Resurrection of the dead, and the Kingdom of God. They eventually have nothing else to test Him on - He is asked what the greatest commandment is and gives us: "you have only one God, love Him with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength and love your neighbor as yourself"

He uses parables to teach them about salvation that comes through Christ Jesus

He gives a lot of warnings about the end of time & used many parables to explain the Kingdom of God and the end of ages to them

Jesus reveals the day of His crucifixion

HOLY WEDNESDAY

2 important events happen on Holy Wednesday

Wednesday Morning: Mary anoints Jesus' Holy head: she uses expensive oil, Jesus says she anointed Him for His burial, Judas (disciples) see this as a waste of \$ but Jesus corrects them. There will be a memorial to this woman wherever the Gospel is preached She gave Jesus something very special, it was something from the depth of her heart. We don't have to spend a lot of money to truly give to Christ from our hearts, as long as we give Him something that means something to us. It can be anything at all, including money, time, acts of service... "whatever you do to the least of these you are doing to Me."

Judas Betrayal: Judas Iscariot went to the chief priest to discuss how to hand the Lord Jesus to them. For 30 pieces of silver. The Bible emphasizes that Judas was "one of the twelve" - he was close to Jesus, emphasizes the depth of the betrayal. In contrast to the woman from the morning who spent a lot of money to anoint Jesus. Reason we fast on Wednesday's - we, like Judas, betray Christ every time we sin

HOLY THURSDAY

Prepares for the Last Supper/Passover: Jesus told two disciples, Peter and John, to go into the village and follow a man carrying a pitcher of water to the house and there they will be lead to the an upper room to prepare the passover meal

Last Supper: what was the first thing Jesus did at the start of the Last Supper? Jesus starts by washing the feet of the disciples - shows LOVE and HUMILITY. act done by servants and he commands His disciples to wash each others feet - those who serve are greater than those who sit at the table. We can do acts of service all around, by helping others in Church, cleaning up around us, taking care of one another - loving one another.

The Lord teaches us that before partaking of the new sacrament, washing or repentance should be preceded: St. Peter said "You shall never wash my feet" and Jesus responded and said "if I do not wash you, you have no part in Me." but Jesus would not wash all of St. Peter, just his feet. Likewise we are not re-baptized every time we confess.

Jesus knows that one there will betray Him

Jesus Instituted the Eucharist: *And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."*

Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

THURSDAY NIGHT

The church reads the chapters of the Holy Spirit (John 14-17) on the 1st hour of Friday Eve. The Holy Spirit is described as the Helper and the Spirit of Truth. Christ promises the disciples the Holy Spirit will come after He leaves them to help guide them and bring many to Him.

Suffering in the Garden of Gesthamane: After they were done eating, Jesus took the disciples and went to the garden. Jesus took Peter, James and John a little farther than the rest, told them to keep watch "lest they fall into temptation" - but the fell asleep do to our week flesh, 3 times He went and prayed and every time He came back and found them sleeping.

Christ went alone and prayed one of the best examples of prayer, - "*O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless not as I will, but as You will*" (Matt 26:39) - completely submits His will to the Father's

He was sent help - an angel came to strengthen Him, it is important to remember that Christ, while fully divine, was also fully human and was going through this much pain as a human

Christ prayed so earnestly that he was sweating blood, was in agony as a human

Arrest and Examination by Annas: They came to arrest Him with a "great multitude with swords and clubs" (Matt 26: 47) with Judas leading them. Judas betrayed Christ with a kiss, Jesus knows he is betraying Him and still calls him friend saying "Friend, why have you come?" (Matt 26:50) giving Judas even to the very last moment to repent

Simon Peter pulled out a sword and cut the ear off one of the soldiers, but Jesus corrects him saying "Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?" (Matt 26:52-54) 12 legions = 72,000 angels - Jesus went willingly to His death and resurrection in order to save us! He was in control of His death every single moment

Annas, the previous high priest is the first to question Jesus. Jesus was very open about His teachings, and asks him why he doesn't ask those who heard His teachings instead. Jesus here receives the first kind of physical abuse for talking back, although He did nothing wrong.

GREAT FRIDAY

The church is clothed in black till the 12th hour on Fri, when the alter veil is opened indicating the reconciliation with the Father.

On Good Friday we go hour by hour with Christ during his crucifixion.

1st hour: Who knows what happened during the 1st hour? The high priest and the scribes bound Jesus and delivered Him to the governor Pontius Pilate. The governor Pilate delivered Him to Herod. Herod and his men mocked Jesus, scourged Him, accused Him and sent him back to Pilate. Because of this, Pilate and Herod – who were not friends – became friends

3rd hour: In this hour Jesus was scourged, the soldiers made a crown of thorns and put it on his head and put on him a purple robe.

6th hour: The Hour of the Cross. Jesus is placed on the cross and darkness covered all the land for the next 3 hours. Remember this is called Pascha week, a reflection of the Passover in the Old Testament. What was the second to last plague? It was darkness - came as a warning to the Egyptians that the next plague was the last and biggest of them all. It was death of the first born, however the Israelites were saved. As Christ is the only begotten of the Father, through His death we are saved.

The Right Hand Thief: *“Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong.” Then he said to Jesus, “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.” And Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.”*

9th Hour: Jesus Dies. *It is finished.* The prophecies said not a bone of Jesus’ body would be broken. Usually they would break the legs of those crucified to speed up the dying process. But Jesus, in control of the whole process, died without his legs being broken – shows He voluntarily gave up His spirit.

Pierced His side: They pierced His side and out came what? Blood and WATER = Holy Spirit

11th and 12th Hours: Jesus Body is taken down from the Cross and the Burial - Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus took the body of Jesus, wound it in linen with spices, as the manner of Jews to bury and laid him in a new tomb.

BRIGHT SATURDAY

Christ’s body lays in the Tomb

Christ Himself went down to Hades, to free all those who were waiting for Him, took them and opened back the door of paradise.

You have conquered death, and humiliated Satan with your power. Holy Immortal have mercy on us.

GLORIOUS RESURRECTION

Visits to the Tomb

Christ appears to:

Mary Magdelene -

Disciples of Emmaus -

The Apostles –

CHURCH SERVICES

Services are arranged to follow 1st, 3rd, 6th, 9th and 11th hours Eve and day. Following Jesus' parable on the workers, Mathew 20: 1-16. Also the Agpeya book. Each hour starts with:

1. Our Father.
2. The Prophecy.
3. Doxology (Praising) of the Pascha.
4. The Psalm and the Gospel.
5. The exposition, an elaboration on the gospel.
6. The conclusion of the hours. (The litanies)

The veil of the alter is closed and the Service is held in the church main hall (outer Chorus) to point out that Jesus was taken outside Jerusalem to be crucified

How to benefit?

- Prepare your mind by going over the main theme of the day before you leave your house. Know the theme of each day, or the subject, the readings go around.
- During the lengthy melody of the psalm try to meditate on the link between the prophecies the bible, the psalms of the day. Study the messages of the prophets, psalms, and gospel
- Use your imagination actively so each hour you are picturing what Christ and the disciples went through. Listen to what Christ is teaching us, it is very relevant to our lives today!

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

-

CONCLUSION:

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

Matthew 26: 40-41

Could you not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation.

CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS:

Unit III: The Journey of the Holy Lent

Purpose: The study of the Gospel themes of Lent as a journey sanctification that leads us to the holy week.

LESSON 23: HOLY WEEK: PART 2

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Matthew 21:1-17

Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, ²saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to Me. ³And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, "The Lord has need of them," and immediately he will send them."

⁴All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying:

⁵"Tell the daughter of Zion,

"Behold, your King is coming to you,

Lowly, and sitting on a donkey,

A colt, the foal of a donkey."

⁶So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them. ⁷They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him on them. ⁸And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

⁹Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying:

"Hosanna to the Son of David!

"Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!"

Hosanna in the highest!"

¹⁰And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, "Who is this?"

¹¹So the multitudes said, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee."

¹²Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. ¹³And He said to them, "It is written, "My house shall be called a house of prayer," but you have made it a "den of thieves."

¹⁴Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. ¹⁵But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the

temple and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant ¹⁶and said to Him, "Do You hear what these are saying?"

And Jesus said to them, "Yes. Have you never read,

"Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants

You have perfected praise'?"

¹⁷Then He left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and He lodged there.

CHURCH FATHERS:

REFLECTION:

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

Epouro

VOCABULARY:

Hosanna

OBJECTIVES

Faith:	
Liturgical:	
Moral:	
Spiritual:	

INTRODUCTION:

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

CONNECTION POINT:

LESSON BODY:

WHAT HAPPENED ON PALM SUNDAY?

Everything that happened was according to prophecy.

Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to Me. And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them."

They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him on them. And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road. Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying:

"Hosanna to the Son of David!

"Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!"

Hosanna in the highest!"

Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. And He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'"

Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David!"

WHAT DOES HOSANNA MEAN?

"Hosanna" is an Aramaic word meaning "save us"

At the time, the Jews expected an earthly king to come and save them

THE SUNDAY LITURGY: THE PROCESSION

The Service is prayed as usual, in the annual tune.

The verses for the feast are added to the Verses of the Cymbals

The Doxology for the feast is chanted before the Doxology of St. Mary

The priest prays Efnooti nai nan and the congregation responds with kerie Leison in the long tune.

They then carry the Icon of Christ's Entry into Jerusalem along with the palms and olive branches and proceed around the Church three times while chanting Evlogimenos.

The Litany of the first Gospel is prayed and the Psalm and Gospel are read quickly.

The Gospel responses are chanted after every one of the 12 gospel.

At the end of the Procession, the Litany of the Matins Gospel is prayed and the Psalm is chanted in the festive (Singary) tune.

A Procession is done when in the presence of someone, either Christ or the Saints

Eulogimenoc

Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord; again in the Name of the Lord.

Hosanna to the Son of David; again to the Son of David.

Hosanna in the highest; again in the highest.

Hosanna to the King of Israel; again to the King of Israel .

Let us praise saying: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia. Glory be to our God, and glory be to our God.

The priest raises incense before the sanctuary and the icons and they go around the church before the saints' icons and say the chapters relevant to the procession.

This procession is performed 3 times a year, twice in the feast of the Cross and once in the Matin of Palm Sunday as a memory to the believers that as Christ carried the Cross, also the Saints carried the Cross in their lives until they were crowned with crowns of victory and as they suffered with their beloved, they were also glorified with Him.

Gospel Response after each one – including one piece of each doxology

1. Front of the Altar (Heavenly hosts)
2. St. Mary
3. Archangel Gabriel – announcer of good news
4. Archangel Michael (must bring it)
5. St. Mark
6. The Apostles
7. St. George – represents martyrs
8. St. Anthony (must bring it) – represents saints
9. Northern Gate
10. The Baptismal Font
11. The Southern Gate (read by priest)
12. St. John the Baptist – represents Humanity

**whatever deacon comes has a chance to read a gospel

TAKE HOME MESSAGE

St. Augustine emphasized this point when he says, "For Christ was not the king of Israel so that he might exact a tax or equip an army with weaponry and visibly vanquish an enemy. He was the king in that he rules minds, in that he gives counsel for eternity, in that he leads into the kingdom of heaven, for those who believe, hope and love.

Christ our Lord comes to us today in complete gentleness and humility waiting for us to accept Him to enter our Jerusalem. That is why He says, "Behold I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and OPENS THE DOOR, I will come in to him..." (Rev. 3:20).

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

-

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS:

Fifth Grade Curriculum:

God called Us to be Holy

UNIT IV: THE BEATITUDES (10 LESSONS)

Purpose: The person always has a feeling of sadness and hunger inside him, he is always looking for something to satisfy the feelings of satisfaction and hunger by earthly things. You lose focus/separate from God when you only look at the earthly materials, which is why we're not satisfied and we're sad. When I direct my need to God, that's how I start to feel satisfied. Blessed are you when you feel your sadness. Ask the kids to describe the best days of their lives, they were happy. After that day passed, what happened? Nothing changed, you're back where you started. When we connect to God is when we're changed

Example: 2yr old/5 yr old: the best thing that makes him happy is like going to Chuck E Cheese. What if you, as a 5th grader went there? When you grow up, your satisfaction changes. What satisfied me when I was 5 doesn't satisfy me in 5th grade or when I'm 20. This tells me that the earthly things don't satisfy me at all.

The point of these beatitudes is to change the perspective e.g. How happy you'll be if you're hunger and thirsty for righteousness. Righteousness means nobility, wise, ideal. When you're looking for these things, you'll get them from the inside. The world is corrupt so you must seek these things and God will give these to you and then you become a light. The circumstances are dark for Christians so you become the light. Changing the perspective of the Israelites who thought they were blessed if they were rich, were healthy etc. Jesus if following the theme but completely changing the concepts

The Sermon on the Mount: Salt and the light is the image of God. Jesus always talks about God as light. Who is God? He's the one who takes care of the sparrows and lilies, He takes care of me - from the image of God we can see that He's caring and a giver. When we act out the beatitudes we're taking on God's image. We're not giving God anything, we're taking on His image. God isn't taking out our freedom or our happiness, He's giving me a blessing. "Seek out the Kingdom of God and . . ." Matthew 6:31 - I seek out the Father because He likes to give

Lesson 24: Introduction

Lesson 25: Blessed are the Poor in Spirit

Lesson 26: Blessed are those who Mourn

Lesson 27: Blessed are the Meek

Lesson 28: Blessed are those who Hunger & Thirst for Righteousness

Lesson 29: Blessed are the Merciful

Lesson 30: Blessed are the Pure in Heart

Lesson 31: Blessed are the Peacemakers

Lesson 32: Persecuted & House on the Rock

Lesson 33: Unit Review

Unit IV

Purpose:

LESSON 24: INTRODUCTION

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

CREED:

CHURCH FATHERS:

REFLECTION:

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

I wanna be like Jesus think like Jesus do
what He will do in every way ever where every day ...
I wanna be like Jesus so that Jesus will be seen in me
Father help me be like Jesus
I wanna be like Jesus, think like Jesus, do what He will do
in every way ever where every day ...love shine through
I wanna be like Jesus so that Jesus may be seen in me
Father help me be like Jesus

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iJ0llutCHL4>

VOCABULARY:

Beatitude

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

CONNECTION POINT:

LESSON BODY:

ACTIVITY

Begin with the activity: give each kid seven pieces of paper with a picture of (1) Christ (2) Friends (3) House (4) Phone (5) Your favorite TV Show (6) Your favorite video game (7) Your favorite dish.

Ask each kid to give up two things (they can't give up Christ)

Begin to take those things one by one.

This is the last season for the TV show (ask them to throw away that paper).

They developed an allergy and they can't eat their favorite food any more.

A powerful computer virus hit all electronics and destroyed both your video game and phone.

Your dad had to change jobs and you need to move to another state, you need to give up your house and best friend.

TRUE HAPPINESS

Explain the moral behind the activity is that a lot of things that we think give us happiness are temporarily and can change. The only source of happiness that we can never lose is God. God gives us true happiness that lasts forever. Jesus showed us how to find this true happiness by living in love and hope.

God loves us so much to the extent that he sent His only Son who died and suffered for us so that we have an eternal life. He wants us to be happy because he loves us so much. Do you think Jesus was happy when He lived on earth? He was the happiest person in the world because #1- He loved God and #2-He always did what pleased His Father.

Jesus was happy in loving people. He helped them, forgave them, gave them peace. We will be happy if we also help people, forgive people and bring them peace. Ask the children to think of ways that they can do these things. Jesus was also very happy even though He was not rich. He worked hard as a carpenter, but He knew that God His Father loved Him and was taking care of Him, so He was *satisfied*. y, Jesus was happy even though He knew He would suffer. Why? Because He trusted that God His Father would bring good from His sufferings. Also, because He knew that He was suffering for what was right and He was happy to be able to show His love for His Father by His suffering. Sometimes we, like Jesus, will have to suffer for what is right, but this can also bring us happiness.

If God loves the human so much and wants them to be happy, why many people are not happy, even some Christians? Jesus taught us the way to obtain this happiness he granted us, it is how we can obtain the true happiness that Jesus felt. There is a special name for Jesus' way of happiness: the Beatitudes. **Beatitude** means "deep happiness or blessing." There are 8 of them. Jesus gave us the Beatitudes in His Sermon on the Mount. It is called this because there were many people listening to Him and He was standing on a mountain. The Holy Spirit does not leave us alone when we try to do this; He comes and comforts us and gives us strength to do the Beatitudes.

This happiness is a lifestyle change, we are changing our ways to become more like God.

THE BEATITUDES ARE A CODE OF LIVING

The Beatitudes are about the code of living: start with picture of royal family, soldiers/military- any discipline: anything in the world that makes sense must be disciplined, have to be prepared to think in a different way. For example, doctors have to study for 12 years (college, med school and residency) and then once they become doctors, they can't drink or do drugs. Entering into a discipline like this affects everything, how you work your mind, what you think about.

Different areas of our life are targeted for different disciplining e.g. athletes = body; astronauts = mind; God = heart. In all these disciplines, it starts by seeming out of ordinary, it's not easy coming. What happens when athlete finishes marathon, king is crowned, astro goes out in space → it makes it worth it. Narrow gate – it's a hard way but there's a reward. The reward for God's discipline (the Beatitudes) is eternal happiness that will never be taken away.

Materialistic things that give us instant gratification, such as bugging parents to get things you want, after 1 week its lost its luster. If you work for being a good athlete, or a queen the pleasure will last longer. The happiness that comes from instant gratification dies instantly: easy

come easy go; harder come harder go; hardest come, never leaves. Discipline that comes from beatitudes is everlasting – these are the characteristics of God

READ THE BEATITUDES

Read the Beatitudes with the kids from the Bible - and they should know it's the 6th hour Agpeya - it's in Matthew 5, it's the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount, the Sermon on the Mount is the Christian way of life, it's the law we live by, the beginning of it is the beatitudes

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- **Paper with pictures**

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Unit IV

Purpose:

LESSON 25: BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

CREED:

CHURCH FATHERS:

REFLECTION:

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What does "beatitude" mean?

A. Blessedness, how happy you will be

Q. How many beatitudes are there?

A. Eight total

Q. Where can we find the Beatitudes in the Bible?

A. Matthew 5: 3-10

Q. Why are they important?

A. They are guidelines Christ is giving us to inherit eternal life and happiness as His children

Just like anything worth being, such as a successful athlete, a musician, a doctor, etc. it takes practice all the time, but is worth it when you finish. It's not like a videogame or TV, which is nice for a little, but can get boring or can be lost as we showed last week.

REVIEW THE BEATITUDES

¹Blessed *are* the poor in spirit,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴Blessed *are* those who mourn,
For they shall be comforted.

⁵Blessed *are* the meek,
For they shall inherit the earth. Blessed *are* those who hunger and thirst
for righteousness,
For they shall be filled.

⁷Blessed *are* the merciful,
For they shall obtain mercy.

⁸Blessed *are* the pure in heart,
For they shall see God.

⁹Blessed *are* the peacemakers,
For they shall be called sons of God.

