



CATEGORY | INTRODUCTION

ORTHODOX SYRIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

Diocese of UK, Europe and Africa



God Cares for Us
GRADE 2

ORTHODOX SYRIAN
SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION
OF THE EAST



God Cares for Us
Grade 2

Category
Introduction

2024

OSSAE : DIOCESE OF UK, EUROPE & AFRICA

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON SERIES - 2

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FOREWORD



**MALANKARA ORTHODOX
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FOREWORD

As we embrace the dawning of a new era in the Sunday School of our Diocese, it is with profound gratitude and joy that we introduce the newly launched textbooks. This milestone is not merely a culmination of efforts but a new beginning, charting a course for faith-filled learning.

Special recognition is due to the Director and the team of dedicated authors of the Diocese of Southwest America of our Church who have tirelessly woven this tapestry of knowledge and devotion. Their commitment to creating a curriculum that speaks to the heart of our tradition is truly commendable.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to His Grace Zachariah Mar Nicholovos and His Grace Thomas Mar Ivanios, our Metropolitans, whose blessings and guidance have been the bedrock of this endeavor. Their spiritual leadership has been a guiding light throughout this year-long journey of preparation and transition.

Our teachers, those steadfast beacons of knowledge, deserve a resounding acknowledgment for their adaptability and perseverance, ensuring a smooth transition to this new curriculum. Their dedication to the spiritual growth of our youth is a testament to their faith and love for the church.

In line with the Apostle Paul's exhortation in Titus 1:9 (NRSV), "He must hold firm to the sure word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to confute those who contradict it," we recognize the pivotal role of sound teaching in nurturing faith. This verse echoes the mission of our Sunday School to steadfastly impart the truth of the Gospel, fostering a resilient and enlightened community of faith.

To the teachers and students embarking on this sacred educational journey, may you be filled with enthusiasm and wisdom. May your hearts and minds be fertile grounds for the seeds of divine knowledge to flourish.

The significance of the Sunday School in our community cannot be overstated. It is here that the foundations of faith are laid, where the stories and teachings of our church come to life, and where the future guardians of Orthodoxy begin their spiritual journey.

A special word of gratitude is extended to Fr. Anoop M. Abraham, Vice President of the Sunday School for the Diocese. His leadership, along with the director, curriculum coordinator, secretary & joint secretary, reviewers, trainers, and all team members, has been instrumental in bringing this vision to fruition.

As we conclude, let us move forward in the spirit of Orthodox tradition, with hope and prayer that these textbooks serve not only as vessels of knowledge but also as lanterns lighting the path towards spiritual maturity and devotion.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

+ Metropolitan Abraham Stephanos

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Glory to the Triune God!

I would like to express my deepest gratitude and sincere appreciation to all those who have contributed towards the development of this Orthodox Sunday school textbook for the new curriculum. It has been a long and challenging journey but with the help and support of many individuals and organizations, we have finally reached this milestone.

First and foremost, I would like to thank our Diocesan Metropolitan H G Abraham Mar Stephanos for His Grace's tireless effort to reform our Sunday School to meet the needs of our future generation by implementing the new curriculum and heartfelt gratitude to all the officials and key personalities of Northeast and Southwest American Diocesan Sunday Schools who are the backbone of this new curriculum and Talmido.

Great appreciation to all the curriculum development committee members of our diocese for their selfless efforts in editing a comprehensive and relevant textbook that caters to the spiritual needs of our Sunday School students. Your dedication, expertise, and commitment to the project were crucial in bringing this book to fruition. Special thanks to the clergy members of our diocese who generously shared their knowledge, wisdom, and experiences in shaping the lessons and activities in this book. Your input has helped to create a well-rounded curriculum that reflects the teachings and traditions of our Orthodox Faith.

I am also grateful to the head teachers and teachers who took the time to review and provide valuable feedback on the content and structure of the textbook. Your insights and suggestions have greatly enhanced the quality of the material and have made it more engaging and accessible to our young learners.

I would also like to acknowledge the role of Holy Episcopal Synod and OSSAE officials for their unwavering support and encouragement towards this new curriculum. It is with their guidance and vision that we were able to compile a textbook that aligns with the goals and objectives of our Holy Church and Diocesan Sunday School education.

Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to the students who will be using this textbook. Your enthusiasm and eagerness to learn about our faith is what motivates us to continue improving and developing resources for your spiritual growth.

In conclusion, I would like to thank everyone who has been a part of this journey and has contributed in any way towards the creation of this Orthodox Sunday school textbook. May it serve as a valuable resource for many generations to come and may it inspire and nurture the faith of our young Orthodox students. Thank you all for your support and dedication.

Fr Anoop Abraham Malayil
Vice-President OSSAE – UK Europe and Africa

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You are special

God made us just like Him! That makes us special. God loves each and every one of us so much!