¹⁰Blessed *are* those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

CONNECTION POINT:

LESSON BODY:

THE FIRST BEATITUDE: POOR IN SPIRIT

Ask the kids if they know the first Beatitude. Read it with them: Blessed are the Poor in Spirit. Ask the kids if they know the reward? For theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven

Today we'll be talking about this Beatitude. What does it mean to be poor in spirit? What are some examples of people who are poor in spirit? And what is the reward of those who are poor in spirit?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE POOR IN SPIRIT? ST. ANNA SIMON

Ask the kids if they know what it means to be poor in spirit. Once they give a few guesses (usually about being materially poor). Tell them the story of St. Anna Simon to help them understand what it means.

She was the daughter of a rich king and queen. She was so wealthy and she loved the poor. Her parents were righteous people and they taught her to fear the Lord and loved the church. She would have gatherings at her house once a week and serve dinner to the poor.

Her parents passed away and she was to be the queen and rule over the land. What do you think she did? Did she dance around and sing "oh ya...I'm queen! I rule! I'm awesome! I have so much money and power! Oh ya! I'm queen! She did not want to do this so she left everything and went to the desert...can you imagine leaving your throne, your home, food, power, riches...this girl had everything and she left it.

There is one little detail about St. Anna Simon that she is known for. Does anyone know it?? She left the doors of her castle open!! She did not care at all about her worldly riches. She went to the desert and there were many wild beasts there. They used to take her to where there was water for her to drink and something for her to eat.

She always prayed to the Lord. She desired to feel the humiliation and insults that our Lord experienced. She decided to go to a convent with nuns but she knew that if she acted normal, they would respect her. So what did she do?? She acted like an idiot. She used to put water in her food and mix it up. Her duty was to clean the floors and she would do an amazing job and sing beautiful hymns as she did it. But when someone came by she would start grunting and would spill the water all over the floor. She acted dumb and the nuns used to say awful things

about her behind her back. They wanted to kick her out but were afraid that the wild animals would eat her.

This went on for many years...it was not until a great saint, Abba Daniel- a monk came to visit the convent that she was discovered. A voice came to him from heaven one day that told him "There lives a saint whose faith far exceeds yours and anyone else's" At night when Abba Daniel and his deacon were at the convent, they saw St. Anna Simon praying and she was lifted above the ground and a great light was coming from her hands and body. The next day, St. Anna Simon knew that she was discovered so she left the convent and no one knows what happened to her after that.

What do we think showed that she was poor in spirit? It's actually just one thing...She didn't care! The extent of her uncaring- leaving the door open, living in the desert, wanting to be humiliated and insulted. She was completely satisfied with and thankful for what she had. Being poor in spirit means being simple; instead of wanting everything, or always wanting more, or not being happy with what we have, we accept it.

WHO ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT

To be poor in spirit is to not rely on anything earthly. We empty ourselves and are "poor" and exposed before God. We want and need Him only. For example, what is your favorite food? Now what is a food you absolutely hate? Imagine you are starving and haven't eaten anything for days. Now someone put the food you hated in front of you. You would eat it and stuff yourself but then your favorite food is brought...you wouldn't touch it!

When we're filling our hearts with the least important things, we're not leaving room for the best and most important thing – God

As another example tell the story of the rich man who came to Christ to inherit eternal life (Matthew 19: 16-26). "Children, how hard it is to enter the Kingdom of God. It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God." In this situation it is not our actual possessions that keep us from entering into the heavenly Jerusalem, but more so our attitude toward them. If we administer our possessions properly, according to the will of God, we will gladly "unload" some of them and share them with the people around us; thus the entrance is granted

The poor in spirit are those who are in need of, or hunger for, God. We need to empty ourselves to be poor and exposed before God. We want and need Him only. When we have nothing to fill us and wait for God to do it. If we don't show our need then we won't ask him to fill us.

St. Paul said: "When I am weak, then am I strong." St. Paul had a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him. He was at first very uneasy at it, and he prayed the Lord thrice that it might be removed, but Christ told him "*My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.*" God kept it that he could never forget his dependence upon God. When he was weak in himself, he was strong in Christ. and thus prepared him to do all things through Christ who strengthened him.

WHAT IS THE REWARD FOR THE POOR IN SPIRIT?

"For theirs is the kingdom of Heaven." that's a GREAT promise, what else could you want?

A way that looks narrow and hard, but is **EASY WITH GOD** and leads to life. The Whole Gospel and New Testament books are ways to explain the Beatitudes by parables and life stories. Jesus knows that it is very difficult to empty oneself, to be humble and needy of God, so He blessed them

When we were doing the Moses unit we talked a lot about sanctification. To be set apart. We are set apart as children of God. And the opposite of sanctify.....Defile- an awful word.

Opposite of poor in spirit?? Pride and blasphemy

HOW CAN WE BE POOR IN SPIRIT?

1. In all we do, **give thanks**: for the food, the clothes, toys, games, homes, parents, siblings, etc.
2. **Be content**, happy, with what we have, from friends, allowance & belongings.
3. **Satisfied with who we are**: do not have to be the popular kid, or the class clown or draw any attention.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

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CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Unit IV

Purpose:

LESSON 26: BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO MOURN

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Ostrov <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gvHBSa19Knk&feature=related> around 3 minutes

BBC documentary with Father Lazarus – boredom

Christ mourning: over Jerusalem because Jerusalem didn't cry for itself – He saw what was going to happen & He cried

Mourning as boredom:

If I'm mourning it's better I go to God to cheer me up, than the world: my friends, the mall... We don't have to be in big trouble to cry – I don't have to be Olagi or St. Augustine and St. Monica (St. Augustine was mourning b/c he was away from God and when he couldn't mourn for himself so St. Monica mourned for him) → these are big things, can be a distant connection at this age for the kids. If I feel depressed, bored, not comforted then I should learn to turn to God.

We have to expect from God comfort – how do I deal with my day-to-day feeling bad? What about today if I go home and feel lonely? We can ask the kids what makes them feel bad – I'm left alone there was no one asking, I'm bored, I have a lot of HW and I don't feel like doing it etc. who is going to cheer me up? Sometimes I don't have any way. Why is God the last one we go and cry to. Have you tried to cry on His shoulder. Instead of mourning before God I'll go and annoy my parents and my siblings instead of giving my sorrow to God

They can cry for their own unhappy soul. Holy Sorrow – it can be for sin, despondency, despair, boredom, sickness

Every human being has sadness, coming from a disconnection of the source of our life. Boredom is emptiness, a metaphor death. It's sadness. It's like being in a tomb – start lesson: imagine yourself in an empty place, nothing to do. We can't take boredom because it makes us confront our life and we like being distracted. Boredom is a type of sadness we run away from

Reward: Comfort

And when we turn our sorrow toward God, it's blessed - "how happy you will be." Your comfort isn't dependant on the circumstances. Your true comfort is from God, from inside. The blessedness is all about changing perspective. You'll be happy if you're not comforted by your circumstances because you'll be comforted by the Holy Spirit

Communion brings the fruit of the Spirit, love joy and peace so that comes and takes care of the boredom/mourn

Morning as realizing you need God but don't see Him

Gospel of St. John 16:20-22 – says this after He says He's going to leave for a little bit and then come back. It's the loss of Christ/when we don't see Him that we're sad

Holy Spirit John 16:8 : Convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. Sin = they (who don't believe in Him) – makes people feel guilty (conscious b/c they don't believe in God). Conviction of Righteousness = you, because He goes to the Father *and you see me no more* – Philipians 1:21. . . St. Paul lives in sorrow, sweet sorrow, because he cannot see Christ. Conviction of Judgment = they and you – everyone

Mourners cannot see Christ – there's a longing the heart for Him but the person who loves Christ will want to be with Him, it's ridiculous for them to continue living. Other people are just ok with living – they want to live as long as they can

Mourning = people are lacking seeing Him, don't have what I need and what I need is Him. As I yearn for Him, the Holy Spirit will comfort me. Constant yearning and constant comfort . Yearning comes from the Holy Spirit

Resurrection story of *St. Mary Magdalene* at the tomb – as she was crying, Jesus stood behind her and said "woman why are you weeping, why are you crying". She was crying because they have taken the Lord. When he says to Mary Magdalene don't touch Me because I'm going to My Father – it's not the 1st time He says it: John 16:16 (after the Last Supper) – the 2 little

whiles are because He's going to His Father then He'll come back and He was not supposed to be held by anyone except His Father

Give them the image of losing a family member – God should be this dear to us. 1 Peter 1:8 – not having seen Christ, they can love Him.

Link them to the suffering of Christ – when we see this suffering, we're moved by the Holy Spirit, He suffered for me to have life

Give them an image of prayer/longing for Christ. Ostrov – praying/crying, wants to be comforted by Christ

Christ visits us in our hearts from time to time and gives us joy, experience Heaven on earth. Joy vs. excitement = joy by God, excited by things

CREED:

CHURCH FATHERS:

REFLECTION:

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

Mourning

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW THE BEATITUDES

- (1) What does the word “Beatitude” mean? Beatitude means blessings/blessings
- (2) What does “blessed” mean? How happy you will be
- (3) What are the beatitudes to us? A way of life, our code of living
- (4) How many beatitudes are there? 8 -- Read Matthew 5:3-10

“Blessed *are* the poor in spirit,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ Blessed *are* those who mourn,
For they shall be comforted.

⁵ Blessed *are* the meek,
For they shall inherit the earth. Blessed *are* those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
For they shall be filled.

⁷ Blessed *are* the merciful,
For they shall obtain mercy.

⁸ Blessed *are* the pure in heart,
For they shall see God.

⁹ Blessed *are* the peacemakers,
For they shall be called sons of God.

¹⁰ Blessed *are* those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

CONNECTION POINT:

I want everyone to close their eyes and think of a member of your family. Any one. Don’t tell me who it is. Don’t tell anyone who it is. Picture them very clearly.

Now, I want you to imagine that this family member has to move far away from you. They’re going to move and you know what? You’ll never be able to see them face to face again. You can, however, talk to them whenever you want.

How will you feel about that? Is it sad?

LESSON BODY:

THE STORY OF MARY MAGDALENE

I'm going to tell you a story about a woman who lived during the time of Jesus. The Bible doesn't tell us very much about her life, but we do know that Jesus cast 7 demons out of her. The Bible also tells us that Jesus cast demons out of many people; however, not very many of those people are mentioned specifically by name. This woman was different. Her life changed completely when she met Jesus. She followed Him along with the disciples. In fact, the Gospel of St. Luke says that when Jesus went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God the 12 disciples were with him. AND it mentions certain women, and she is the first one mentioned. (*READ Luke 8:1-3*)

St. Mary Magdalene, along with the Virgin St. Mary and certain other women stayed with Jesus the entire time during his crucifixion. While some of the disciples fled because they were afraid, these women stayed with Jesus and were standing right beside the cross.

"Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene." (John 19:25),

When they took Jesus' body off the cross, St. Mary Magdalene was there and saw where they laid him, exactly which tomb it was. And very early the next morning, she came (along with other women) bringing spices to anoint His body. It was so early in the morning, it was still dark out! When they got to the tomb they saw that the stone had been rolled away from the tomb and that it was empty so they ran and told the disciples who went and saw the empty tomb, and then they went home. Mary Magdalene, however, stayed by the tomb weeping.

Let's read what happened next. *Open John 20:11*

But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him."

Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him, "Rabboni!" (which is to say, Teacher).

Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord,^[b] and that He had spoken these things to her.

She then went and told the disciples about the resurrection of the Lord, and after the ascension of the Lord, she remained ministering to the disciples. She received the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter

This saint preached with the disciples, and brought back many women to the Faith of Christ. The apostles ordained her a deaconess, to teach the women, and to assist in their baptism. She received many insults and humiliation from the Jews, and she departed in peace while she was still ministering unto the disciples.

MARY MAGDALENE IS AN EXAMPLE OF THIS BEATITUDE

1. Why do you think St. Mary Magdalene was at the cross, with the other women? Remember that most of the disciples fled because they were scared. She was one of the few who stayed by Jesus the entire time
2. Why do you think she was crying when she came to the tomb? She was crying because they had taken away the Lord.
3. What happened after she cried? Jesus came to her.
4. Did Jesus stay with her for a long time? What did He tell her? He told her not to cling to Him because He would not be staying for very long
5. Do you think she was still crying or upset after Jesus left her? Even though she knew that Jesus would not be staying with them on earth. Remember that Jesus had told his disciples that He would go away for a "little while" then they would see Him again for "a little while" and then they wouldn't see Him anymore.
6. How *can* we be like St. Mary Magdalene? Remember when I asked you to think of a family member moving away? I'm sure this made you all very sad.

While we are here on earth, we are not with Jesus physically. After Jesus ascended, all of the apostles were *mourning* because they were not with *Him*. The apostle St. Paul wrote about how he was living in sorrow because he could not see Christ. He just had a longing in his heart

for Christ. Mourning is to feel or express sorrow or grief over a lost loved ones, or a loss of any dear thing.

Mourning is an express of a deep sorrow over failure, denial, or any tribulation.

WHAT IS SPIRITUAL SORROW?

This kind of sorrow is different than any other sadness or hurt we feel. There is a difference between feeling spiritual sorrow and feeling sad about worldly things.

What are some of the things we can feel spiritually sorrowful about/mourn over?

- Our sins
- Not being with Jesus → Feeling this sorrow, this longing to be with Jesus, is a gift from the Holy Spirit. The closer we come to Jesus in the spirit, through praying (talking) with Him, cleansing ourselves from sin that keeps us away from Him, and being sanctified, the more we LOVE Christ, the more we will start to feel this sorrow as well. A helpful way to grow in your relationship with Christ is to mediate on the image of Him on the cross. When we see His suffering, we're moved by the Holy Spirit because we can see His great love for us. He suffered so we could have life.

The person who loves Christ will want to be with Him so bad. You can tell that there is something missing and that nothing but being with Christ and seeing him will be able to fill the emptiness inside you.

WHAT IS THE REWARD FOR THIS BEATITUDE?

Remember we told you that with every beatitude there is a reward? The reward for this kind of mourning is exactly what you would need to feel better. It is *comfort*. This kind of comfort is true comfort, it comes from the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. Sometimes when we get sad or upset or angry, or are even bored, about un-spiritual things then we turn to things that give us a little bit of comfort, things that don't last. The spiritual comfort that comes from the Holy Spirit is completely different. When I yearn for Christ, then the Holy Spirit will comfort me

Christ does visit us in our hearts sometimes and gives us Joy. This Joy is true heavenly Joy and is how we will feel when we're with Him all the time.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

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CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Unit IV

Purpose:

LESSON 27: BLESSED ARE THE MEEK

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Matthew 12:19 "He will not quarrel nor cry out, Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets."

Story of Abraham and Lot – who gets the land

Roman centurion who came to Christ and asked Him to heal His servant, said he wasn't worthy for Christ to come . . . was a man of authority (he was richer and more powerful – like Abraham & Lot) (and the Canaanite woman)

SERMON on the MOUNT

- Matthew 5:38-42, going the 2nd mile
- The eye for the eye
- Love your enemies
- Jesus is contrasting things. When you put them against one another, you get the full picture. The non-meek will never love his enemies.

Meekness in Christ – Passion Week: out of power, He said He could bring 12 armies to defend Himself, when Christ is slapped and doesn't respond

St. Amonious of Asna – didn't live with his congregation, he prayed in a cave. Every week his whole congregation would go up there. He was praying constantly for his congregation that once an angel said stop praying for your congregation, God heard your prayers He'll take care of them, they'll all become martyrs. When the Roman soldiers came they didn't find anyone in the town they found everyone up in the cave ready to be martyred

Why do people get angry when they get opposed? They get a feeling like they're not important, and they want to defend it all the time. They're fighting my way through life saying I am somebody to overcome that nagging fight that you're nothing. When someone puts us down, this feeling comes back. Anger is a sign of the hidden pride in the soul. We get humbled when we're told we're wrong.

Meekness = willingness to accept learning from others. Listen more than talk E.g. if our parents say something we don't like, we just accept it

Meek are wise, they inherit the earth = they get much more out of life

CREED:

CHURCH FATHERS:

REFLECTION:

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. Who are the Poor in Spirit?

A. talks about a person who realizes their spiritual poverty. They understand that they are powerless to save themselves and need God in their lives.

Q. Who are those who Mourn

A. talks about a person who realizes that they're sinners and powerless to save themselves but also act upon that knowledge in grieving over their sinful state of separation from God, meaning they are very careful to repent their sins and watch what they do.

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

CONNECTION POINT:

LESSON BODY:

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE MEEK

Meekness = gentleness; not being quick to react to an upsetting event; putting everyone on the same level; submissive, gentle, yielding, and mild-tempered – someone who doesn't fight, isn't competitive

Looking down on people (NOT PUTTING EVERYONE ON THE SAME LEVEL) builds your pride and makes you think that you're better than someone else

Meekness does NOT mean weakness but rather wisdom because you know that fighting back doesn't help the situation in anyway. It actually makes it worse. It takes more power not to respond to instigators – the weak fight back and respond

To be weak is to not defend the truth out of fear of loss, to be meek is to freely give up your right for the sake of others without fear involvement

AN EXAMPLE OF NOT BEING MEEK

Ask the kids what's wrong with this "Our Father"?

Our Father who art in heaven; hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; **my** will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our bread of tomorrow, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. In Christ Jesus, our Lord. For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Think about how you react when your parents say no to something you ask for. If you get so agitated, that's the opposite of meek. It shows pride and that you don't want your will to be crossed.

EXAMPLES OF PEOPLE WHO WERE MEEK: ST. MOSES & BARNABA

MOSES - Once when he was in his cell two of his old friends, thieves, came to rob him so St. Moses tied them up and brought them to the head of the monetary. When the head saw that he had tied them, he was upset because St. Moses did not treat them with love and so he let the thieves go free. A couple weeks later the thieves came back so this time St. Moses fed them and told them to take whatever they wanted. Shortly after the thieves converted to Christianity because of the love St. Moses showed them.

BARNABA - His father, who was an abouna, asked Barnaba this question- "if there were some apples and I asked you to choose one of them to eat, which one would you choose?" Barnaba answered him and said that he would wait until everyone else chose first, and then he would take the last apple that was left over, that nobody wanted. His father was very surprised that he answered this way, and he was impressed.

WHAT IS THE REWARD?

...for they shall inherit the earth.

What does inherit mean? Do we have to work for it?

JOY: J = Jesus, O = Others, Y = Yourself

ARE WE MEEK?

Ask the kids how we can start being meek? What are some things we can work on? Attention, not getting angry when someone crosses us.

How to find out if you're being meek?

Have there been any recent occasions when you became angry or were not gentle?

How could you have handled the situation better? What situations tend to make you that way?

Is it God's honor at stake or your own?

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

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CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Unit IV

Purpose:

LESSON 28: BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO HUNGER AND THIRST

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Examples from the Gospel:

- The parable of the merchant who was looking for pearls sold everything to get it,
- Zacchaeus,
- The woman with the bleeding,
- The crowd that followed Christ everywhere he went,
- Parable of lost coin

Other examples: St. Moses, St. Vladimir

This beatitude describes how we should feel when we lose connection with God: we should feel hunger and thirst – if we feel that way then we'll feel happy when we're quenched

Think about how you feel after reading stories about morality, saint stories – they motivate us. What is it instigating in us? it's hitting the hunger, it's uncovering hunger for righteousness. It makes you long for something. The stories are pulling from us a hunger for righteousness. If that hunger comes out, and we feel like we're drawn to the stories, it'll be fulfilled – it feels like something is calling me.

Tell the kids a story of one of the saints above who are hungry and thirsty for righteousness and ask how they feel about the story? See if they got inspired

Find a prayer to link to this: pray for mourning, pray for poor in spirit, pray for the hunger – these are blessings so we should *want* them and ask God for them. Turn the blessedness into a prayer

When people go to bars/movies because they feel empty but they want more it's because they're hungry and thirsty for God. Nothing earthly can fulfill them

Sermon on the Mount

- Starting Matthew 6:9 . . . giving, prayer and fasting (how to act) – how to act righteous
- Matthew 7:7 keep asking seeking knocking
- Matthew 7:13-14 – the narrow gate

CREED:

CHURCH FATHERS:

REFLECTION:

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

As the deer pants for the water,
So my soul longs after You.
You alone are my heart's desire
And I long to worship You.

You alone are my strength, my shield,
To You alone may my spirit yield.
You alone are my heart's desire
And I long to worship You.

I want You more than gold or silver,

Only You can satisfy.
You alone are the real joy-giver
And the apple of my eye.

You're my Friend and You are my Brother,
Even though You are a King.
I love You more than any other,
So much more than anything.

VOCABULARY:

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW PREVIOUS LESSONS:

We've been discussing the Beatitudes. Let's open our Bibles to Matthew 5. I'm going to tell you a story, and see if you can figure out which beatitude I'm talking about.

CONNECTION POINT:

For this lesson the servant can, if they want, wait until after the story to give the kids the snack or the drink for the day. The goal is to have the kids connect the feeling of physical hunger and thirst with spiritual hunger and thirst for righteousness.

LESSON BODY:

TELL THE STORY OF ST. VLADIMIR

Show the kids a picture of Hagia Sophia. This is an image of a church that changed a country. The church is no longer a church, so this isn't a real image but it was once the grandest church during the time of the early Christians. It was built by Emperor Constantius, the son of Emperor Constantine. Its name is Hagia Sofia (Holy Wisdom) and it's in Constantinople, which is present day Istanbul, Turkey

Around 900, Vladimir was prince of Russia and Russia was an almost entirely pagan country. There were Christians in Russia and the surrounding countries but most of them were in hiding and it was secretly growing. Vladimir erected many idols and statues to the pagan gods. Prince

Vladimir was introduced to Christianity when a Christian man denounced the idols in front of him and said that they were just plain wood and that there was only one God. Prince Vladimir didn't convert at the moment but he spent a lot of time thinking about what this man said.

From around that time Vladimir sent out envoys all over the world to find the right and true religion. They went EVERYWHERE and only when they entered the church of Hagia Sofia did they finally realize what the true religion must be.

"We no longer knew whether we were in heaven or on earth," they reported, describing a majestic Divine Liturgy in Hagia Sophia, "nor such beauty, and we know not how to tell of it"

Do we feel this way in liturgy?

When they returned Prince Vladimir soon converted to Christianity and, in order to convert his people, he destroyed all the pagan temples and statues, which showed the people the helplessness of their gods. He also established many Christian churches and monasteries

He gave up his warlike career and devoted himself principally to the government of his people; he established schools, introduced ecclesiastical courts, and became known for his mildness and for his zeal in spreading the Christian faith.

Ask the kids if they know which beatitude St. Vladimir's life describes.

PHYSICAL HUNGER & THIRST

Ask the kids what it feels like when they're hungry and thirsty, and how often they think about and complain of their physical hunger and thirst.

Show the kids a picture of the Sermon on the Mount. The average working person made 3 cents per day. That was taxed. In the same world, average person ate meat once a week. Real hunger and actual starvation were never far away so when Jesus first spoke this beatitude "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness", it's meaning was very intense and resonating. The hunger Jesus refers to is not something that can be satisfied by a meal or a snack. The thirst isn't something that can be satisfied with a Gatorade or a bottle of aquafina. It's the hunger of a person who is literally starving and the thirst of a person who will die.

HUNGER & THIRST FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS

A righteous person is someone who sincerely strives to do God's will.

We can't be satisfied by having just some vague desire for righteousness. It requires an effort,

always wanting to be like the righteous, always and whole heartedly seeking righteousness. Similar to the way we seek food when we are hungry or water. For example, in Sunday School, you're thirsty. You ask for another juice or water and if you don't get it, what happens. You keep thinking about it, you keep asking, you keep trying to get it because this thirst is just so overwhelming. In the same way we have to feel that same need inside of us for righteousness.

What does it mean to be a righteous person? Someone who sincerely strives to do God's will

What does it mean to hunger and thirst for righteousness? To hunger and thirst for righteousness means that you are constantly longing for God because there is nothing more righteous than being in love with God.

EXAMPLES IN THE HOLY BIBLE OF HUNGER & THIRSTING FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS

How sweet are Your words to my taste. Sweeter than honey to my mouth. (Psalm 119:103)

Think about how you feel after reading stories about morality, saint stories – they motivate us – what kinds of stories leave you wanting to be like the saint? Who are some examples in the Bible of people who were so hungry and thirsty for the Word of God (Zacchaeus)

What is it instigating in us? it's hitting the hunger, it's uncovering hunger for righteousness, it makes you long for something

The stories are pulling from us a hunger for righteousness. If that hunger comes out, and we feel like we're drawn to the stories, it'll be fulfilled

WHAT IS THE REWARD?

For they shall be filled

"Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God."
(Matthew 4:4)

"He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me and I in him." (John 6:56)

What will they be filled with?

- Spiritual enjoyment
- Consolation from heaven
- Heavenly love

- God's companionship

HUNGER & THIRST IN PRAYER

Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you
Matthew 7:7

This is why the spirit becomes hungry and is in great need of the word of God which feeds it.

He who abstains from food and does not feed himself on spiritualities, feels hunger of the body. (aka Fasting without prayer just induces only bodily hunger). This is why we have to change the way we fast AND pray.

Will he ever reach spiritual satisfaction? It is understood from the continuance of hunger and thirst for righteousness that a believer cannot reach spiritual satisfaction, because the search is continuous. The more he lives with God, the more he feels new spiritual enjoyment which ignites him so hotly that he becomes more and more eager to live deeply with the Lord

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

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CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. During the time that Jesus gave this sermon, how much did the average working person make?
2. What does it mean to be a righteous person?
3. Fill in the blank: "As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my _____ for You, O God. My soul _____ for God, for the living God." (Ps 42:1)
4. Fill in the blank: "Man shall not live on _____ alone, but on _____ that comes from the _____." (Matthew 4:4)
5. Complete the sentence: "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood _____." (John 6:56)
6. Name 2 of the 4 fulfillments we receive when we hunger and thirst for righteousness.

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Unit IV

Purpose:

LESSON 29: BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Stories from Gospel:

- Paralyzed man by the pool,
- Acts: when Tabitha died and St. Peter was called, they showed St. Peter all she did to make him compassionate;
- Blessed is he who gives heed to the condition of the poor and hungry – psalm.
- Raising of the son of the widow in Nain,
- the hungry crowd – Christ thought about them
- The Good Samaritan

4th Wise Man

Application: don't ignore the needs of others, don't be selfish - contrast with rich man and Lazarus – can see what happens when people are not merciful

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

- The "Our Father"
- Matthew 6:19 Lay up treasures in heaven
- Starting Matthew 6:9 . . . giving, prayer and fasting (how to act) – how to act righteous

CREED:

CHURCH FATHERS:

REFLECTION:

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Beatitude means....blessedness (meaning happiness)

How many are there?...8

Where can they be found?...Matthew 5:3-10

Review the first four in order (Poor in Spirit, Mourn, Meek, Hunger and Thirst)

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

CONNECTION POINT:

Do we allocate any time to think of others – immediate family

Exercise for next week: how much time did they spend thinking and what did they get out of it?

What did they find, what were their needs → have them write it down

LESSON BODY:

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE MERCIFUL?

It *can* be forgiveness, but not just forgiveness. Someone doesn't necessarily have to wrong you for you to be merciful to them

Also involves thinking of others' needs. It's all about compassion and empathy. You have to have a desire to help those who do not necessarily have the capacity to help you

Acting in mercy is a direct action of love towards God!

Matthew 25:34-40 - Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

PARABLE OF THE UNFORGIVING SERVANT

Matthew 18:23-35

10,000 talents versus 100 denarii: (\$888,312 versus \$1)

'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

FR. MAXIMILIAN KOLBE

Tell the story - <http://www.fatherkolbe.com/>

WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT TO BE MERCIFUL? WHAT IS THE REWARD

The compassionate, steadfast love of God for sinners. Christians reflect the mercy of God by caring for others

The **REWARD** is that we too obtain mercy from God. However, we cannot expect mercy to come onto us if we do not give it unto others

Like in the Lord's Prayer, we say "Forgive us our trespasses, as..."

We cannot forget the importance of that second half

HOW CAN I BE MERCIFUL?

I can be merciful everywhere – at school, home, church and with my friends and family.

- We can be merciful to everyone in our lives
- I can think about others' needs
- I can pray for those needs
- If I see someone in school who needs a friend or needs help, I can give it
- I can help my family around the house
- When someone hurts me or does something bad to me, I can practice making excuses. I can try to see what it would be like if I was in their shoes and figure out why they acted that way

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

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CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"Blessed is he who understands the poor and needy; The Lord will deliver him in an evil day. May the Lord keep him, and give him life, and make him blessed on the earth, and not deliver him into the hands of his enemies"

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Unit IV

Purpose:

LESSON 30: BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

The pure in heart are like the children: don't know how to lie, they can't hide anything, they don't hold grudges

We need to learn how to examine our hearts. For example, Instead of saying "I said a bad word at my brother" = "I hated my brother, then I swore at him." Instead of "I lied" = "I was afraid or filled with pride, so I lied" – Describing an emotion that led to an action, instead of describing the action. Heart examination leads to discovery of emotion behind the action

Exercise: examine yourselves in the next week to see what kinds of feelings/attachments they have – write it down and prepare it for confession and ask God to help get rid of it. Can pray: "a pure heart create in me oh God" – It is God's work

Mark 7:20-23: *And He said, What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man.*

Matthew 12:33-37 *Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit. Brood 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. But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.*

Good heart has good fruits, the impurity of the heart is the bad fruits (of the Spirit). Bad fruits: hate, anxiety, fear, sadness, impatience, aggression/violence. Sins don't come from nowhere. You think, then feel then act

Stories from the Gospel: Judas story – kept a love of money in his heart that led him to deliver Christ because he appreciated money more than anything else

When God looks into my heart he sees nothing that would offend him – does He find my heart a place of rest instead of a place he would not want to come close to?

Talk to them about how we deal with wrong feelings, of attachments and talk to them about girlfriends/boyfriends – how to cut a relationship that isn't working. Show how difficult it is to cut the relationship

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

- Matthew 5:27-30 Adultery in heart – need to take it out to have a pure heart. Lust is against the purity
- Don't look at people from the outside only, talk about their looks – good or bad.
- Pure person will look at someone as God looks at them, ignore their shape and look at their heart
- Pure senses Matthew 6:22-23 – purity of the heart starts with purity in the eye and the rest of the senses.
- Matthew 7 do not judge, judging goes against purity in heart.

CREED:

CHURCH FATHERS:

REFLECTION:

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Review previous beatitudes:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy

Today: blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

CONNECTION POINT:

LESSON BODY:

STORY OF THE PURE IN HEART

On July 3rd, 1980, a beautiful baby girl was born. Her father named her Elizabeth and he loved her very much and took care of her, as she was his only daughter.

When Elizabeth was six years old, it became time for her to go to school. Her father came into her room on the morning of her first day of kindergarten and said “Good morning, Elizabeth! Rise and shine! Today’s a big day, you’re finally going to get to go to school!”

Elizabeth sat up in her bed, but to her father’s surprise, she wasn’t excited. In fact, she started tearing up.

“What’s wrong, Elizabeth? Are you feeling sick?”

She quietly shook her head “no” and then began to cry.

“Elizabeth, why are you crying? You’ve been looking forward to this day since I first told you about school!”

She quietly responded “I know. But-but Daddy, I don’t want to be away from you? How am I going to go through a whole day without seeing you?”

Her father answered “Elizabeth, sweetie, you’re going to meet lots of new friends, your teacher will be nice, you’ll have time to read stories, play outside, talk with your friends, the day will go by before you know it and you’ll be home!”

“Daddy, will you please come with me?” Elizabeth asked.

“I can’t come with you. School is a time and place for you to start being independent and learning how to be a young lady!”

Elizabeth cried “NO DADDY! Then I’m not going”.

Her father sighed. “Ok, Elizabeth, I guess it’s time that I tell you this. You and I both have very special genes”

“What do you mean Daddy?! Like denim jeans?” Elizabeth interrupted.

Her father smiled softly “No Elizabeth, we have a very special characteristic, almost a superpower. If you close your eyes and think of me, you will be able to see me exactly where I am and I can see where you are. No matter how far apart we are, we will always be able to see each other and be together, only if one of us closes our eyes and thinks of the other person from their heart.”

Elizabeth appeared confused.

“Here, give it a try.” Her father quickly hopped off of the edge of her bed, walked into the hallway and closed the door after him. Elizabeth hesitated, but then, she closed her eyes and concentrated about how much she wanted to see her father.

Surely enough, she was able to see his dark brown eyes looking back at her and his soft smile appear as though he were standing right in front of her. She thought in her heart *Daddie! I can see you.* and he responded to hear *I can see you too sweetie. Now, all you have to do is just think of me, think of talking to me, close your eyes, and I will be right there next to you.*”

Elizabeth opened her eyes. She looked around her room, around her bed to make sure he wasn't there, then she jumped right off her bed and ran outside to the room she saw her father in. Indeed, he was sitting exactly where she had seen him, she ran over to him and gave him a big hug. “Daddy! I think I'm ready for school!!”

Elizabeth had a very exciting first day of school, but when she got to recess, no one played with her. She started to feel lonely and wanted to see her father, so she closed her eyes. She saw his dark brown eyes and thought told him the thoughts of her heart: *Daddy, I'm feeling lonely. None of the other girls are talking to me.*

Her father responded and said *I know Elizabeth, I have closing my eyes and watching you during recess. You have to be friendly with them too, don't be shy or scared to go up to those girls and ask if you can play with them. If you don't ask, they're going to think you don't want to play.*”

Elizabeth thought from her heart: *Wow, thanks Daddy, thanks for watching over me and checking on me!* She went over to the tire swing in the playground where all the girls from her class were standing together, giggling, and pushing each other on the swing.

Elizabeth said “ex-excuse me. Can I please play with you.”

“Of course!!” Answered one of the girls on the swing. “Hey! Move over, let's make room for Elizabeth.” Once she got on the tire swing, she started laughing, and the faster the swing went, the more she laughed. While she was laughing out of excitement she closed her eyes and thought from her heart *“thank you Daddy!”* He said *“You are welcomed”*.

Years went by and everyday, Elizabeth would close her eyes and see her father who had been watching over her and looking out for her. Whenever she would ask for advice he would give it. In fact, sometimes, he would tell her what she should do before she even had to ask, because he always knew where she was and what was in her heart.

Now Elizabeth was in the fifth grade. She had made a pretty big group of friends and was considered to be pretty popular among the kids in her class. One day, during open reading time,

the teacher asked for the attention of the class and introduced a new student whose name was "Sylvia."

During recess, Elizabeth noticed one of her best friends laughing with and playing with Sylvia. She was overcome with jealousy and didn't know what to do, so she closed her eyes and saw her father's eyes, but this time, they were disappointed. She heard him say "Elizabeth, why are you so angry and jealous? These are not good feelings to have, you should be happy that your best friend is having a good time, and besides maybe Sylvia is a really nice girl, why don't you go over and introduce yourself."

Elizabeth scoffed and quickly opened her eyes. She went over to where Sylvia was playing, pushed her off of the monkey bars, grabbed her best friend's hand and said "let's go! you should be playing with ME not her." Sylvia's eyes began to well with tears, but instead of saying anything, she just got up, brushed the sand off of her hands and knees, and walked back towards the cafeteria.

Elizabeth started to feel bad, so she closed her eyes and saw her father's disappointment, but before he could say anything, she opened her eyes. She just didn't want to hear about it, so she ignored it and kept playing as if nothing had happened.

As the years started to go by, Elizabeth started to become more and more involved in school, sports, and her friends. One night, some of the girls on her soccer team invited her for a team pool party on a Sunday. She closed her eyes to ask her father for permission: *Daddy, can I please go?*

He responded: *Elizabeth, you know Sundays are dedicated for church and Sunday School. Are you going to give up the one day in the week that you attend liturgy and take the Holy Communion just for a swim party?"*

Elizabeth was annoyed because she really wanted to go to the party, so she opened her eyes quickly and told her friends "Sure! I'll be there on Sunday! I can't wait!!!"

That Sunday night, when she had gotten home, her father asked her why she disobeyed him. She answered back at him saying "Dad, I'm 12 years old, I'm a big girl now and I can make decisions for myself. There are plenty of other Sundays for me to go to church, but it's not every Sunday where the team holds a celebration for the season."

She saw that her father was upset with her, but she didn't want to deal with it, so she went upstairs to her room and didn't talk to him for the rest of the evening.

Years went by, and Elizabeth started closing her eyes less and less to talk to her father. She was being distracted by school, by her friends, by her popularity, and didn't want to think about what her father would say every minute. Elizabeth felt like she was now responsible enough without him.

One warm spring morning, Elizabeth left her house to go to school and was wearing a halter top and a mini skirt that one of her friends told her to buy when they were shopping at the mall together. Her father stopped her before she left and said "you can't go to school dressed like that? You have to dress respectfully when seeing your teachers and your classmates."

"But dad! What's wrong with THIS outfit. It's completely appropriate?" She whined.

"Yes, it's appropriate if you're going to the beach! Or water country! Elizabeth, you are going to school, it's a place to study, to learn, and to behave appropriately. Go change into that nice white blouse and those capris that you have"

Elizabeth grunted "Ugh! Dad! FINE!" She stomped upstairs. When she went into her room, she changed into more appropriate clothes, but decided to take her halter top and mini skirt in her backpack. Once she got to school that day, she went into the locker room and changed into the outfit she had already been wearing. She began to feel guilty, but she refused to close her eyes, because she knew her father had known that she was dishonest and disobedient.

When Elizabeth graduated from high school and went to college, she stopped talking to her father all together. By then, she wasn't going to church at all, and was just more focused on going out with her friends, getting by just enough to pass in school, and just trying to have as much fun as possible in college.