Vocabulary Words

Image A copy of something. An image looks like what is copied.

Likeness To act or behave in almost the same way

Theosis To become more and more like God by doing what Jesus would do.



Made In His Image and Likeness

Learning Outcome Check

All life comes from God.

God is the creator of all things. He created what we can see, and He also created what we cannot see! Everything is made by God!

Do you remember how God created Adam? God made man in His **image** and in His **likeness**!

Remember

The first thing to remember is that God loves us so much that He made us look like Him!

This includes everybody in this world - man and woman, boy and girl, and even those who are Christian and those who are not Christian. God made everyone in His **image**, so everyone is important and must be treated with love and respect.

Even those who may not look like you, act like you, or live the same way you do are made in God's image.

EVERYBODY looks like God! That is how special we are to God.

We can think, we can understand the difference between right and wrong, and we can make the right choices about our lives. But most importantly, **WE CAN LOVE!**

In school, you may notice a classmate who is sad because they are teased or have no friends. As Christians, we have to remember that God made that class-



Question

- (a) In this Icon of Creation of Adam, does it look like Jesus and Adam have the same face?
 (b) Why do you think the iconographer did that?

mate and loves them, and so we also need to do the same! We should show kindness and be friends with that classmate.

Why should we do this? Because that is what Jesus would have done. And by doing what Jesus would do, we begin to live like the **image** of God. We begin to become like God!

Remember

Before we do or say anything, we should always think, "What would Jesus do or say?" in this situation. If our actions or words go against what Jesus would do we should not say or do it.

Learning Outcome Check

Human life is holy and precious

By trying our best to be like Jesus and do what Jesus would do, we become more and more like Him. We all not only have the **image** of God in us, but we also have the **likeness** of God. God has made

us special, and we can choose to do the right things to become like Him. This is called “**theosis**.” **Theosis** is when we become like God and do things that Jesus would do!

The Church uses many examples from the Bible to show us how Jesus always loved everyone. This includes the people who were different and even those who did not like Jesus.

Learning Outcome Check

All people are made in the image and likeness of God.

to tell others about Him. Many people came to meet him and believed in him.



Jesus asks the Samaritan woman for water

The Samaritan Woman

In **St. John 4:4-42**, we read how Jesus was tired and sat next to a well. He wanted some water and asked Photini, a woman from Samaria, for help.

A Samaritan is a person from a place called Samaria. The Jews and the Samaritans did not get along, and so she was very surprised that Jesus wanted her help.

To Jesus, however, it did not matter that she was a Samaritan. She was made by God, and God loved her. She was made in God’s **image** and could be like God.

And that’s what we can see at the end of the story. Even though she did not lead a holy life, after she spoke with Jesus, she believed and ran into the town

It does not matter what we all look like; we are different colours, heights, weights, etc. It does matter how we behave because we are all made in the **image** of God. Jesus tells us that the most important things we can do is to love God and to love others (St. Matthew 22: 37-40).

By loving others and the rest of God’s creation, we are becoming the **image** of God as He made us to be. When we do the will of God, we are becoming more like Him.

Remember

By trying our best to be like Jesus and do what Jesus would do, we become more and more like Him

Reflection Questions

1. In church, we sing, "God created Adam and sat down, contemplating him. He saw how fair and like the creature was to the Creator". How was Adam created?
2. Was St. Photini (the Samaritan woman) surprised when Jesus asked her for help?
3. What are different ways you can show God's love to others?

God's story

When we listen or read the Bible, we can learn more about God. The Bible is really important for the Church!

Vocabulary Words

Almighty A word to describe God because He can do anything.

Gospel A word that means “good news”, and is a special part of the Bible that tells us the story of Jesus. It is written by St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John.

Synoptic The books of the Gospel from St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke. They have a lot of the same stories and are similar to each other. So, when you read them, you will find many of the same things happening in the stories about Jesus!

Theological The gospel of St. John is called the theological gospel because it teaches us more about how Jesus is God.

Quilions Special prayers that we sing during Holy Qurbana.



The Holy Bible teaches us about God. The Bible is also called the **Word of God** or **Holy Scriptures**.

The first book of the Bible is Genesis, which teaches us that God made the heavens and the earth.

Everything we see and everything we cannot see is made by God. God is **almighty** and awesome!

Remember

Everything that we see and everything that we cannot see is made by God.

Genesis teaches us that God loved man and woman above everything. God created each of us to look and be like Him! (**Genesis 1:27**)

Genesis also tells us how the first people (Adam and Eve) listened to the Devil instead of God. The Devil tricked Adam and Eve, and they sinned against God. Adam and Eve began to die.

But God's story does not end here. When we read the Bible from the beginning (Genesis) to the end (Revelation), we learn how God saved us! God's story is that He loves us, and every page of the Holy Bible teaches us more about that



story. The Holy Bible has two parts - the Old Testament and the New Testament.