During her last semester, she received a letter in the mail saying that she couldn't graduate that semester because she had failed too many of her classes. Elizabeth was overcome with shame and she began to cry. She regretted all of those nights that she hung out with her friends, or went out to the movies, or wasted her time chatting away and gossiping instead of studying for her exams and doing her assignments. When her friends found out she wasn't going to be graduating with them, they looked down on her and stopped talking to her and inviting her to things.

Elizabeth was so lonely. She missed the feeling of care and love. She missed having that person who always gave her the best advice in times of trouble. Most of all, she missed the church, her first home, the place she could always go to for safety where she knew she could always be accepted. Elizabeth missed her father. She wanted to close her eyes and see him, but she was

so ashamed. "What will he think of me now? What will he say to me?! I've disappointed him so much, but I need him more than ever right now."

After hours of hesitation, Elizabeth closed her eyes. (Pause)

From her heart, she sought her father: "Dad? Daddy? Where are you? Why aren't you here?"

She began to cry "Dad I can't see you anymore, please come back. Please"

Elizabeth opened her eyes. She felt hopeless, but somewhere in her heart, she kept praying and praying that she could get help. Soon, she took a deep breath, got up, and went to church for confession. She wanted to see her father again, and she knew there was only one way she could go back."

REVIEW THE STORY

Ask the kids what they think of the story? Do you feel sorry for Elizabeth? Can we relate to her?

This is how we lose our communication with God: by lacking of purity in heart. We have to have an image of Christ- visual and imaginary picture- getting in touch with the Father-what He has done, how He feels, how He thinks

How do we get this image? By attending the church and partaking of the Eucharist. The more we are in that atmosphere (the church) the better image of God we have.

FOR THEY SHALL SEE GOD: ST. BISHOY

We know of examples of people in the Bible who saw God. For example, Moses was able to see and approach God in the form of the Burning Bush. Moses also later went up to the mountain while others were worshipping a earthly God of Golden Calf, Moses saw God in all his might in the form of fire and lightning when he received the Holy Commandments

When God appeared/spoke to Saul of Tarsus (who later became St. Paul), it was said that the people who were around him were only able to see light, but only Saul was able to hear the voice of the Lord.

St. Bishoy, does anyone know the story? St. Bishoy used to want to continue his conversations with God as long as possible. He lived in solitude, so at night, he would keep himself awake all night by tying his beard with a rope to the ceiling.

St. Bisoy lived in the monastery and many of the monks surrounding him noticed that the Lord would speak to him saying things like "Here I'll be with you, I have witnessed your toil, love and

perseverance. I have granted that whoever prays asking through your intercession would be answered.”

The monks longed to see the Lord through Abba Bishoy. They asked the saint to pray for their sake, so that He might bless them with an appearance. Abba Bishoy mentioned their desire to the Lord, and pleaded for them, saying that such an appearance would increase their enthusiasm and encourage them in their spiritual lives. The Lord promised to appear to them on the mountain on a certain day at a certain time.

On that day that the Lord promised to appear, the monks raced to get to the appointed spot. On their way, they saw a sick old man who wanted to join them, but none of the monks was willing to carry him, or even had enough patience or time to “waste” with him. Abba Bishoy passed by; he was very late but offered to take him. He lifted him up on his shoulders and carried him.

At the beginning of the climb, Abba Bishoy did not feel any weight, but gradually he felt that the old man was getting heavier and heavier until he could not continue. At that moment, he knew that this was the Lord. He cried, “My Lord Jesus Christ, the heavens are not spacious enough for You, the earth trembles in facing Your Holiness, how can a sinner like me carry You!” Then our Lord Jesus Christ answered and said, “Because you have carried Me, my dear Bishoy, your body shall never decay.” When the monks discovered that the Lord revealed Himself to the saint while they had deprived themselves of seeing the Lord because of their carelessness, they were greatly grieved.

St. Bishoy washes the feet of Christ:

One of Abba Bishoy’s distinguished merits was his **hospitality to strangers**. One day while he was sitting outside his cell, he saw a stranger who was weary from walking. He invited the stranger to his cell and brought some water to wash his exhausted feet. While washing his feet, he heard the Lord’s voice saying, “My chosen Bishoy! You are an honorable man.” Realizing that he was washing the Lord’s feet, he knelt down and worshiped Him. The Lord gave him peace and comforted him.

SEEING GOD

You may see God with your spirit more than with your eyes.

Your heart, whose vision comes true, may see God. On the contrary, the mind which keeps on examining and wishes to see the Lord according to its own ideas can never see God.

Seeing God is sometimes connected with pain which purifies the heart.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

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CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Unit IV

Purpose:

LESSON 31: BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

“And be not conformed to this world: but be transformed by the renewing of your mind”(Romans 12:2)

“Let the peace of Christ rule in your heart, since as members of one body you were called to peace.” Colossians 3:15

“And the peace of God which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:7

Peacemaking has 2 aspects: within and without - peace over circumstances and others.

Within: I don't hold grudges – I reconcile myself to people within my heart (purity of heart). Someone who holds within himself a very deep peace. Before giving peace to others, we need to seek it in our hearts first

How to accomplish this? It's a struggle that we have to fight for it, and beg God for help – it does not come easy

Biblical references:

- Night of Gethsemane – Christ put the circumstances in His Father's hands: He sweat blood, it's a struggle
- Jesus was a peacemaker by being Himself between Herod and Pilot – just being who He is (told the story during Holy Week)
- St. Stephen – didn't force himself to forgive, it was in his heart

Peacemaker = creating peace wherever they are. Means that there is no peace so it needs to be made

Christ = the king of peace = Epouros. But look at His life, it's not peaceful – born in a conflicted country (Romans), they have to escape to Egypt, there's a lot of scandal about His birth, when He grew up they wanted to kill Him BUT if you're in His presence you feel extreme peace. There is no anxiety, noise etc. the disciples were safe wherever He is.

In the middle of the conflict, you are the peace – it's not avoiding conflict (paint picture of someone sitting on a beach drinking pineapple), apathy is not peace

Example of their daily lives → **story about bullying/conflicts in school**. Bullying is the opposite of peacemaking: Tell a story about bullying in church: FOB that came and was mocked and made fun of but he helps others all the time. He overcomes the conflict because of his connection with Christ

- Points of story: nobility of peacemaker, fakeness etc
- In the midst of the pain and suffering, they want the other person to come to Christ
- The opposite of peacemaking is destroying people, creating a monster

Peace does not come from self-control. Need the fruit of the Spirit and there is no fruit of the Spirit without serious prayer. To be a peacemaker you have to have the Spirit in your heart

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

- Matthew 5:25-26 – murder in heart is against peacemaker. Take out the anger from inside you
- Matthew 5:43-48 love your enemies
- Matthew 6:25-34 – do not worry about anything.

CREED:

CHURCH FATHERS:

REFLECTION:

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- Q. What are the Beatitudes?*
- Q. Where did Jesus give this sermon?*
- Q. What is the first beatitude?*
- Q. What does blessed mean?*

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

CONNECTION POINT:

LESSON BODY:

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS

Ask the kids What does it mean to be a peace maker? It means creating peace wherever you are. It means that there is no peace , so it needs to be made.

Who are the “peace makers”? Someone who don’t hold grudges and who holds within him /herself a very deep peace

What is the reward? Shall be called sons of God

HOW CAN WE BE PEACEMAKERS?

Before we give peace to others we should seek it in our heart first.

1. First reconcile with yourself in your heart, to be in peace with myself. (*examine your heart*)
2. Then I reconcile myself to people within my heart (purity of heart).*Repent*
3. Then Peace over Circumstances and others . seek guidance

How to accomplish this? It’s a struggle that we have to fight for it, and beg God for help

JESUS IS THE KING OF PEACE: GETHSEMANE

On the night of Gethsemane Christ put the circumstances in his Father’s hands. He sweat blood, It’s a struggle

During that night many examples to show us Jesus as a king of peace...ask the kids for examples.

- He healed the servant’s ear
- He was a reason that 2 kings reconciled again after long time. Pilate and Herod
- Refused that St Peter will use sword.

JESUS IS THE KING OF PEACE: THE REST OF HIS LIFE

The life of Christ wasn’t peaceful: He was born in a conflicted country, they had to escape to Egypt, there was a lot of scandal about his birth, they wanted to kill him when he grew up.

But everyone in his presence felt extreme peace - the disciples left everything, followed him, and felt safe wherever He is.

ST. STEPHEN

Read Acts 7:51-60. St. Stephen was persecuted and stoned but remained peaceful the entire time.

EXAMPLES OF HOW WHERE WE CAN BE PEACEMAKERS

Ask the kids how they can be peacemakers at home, at school, and even at church.

At home: among our brothers and sister

At school: Bully

At church: FOB

In the middle of the conflict you are the peace—It's not avoiding conflict

HOW CAN WE BE PEACEMAKERS? PRAYER

Pray about temptation *And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one (Matthew 6:13); "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak." (Matthew 26:41)*

Practice the Arrow Prayer: O My Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me, a sinner.

God's promise to help: God is faithful; He will not let you tempted beyond what you can bear - *No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. (1 Corinthians 10:13)*

The Holy Spirit resides in you to help you distinguish right from wrong and to give you the power of peace

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

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CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- Q. Finish the sentence: Blessed are the peacemakers...
- A. A. They will be called the sons of God.
 - B. They will inherit the earth
 - C. They will have the kingdom of heaven
- Q. Does it means staying silent or creating peace?

Q. Is peacemaking the same as peace -achieving?

Q. Who should we ask to keep peace within ourselves?

Q. What do we call Jesus?

Q. We discussed the story of St. ? St Stephen

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Unit IV

Purpose:

LESSON 32: PERSECUTED & HOUSE ON THE ROCK

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Penocratus: Roman 1st century martyr, was very good in school and the kids beat him up after school because he was Christian he believed the way to behave wasn't to retaliate "an eye for an eye" he chose not. He ended up being a martyr – confessed Christ before the governor

Stories on persecution for righteousness sake: Acts – St. Stephen, 2 disciples talking about Christ; Joseph standing his ground in Egypt; all the martyrs

Righteousness = what you believe in that's Godly.

Reward: For yours is the Kingdom of God = I want to feel God reign in my heart. If you get persecuted you'll feel God right there

House on the Rock:

- Building on the Rock is very stable
- Building on the Rock is very difficult, because you have to dig in the rock
- It takes time
- Our Lord is telling us some hard commandments, and He knows that it is not easy, but "easy come, easy go"

SERMON ON THE MOUNT: Matthew 5:43-48 love your enemies

CREED:

CHURCH FATHERS:

REFLECTION:

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

My heart and my
tongue, praise the
Trinity. O Holy
Trinity, have mercy on
us.

Everyone praises You,
And worships You, O
Holy Trinity, have
mercy on us

For You are our God,
And our Great Savior,
O Holy Trinity, have
mercy on us

The Master Lord , He
came and saved us, O
Holy Trinity, have
mercy on us

For the sake of Your
true judgments, Teach

me Your justice, O
Holy Trinity, have
mercy on us

Many are Your
mercies, Grant us
Your salvation, O
Holy Trinity, have
mercy on us

I am here before You,
I took refuge in You,
O Holy Trinity, have
mercy on us

Yours is the power
and glory, O King of
glory, O Holy Trinity,
have mercy on us

Jesus is our hope, In
our tribulations, O Holy
Trinity, have mercy on
us

You are blessed, O
Son of God, Deliver
us from temptations,
O Holy Trinity, have
mercy on us

Righteousness

Persecuted

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Today we're going to discuss a beatitude I think is very important and that I think you all will find very important too. Have the kids discover which beatitude we'll be talking about today before reviewing the previous beatitudes.

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

CONNECTION POINT:

LESSON BODY:

WHICH BEATITUDE?

For right now, I want us to open our Bibles to Matthew 5:43-48 and read what those verses tell us.

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 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, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Ok now turn to Matthew 5:3 and read the Beatitudes to yourself. Which Beatitude do those verses reflect? What one do you think they are talking about the MOST – I know that reflects a lot of the beatitudes we've already talked about, but today we're going to talk about blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

REVIEW THE PREVIOUS BEATITUDES QUICKLY

“Blessed *are* the poor in spirit,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ Blessed *are* those who mourn,
For they shall be comforted.

⁵ Blessed *are* the meek,
For they shall inherit the earth. Blessed *are* those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
For they shall be filled.

⁷ Blessed *are* the merciful,
For they shall obtain mercy.

⁸ Blessed *are* the pure in heart,
For they shall see God.

⁹ Blessed *are* the peacemakers,
For they shall be called sons of God.

¹⁰ Blessed *are* those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO ARE PERSECUTED FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS’ SAKE, FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

We’re going to talk about what it means to be persecuted for righteousness sake, who are our examples of those that are persecuted for righteousness sake, how we are persecuted and what our reward is

Persecuted: to harass or punish in a manner designed to injure, grieve, or afflict; *specifically* : to cause to suffer because of belief

Righteousness: remember we talked about this word during the lesson on blessed are those who hunger & thirst. Does anyone remember? Striving to do God’s will means we want to follow His commandments, we want to behave like His sons and daughters, we believe in Him. All those noble and wise thoughts that are Godly is what is righteous

When you hear the word persecuted, who are the 1st people in our church that should come to mind? Of course the martyrs!

STORY OF ST. PHILOTHEUS

Martyrdom of St. Philotheus

On this day, the honorable St. Philotheus, whose name means "lover of God", was martyred. He was born in the City of Antioch, of pagan parents, who worshipped a bull, which they fed cakes

made of fine flour and sesame seed oil mixed with honey. They also anointed the bull with spices and fine perfumed oils three times every day, and they gave it wine and oil to drink. They established two places for the bull, one for the summer, and another for the winter. They put around its neck a collar of gold, and golden rings in its legs.

When Philotheus was ten years old, his father asked him to worship the bull, but he refused, his father left him without punishment, for he loved him as he was his only son. As for St. Philotheus, because of his young age, he did not know the Living God, and he thought that the sun was the god. He stood once looking at the sun and said, "I beseech you, O sun, if you are God, tell me." He heard a voice coming from heaven saying, "I am not God, but I am a servant and a slave to God, Whom you will know, and you will shed your blood for His Name's sake."

When God saw the integrity of the child's heart, He sent His angel to inform him about the creation of the world, and the incarnation of the Lord Christ, for the salvation of mankind. St. Philotheus was pleased, and rejoiced in his heart. From that time on, he fasted, prayed and gave alms to the poor and those who were in distress.

After one year had passed, his parents had a great banquet for their friends, and they asked their son to worship the bull before they ate and drank. The child stood in front of the bull and said, "Are you the God that should be worshipped?" A voice came out of the bull saying, "I am not the God, but the devil has possessed me and I have become a deceiver of men." Then the bull jumped and attacked his parents and killed them instantly. The Saint ordered his servants to kill the bull, burn its body and scatter its ashes.

St. Philotheus prayed to God for the sake of his parents, and the Lord raised them up from the dead. Later on, he was baptized along with his parents in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God granted him the gift of healing the sick, and his repute reached Diocletian, the emperor. He brought him, and ordered him to offer incense to the idols, but he refused. The Emperor tortured him with all kinds of tortures, but the Saint never swayed from his determination. The Emperor tried again to persuade him by deception and flattery, and the Saint promised to worship Apollo as the Emperor commanded. The Emperor was pleased to hear this, and he brought Apollo along with 70 other idols, and 70 pagan priests and a herald went around to call upon the public in the city.

Great multitudes came to watch St. Philotheus worshiping Apollo. On their way, the saint prayed to the Lord Christ, and the earth was opened and swallowed the priests and the idol of Apollo. There was a great excitement and disturbance, and a great multitude believed and confessed the Lord Christ.

The Emperor was exasperated, and ordered them all beheaded, and they received the crown of martyrdom. St. Philotheus was also beheaded, and he received the crown of life.

You cannot reach the level of accepting persecution for God until you've managed to live the beatitudes – it's a very advanced stage

WHEN ARE WE PERSECUTED FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS SAKE?

When we fast and people say things

When we stand up against cursing, lying, or other sins

When we choose not to have a boyfriend or girlfriend

When we don't go to parties or go to games on Sunday that take us away from church

When we get made fun of for loving those who have no one else

WHAT IS OUR REWARD?

Jesus promised that while His followers may appear to lose everything in this life, they gain an incredible reward in the next one.

You have no idea how you'll pray on a day of persecution - blessed = how happy

For yours is the Kingdom of God = I want to feel God reign in my heart. If you get persecuted you'll feel God right there and will rejoice always

Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong. 2 Corinthians 12:10

BUILD YOUR HOUSE ON A ROCK

We've spent a lot of time talking about the beatitudes. Why?

- They are our commandments
- They are how we should live our lives
- They are the foundation of our faith and our lives in Christ.

What do we mean when I say they are our foundation? What is a foundation? I looked it up. A foundation is the lowest level of a building, upon it all the other levels are laid and without it now other layer can come. When we say that beatitudes are our foundation, they are this important – no, necessary – layer in our lives on top of which we add everything else.

Matthew 7:24-27 - ²⁴ *“Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: ²⁵ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.*

²⁶ *“But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: ²⁷ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.”*

Why do we build on a rock?

- Building on the Rock is very stable
- Building on the Rock is very difficult, because you have to dig in the rock
- It takes time

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

-

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Unit IV

Purpose:

LESSON 33: REVIEW

Fifth Grade Curriculum:

God called Us to be Holy

UNIT V: GOD CALLED US TO BE HOLY (6 LESSONS)

Purpose:

Background information for servants on Sanctification:

Sanctification means to be holy. To be holy means to see God, can't see God without being holy. There are 2 parts to sanctification. First, setting apart: first step before union (get someone out, then unite them with God – cleaning the sheets so you can sleep in them, cleaning the pot so you can fill it). Old Testament - old covenant is physical setting apart for example, the Israelites were told not to eat with gentiles. The new covenant - mainly spiritual and moral – commandments, cleansing of the inside and the outside. For example, Christians are asked not to be under yoke with unbelievers – you figure it out, more generalized what it means → can't MARRY – only marry orthodox otherwise you're not holy anymore. If you want to marry someone they need to come to church to be holy by baptism, education of the faith and baptism. In baptism we are set apart, dead to the world

Second, partaking of holiness: setting apart makes someone feel empty so they need to be filled. In the OT this was done through sacrifices, certain foods, customs. In the NT Christ shares our humanity; taking what's ours and giving us what's His.

Examples of separation

- Examination of conscience, filtering thoughts & actions, plucking off eye, cutting off arm or leg
- Yielding to the discipline of the Gospel
- Not to be yoked with unbelievers
- Hating sin, loving sinner

NT Sanctity - role of Christ & Holy Spirit. Material sanctification: *the Word made flesh*. Spirit of Holiness: *becoming the temple of the Holy Spirit*. Jesus' Passover – by dying, scandalizing whole community of Jews, he made his disciples a scandal/ashamed – if a teacher is condemned as a blasphemer, the disciples are also set apart as blasphemer so the disciples were afraid and

hiding – they were separated from the whole Jewish community. He then gave them the Spirit so they can stand in front of everyone and say you're wrong and we're right

Go deeper into what sanctification means: Moses is perfect example: could not tell the people the Commandments until they were brought out of Egypt. Children think they can continue to be worldly AND still have Christ/ CANNOT be in both roads at the same time because they're opposite – have to change your way and then take on Christ. Whole meaning of Baptism

Sanctification & reverence: Gen 28: 16,17 –attitude of reverence that comes through the process. Reverence means the fear of God. Realization of Sanctity of Place → Fear of the Lord.

3 things to say as you bow down before alter – teach them about the sanctity of the place, enter the church and make the 3 metanias with these sayings:

- **Glory to Father, Son and Holy Spirit**
- **With the Angels I glorify you and I bow down before your Holy sanctuary**
- **According to the multitudes of your mercy I enter Your house and I bow down before Your holy alter with Your fear**

Desecration (opp to consecration) – belittling things that belong to God: Gen 25:30, Heb 12:16 = profane = person that does not pay attention to the sanctity. Anyone who gives up his body for fornication is profane because they do not realize the sanctity of the body – from the eye to the whole body. Compared to Jacob: “and he was afraid and said, ‘How awesome is this place’ “ – holy things of God to be revered, respected – handled differently, NOT common

We need to change the attitude towards sacred, holy, sanctified, consecrated objects and lives - it is for our sake that Holy Objects are consecrated . They are sanctified for ME so that through them I can be sanctified → when we pay heed to the things of God we are filled with their Holiness

Jesus Himself became sanctification for us: Jesus was sanctified – inside His life He was sanctified, He had to bring it out to be completely dedicated to the people – He was sanctified for His congregation. Jesus goes to pray on the mountain, He's praying for everyone else, He prays for the people He will meet – His sanctification process is not for Him, it is for us – His prayer and fasting, being alone is for us

After baptism I can't decide or do anything unless I can take Jesus with me – putting on Christ makes my decision different because it is no longer just me but me and Christ. **Gal 3:27 – For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.** When we put on Christ we put on the temple of the Holy Spirit

World is acting in opp to Church. The world tells us you're going to die tomorrow, do whatever pleases you today (Esau – gave up something very expensive for just some food that could have come just a little later for more food). Jesus could heal with the word but he chose to use clay or oil to anoint

Sanctify work, family etc by being in there and being with them - as we go to be touched by Christ and put on Christ we also go as *Christians* and touch the world. Remind them that this is why we go to work, school – Christ sanctified everything that we do too (pictures). Come to church to establish sanctification and go out to sanctify the world

***Practical Aspects of Sanctification Examination and confession – go and examine yourself: what have you not sanctified from. Prophets point out what is wrong – what they did in the OT was point out when Israelites mingled with others. During the process there is a time when it feels dry – it feels like your life is totally empty, you're dying. By Jesus setting Himself apart, He gave us an example: everything Jesus touched became restored/whole because Jesus is holy and He is holy because He sanctified Himself for our sakes → if you want to be able to do that you also have to be sanctified and holy

HOW TO CONFESS – more time you spend examining yourself being more particular, detailed and putting more effort into your confession figuring out what is keeping you from being sanctified the more reward you'll have after confession and communion (Farmers “walk beans” clean stones). Self examination: need to show them why – show them the fruits of the labor and need to be practical – find the reason

Lesson 34: Introduction

Lesson 35: Our Lord invites us to receive God's mercy

Lesson 36: Our Lord Jesus Christ invites us to follow Him (putting on Christ)

Lesson 37: God gave us laws to live by

Lesson 38: Invitation to worship

Lesson 39: We protect God's gift of holiness

Unit V

Purpose:

LESSON 34: INTRODUCTION

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

God revealed Himself to us in many ways...through the scripture, through the church, through His Son and through Communion. We are Christians because we see Christ in these ways and we follow Him, because of this we are sanctified

“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” Gal 2:20

“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ” Gal 3:27

“He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in Him.” John 6:56

“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you.”
1 Cor 3:16

Ephesians 4:15-5:24:

¹⁵ but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

The New Man

¹⁷ This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of ^dthe Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, ¹⁸ having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in

them, because of the blindness of their heart;¹⁹ who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

²⁰ But you have not so learned Christ, ²¹ if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: ²² that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, ²³ and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ²⁴ and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Do Not Grieve the Spirit

²⁵ Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,"^[b] for we are members of one another. ²⁶ "Be angry, and do not sin":^[c] do not let the sun go down on your wrath,²⁷ nor give place to the devil. ²⁸ Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. ²⁹ Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. ³² And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

Walk in Love

5 Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. ² And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

³ But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; ⁴ neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. ⁵ For this you know,^[d] that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. ⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷ Therefore do not be partakers with them.

Walk in Light

⁸ For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of the Spirit^[e] is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), ¹⁰ finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. ¹¹ And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of

darkness, but rather expose them.¹² For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.¹³ But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.¹⁴ Therefore He says:

“Awake, you who sleep,
Arise from the dead,
And Christ will give you light.”

Walk in Wisdom

¹⁵ See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, ¹⁶ redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

¹⁷ Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, ²⁰ giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ submitting to one another in the fear of God

What are we filling ourselves with? How can we be holy when we're filled with music and media and profane things.

Explain to the kids that our journey in the church throughout life is like the journey of the Israelites. We too are in a process of separation and sanctification 1. Baptism (die to the world and put on Christ) 2. Follow Christ as they followed Moses. (signs for Moses: staff, leprosy; anything that is away from Moses is bad, close to Moses is good—away we are bad, close to Christ is good- incarnation of Christ is like the staff- away from Christ is disfigured; back to Father- Glory) the manna is food and is so much more.

How do we start our journey-? Like the Israelites through baptism—that is the door. We have to be close and listen, what does he tell us about how to live? Give examples of how to live: in loving God and loving others (application of ten commandments- first 4 loving God, next 6 about loving others) These are the commandments of Christ- His invitation, not from us- is it Jesus that says this not us. Use verses for back up- John 14: 31 "but the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me." (Father and worshipping/loving God)

Loving God: go through the **Lord's prayer** through the Unit; ex. God is our real and ultimate father; earthly fathers are those under Him

- Father- honor, instruction, discipline, bread-winner, protection

- Hallow be Thy name (you are my highest regard)
- Instruct us- Thy will be done
- Forgive us our trespasses- discipline and forgiveness
- bread winning- eat from his table- give us this day our daily bread
- do not lead us into temptation-protection

Loving others: God is asking us to honor our parents- never answering back, quick to respond, quick to serve, sharing with brothers and sisters and putting them before us, think of Christ as a child- WWJD- insert stories?

- Humility- David in his little age with sheep, praying, intimate relationship with God.
- Child Jesus in the temple speaking of Christ;
- Forgiveness: Joseph and his brothers?
- Daniel- did not care about those looking at him when he opened the window and spoke to God.
- Serving others- St. Mary- wedding- respect the parents- Christ is encouraging and asking us to follow Him

Separation: In the Old Testament the people were separated twice: 1st from Abraham and 2nd from the Egyptians. How were the Jews separated? The food, the Sabbath – they were separated because they had the 10 Commandments.

The 3rd sanctification is the Christians from the Jews: God thinks of the Christians as Holy of Holies (St. Pachomious) – if the Israelites were holy and He took the Christians out further, then the Christians are the Holy of Holies. The 3,000 asked St. Peter “what do we do?” “separate yourself from this wicked and perverse generation” become even more separated. Christians have the beatitudes – these are the New Testament Commandments and are baptized, Myron

We sanctify through baptism (old and new). We sanctify everything by **the word of God and prayer**

Putting on Holiness: When we’re sanctified we are united with Christ – He is now part of the I. BE HOLY FOR THE LORD YOUR GOD IS HOLY → verse of the unit. Separation without putting on Christ is torture – there is no life. Separation is not a punishment

Original sanctification is through baptism – I renounce you Satan. The union is accepting Christ → see the dual action of setting apart and uniting all the time, every day we should examine ourselves and set ourselves apart from sin and ask the Holy Spirit to come and dwell in us

What it means to be sanctified (practically): The respect due for the children of God: We are very special in God's eyes. We are the daughters and sons of the King of kings – we need to act according to our calling. Princes and princesses still get disciplined but with respect - we respect them as the children of God. King and queens are disciplined → talk about St. Mary

Examples:

- Parent throws kid a graduation party at a club and the kid doesn't go because they have Christ in them and they do not feel comfortable taking Christ in there with them
- Sanctifying the day of the Lord on Sunday – if you can't keep it, then make Saturday the day of the Lord and go to the vineyard

Sanctification is action and words

- OT. Moses – action: crossing the Red Sea, manna etc. Words: 10 commandments
- NT. Words = prayer. Action = baptism, sacraments

CREED:

CHURCH FATHERS:

REFLECTION:

Sanctification: we are set apart from the rest because of the Holy Spirit. We are not only kind to those who are kind to us b/ that is nothing special. We are kind to everyone, not just Christians. We must show that we are Christians so that others may see the Lord in our love.

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

Sanctification

INTRODUCTION

Introduce the Unit by discussing that the goal is that by the end of the lesson, everyone will know the exact meaning of the word “sanctification” and how it applies to us- our minds, our bodies, and our spirits.

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

CONNECTION POINT:

The Lord has set us apart upon Him so that we may live as Christians and Be Holy. We must work to maintain this Holiness.

LESSON BODY:

SANCTIFICATION STORY

Start off by telling the kids this story:

There once was a King. Have the kids choose the name of the King.

This King was a very loving and kind king. He was powerful, yet generous and always understanding of his people’s needs.

The King then invited his people to join him in his palace.

He said “I’m opening up my palace to everyone who wants to be in it, but there is one condition. You have to be like me, in your actions, in your words, even in your image”

After he told them this, the people of his kingdom came knocking at his gates because they wanted to go inside and live in his palace.

There were lots of people in the nation that he ruled, but when he looked around, he only found that a few looked like him, and the rest, were not fit to live in the palace with him.

So everyone approached the gates, but....

Only those who obeyed him and became like him were allowed to enter. Because they resembled the king, they were set apart from everyone else. This is what made them special and what granted them access through the gates.

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SANCTIFIED: PUTTING THE STORY IN CONTEXT

Putting this story into the context of sanctification, today’s introduction, and the rest of this unit.

Let’s define **Sanctification**.

“To Sanctify” is:

- To Consecrate
- To make holy
- To Separate
- Set apart from the world and bring into the sphere of the sacred for God’s use

Now that we know what sanctification means, let’s talk about its significance to us. *Why* are we sanctified? *How* are we sanctified?

WHY ARE WE SANCTIFIED?

TWO main reasons to understand.

First one:

Split the class in half. One half opens up to Leviticus, other half opens up to Peter.

Before reading these verses, have the students note that one passage is from the Old Testament and the other is from the new testament, but they both convey the same message.

Leviticus 11:44- *For I am the LORD your God. You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I am holy. Neither shall you defile yourselves with any creeping thing that creeps on the earth.*

Peter 1:13-16- *Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; ¹⁴ as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; ¹⁵ but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶ because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."*

After reading the second verse, make sure the understanding and connection is made that the verse in book of Peter is alluding to scripture in Leviticus.

We are sanctified because: It is God's Commandment

The second reason we are sanctified is because Christ prayed for our sanctification

John 17:13-23 *But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. ¹⁴ I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁵ I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁷ Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. ¹⁸ As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.*

I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will ^[a] believe in Me through their word; ²¹ that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. ²² And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: ²³ I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

Very precious prayer.

HOW ARE WE SANCTIFIED?

"Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

"And for their sakes, I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth"

Make them holy through the gift of the Spirit and by correct doctrine. – St. John Chrysostom

John 17:17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

Write this on the board. Take it one step at a time:

“Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth”

So if “Your word” = “Truth”

Then we are Sanctified by God’s word (substitute “your word” for “truth”)

SANCTIFICATION

Has 2 parts: (1) Separation and (2) Putting on Christ

Separation: God’s children → Children of Kings of Kings → Princes and Princesses

We are separated. This makes us very valuable and special. It makes us different. If you think back to the first couple of slides with the king and the people, those who were allowed in the palace look “special”, not like the other generic figures.

If God is the King of Kings we are God’s children, that makes us sons and daughters of the king of kings”

In other words, that makes us princes and princesses

If I have an unhealthy friendship, habit, attachment, etc, it needs to be pointed out and removed. We aren’t different because we are Coptic or from different culture, but as Christians we belong to Christ and the Church

Putting on Christ: Putting on Christ comes second. We have to follow an organized order in order to be sanctified. We have to be cleaned, be sanctified, be separated in order to prepare ourselves to put on Christ.

How we receive/put on Christ:

Baptism- initially

Communion- nourishes and enriches

SO, WE ARE SANCTIFIED. NOW WHAT?

Sanctification is a continuous process that requires our care, attention, and maintenance

The 3 R's of Sanctification:

Remember my identity and calling

The Church gave us holy items through which we put on & maintain Christ in us. As we live together as members of Christ (we are one body as a congregation) and as temples of the Holy Spirit, we also sanctify the world around us (they will know that we are Christians by our love). This means we should treat others with love

Christ told us *"You are the salt of the earth... the light of the world"* Mat 5:13. Ask the kids what this verse means. Salt is a very important part of a meal, right? Just like salt, we are also a very important part of this world. We must reveal our love to others so that through us they may also see the Lord. What is Salt good for if it's not for food?? What else do we use salt for? To melt ice? To be trampled on by ppl on the ground. We cannot lose our flavor

Respect the gifts and vessels of holiness

Have the kids criticize the way we act in church. Let them give suggestions for what should be done during communion and what it should be like. Compare it to what's happening and how do we fix it? Take videos of the kids in church/entering the church – think about it from the point of the church.

- How to enter the Church & behave in it
- How to approach Communion
- How to pray, pay attention to the Gospel, the liturgy

Renew our sanctification is continuously revived and renewed through the sacraments

We are each temples of the Holy Spirit and must keep ourselves cleansed to keep ourselves Holy (confession)

We also must maintain our own spirit by praying, fasting, confessing, taking communion, attending liturgy, reading the bible. Through Baptism we put on Christ and maintain Christ through Communion. When we feel like we are not close to Christ, we need to do things to help us become closer- going to church, reading the bible, praying

STORY OF JOSEPH

Briefly tell the kids the story of Joseph. How the Israelites made it to Egypt- How God prepared Joseph's life. God prepared he would be sold to people to bring him to Egypt, God gave him the gift of interpreting dreams so he would be in charge, God prepared the famine so Joseph's whole family would move to Egypt

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

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CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Unit V

Purpose:

LESSON 35: OUR LORD INVITES US TO RECEIVE GOD'S MERCY

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Luke 15:7 "I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.

Matthew 9:12 "When Jesus heard *that*, He said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick."

Matthew 7:12 "Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the prophets"

Luke 15:11-31 Parable of the Prodigal Son

Go behind the sin, more than the physical act. When we sin – we start with a very simple sin but it can be covering up a bigger sin later on

Story of man with the bread: he worked very hard on his spiritual life, ate 1 meal a day and then he went to monastic life and he saw that the monks ate twice a day and he thought to himself why do they eat twice a day? When I used to eat once a day? So he wouldn't eat the 2nd time with them and then he started to get hungry – very hungry. But he didn't want to admit his hunger to others so he hid a piece of bread. And then he came to himself and thought why I am stealing the bread? And he felt really bad and then he went and confessed – it was so hard for him to do that because he was proud but once he did it the hunger went away

Devil takes advantage of the darkness, where it's not out in the open. When you confess something, you bring it to light

Can give the kids a notebook if we have clear instructions and we follow up on it and tell the priest giving their confession if they are bringing the notebook with them

Get them to go through the songs they listen to, find out if they have any inappropriate words or gestures or hints and your conscious will tell you which one is inappropriate for the Son of God to listen to

1st part of sanctification: setting apart from sin with an emphasis on self-examination. Can self-examine in regard to the commandments, **Love the Lord your God & Love your neighbor**

- i. Do you show love to God or not? Actions speak louder than words
- ii. How do you love your friends/family if you don't spend time with them or serve them
- iii. Comparison with things that they do love and how they act with those things

Skit: begins with servant repenting. Thinking *I'm feeling a little cold, I'm not connecting with God. There's something missing. Maybe it's time to examine myself and confess. Do I feel far away because of my actions?* Begin listing actions:

- i. Start with relationship with God: my prayers, readings, liturgies
- ii. Then relationship with others: my actions with others reflect on my relationship with God - must be forgiving to get forgiveness

Then servant confesses to priest and priest sits silently until the end, where he can give advice or not. A priest should not be teaching in confessions

In confession there is cleansing – it's a grace. Help from God. it's a synergy (combination of 2 things, leads to more than the sum of them). Me alone, can't do it. When I work with God it is a synergy

CREED:

CHURCH FATHERS:

REFLECTION:

Contemplate on the saints in our church who are great examples of complete repentance and confession – the story of the Prodigal Son, St. Moses the Black, St. Peter when he denied Christ 3 times, St. Mary of Egypt, Zacchaeus – loved money more than God, broke 1st commandment, but our Lord, through loving him, brought Zacchaeus to give up the love of money & others. Christ used to go around forgiving sins and when sinners met Him they received joy and peace – Samaritan woman who was so excited she left her water pot and went all over the town telling people about Christ

The processes of repentance and confession is a *reconciliation with God = making up*.

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW PREVIOUS LESSON:

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

CONNECTION POINT:

LESSON BODY:

SIN AND ITS CONSEQUENCE

Ask the kids what they think a sinner is. A sinner is someone who says NO to God. Think about it, a sin is one where you either refuse to love God (e.g. first 4 commandments) or refusing to love your neighbor (e.g. last 6 commandments). Either way, you are disobeying, or saying no, to God

Ask the kids what is the consequence of sin. This is the scary part. In sinning, we choose to ignore God and His commandments, and thereby refuse Him, His love, and His salvation. We are condemning ourselves. The result of sin is that we are not peaceful, we are sad and we don't feel good about ourselves.

Romans 5:12 – *“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—”*

Ask the kids if God wants us to perish? Of course not!

GOD'S MERCY AND OUR RETURN TO HIM: THE PRODIGAL SON

God is a loving Father, one that does not want us to perish, and therefore offers us MERCY

Not only does God offer us a way to eliminate all our sins (repentance, confession), but He also is overjoyed at our salvation: Luke 15:7 *“I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.”*

Ask the kids how we receive God's mercy and return to Him? Let's walk a little bit through the story of the Prodigal Son to understand how to do it.

This is a common story that discusses repentance and God's mercy. We all know that the younger son took his inheritance from his father, lived a lavish and sinful life, and wasted everything. Then there was a famine in the land and he had to work with the pigs and would have been happy to eat their food.