The Old Testament

The Old Testament is the time before Jesus was born. Do you remember the stories of Noah, Moses, and Jonah? Each one of these **prophets** had a message from God to save His people. When we read about these **prophets**, we also learn how God wants us to follow His commands. But more importantly, the Old Testament was teaching that Jesus was coming!

Every page and every story in the Old Testament told the people who loved God that the Saviour would come and how they would know Him. All the **prophets** and all the laws were to prepare them for Jesus.

“You search the scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness to me” (St. John 5:39).

Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled” (St. Luke 24:44).

The Orthodox Study Bible that we use today has 49 books in the Old Testament. Some other Bibles we may have at home

have only 39 books because they are missing some books! A long time ago, our church used a Bible written in Syriac called the “Peshitta” that had about more than 39 books as well.

The New Testament

The New Testament is the life of Jesus and the Church after Jesus died, rose again, and ascended into heaven.

The first 4 books in the New Testament are special. These books are called the **Holy Gospels**.

They are written by St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke and St. John. These four friends of Jesus wrote about Jesus’ whole life. The Gospels of St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke have many of the same stories and are called the **Synoptic** Gospels. The Gospel of St. John teaches us more about Jesus and is called the **Theological** Gospel.

From the time Jesus was born, to the many miracles Jesus performed, to the time Jesus died on the cross and was resurrected, these four friends kept track and wrote about everything they remembered and were told about Jesus. How cool is that? We have real-life stories about Jesus because those who were very close to Him left us writings about Him. It was the Holy Spirit who helped these four friends keep track of all these real-life stories.

The next book of the New Testament (Acts of the Apostles) was also written by St. Luke and is a continuation of St. Luke’s story about Jesus. The last book

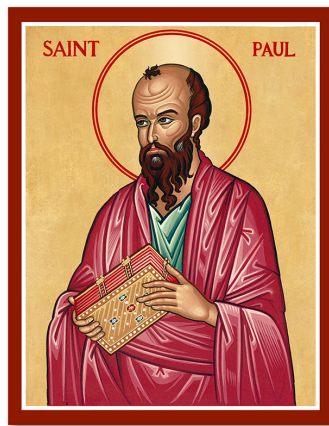
of the New Testament (Revelation) was written by St. John and is the continuation of St. John's story about Jesus.

Remember

The New Testament is about the life of Jesus and about the Church after Jesus died, rose again and ascended into heaven.



These letters were written by St. Paul. These letters taught churches around the world how to follow the directions Jesus left us, so they could be good followers of Christ.



St. Paul

Learning Outcome Check

Synoptic Gospels :

St. Matthew, St. Mark and St. Luke

Theological Gospel :

St. John



Next in the New Testament, we have letters written by **Apostles** called **Epistles**. These letters show us how Christianity spread throughout the world after Jesus.

Learning Outcome Check

Letters written by Apostles are called Epistles.



All 27 books of the New Testament talk about Jesus - His birth, His life, and how He continues to act through His church. Just like the Old Testament, the New Testament is also teaching us how to be a Christian!

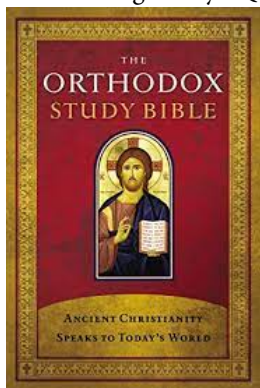
"but these are written, that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name." (St. John 20:31)

The Bible and the Church

The Bible is the Church's book!

It is very holy and very important to us. We use the Bible all the time because we not only read the Bible

at home but also in church. The Bible is also in the songs during the prayers and during Holy Qurbana.



The Bible verses are read in Church according to the **Liturgical Calendar**.

Learning Outcome Check

The Old Testament is the first 49 books in the Orthodox Study Bible and the New Testament has 27 books. We read from the Old testament at the beginning of the Holy Qurbana

At the very beginning of Holy Qurbana, a member of the church reads the Old Testament. The first reading is from the first 5 Books of the Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy), which are called the Books of Moses.

Once Holy Qurbana begins, we sing special songs before hearing the Epistles.

These are letters from the **Apostles**. The first Epistle reading is called the General Epistle and is from the **Apostles**, and the second Epistle is from St. Paul.

And then, when the priest brings forward the Bible to read the gospel, everyone sings and stands straight. We should fold our hands and listen very carefully to the bishop, priest, or full deacon reading the special gospel reading for that day. The **sermon** after the gospel helps us understand what we just heard.

Did you also know many of the songs from church are from the Bible? The special prayers called **Kukilion** to the Saints and to the Cross are all from the **Book of Psalms** in the Old Testament!