However, the beginning of regaining God's mercy is that it says *“But when he came to himself...’I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you,¹⁹ and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.”* This was the first time he really realized how bad things were and what he had done to himself, all the sin he had fallen into. This is **self-examination...HOW?? – we have to make a conscious effort! Maybe assign yourself a time, have a notebook with you and write things down, etc.** If we don't stop to realize our faults and our wrong-doings, we can

never return and find God again. This comes hand-in-hand with **repentance**. Not only must you realize your mistakes, but also to feel bad about them and turn your heart away from them

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. ²¹ And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.'²² "But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. ²³ And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; ²⁴ for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry.

We notice here that the second part, after repentance, is the actual **confession**. We go to God and ask for our forgiveness, through priests, and we gain His mercy. Notice that God was not angry, but loving, and overjoyed at His son's return. So He will also be with your return from sin

Repentance means deciding to change our ways. Sometimes this may require some sort of discipline (for example, if you consistently talk about someone then Abouna might suggest praying for that person for a whole week). The Fruits of repentance and confession are peace and joy, a reconnection with God.

Don't forget, we cannot ask for mercy but then not offer it. We have to be merciful to others as well if we expect God to forgive us! *Matthew 7:12 "Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the prophets"*

HOW TO MAKE A GOOD CONFESSION

When we go to confess we are meet our Lord Jesus to say sorry and be forgiven

1. Prepare with a prayer asking the Holy Spirit to help you find what you have done wrong
2. When I go to the priest, he prays "Our Father" with me
3. I tell my sins to the priest
4. The Priest sometimes gives us advice, sometimes reads with me something from the bible
5. The Priest gives us an Absolution = a prayer that the priest prays to God on our behalf to ask forgiveness from God in our Lord Jesus' name. Then he would make the sign of the cross as he anoints us with oil
6. We come out feeling peace and joy and we are able to start over loving God and others.

It doesn't end there. We must fight every day to avoid the sins of our confession and earn God's mercy!

****Go through your day. See what you say to people. Go through your music. Is your life filled the way a child of God would want it to be filled??**

Remember, there is a physical sin, but there is always something behind the sin. Look to the core of why you do things? Is it your environment, is it your state of mind? ANALYZE!

Our fathers and mothers and the Abounas never stop loving us when we do something wrong, they just don't like what we did. Abouna also never remembers our sins after he prays and they are forgiven.

The Mystery of repentance and confession is the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit helps us to love God and others – when the Holy Spirit is present inside me I feel love, joy, and peace. The Holy Spirit will help me to find what I have done wrong. We can rely on the work of the Holy Spirit and we should always take time to listen to the Holy Spirit.

The most important and best way to listen to the Holy Spirit and repent is to take some time at the end of every day and make a list of the sins you have committed that day so you can remember them and have an honest and true confession with Abouna

Ask yourself: Did I fail Christ today? Look at all the times you said no to God each day, will help your sharpen your conscious and you will become less likely to fall into the same sins day after day

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- Notebook for everyone to take home and practice the daily examination of the consciousness (two verses inside: Matthew 7:12 as reminder of the Law and Like 15:7 as reminder of repentance and confession)

CONCLUSION

Remind the kids to fill out notebooks and can bring the notebooks with them when they go talk to Abouna

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead”

1 Peter 1:3

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Unit V

Purpose:

LESSON 36: OUR LORD JESUS CALLED US TO FOLLOW HIM (PUTTING ON CHRIST)

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Life in Christ by Nicholas Cabasilas

John 14:31 *But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandments, so I do.*

Love one another as I have loved you

Prayer: Luke 11; John 14

Communion: Background for servants – not kids: Story of St. Emilda who became a nun at a young age but she wasn't allowed to take Communion because she was too young. For a whole year the girl begged the mother superior and the mother asked the priest who said that he couldn't do it. so while they were all taking communion the girl knelt down and was crying. A nun came out and saw Emilda kneeling and there was a little Body hanging above Emilda and the nun got the mother superior and the mother superior got the Priest and the Priest came down with the patent and the host came down on the patent and the priest gave it to Emilda. She was so so happy, she went into a very very deep prayer. They left her in deep prayer for a while and when they came back she was dead.

Baptism: we put on Christ through the faith of our parents. Other examples of salvation through the faith of others: The 4 people who brought the paralyzed man through the roof. Christ looked at the faith of the 4 and told the paralyzed man he was forgiven.

St. Cyril's commentary of St. John talks about the raising of Lazarus – Jesus goes to Bethany and Martha meets Him. In the middle of the conversation with Martha He asks her if she believes that He is the resurrection and the life and that He can raise Lazarus. He's asking Martha's faith to raise her brother. He's asking faith from the dead person's sister because the

dead person can't answer. Isn't that what we do in our churches? We ask the mother's faith for the baby, to be raised not from physical death but from eternal death

If you look at who had the faith for the healing that Jesus did – it's not the sick person. The paralyzed man is forgiveness of sins, much more than healing. When we're baptized, we're leaning on the faith of the parent to be healed

What about idiots/mentally handicapped people? They can't understand the Gospel so does that mean that they're going to hell? That's why the sacraments are mysteries. Don't stop children from entering the kingdom of Heaven

After we're baptized we come out as a different person. A new person in Christ – I died to the world but now I live with Christ living in me. → because the kids have a lot to struggle with, and we understand.

How to be special like Jesus: Pictures of Christ's daily life teaching us how to live. They are not, and should never, be like anyone else. They should not be like each other if they are doing wrong. "Be an example to the believers in words and in conduct". Can be kind to others. Love one another is given just to the Church

CREED:

CHURCH FATHERS:

REFLECTION:

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW SANCTIFICATION :

Sanctification: we are set apart from the rest because of the Holy Spirit. Sacraments is the first thing that we think about, after setting apart from sin. Baptism is the sign of our belief. The first step is to believe in Jesus and commit to Him. Everyone in the Church is a believer in Christ through baptism so we can talk about works with the Church. The works are nothing without the belief. Baptism is the door to enter into Heaven and the works come from that. Putting on Christ is the 2nd step

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

CONNECTION POINT:

I can do all things in Christ who strengthens me

When you feel down, challenged and stressed in your life e.g. problem in school – not doing well. If I run away from things that are giving me a hard time I put on Christ to strengthen me. I go to Him to pray and put on the sacraments.

Very specific point: I'm not doing well in school, I'm not getting along well with my parents, or friends, someone bullying me in school & you feel so put down and you can't defend yourself and you feel so overpowered → must stick to Christ to find the right thing to do. It'll feel very intimidating if you don't have an internal power, that power is Christ.

LESSON BODY:

PUTTING ON CHRIST: COMMUNION

When you take Communion you practice dedication. You take on Christ in yourself and then you enjoy Him. If I took the Holy Bread then that whole day is very special.

Holiness: give attention to the day that we take Communion – Christ is here with me. I watch what I eat, what I say what I do. Why do we say don't spit, don't put your finger in your mouth – it's to be very aware that we have Christ in us.

We live from Communion to Communion. We prepare during the week and the other days we enjoy it in us. When I take communion do I eat it like any other piece of bread? Or do I really think about what I'm taking? There was a mother who was talking to Abouna who said that she never wanted to bite on the bread, she thought it was too much to bite on it. We have to think about what we're doing, we take Communion with a lot of respect. Apply it them: what do you do when you take communion?

It's all about preparation – do you want to have Christ in you. If you do, then you'll prepare yourself.

PRAYER

It is important to remember the Lord's prayer in our daily lives. Although it is repeated often, its meaning should not be forgotten. Because God has guided us through life, we have to be close to him and listen to him

“Our father who art in heaven”: God is our real and ultimate father. We have our earthly fathers who are under him. Think about how much your father loves you, and think about how much more your Father in heaven loves you. When we say or think of the father we think about honor, instruction, discipline, protection, etc. Also, we say “our” not my...because we are all ONE body, united by Christ.

“Hallowed be thy name”: You are my highest regard; DEFINITION of hallowed: regarded as holy, respected and feared b/ of importance

“Thy kingdom come “: we pray for when the Lord will come back and take us to his Kingdom. My heard belongs to God

“Thy will be done. On earth as it is in heaven”: we are asking God to instruct us through life.
“Your will be done”- guide me in you path so that I know what to do, because you are all knowing and you always know what's best for me.

“Give us this day our daily bread”: Please provide us with bread to eat and the bread of life (i.e. manna); father is the one who provides the food

“Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us”: we are all sinners and need discipline and forgiveness from our father (through repentance and confession). Similarly,

we must also love one another and forgive one another. If not then how can we expect God to forgive us?

“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil”: As our father, the God is also our protector. We as that he keeps us in peace and keep us away from evil (evil thoughts and actions as well)

Remind the kids how to pray: When we pray: 1. Call His name 2. Ask for the kingdom and forgiveness 3. petition for others 4. Praise God “For thine is the kingdom, the power, the glory...”

PUTTING ON CHRIST: LOVING ONE ANOTHER THROUGH SERVICE

Because we love God so much we must follow his commandments and love Him and others through service. First 4 commandments about Loving the Lord with all your heart and soul and mind and the last 6 are about loving one another as Christ loved us (the ultimate love)

Examples of Service: St. Mary and the wedding- even Christ respects his earthly parents; when we obey our parents, we are obeying Christ.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- **Play the Our Father game at the end of the lesson**

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Unit V

Purpose:

LESSON 37: GOD GAVE US LAWS TO LIVE BY

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

Sanctification is about love. Christ's commandment: love one another as I have loved you - "As" means "similar to" or "as" can mean "because". Because Christ loves us, we'll be able to love others. We take from Him and give to others

All the commandments are summarized in the 2 commandments – see class activity below

- The 10 commandments
- The Greatest commandments: love God and love your neighbor
- New commandment: love one another as I have loved you

We are sanctified by the commandments.

Repentance and confession: Explain the fruits - relationship b/w us and God. How to confess-famous sinners, how Jesus deals with sinners. Examine yourself every day- give them the law-examine based on this law- start with they already know is wrong- sharpen it.

- EXAMINATION OF CONSCIOUS THAT IS DAILY- when did we say no to God's commandment
- Give them a notebook to write down their examination- keep for confession- once a month list of confession- give to Father of Confession. Divide each week- every month come back for confession with the notes- with the commandments in the front

How to confess- pray "our father" recite the confession starting from the last time they confessed—absolution- read from bible, give advice, maybe discipline- abouna never feels bad

about what you're saying- has heard confessions from many ppl. If we do not confess, we are robbing Christ of what He came for - He came for us and our sins.

Fruits of repentance and confession- peace and joy- reconnection with God. Pray easily after that. A good confession results in peace and joy. Must forgive to be forgiven. Ex. Joseph when he forgave his brothers; King that forgave his servant; sinful woman, thief on the cross, Samaritan woman, zakarias,

Make confession productive- give peace to your heart e.g. if I've offended someone, must confess and repent but also fix the mistake or sin. Reconciliation with others- do not recount the past deeds- just be sorry. A person should never be objectified- person before objects-

CREED:

CHURCH FATHERS:

REFLECTION:

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

CONNECTION POINT:

LESSON BODY:

THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

Memorize the Commandments:

- 1- DIRECTED HIT on the fear of God utmost respect- no other Gods
- 2- Do not make yourself a carved image- do not worship materials- happiness of owning something- posters VS saint pictures- we see the Holy Spirit in them that is why It's different "Praise God all his saints"- where does God live? where is his Holy place? He lives in the hearts of his saints, they are his real sanctuary- Gods Sabbath is in His saints; when you call God do you look up or inside you?
- 3- Do not take the lords name in vain
- 4- Keep the Sabbath Holy- go to church! Take communion- keep Sunday open- time with God, family, the needy, the sick
- 5- Honor father and mother
- 6- Do not kill
- 7- Do not steal (DO NOT STEAL THE JOY FROM SOMEONE ELSE- NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTION- UNLESS THIS PERSON IS HURTING THEMSELVES OR OTHERS)
- 8- Do not commit adultery- be respectful of your body and the body of others- only naked image you can look at is Christ on the cross. People bitten by the serpents by looking at (ADULTRY IS EVEN TO LOOK IN THE NEW TESTAMENT)
- 9- Do not bear false witness- LIE

10- Do not covet- desire something that is not yours- be content with what you have- commit murmuring, unhappy with God- cannot give him thanksgiving

THE NEW COMMANDMENT

“Love one another as I have loved you”: Good Samaritan parable: the priest and Levite couldn’t touch the man because they were on their way to worship and they were clean. In this parable, Christ is showing them the new commandment. Just 1 commandment.

Sanctification is about love. Christ’s commandment: love one another as I have loved you - “As” means “similar to” or “as” can mean “because”. Because Christ loves us, we’ll be able to love others. We take from Him and give to others

The new commandment is the old commandment, they’re not different. Love one another as I have loved you is the 2 commandments in 1. Jesus said: if you love me, keep my commandments. The commandment is to love one another, which is loving God.

Love each other as I have loved you: the focus of the New Testament is about the church. When you love the church as Christ has loved us you have fulfilled the New Testament. Our relationship with Christ is dependent on the community Ex. St. Paul was away for many years and when he had a visitor, the first question he had was about the community. We know we have moved from death to life because we love the brethren. CORE of our faith—that God is in the church.

When we empty ourselves then we have a place for someone else. When you want the person you hate to be in heaven; giving up our selfishness.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OLD AND NEW COMMANDMENTS

Difference between 10 commandments and beatitudes: it was said to the old, now its said to the new – highlight the comparisons e.g. OT: love the Lord, New: sell what you have. The OT had a level of commandments and they had to live by them. The higher the level of commandments, the higher the level of etiquette e.g. at no time should you address the Queen “you” or give the Queen your back. . . the Queen/prince can’t use common jokes or common words. The higher the person the higher the etiquette

“It was told to the people of old you shall not commit adultery but I say to you. . .” → MUCH higher standard leads to a higher standard of examination

- Christians are the holy of the holies because of the higher standard

- Give example of church and alter – in the alter you don't talk to anyone or pray out loud or wear normal clothing (tonya required) but in the common area you talk and pray loudly and wear normal clothes
- Sanctification: More special, more disciplined

We are sanctified by the commandments

CLASS ACTIVITY

Make 10 (or 20) index cards and put ONE commandment on each card.

Divide the following verse into 10 sections and write them on the back of each card in order of the commandments:

1. A new commandment (back of index card of 1st commandment)
2. I give unto you (back of index card of 2nd commandment), etc etc
3. that you
4. Love
5. One another
6. As I have
7. Loved you
8. that you also
9. Love one another
- 10: John 13:34

If you make 10 cards (one commandment for each person), have the kids line up in order of the ten commandments and when they are in the order, have them flip over their card and in order from 1 to 10, read each section of the "new commandment" verse.

If you have more than 10 (or 20), put a star on the cards that have the part of the verse written in the back. Same thing, except, each student with have to find the other student in the class with the same commandment and then together, they have to get in the correct order.

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- **Index cards with verse/commandments**

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Unit V

Purpose:

LESSON 38: WE RESPOND TO GOD'S CONTINUOUS INVITATION TO WORSHIP

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

1 Peter ¹³ ¹⁴ *as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance;* ¹⁵ *but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,* ¹⁶ *because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."*

Exodus 15: 11 *Who is like You, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like You, glorious in holiness, Fearful in praises, doing wonders?*

Sanctification by material things = sacramental. Sacramentals are for the congregation. Things we hear, things we see, touch, smell; Taste – Holy Bread; See – icons to sanctify my eyes vs. when I look at profane pictures I'm doing the opposite

The woman with the flow of blood – touched Christ's clothes, not Him.

The sacraments give us Christ Himself: His body, His blood

Give them Holy Oil & Holy Water at home so they can keep it at home. Tell them personal experience: when Abouna lived alone in Iowa he had a very bad cold and so he went to bed and he felt something coming towards him and he felt like he was being thrown to the floor. He woke up because it was a nightmare. He took the holy oil and went sprinkling everything and it never happened again. Must use it with faith and prayer

CREED:

CHURCH FATHERS:

REFLECTION:

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

CONNECTION POINT:

LESSON BODY:

SANCTIFICATION

We've been talking a lot about sanctification and what it means. This unit is supposed to summarize all that we've learned during this year

- We're sanctified by being separated from the world and from sin and then being filled with God's holiness
- We've talked about separation from the world: when we sin we are separated from God and so we need to confess and repent so that we can get close to God and separate from the world. We've talked all year about making Christian, Godly friends, what music to listen to, what to do with our free time and how we need to make the decision to separate and not be a part of worldly things
- Once we've separated from all of that, we need something to fill us – and that is holiness. Through all the sacraments and attending church we are filled with holiness
- But now the last point – why are these things holy? Like Holy oil and the water Abouna prays on when he comes to your house. And even the church and all the things in it

Let me tell you a quick story about the power of Holy oil, when used with faith and in prayer.

THE SACRAMENTS SANCTIFY US

When I was in the monastery in Texas this past winter I met a woman who told me this story: a few years ago abouna went over her house during lent. You know how Abouna goes to everyone's house and prays and blesses the house? In some places, abouna prays the Andeel prayer, or the Unction of the Sick in the house. It's different than what abouna prays in our houses here but he might go to pray it if someone is sick and we pray it on the last Friday of Lent. It's a long prayer and everyone must be fasting before they receive it. Abouna prays over a plate of oil and there are 7 cotton balls in the oil, to go with the 7 prayers. Each cotton ball is lit at the start of each prayer.

So Abouna went to her house early in the morning and prayed the Unction of the Sick. The woman had a 6 yr old son who was very sick. He had very bad asthma and was constantly going to different doctors and taking so many different kinds of medicine because he had trouble breathing. After Abouna left, the son asked his mom what was the plate and what was it used for. His mom told him this plate has holy oil and it will heal illnesses. The boy, with very strong faith, decided he was going to use some everyday on his chest and that he was going to stop using his medicine. His mom liked the idea of him using the oil but did not want him to stop using his medicine! The boy was determined and every day for about a month he put some oil on his chest and wouldn't take his medicine. After a while of doing this, the boy no longer had any breathing problems and no longer had to visit any doctors. He was completely cured.

The Unction of the Sick is one of the 7 sacraments of the church. What are the 7 sacraments

1. Unction of the Sick
2. Baptism
3. Myron
4. Repentance and Confession
5. Eucharist
6. Marriage
7. Priesthood

The sacraments are one example of things we can hear, taste, touch, and smell that sanctify us. They make us holy because they are holy.

GOD IS HOLY

Why are the sacraments holy? God is the source of all holiness, anything that is connected to God becomes Holy like God is Holy. What do you guys think is God's most important characteristics? **Holiness**. In our first unit we talked about different characteristics of God and how we can see them by looking at nature. However, we did not talk about Holiness.

Holy: same root as the word "whole." As "wholeness", holiness may be taken to indicate a state of religious completeness or perfection; sanctified or set apart for a specific purpose

What is considered Holy? Objects can be, like the oil because they are dedicated for a sacred use – for worshipping God. Things that are close to God, including people are Holy.

Read Isaiah 6:1-7

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one cried to another and said:

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!"

And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke.

So I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone!"

*Because I am a man of unclean lips,
And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips;
For my eyes have seen the King,
The Lord of hosts.”*

Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal which he had taken with the tongs from the altar. 7 And he touched my mouth with it, and said:

“Behold, this has touched your lips;

Your iniquity is taken away,

And your sin purged.”

How many times do the angels say that God is Holy? 3 times! Nowhere else does it describe a characteristic of God in this way. The Bible never says that God is “strong strong strong” or “great great great” NO ONE is like God in Holiness...it’s like trying to put the ocean in a cup...cant happen! When Moses was in front of the burning bush...what made it Holy? That bush was not Holy the day before or the week before...God’s presence made it Holy.

Anything that is connected to God or anywhere God is, is made Holy because He is Holy. That means that everything in the church is Holy and is there for a reason. And when we touch or look at these Holy things, we also become holy

OUR RESPONSE TO GOD’S HOLINESS: WORSHIP WITH ALL OF OUR SENSES

We are called to worship God in response to this holiness. How do we worship God? By praying, of course. But also with all of our senses. When we enter the church, all our senses are made holy

- EYES: As soon as you walk into church- icons, art, paintings, etc., Image of the Son (in altar)- visual for heaven (saints, etc), you do not see blank walls, We are visual thinkers and Icons are written- tell visual story- red cape- blood, gold-glory, white- purity, etc.
 - When we look at profane images – we are doing the opposite.
- EARS: **Volunteer to read:** Isaiah 6:3 “Holy, Holy, Holy the world is filled with your glory” sounds like liturgy? Yup! Entire liturgy is sung. Praises, readings, etc. Worship with music and song; spirit worships through songs and hymns. **Have**

two girls sing the part of the liturgy “the Cherubim worship you...and the Seraphim glorify you...” When we say the “Ooooo” it’s so boring? It’s for a reason- time to meditate and pray. Also, it’s only boring b/ we do not know them. We must learn them so that we can join in the praise! “Praise him with cymbals of joy!” **Have deacon play** the symbols and triangle as in liturgy.

- When we listen to profane things – we are doing the opposite
- **TOUCH AND TASTE: Volunteer to read** Isaiah 6:7 Behold, this has touched your lips; Your iniquity is taken away, And your sin purged.” coals, touched your lips, iniquity taken away, sin is purged.....Communion!!! given for the remission of sins and eternal life to those who partake of it. Most important element; that God touches me. When we go to BK...we do not go to see the people and meet the manager and see the area...we go to get food! The same is with liturgy, we go to receive this “food” that God has provided for us.
- **SMELL:** the second you walk into church....what is the first thing you notice??? **INCENSE!!** And the house was filled with smoke; **Volunteer to read** Rev 5:8 “Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, *and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.*” Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ was given incense as one of his 3 gifts when he was born by the wise men. The smell stays on your clothes throughout the day...and smell is most closely tied with our memory and emotions...

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

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CONCLUSION

God is Holy and He wants us to be Holy too...we do this by continuous worship throughout the day in everything we do. With ALL OUR HEARTS.

We can show God our love by honoring Him and worshipping Him. Following His commandments, confessing and repenting when we break them, praying to Him, especially in the morning – as the first thing you do that day - and spending time with Him throughout the day

When we use holy oil and blessed water with prayer and with faith, then we are sanctified, we are made holy. We must protect this holiness.

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS

Unit V

Purpose:

LESSON 39: WE PROTECT GOD'S CONTINUOUS GIFT OF HOLINESS

SERVANT PREPARATION:

Verse & References:

"But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, 'Be holy for I am holy.'" Peter 1:15-16

This lesson has three underlying goals:

1. To talk about Holiness as a gift from God and like we protect and cherish the gifts we love, we should do the same with our holiness
2. To discuss when we first acquire holiness
3. To learn how to renew holiness when it is broken.

We accomplish and integrate these lessons throughout the lesson by first introducing the idea of "gifts" in a worldly sense. This will allow us to think about how much we care for materialistic gifts. Then we introduce and discuss it in a spiritual sense (God's gifts) and after we have talked about the meaning of holiness, we will discuss how to keep ourselves holy.

Holiness is a gift. God is holy and when he calls us to be holy, it's an opportunity for us to be "Godlike" (not in his divinity because eternity, power to create, etc are unique to only God and not to be thought of by man) but in our words, our thoughts, our behavior, and in all other aspects we can exhibit through our humanity. God invites us to be holy because this goes all the way back to the creation of man:

Genesis 1:26, 27: *"Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness. So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him."*

In order for us to maintain God's image we must seek and practice holiness. (Be holy for I am holy). God created man in purity and righteousness and when we acquire holiness, we can restore and exercise these virtues, and protect ourselves from sinful temptations. Like God is

strong, when he calls us to be holy, we have the chance to acquire STRENGTH from God and this strength can surpass all worldly things which leads us to our ultimate goal: Sanctification

During the liturgy we say “the holies are for the holies” This is in reference to the sacrament of communion. In order to receive the Holy Communion, we must make sure that we are practicing a life of holiness in order to be worthy of Christ’s body and blood. The holies are for the holies. We cannot mix the two because unholiness is defiled and unworthy of the holy gifts.

CREED:

CHURCH FATHERS:

REFLECTION:

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

CONNECTION POINT:

Our most valuable gifts are the ones that we aren't always conscious of. Instead of asking God for a new house, or a car, or a dog, let's think about asking God to help us restore the gift he already gave us: our holiness.

We first acquire holiness in Baptism where our bodies and senses are holy to God.

Satan wants us to fall into sin and take our holiness away because he lost his holiness. It makes him angry to see us in God's holiness which is why we face temptation. In order to escape this, we must do two things:

1. Take off the world + 2. Put on Christ = Sanctification

Take off the world: Abandon the sins that we find in media, distractions, friends, hurtful language, unnecessary materialism/technology

Put on Christ: Communion, Repentance, Confession. Genuinely wanting to be close to God and be away from the hatred and deception of the world.

LESSON BODY:

MATERIAL GIFTS

To introduce the idea of a gift first in a materialistic sense, then transition to spiritual idea – Ask the kids What is a gift? What does it mean when someone gives you a gift?

Ask all the kids to think about a gift that they love. It can be a gift they have or one that they really want. One by one, bring a few kids to the front and have them answer the questions about this gift:

- What are you going to do with this gift?
- Are you going to hide it?
- Are you going to show it to everyone because you are proud of it?
- Will you protect it?
- Or will you leave it to be taken away from you?

- Will you take it with you everywhere you go?
- Or will you abandon it in the middle of nowhere?

THE GIFT OF HOLINESS

After the introduction, we have an idea of how we treat and cherish everyday gifts (worldly 'gifts'). Now we want to talk about God's most valuable gift to us: Holiness –

Ask the kids to name some gifts that God gives us (show pictures of nature, food, joy, friends, home, family) Then ask if anyone knows which is the most important/precious gift. From there introduce holiness, discuss what holiness is by asking the kids about their ideas.

God called us to be Holy: *But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, 'Be holy for I am holy'* 1 Peter 1:15-16

When do we first acquire holiness? Through baptism – our bodies and senses are holy for God

Sometimes we break this holiness. What causes our holiness to be broken? Discuss what some things are that take us away from holiness (videogames, computers, tv, music, phones, friends)

Why does Satan tempt us? *"And He said to them, 'I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy and nothing shall by any means hurt you.'*" Luke 10:18-19

MAINTAINING OUR HOLINESS

Talk about how to maintain or restore holiness when we lose it.

Two ways:

1. Take off the world: this means we must go away from sin. We deny Satan and the sinful temptations of the world. We always have to remember and believe that we are not like everyone else. We are not OF the world.
2. Put on Christ: who do this through (1) Communion/Eucharist (2) Reptence (3) Confession.

When we do these things, we renew the gift of holiness that Christ gave us

Tie everything back to sanctification. Holiness and sanctification come hand in hand - In order to maintain our holiness, we need to separate ourselves from the world. Ask the kids how the lesson relates to sanctification. Give some examples of those who have separated themselves from the world (Powerpoint includes pictures of Moses: was once a prince and had all the

riches, but decided to follow God and his people. Daniel is another example. These are stories the kids should know, so ask them to tell it in their words. They like to listen to each other.

John 17:15-19: ¹⁵ *I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.* ¹⁶ *They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.* ¹⁷ *Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.* ¹⁸ *As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.* ¹⁹ *And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.*

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

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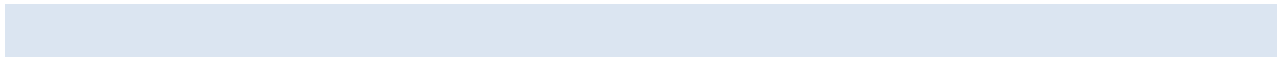
CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS



SEASONAL LESSONS. (3 LESSONS)

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

1. The feast of Nyrouz: (Help the students celebrate the feast processional with colored icons of Martyrs)
2. The feast of the Holy Cross: (Help the students celebrate the vespers processional with Wooden crosses and color coded ribbons)
3. The feast of the Holy Theotokos (How to make an Icon of the Theotokos)

1. FEAST OF NAYROUZ

SERVANT PREPARATION:

A. VERSE & REFERENCES:

Psalm 42:1-4 "As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my food day and night, While they continually say to me, "Where is your God?" When I remember these things, I pour out my soul within me. For I used to go with the multitude; I went with them to the house of God, With the voice of joy and praise, With a multitude that kept a pilgrim feast."

B. CHURCH FATHERS:

A martyr from The Apostolic Fathers: St. Ignatius of Antioch
Feast on the twenty-fourth day of Kiahk

Virtually nothing is known of St. Ignatius' life preceding his journey to martyrdom from Antioch to Rome. St. Ignatius (about 35-107 C.E.) was probably born a pagan of Syrian origin. In the year 69 C.E, St. Ignatius was appointed as the second bishop of Antioch, succeeding St. Peter the Apostle. Antioch is a city in Syria where St. Paul and St. Barnabas started their famous journey. Also at that time, St. Ignatius was a disciple of the apostle John.

His Martyrdom

St. Ignatius was ordered by the Roman prefect to be chained and sent to Rome during the reign of Emperor Trajan. When the Emperor heard that St. Ignatius had attracted many to believe in the Lord Christ through his teachings, the Emperor brought the saint and asked him, "Are you Ignatius the Theophoros?" St. Ignatius replied, "Yes, I am." The Emperor inquired about the meaning of his name.

The saint replied saying, "Theophoros means 'God-bearer.'" The Emperor asked, "Do you think that we do not carry our gods to support us in wars?" The Saint answered, "How can these statues be gods? Listen, there is no God except the only God that created the Heaven and Earth, and His Son Jesus Christ who was incarnated to save mankind. So if you had believed in Him, you would be content now in your kingship." The emperor attempted to persuade him to forsake Christianity, but he refused. The Emperor was enraged, ordered him bound with chains, and taken to Rome to be thrown to the beasts.

Despite the misery that St. Ignatius was subjected to, he was still always content and thankful. Ignatius responded to the Emperor's orders by kissing the chains that would be his means of receiving the crown of martyrdom. He shouted in joy, "Thank You Lord, for You granted to honor me with the abundance of Your love. You allowed me to be chained like Your Apostle Paul." He then left Syria under a heavy guardianship of ten soldiers. Two members of his own church, Rufus and Zosimus, also accompanied him and were also eventually sentenced to death. The believers tried to save St. Ignatius by paying bribes to the soldiers, but St. Ignatius refused, for he was yearning for martyrdom. He went on his way to Izmir (Smyrna) where the guards halted the journey for an extended rest stop. This is where he wrote a letter to the Christians of Rome that said in it: "I am afraid that your love may be harmful. If you wish to prevent my death, that will not be difficult for you. But allow me to be slaughtered wherever the altar has been prepared... I am wheat which must be ground, to make bread, to be offered to Jesus Christ. Whenever the people will not behold me anymore, I will behold our Lord Jesus Christ."

In Izmir (Smyrna) St. Ignatius was received with great honor by St. Polycarp and was visited by many priests, deacons, and members of neighboring Christian communities. Onesimus, bishop of Ephesus, was also with Ignatius there. Onesimus brought along a deacon named Burrhus who was a scribe, and with his help, Ignatius wrote letters to the churches. He wrote thence to the Churches of Ephesus, Magnesia, and Tralles, letters of encouragement, and a fourth to the Church at Rome, begging them not to deprive him of martyrdom by intervention with the pagan authorities.

From Izmir (Smyrna), the guards hauled Ignatius to the port city of Troas. Burrhus the scribe stayed with him, still writing letters to the various churches. He wrote to Philadelphia, Smyrna, and St. Polycarp. Then he was taken from there through Macedonia and Illyria to Dyrrhachium, where he was embarked for Italy.

When he arrived at the coliseum in Rome, the guards rushed him into the arena where he faced the wild beasts cheerfully as a person hurrying to eternal glory. Two lions sprang upon him and left only a few bones of him as the Saint delivered up his soul in the hand of the Lord. Then the lion released him and went back to his place, and the believers came and carried his body with great honor to a place that they had prepared for him in Antioch. Emperor Theodosius the Young (408-450) put the relics in the temple of Fortune located in the center of Antioch, which was converted to a Christian church, and named it after St. Ignatius' name.

His Feast

The feast of St. Ignatius is the 17th of October in the Roman Catholic calendar. It is the 20th of December in the Greek Church. The Coptic Church celebrates his feast on Kiahk 24 (January 2nd).

His Letters

St. Ignatius' life is represented mainly by his letters and writings. Seven of St. Ignatius' writings composed on his way from Antioch to Rome are preserved. The seven epistles are an invaluable testimony to the beliefs and internal organization of the early Christians. St. Ignatius is the first writer to stress the virgin birth. He firmly denounced Docetism and viewed the mystery of the Trinity as an implicit doctrine of faith. The only guarantee against heresy, he taught, is the church united under a bishop. St. Ignatius is also the first in Christian literature to use the word *Catholic*.

The overall theme of St. Ignatius' letters is best described by St. Paul the Apostle's words, "Christ in you, the hope of glory!" (Col 1:27) To St. Ignatius, union with Christ is more important than anything else imaginable. St. Ignatius' theme can be summed up by his final salutation to the Church of Smyrna, "I salute the bishop, worthy of God, and presbytery for God, and my fellow slaves, the deacons, and all of you, individually and together in the name of Jesus Christ and His flesh and blood, in union with God and with you." (St. Ignatius' letter to Smyrna 12:2)

Each of St. Ignatius' letters is fairly similar in content, though each one has its own uniqueness. Perhaps the most common element of each letter is St. Ignatius' emphasis of the unity of the church and the role of the bishop as the center of that unity. He is most emphatic about the value and role of the Eucharist as the primary means of mediating the life of the risen Lord to the members of His body, the church. The letters differ according to St. Ignatius' delegations and conversations with the separate regions. These letters are of immeasurable significance for the history of the dogma.

His Teachings

St. Ignatius' letters reflect how fervidly he spoke and show us how he taught through intense religious zeal. In his letters, St. Ignatius addressed the question, "how can we attain salvation?" He taught that salvation may be attained by "fellowship with Christ, the only source of life," and "isolation from those whom we do not live the true life with." Also, he explained that we have attained salvation through the death of our Lord Jesus Christ who was crucified to grant us life. Finally, salvation may be attained by our unity with the risen body of Christ. The Lord is immortal life who grants us the new risen life and divine love.

St. Ignatius' letters reveal to us much of the history of the Church and the foundation of its true beliefs. For instance, St. Ignatius proceeds to write about the Church's role for Christians. He explains that the Church is a place of sacrifice, presenting the Eucharist as the sacrifice of the Church. It is a place of salvation, as salvation uses infinite love towards God to destroy death and the authority of the devil. He states that the Church is a place of prayer, as the combined prayers of the clergy and people are much more powerful than those of the individual. He also asserts that the Church is a place of purity, and all who are involved with the Church are pure.

St. Ignatius is the first to use the term “Catholic Church,” denoting the faithful gathered collectively and universally. It has been used in our liturgies, not to mean universality in location, but the spiritual existence in relation with the one altar and one Eucharist. It is the Church who gathers in love and unity in Christ.

St. Ignatius has also reiterated the function of the sacraments in our church’s early history. Baptism is among the sacraments that St. Ignatius wrote about. He taught that baptism was necessary for Jesus to purify the water from the dominion of the devil and to fulfill every righteousness. St. Ignatius also taught of the sacrament of the Eucharist. He affirmed that it is the primary means of mediating the life of the risen Lord to the members of the church and renewing our spiritual life. St. Ignatius has also underlined the rules of marriage. He declared that marriages must be held before the bishop and through his approval, as he is the father of the couple, and he emphasized the importance of celibacy and the sanctity of marriage. St. Ignatius also had very much to say about priesthood, as he was the bishop of Antioch.

St. Ignatius also had much to contribute to the hierarchical orders of the church. He portrayed a vivid picture of the ranks of priesthood and their place in ministering. He also confirmed that God had established these ranks by his own will and through the Holy Spirit, and thus they are to be respected regardless of their age or any trivial matters. The idea that the head of the Church represents Christ causes Ignatius to view these positions with great dignity, yet humility. He also manifests the great responsibility that priests and bishops must have, because without them not even baptism, agape, or Eucharist may be celebrated.

Finally, St. Ignatius taught that we must follow the perfect example; that of Christ. As Christ imitated his Father so must we imitate Christ. St. Ignatius chose to be martyred as the perfect imitation of Christ; hence “only he is the true disciple of Christ who is ready to sacrifice his own life for Him.” St. Ignatius teaches that we must always seek Christ, placing Him who died for us before all the earth. Thus we must always yearn to be in God’s hands and never fear death, as death is actually bondage of the devil.

THE EPISTLE OF IGNATIUS TO THE ROMANS

Ignatius, who is also called Theophorus, to the Church which has obtained mercy, through the majesty of the Most High Father, and Jesus Christ, His only-begotten Son; the Church which is beloved and enlightened by the will of Him that wills all things which are according to the love of Jesus Christ our God, which also presides in the place of the region of the Romans, worthy of God, worthy of honor, worthy of the highest happiness, worthy of praise, worthy of obtaining her every desire, worthy of being deemed holy, and which presides over love, is named from Christ, and from the Father, which I also salute in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father: to those who are united, both according to the flesh and spirit, to every one of His commandments; who are filled inseparably with the grace of God, and are purified from every strange taint, [I wish] abundance of happiness unblameably, in Jesus Christ our God.

CHAPTER 1: AS A PRISONER, I HOPE TO SEE YOU

Through prayer to God I have obtained the privilege of seeing your most worthy faces, and have even been granted more than I requested; for I hope as a prisoner in Christ Jesus to salute you, if indeed it be the will of God that I be thought worthy of attaining unto the end. For the beginning has been well ordered, if I may obtain grace to cling to my lot without hindrance unto the end. For I am afraid of your love, lest it should do me an injury. For it is easy for you to accomplish what you please; but it is difficult for me to attain to God, if ye spare me.