As you see, the Bible is so important in the church! It helps us be ready to be more like Jesus and receive the body and blood of Jesus.

The Bible at Home



Today, every Christian can have a Bible at home. If the Bible is so important for us at church, shouldn't we also read it at home? The more we hear our parents read the Bible or read ourselves, we learn more about God's story and how much

He loves us! That's why the Bible is so important at home as well!

Learning Outcome Check

It is important to read the Holy Bible and be obedient to God.

The Bible can be read at any time throughout the day. Just like during Holy Qurbana, we can read from the Old Testament and the New Testament. Who

knew the Bible had so many different parts? Each part of the Bible is unique and teaches us different lessons for our everyday lives.

What is the Bible?

The Holy Bible is the holy book of the Church. The Bible teaches us about Jesus Christ. The Bible was written by **the saints** of the church and is important for us to grow to know God and be more like Jesus!

Reflection Questions

1. How many parts are there in the Bible?
2. Does the Old Testament talk about Jesus?
3. What are the first 5 books of the Bible?
4. How many books are there in the Orthodox Study Bible?
5. Do we read the Bible during Holy Qurbana?

The Church calendar

We have a special calendar for the church called the Liturgical Calendar. It helps us celebrate the life of Jesus every year, just like we celebrate our own birthdays and other important events.

Vocabulary Words

Liturgical Calendar This is our Church calendar and has 7 seasons. The calendar follows the life of Christ and our Saints who lived in Christ.

Prostrations Bending down and touching the ground with our head when we pray. We do this because we love God!

Venerate To show respect and look up to as holy. We venerate our Saints because they lived their life like Christ, and we venerate holy things like the Cross because they are special to God.



Learning Outcome Check

The Liturgical calendar helps us know the date to celebrate and remember the life of Christ, the saints and important events throughout the year.

Happy Birthday! Every year, we celebrate our birthday on the same date from when we were born. Congratulations! We also celebrate major events in our lives, like the first day of school. The first day of school is not always on the same exact date, but it's celebrated every year

around the end of summer.

In the same way, the church follows a calendar that celebrates and remembers the life of Christ, the saints, and important events throughout the year. This is called the **liturgical calendar**.

Some events are celebrated on the exact same day every year, like Christmas on December 25th. Those that have exact dates are called **fixed dates**.

Learning Outcome Check

The Liturgical calendar has some dates which are fixed and some that are movable.

Other events are celebrated every year during the same season, but the dates change. Easter is celebrated every spring, but on different dates. These are **movable dates**.

When we go to church, it sometimes feels like we always do the same thing, but it's actually a little different each time.

Sometimes we are fasting, and sometimes we are feasting (celebrating). Depending on the season and the day of the week, we sing different songs to match the celebration or prayer. We also sing

these songs with different tones to match the season.

Each week, the calendar has 7 days, and the church has 7 hours of prayer each day. Can you guess how many seasons the calendar has? 7!




Learning Outcome Check

A Feast is when we celebrate. One of the feasts we celebrate is the Feast of Nativity, where we celebrate the birth of our Lord.

| Liturgical Season | Description | Icon |
|------------------------|---|---|
| Season of Annunciation | Unlike the regular monthly calendar, the Liturgical Calendar starts 8 Sundays before Christmas with 'Kudosh Etho,' the sanctification of the church. This is a movable date around the end of October/beginning of November. The church announces the arrival of our Saviour and gives us time to prepare for the birth of Christ. (Remember: We fast for 25 days before Christmas! |  An icon depicting the Annunciation. The Virgin Mary is seated on the right, wearing a blue robe over a red one. The Angel Gabriel is on the left, wearing a red robe and holding a scroll. A dove with a cross on its back is at the top. The background shows a city wall and a tower. |
| Season of Epiphany | After Christ is born on Christmas (fixed date), we begin the next season. In this season, we remember the baptism of Jesus on January 6th (fixed date). At this time, we celebrate the Holy Trinity. The Holy Spirit comes down in the form of a dove during Jesus' baptism. |  An icon depicting the Baptism of Christ. Jesus is standing in the Jordan River, being baptized by John the Baptist. The Holy Spirit is shown as a dove descending from the sky. The background shows a landscape with a cross and a building. |



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| Liturgical Season | Description | Icon |
|------------------------|---|--|
| Season of Great Lent | <p>It's the long 40 days when we give up our favourite foods and activities so that we can really focus on God. Just think back to what Jesus had to suffer through during his forty days in the desert. He did not eat or drink anything! The devil actually tempted Jesus 3 times! The long days in the church and all those prostrations are nothing compared to what Jesus suffered through. But just like Jesus, by fasting, we learn to stand strong against temptations and control our minds and bodies a little better so that we can become more like Jesus.</p> |  |
| Season of Resurrection | <p>This is the most joyous feasting season. We celebrate the biggest event ever - Jesus' Resurrection, also known as Easter or Kymtha (movable date). Jesus rose from the dead and spent 40 days on Earth with His people. Do you remember seeing the big cross from the middle of the church being moved into the altar after Easter? That represents Jesus being with us after His Resurrection. Jesus stayed on Earth for 40 days until His ascension into heaven. This season lasts 50 days, from Jesus' Resurrection until the Feast of Pentecost.</p> |  |
| Season of Pentecost | <p>10 days after Jesus' ascension into heaven, the Holy Spirit came down in the form of fiery tongues and sat upon each of the apostles on the day of Pentecost. The apostles were chosen to spread God's word all over the world. But how would they do that if they could not speak the languages in these faraway countries? Remember, they still didn't have Google Translate or cell phones. They had to use the power of the Holy Spirit to speak to everyone all around the world. During this season, we remember the Apostles with a 13 days' fast that starts on June 16th (a fixed date).</p> |  |

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| Liturgical Season | Description | Icon |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| Season of Transfiguration | A little before Christ's passion and death, Christ went to the top of Mt. Tabor, where He was transfigured (revealed His radiant glory). This is celebrated on August 6 (fixed date). During this season, we also remember the falling asleep (death) of St. Mary on August 15th, which completes the Dormition Fast (August 1st - August 15th) (fixed date). Mother Mary carried Jesus in her earthly body. When she died, her earthly body was taken to Heaven. |  |
| Season of The Holy Cross | This last season of the Church season begins on September 14th (fixed date). The Queen and Saint Helen, the mother of Emperor Constantine, found the Holy Cross that Jesus was crucified on. The church uses this day to venerate the Holy Cross. |  |

Learning Outcome Check

The reason we repeat the “cycle” each year is to better understand Christ.

dar repeats itself every year.

We use this cycle to remember the different parts of Jesus' life. We also incorporate our own holidays and prayers into this calendar.

Just like our regular January to December calendar, the **Liturgical Calen-**

Next Sunday at church, make sure you listen to the words of the songs we sing and the prayers that we are using, as they will tell us where on the calendar we are!

Reflection Questions

1. Is your birthday a date that is fixed or movable?
2. Name 3 major feasts celebrated in the liturgical calendar. Are they fixed or movable?
3. Can you figure out which season we are in now?

Born Again

Our Baptism is a special day as we become part of God's family. We are born again and enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

Vocabulary Words

Sacrament A special event in our life that God changes something in a way we cannot explain. Also called a Holy Mystery.

Godparents A special person who helps us, like our parents, grow in our spiritual life in Christ.

Font A large tub used for baptism



Do you remember attending a Baptism in Church? Holy Baptism is the first **Sacrament** we receive as Orthodox Christians. We have all been baptised!



Baptism is our birth into the life of the church. This is the day we say we are born again. We begin a new life with Jesus in God's family, which is the Holy Church.

Learning Outcome Check

Holy Baptism is one's entrance into the Church.

A **godparent** is someone who promised to look after you and teach you about Jesus and His Church when you were baptised. Together, your **godparent** and your parents guide you to grow close to God

Do You Know?

Do you know who your Godparents are?





Institution of Holy Qurbana

In our church, we usually see babies being baptised, but even adults can become members of the church through baptism. No matter what age we are baptised, we can only receive this sacrament once in our lives.

During the baptism service, the priest pours water into the font and blesses it. The priest then baptises the person in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

After that, the priest makes the sign of the cross on every part of their body with the holy oil known as Chrism or Myron. This is the **sacrament** of Chrismation, and the special oil is a way of receiving the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit helps us to become more like Jesus and live like Him.



Learning Outcome Check

What do you see happen during the Sacrament of Baptism?

The seal of the Holy Spirit stays with us forever. This is why we are baptised only once in our lives. We are born again into God's family.

You also have a new name! Your baptismal name is the name of a saint. Sometimes, the name we use in school and the name you use at church are different. We are usually known by our saint's name in the church.

Do You Know?

Do you know your baptismal name?



Saints are holy people who lived the way God wanted us to live. After our baptism, we also promise to live God's way. We can do this by studying about our saints and be like them. This way, we can also be holy like Jesus.

Once we are baptised, we are full members of the church, and all members of the church can receive Holy Qurbana. Even little babies!

When we receive the body and blood of Christ, we receive the body of Jesus, who is life, so we have new life inside us.

Baptism is a very happy moment in our life, because we become part of a bigger family and can now receive Jesus!

Did you know Jesus was also baptised? He was baptised in the Jordan River by St. John the Baptist (also known as the Forerunner).

When we are baptised, we start our new life to become more like Jesus. Once we are baptised, our sins are forgiven, and we become part of the church forever.



Baptism of Jesus Christ

Reflection Questions

1. How do we become members of the Holy Church?
2. What holy things does the priest use during Holy Baptism?
3. Can we be baptised more than one time?
4. Who is the saint that you were named after during your baptism?

The Mother of God

Mary was chosen to be Jesus' mom because she loved God and always prayed. She was very humble, and she is blessed.

Vocabulary Words

Theotokos A special word for St. Mary because she is the Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is God.

Devout To have strong faith and love for God

Humble To not think of yourself as more important



Mother of God

Eve was the first person to disobey God. Eve thought she could become like God without God's help. Sin came into the world. But God wanted to save the world and bring His children back to Him. God chose a very special woman

who loved, obeyed, and trusted God. We know her as St. Mary.

St. Mary was very **humble**, and she listened to what God told her. St. Mary has the title "**Theotokos**," which means "God bearer" or "Mother of God."



Mother of God

Holy, Glorious, and Blessed

St. Joachim and St. Anna were very devout people who worshipped God. They were old and did not have any children. They prayed every day for God to bless them with a child. They knew one day God would answer their prayers. They also promised God they would dedicate their child to serve God.

God answered their prayers and blessed them with a baby girl, whom they named Mary. They raised her in prayer and dedicated her to the temple when she was three years old.

Why did God choose Mary?

St. Mary loved God. She grew up obeying, serving, and praying to the Lord. She read the **Scriptures** and prayed every day. She was also very **humble**. She

was filled with the Holy Spirit. She was a model human being.

God was so pleased that He blessed St. Mary and honoured her by choosing her to be the mother of Jesus Christ.

Learning Outcome Check

St. Mary is the mother of God. She was a very humble, obedient woman, who was willing to listen to God.

Think

How can we be a model Christian?



How did God tell St. Mary that He had chosen her?



Annunciation

One day, when St. Mary was sitting quietly and praying, God sent Gabriel to her to ask an important question. St. Mary was a little scared at first, but angel Gabriel said, “Peace be with you,” and she became calm.

Angel Gabriel told St. Mary that he had good news to share with her. St. Mary was chosen by God to be the Mother of God, will have a child, and will be called Jesus. She was very surprised, but also confused.

When Gabriel shared the good news with her that she could be the Mother of God, she was very young and not mar-

ried. St. Mary was confused, but she had great faith in God and knew that she must obey God.

St. Mary told the angel Gabriel, “I am the servant of the Lord. Let it be with me according to your word.”

Can't we be like Mary?

Because St. Mary obeyed and listened to God, she gave birth to Jesus, who was to save us all.

We honour and remember St. Mary as the great and Holy **Theotokos**, who is the queen of all the saints and of heaven. We love St. Mary like she is our own mother, and we ask her to pray for us.

She is most Holy because she had Jesus inside of her. St. Mary was able to receive the Holy Spirit because she was **humble**, obedient, and willing to listen to God.

In the same way, we can be called by the Holy Spirit as well. Just as Christ was born in St. Mary, Christ can be born in us too. St. Mary prayed and obeyed God so much that God chose her.

In the same way, we should also be prayerful so that God can choose us and the Holy Spirit can live in us. St. Mary is the perfect example of how we can be in the image and likeness of God.

Remember

In the same way, we can be called by Holy Spirit as well. Just as Christ was born in Mary, Christ can be born in us too.



Learning Outcome Check

We are never too young to experience the Holy Spirit!



The Mother of God

Learning Outcome Check

Recite Peace be with you Mary, full of Grace.

Learning Outcome Check

St. Mary is the primary intercessor to Christ on our behalf.
St. Mary is an example of all of us to be like.

Reflection Questions

1. What did St. Mary do differently than Eve?
2. How did St. Mary please God?
3. What is the meaning of Theotokos?
4. How can we be like St. Mary?

Every Christian must learn this prayer and use it every day:

Peace be with You, Mary, full of grace

Peace be with You, Mary, full of grace,
our Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your womb, our Lord Jesus, Christ.
O, Virgin Saint Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at all times, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Peace with you, Mary

St. Mary lived a life of humility and obedience. She trusted God and His plan.

Vocabulary Words

Annunciation To make known, the announcement by Angel Gabriel to St. Mary

Generations A group of people born around the same time.



Annunciation to St. Mary

In the last lesson, we learned that Angel Gabriel came to St. Mary with important news. The angel asked St. Mary if she was ready to be the Mother of God.

St. Mary was obedient to the Lord, and even though she did not understand how everything would work out, she said “yes” to God. St. Mary is an example of obeying God’s will, even if we don’t completely understand it. In her humility, she trusted God and His plan for her.

She is the model of obedience and humility for all of us!

This visit of Angel Gabriel to Mary with the divine message is known as the **Annunciation to Mary**. We read about this in the Bible (**St. Luke 1:26-38**) and celebrate this feast in church two times!

The Feast of the Annunciation is on March 25th, as is the 4th Sunday of the church calendar, which is in November and is called the Season of Annunciation. See how important this is to our church!

Learning Outcome Check

It was St. Mary’s humility and obedience that led her to accept the invitation from the angel Gabriel to be the Mother of God.

Remember

Sometimes in our life, we may not understand why things work out the way they do. But like St. Mary, we should trust God’s plan.







The Icon of Annunciation. the angel Gabriel announcing the birth of Jesus Christ to St. Mary

The Icon of Annunciation

Let's take a look at the icon of this event to better understand the story. In this icon, we see the angel Gabriel announcing the news to St. Mary.

The angel Gabriel is holding a staff, which shows that he's a messenger. His feet are apart as if he is running to St.

Mary, and the ribbons in his hair show their heavenly job to help God, who is King.

This shows the message Gabriel is giving St. Mary is very important.

St. Mary is holding scarlet yarn in her hand. While she was in the temple, St. Mary would take care of the curtain in the temple and was working to fix it

when the angel visited.

St. Mary is dressed in blue and covered by a red robe. The blue represents that St. Mary is a regular person, while the red shows how she was covered by the holiness of God. The light coming down on top of the icon is the Holy Spirit.

Learning Outcome Check

What are some important teachings we learn through the Icon of Annunciation?



Mother of God visiting Elizabeth

Visitation of the Theotokos and St. Elizabeth

St. Mary heard her cousin St. Elizabeth was also going to have a baby, who we know was St. John the Baptist.

St. Mary made plans to visit her cousin. When she reached and saw St. Elizabeth, the baby St. John the Baptist leaped for joy.

St. Elizabeth said, “Blessed are you amongst women, and blessed is the child you will bear” (St. Luke 1:42). St. Mary said, “From now on, all generations will call me blessed” (St. Luke 1:48)

From this meeting between St. Mary and St. Elizabeth and the visit from Angel Gabriel, we get the prayer “Peace to thee Mary, full of grace.”

One of the first songs in the Holy Qurbana is a song about St. Mary. The song begins, “By the prayers of Your Mother and those of all Your Saints.”

Let us look at the verses in which Mary is mentioned.

*Who [Jesus Christ] did become incarnate
Of the pure Virgin
The holy and glorious Theotokos
He became man without change*

Think

Can you think of any other songs sung during the Holy Qurbana that talk about St. Mary?



Learning Outcome Check

The prayer “Peace to thee, Mary” relates to the Annunciation.

In the Orthodox Church, we call St. Mary the **Theotokos**, which means the

Mother of God. In Malayalam, we call her **Daiva Maathavu**.

Remember, whenever we hear **Theotokos** in our prayers or songs, we are talking about St. Mary.

Having learned more about the most blessed and holy St. Mary, let us look again at the “Peace be with you” prayer:

*Peace be with you Mary, full of Grace!
Our Lord is with You. Blessed are you
among women and blessed is the fruit of
your womb, our Lord Jesus Christ.*

In these lines of the prayer, we are remembering Angel Gabriel coming to St. Mary and asking her to be the mother of God. Here we remember the Annunciation.

*Oh, Holy Virgin St. Mary, Mother of God!
Pray for us sinners at all times and at the
hour of our death, Amen!*

In the second part of the prayer, we are asking St. Mary to intercede or pray for us to God.

Reflection Questions

1. Who was the angel that brought a special message to St. Mary?
2. What event is so special in our liturgical calendar that we celebrate it twice?
3. How did St. Mary feel when she heard the angel? Why did she say “yes”?

New Life in Christ

When we are baptised, we are set apart as God's children. At our baptism, we are born again and make a promise to be like Him.

Vocabulary Words

Holy Myron (also known as Holy Mooron) Holy oil used to seal the Holy Spirit, e.g. in Holy Baptism

Chrismation When the priest or bishop uses a special oil called Holy Myron on the person's body.

Sanctify To make something special and holy.



Holy Baptism

We become Christians when we are baptised. Holy Baptism is the sacrament where we become members of the Holy Church. God loves everybody, even those who are not members of the church, but during Holy Baptism, we have a new life in Jesus Christ.

The sacrament of Holy Baptism is split into two main sections. The first part is being baptised in water, and the second part is being anointed by a Holy Oil that is called Holy Chrism. Holy Chrism is also known as **Holy Myron or Holy Mooron**.

The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River is an example of how we carry out the sacrament of Holy Baptism. John the Baptist, who is Jesus's cousin, had bap-

tised Jesus in the Jordan River.

Remember

Holy Chrism is also known as Holy Myron or Holy Mooron



Jesus is God and has never sinned. But Jesus was still baptised. This was to purify the waters of the world and also reveal the Holy Trinity to the world.

When God the Son was baptised, God the Father said "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased", and God the Holy Spirit came down in the form of a dove during the baptism of Jesus Christ.



Icon of the Baptism of Jesus Christ

A Fun Fact

A fun fact about this is that there are two smaller rivers that flow into the Jordan River. One small river has cool water and the second small river carries hot water. When these rivers join to become the River Jordan, the water becomes warm! This is why we use warm water during Holy Baptism today.

The first part of the sacrament of the Holy Baptism has prayers and songs. At the end of this portion, the godparent of the person being baptised will say out loud that they renounce Satan and accept the Messiah, or Jesus Christ.

Immersion begins with mixing hot water and cold water to make warm water, to represent the warm water of the Jordan River. Then, Holy Myron is

poured into the warm water. Afterwards, the person getting baptised is immersed into the **baptismal font**.



Sanctification makes us clean and pure after immersing our sins in the water. Sometimes baptismal fonts are small, so water is poured on the person's head instead.



The second part of the Holy Baptism service, after immersion in water, is the **anointing** of the person where they receive the Holy Spirit. This is known as Holy Chrismation.

Holy Chrismation

Holy Chrismation is given right after holy baptism. Chrismation is the act of anointing someone with Holy Myron or Mooron.

What is Holy Myron? **Holy Myron** is a consecrated oil that represents the Holy Spirit.

Remember

Holy Myron is a special oil that represents the Holy Spirit.



Learning Outcome Check

Chrismation is the act of anointing someone with Holy Myron or Mooron. Holy Myron is a special oil that represents the Holy Spirit.

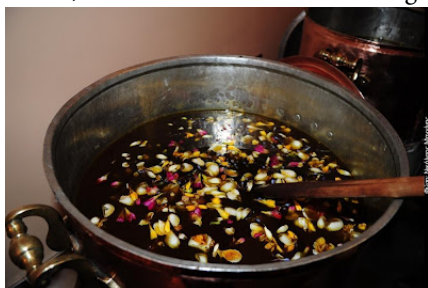
Holy Myron is so sacred that it takes a long time for it to be prepared and ready to be used in churches. Because this sacred oil is going to be used in Holy Baptism and in the consecration of the Church, 40 days of fasting and prayer are needed to make it.

Learning Outcome Check

Chrismation happens along with Holy Baptism.

Most ingredients are not even available in India. The main ingredient is balsam oil, which is expensive and is used for its healing properties. This is important because we can think of the Holy Myron used during Holy Baptism

to *heal* or cleanse us from our sins. This oil is made using a very large pot, boiled water, and balsam oil, as well as other ingredients. This mixture is heated for 40 days, and on the 40th day, there is a special Holy Myron consecration service, which lasts about 8 hours long.



Making of the Holy Myron

Learning Outcome Check

The very special oil, the Holy Myron, is rubbed on the baby or the person getting baptised. This is the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Once we receive the Holy Myron, we are sanctified.

During the Holy Chrismation part of the Holy Baptism service, the priest or bishop seals the baptised person with a cross, using the Holy Myron. Then, this oil is rubbed on the body of the person; this usually happens for babies or small children. The rubbing with Holy Myron is called anointing with the Holy Spirit,

and thus it makes the person sanctified.

In our tradition, the first bath after the Holy Baptism service should be somewhere where the water does not splash onto the ground where people step on. Even the water that touches the holy oil becomes sacred!

After the person is anointed with Holy Chrism, the priest places a crown on their head. This crown is called the “Crown of Glory”. This represents the heavenly crown we receive as we become members of the Kingdom of God.



After receiving the crown, the priest takes the child into the Holy Altar Room. The child is taken around the altar, kissing all four corners. The baby is returned to their godparent and gets dressed in all white. The white represents starting a new life as a Christian with all their sins forgiven.

The sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Chrismation are now complete.

If we are born into an Orthodox Christian family, we are usually baptised as babies or as small children. Orthodox Christians tend to baptise the child at a young age to make sure that the child grows up in the Kingdom of God from infancy on.



Some people become Orthodox Christians when they are older, and so they get baptised as older people.

The church welcomes everyone, whether you are a baby or much older. The prayers are the same, and everyone is born again.

Set Apart for The Lord

Anointing with oil is the method by which God separates people for His work. We see this in the Old Testament during the selection process, where Samuel was selected as a prophet and Saul and David as kings of Israel.

In the same way, anointing with Holy Myron separates the person from evil and unites them with Jesus Christ. This means that through Holy Baptism, we are chosen by God to carry out His work in the world. We are stronger with the Holy Spirit inside of us to become more like Jesus.

Reflection Questions

1. What is the special oil used during Holy Chrismation?
2. What is placed on the head of the person who has been baptised and chrismated?
3. What happens to us after we are baptised? What makes us different?

Peace and Good Hope or All

The Church celebrates the