CHAPTER 2: DO NOT SAVE ME FROM MARTYRDOM

For it is not my desire to act towards you as a man-pleaser, but as pleasing God, even as also ye please Him. For neither shall I ever have such [another] opportunity of attaining to God; nor will ye, if ye shall now be silent, ever be entitled to the honor of a better work. For if ye are silent concerning me, I shall become God's; but if you show your love to my flesh, I shall again have to run my race. Pray, then, do not seek to confer any greater favor upon me than that I be sacrificed to God while the altar is still prepared; that, being gathered together in love, ye may sing praise to the Father, through Christ Jesus, that God has deemed me, the bishop of Syria, worthy to be sent for from the east unto the west. It is good to set from the world unto God, that I may rise again to Him.

CHAPTER 3: PRAY RATHER THAT I MAY ATTAIN TO MARTYRDOM

You have never envied any one; ye have taught others. Now I desire that those things may be confirmed [by your conduct], which in your instructions ye enjoin [on others]. Only request in my behalf both inward and outward strength, that I may not only speak, but [truly] will; and that I may not merely be called a Christian, but really be found to be one. For if I be truly found [a Christian], I may also be called one, and be then deemed faithful, when I shall no longer appear to the world. Nothing visible is eternal. "For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." For our God, Jesus Christ, Now that He is with the Father, is all the more revealed [in His glory]. Christianity is not a thing of silence only, but also of [manifest] greatness.

CHAPTER 4: ALLOW ME TO FALL A PREY TO THE WILD BEASTS

I write to the Churches, and impress on them all, that I shall willingly die for God, unless ye hinder me. I beseech of you not to show an unseasonable good-will towards me. Suffer me to become food for the wild beasts, through whose instrumentality it will be granted me to attain to God. I am the wheat of God, and let me be ground by the teeth of the wild beasts, that I may be found the pure bread of Christ. Rather entice the wild beasts, that they may become my tomb, and may leave nothing of my body; so that when I have fallen asleep [in death], I may be no trouble to anyone. Then shall I truly be a disciple of Christ, when the world shall not see so much as my body. Entreat Christ for me, that by these instruments I may be found a sacrifice [to God]. I do not, as Peter and Paul, issue commandments unto you. They were apostles; I am but a condemned man: they were free, while I am, even until now, a servant. But when I suffer, I shall be the freedman of Jesus, and shall rise again emancipated in Him. And now, being a prisoner, I learn not to desire anything worldly or vain.

CHAPTER 5: I DESIRE TO DIE

From Syria even unto Rome I fight with beasts, both by land and sea, both by night and day, being bound to ten leopards, I mean a band of soldiers, who, even when they receive benefits, show themselves all the worse. But I am the more instructed by their injuries [to act as a disciple of Christ]; "yet am I not thereby justified." May I enjoy the wild beasts that are prepared for me; and I pray they may be found eager to rush upon me, which also I will entice to devour me speedily, and not deal with me as with some, whom, out of fear, they have not touched. But if they be unwilling to assail me, I will

compel them to do so. Pardon me [in this]: I know what is for my benefit. Now I begin to be a disciple. And let no one, of things visible or invisible, envy me that I should attain to Jesus Christ. Let fire and the cross; let the crowds of wild beasts; let tearings, breakings, and dislocations of bones; let cutting off of members; let shatterings of the whole body; and let all the dreadful torments of the devil come upon me: only let me attain to Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 6: BY DEATH I SHALL ATTAIN TRUE LIFE

All the pleasures of the world, and all the kingdoms of this earth, shall profit me nothing. It is better for me to die in behalf of Jesus Christ, than to reign over all the ends of the earth. "For what shall a man be profited, if he gain the whole world, but lose his own soul?" Him I seek, who died for us: Him I desire, who rose again for our sake. This is the gain which is laid up for me. Pardon me, brethren: do not hinder me from living, do not wish to keep me in a state of death; and while I desire to belong to God, do not ye give me over to the world. Suffer me to obtain pure light: when I have gone thither, I shall indeed be a man of God. Permit me to be an imitator of the passion of my God. If anyone has Him within himself, let him consider what I desire, and let him have sympathy with me, as knowing how I am straitened.

CHAPTER 7: REASON OF DESIRING TO DIE

The prince of this world would fain carry me away, and corrupt my disposition towards God. Let none of you, therefore, who are [in Rome] help him; rather be ye on my side, that is, on the side of God. Do not speak of Jesus Christ, and yet set your desires on the world. Let not envy find a dwelling-place among you; nor even should I, when present with you, exhort you to it, be ye persuaded to listen to me, but rather give credit to those things which I now write to you. For though I am alive while I write to you, yet I am eager to die. My love has been crucified, and there is no fire in me desiring to be fed; but there is within me a water that lives and speaks, saying to me inwardly, Come to the Father. I have no delight in corruptible food, nor in the pleasures of this life. I desire the bread of God, the heavenly bread, the bread of life, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who became afterwards of the seed of David and Abraham; and I desire the drink of God, namely His blood, which is incorruptible love and eternal life.

CHAPTER 8: BE YE FAVORABLE TO ME

I no longer wish to live after the manner of men, and my desire shall be fulfilled if ye consent. Be ye willing, then, that ye also may have your desires fulfilled. I entreat you in this brief letter; do ye give credit to me. Jesus Christ will reveal these things to you, [so that ye shall know] that I speak truly. He is the mouth altogether free from falsehood, by which the Father has truly spoken. Pray ye for me, that I may attain [the object of my desire]. I have not written to you according to the flesh, but according to the will of God. If I shall suffer, ye have wished [well] to me; but if I am rejected, ye have hated me.

CHAPTER 9: PRAY FOR THE CHURCH IN SYRIA

Remember in your prayers the Church in Syria, which now has God for its shepherd, instead of me. Jesus Christ alone will oversee it, and your love [will also regard it]. But as for me, I am ashamed to be counted one of them; for indeed I am not worthy, as being the very last of them, and one born out of due time. But I have obtained mercy to be somebody, if I shall attain to God. My spirit salutes you, and the love of the Churches that have received me in the name of Jesus Christ, and not as a mere passer-by. For even those Churches which were not near to me in the way, I mean according to the flesh, have gone before me, city by city, [to meet me.]

CHAPTER 10: CONCLUSION

Now I write these things to you from Smyrna by the Ephesians, who are deservedly most happy. There is also with me, along with many others, Crocus, one dearly beloved by me. As to those who have gone before me from Syria to Rome for the glory of God, I believe that you are acquainted with them; to whom, [then,] do ye make known that I am at hand. For they are all worthy, both of God and of you; and it is becoming that you should refresh them in all things. I have written these things unto you, on the day before the ninth of the Calends of September (that is, on the twenty-third day of August). Fare ye well to the end, in the patience of Jesus Christ. Amen.

C. REFLECTION:

It is no coincidence that the coptic Calendar is the Calendar of martyrs. Our Coptic Church as the Bride of the Lamb, is also the mother of martyrs. We know that the faith of Christ could have not survived without the martyrs' blood that covered Egypt at different times and ages. There is not a city nor a town that had not been void of martyrs. There had not been a century that did not witness martyrdom of Copts. Martyrs are the precious sacrifices that the church offers to God from this passing world.

First grade students should be taught about Nyrouz martyrs without unnecessary exposure to violent stories.

D. PRAYER:

Praise is awaiting You, O God, in Zion; And to You the vow shall be performed.

O You who hear prayer, To You all flesh will come.

Iniquities prevail against me; As for our transgressions, You will provide atonement for them.

Blessed is the man You choose, And cause to approach You, That he may dwell in Your courts. We shall be satisfied with the goodness of Your house, Of Your holy temple.

By awesome deeds in righteousness You will answer us, O God of our salvation, You who are the confidence of all the ends of the earth, And of the far-off seas;

Who established the mountains by His strength, Being clothed with power;

You who still the noise of the seas, The noise of their waves, And the tumult of the peoples.

They also who dwell in the farthest parts are afraid of Your signs; You make the outgoings of the morning and evening rejoice.

You visit the earth and water it, You greatly enrich it; The river of God is full of water;

You provide their grain, For so You have prepared it.

You water its ridges abundantly, You settle its furrows;

You make it soft with showers, You bless its growth.

You crown the year with Your goodness, And Your paths drip with abundance.

They drop on the pastures of the wilderness, And the little hills rejoice on every side.

The pastures are clothed with flocks; The valleys also are covered with grain; They shout for joy, they also sing. Psalm 65

LESSON PREPARATION:

A. SONG:

O red dates your color is like, ..

B. VOCABULARY:

1. **Relic – part of a saints' body**
2. **Martyr – one who witnesses to the Truth, even up to death**

C. INTRODUCTION

If your church owns relics of martyrs you can ask your students: *Who here knows what all those red tubes are that we have in our church?* Does anybody know what is inside them, why they are so special? [there are **relics** of the saints inside them!] Does anybody know on which feast we take out almost all of them? [Nyrouz! Nyrouz is one of the feasts of the church and it is the Coptic New Year. It comes every year in September. Every year, our church does a very big procession, even going outside and around the church, with all the deacons holding a relic]. Does anybody know which special saints' relics we take out on Nyrouz? [The **Martyrs**]. Martyrs are people who were killed because they believed in Christ. They are most honored in the church and God gives them a very special place in Heaven. And on the Feast of Nyrouz, we remember the martyrs and we celebrate them (because we are happy that they were victorious on earth and are now with God in Paradise), we celebrate *with* them (because the church in heaven and the church on earth together worship and praise God joyfully), and we also thank God for giving the martyrs to His church because without them, the church would not have survived.

D. LESSON BODY:

THE MANY MARTYRS OF OUR CHURCH

Take one copy of each one of the icons so that every martyr is represented and put them up on the board or at the front of the room so all the students can see them. Tell the students the names of each one of the martyrs. Explain to the students that each student will get to choose one of these icons, color their own icon, sign their name on the back, frame it, and then walk in the procession at church on Nyrouz vespers with their icon, showing the church this martyr so that the people can honor him/her. Have the students choose their icons. Have the ones who chose the same icons sit in groups. As each group is coloring their icon, one servant will come and sit with the students and (gently) explain the story of that martyr to them while they are coloring. Servants will also help the students sign their names and frame their icons when they are finished coloring. Icons will be stored in the classroom. Servants will come up with a plan for distributing the icons to the students on the feast vespers procession and will tell the students what they should do in order to get their icon on Nyrouz and to be

ready to walk in the procession. Servants should carefully plan and assist students to participate in the procession in co-ordination with the priest, deacons and parents.

E. PLAN AND MATERIALS:

The purpose of this class is to give the students a way to take part in the feast of Nyrouz. By coloring and framing their own icons in order to walk in the procession, the students will come to understand that they have a role in the church and an important place in the family of God. The stories of the saints' lives will be told to the students while they are coloring.

Teachers should have extra ready framed colored pictures of martyrs for children who did not have a chance to be in the class and prepare for the feast.

- Copies of the icons of martyrs for the students to color and frame preferably on card paper
- Crayons and colored pencils
- Frames
- Decorations for the frames
- A way for the students to sign their names to the back of their icon
- A letter to the parents to bring their children on the eve of Nyrouz for vespers

F. CONCLUSION

1. REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. What is Nyrouz?

A. *The feast of the new Coptic Year*

Q. What do we celebrate on Nyrouz?

A. *The Martyrs of the Church*

Q. How do we celebrate the Nyrouz feast?

A. *By making a procession with relics and icons of martyrs*

Q. What is a martyr?

A. *One who witnesses to the truth even to the point of death*

Q. What is a relic?

A. *A part of the body of the martyr.*

2. VERSE TO REMEMBER:

"For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Philippians 1:21

UNIT IX: SEASONAL LESSONS

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

1. FEAST OF THE CROSS

SERVANT PREPARATION:

A. VERSE & REFERENCES:

John 12:32-34 "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself." This He said, signifying by what death He would die. The people answered Him, "We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever; and how can You say, "The Son of Man must be lifted up"? Who is this Son of Man?"

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

Matthew 24:29-31 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

B. CHURCH FATHERS:

St Cyril of Alexandria Commentary on St John 12:32,33

Howbeit, after that Christ had given Himself unto the Father for our salvation as a Spotless Victim, and was now on the point of paying the penalties that He suffered on our behalf, we were ransomed from the accusations of sin. And so, when the beast has been removed from our midst, and the tyrant is deposed, then Christ brings unto Himself the race that had strayed away, calling not only Jews but all mankind as well unto salvation through the faith that is in Him. For whereas the calling through the Law was partial, that through Christ was universal. For Christ alone, as God, was able to procure all good things for us. And with exceeding good omen, He speaks of being "uplifted" instead of being "crucified." For He would keep the mystery invisible to those intent on killing Him; for they were not worthy to learn it: nevertheless, He allowed them that were wiser to understand that He would suffer because of all and on behalf of all. And especially I suppose any one might take it in this way, and very fitly; that the Death on the Cross was an exaltation which is ever associated in our thoughts with honor and glory. For on this account too Christ is glorified, forasmuch as the benefits He procured for humanity

thereby are many. And by these He draws men *unto Himself*, and does not, like the disciples, lead them to another. He shows therefore that He is Himself by Nature God, in that He does not put the Father outside Himself. For it is through the Son that a man is drawn unto the knowledge of the Father.

33 But this He said, signifying by what manner of death He should die.

Hereby the Evangelist showed that the Lord did not suffer in ignorance, but voluntarily; and with full knowledge, not only that He was dying, but also in what manner: and He named the Cross [as His] death.

St John Chrysostom commentary on the letter to the Galatians chapter 6:14

Verse 14. *“But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

Truly this symbol is thought despicable; but it is so in the world’s reckoning, and among men; in Heaven and among the faithful it is the highest glory. Poverty too is despicable, but it is our boast; and to be cheaply thought of by the public is a matter of laughter to them, but we are elated by it. So too is the Cross our boast. He does not say, “I boast not,” nor, “I will not boast,” but, “Far be it from me that I should,” as if he abominated it as absurd, and invoked the aid of God in order to his success therein. And what is the boast of the Cross? That Christ for my sake took on Him the form of a slave, and bore His sufferings for me the slave, the enemy, the unfeeling one; yea He so loved me as to give Himself up to a curse for me. What can be comparable to this! If servants who only receive praise from their masters, to whom they are akin by nature, are elated thereby, how must we not boast when the Master who is very God is not ashamed of the Cross which was endured for us. Let us then not be ashamed of His unspeakable tenderness; He was not ashamed of being crucified for thy sake, and wilt thou be ashamed to confess His infinite solicitude? It is as if a prisoner who had not been ashamed of his King, should, after that King had come to the prison and himself loosed the chains, become ashamed of him on that account. Yet this would be the height of madness, for this very fact would be an especial ground for boasting.

Verse 14. *“Through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”*

What he here calls the world is not the heaven nor the earth, but the affairs of life, the praise of men, retinues, glory, wealth, and all such things as have a show of splendor. To me these things are dead. Such an one it behooves a Christian to be, and always to use this language. Nor was he content with the former putting to death, but added another, saying, “and I unto the world,” thus implying a double putting to death, and saying, They are dead to me, and I to them, neither can they captivate and overcome me, for they are dead once for all, nor can I desire them, for I too am dead to them. Nothing can be more blessed than this putting to death, for it is the foundation of the blessed life.

C. REFLECTION:

The Church celebrates the feast of the finding of the Holy Cross with two processions. One short at vespers and another longer and more elaborate at Matins. Children would be excited to share in both processions, but because the feast in most years falls on week days, it might be impractical for them to participate in the morning one. All attention should be given to them in participating in the vespers procession.

D. PRAYER:

Lord, who on the sixth day, at the sixth hour You were nailed to the Cross for the sin that Adam dared to commit in paradise. Break the bonds of our sins, Lord Christ and save us. I cried to the Lord and He heard me. Lord accept my prayer and answer my supplication, hear me in the evening and in the morning and at noon. Hear my words and spare my soul.

LESSON PREPARATION:

A. SONG:

Evol Heten pi-Estavros.

B. VOCABULARY:

3. Trinity

4. Blessed

C. INTRODUCTION

I have a very important question for you today; the answer to this question has literally changed peoples' lives. What is the most powerful sign in the whole world? [May need to provide examples of signs so that the students understand: a heart, an arrow, etc... Encourage them to think of truly the most *powerful* one]. The Cross. This is the most powerful sign in the world.

D. LESSON BODY:

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

Why is the Cross so powerful? Because when I sign myself with the Cross, I sign myself with the weapon that defeated the devil and sin. Because when our Lord gave up Himself on the cross He brought us back to His kingdom.

It is powerful because I say with it the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (make the sign of the cross as this is being said). This is the Name of our God, of the **Trinity**. And it is the most important name and the most **blessed** name.

I need to tell you something else – the sign of the Cross is almost like a secret for the Christians. Other people who are not Christian do not understand how special the Cross is to Christians and to them, it just seems like moving your hand around. But a Christian knows the secret, knows how powerful and how special the Cross is. Remember that.

When I sign myself with the Cross, I go from top to bottom. This means something. Let me ask you – who went from the top to the bottom? What is up there, at the top? [Heaven]. And what is down here, that we are standing on? [Earth]. Who was living in Heaven and then came down to Earth? [Our Lord Jesus Christ]. So when I take my fingers and I go from top to bottom, I am doing what Christ did when He came from Heaven down to Earth and was born from St. Mary.

Then after this, we go from left to right. This also means something very special. The left side represents the sadness and darkness we were in without Christ. Then when I move my fingers from the left side to the right side, this shows the change that Christ has done in my life – He moved me from a dark, sad place and to a place that is full of light and joy, moved me closer to Him.

USING THE CROSS

Does anybody know when we use the sign of the Cross? [Anytime and all the time!] We use the cross before we do anything: before we leave our room, eat, sleep, do our work in school and at home. We also use the sign of the cross if we are ever scared or sad or angry. [Invite the students to name other times they would use the sign of the cross].

E. PLAN AND MATERIALS:

- *Prepare wooden crosses for the students to carry during procession. have them decorate it during the class and write messages of love to Christ our Lord.*

F. CONCLUSION

3. REVIEW QUESTIONS:

Q. Why the sign of the cross is powerful?

A. *because it is the sign that defeated the devil and that we say the Name of God with it*

Q. When do we bless ourselves with the sign of the cross?

A. *before we start anything*

Q. When I make the sign of the cross, why do I move my hand from my head to my belly?

A. *to say that Our Lord came down from heaven to the belly of St Mary*

Q. Why do I move my hand from left to right

A. *to say that by the Cross of Our Lord we were moved from darkness and sadness to light and joy*

4. VERSE TO REMEMBER:

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

FORMAT:

Unit

Purpose:

LESSON :

SERVANT PREPARATION:

VERSE & REFERENCES:

CREED:

CHURCH FATHERS:

REFLECTION:

PRAYER:

LESSON PREPARATION:

SONG:

VOCABULARY:

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

REVIEW VERSE TO REMEMBER:

CONNECTION POINT:

LESSON BODY:

PLAN AND MATERIALS:

-

CONCLUSION

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

VERSE TO REMEMBER:

3. CREED RECITATION:

DAILY READINGS
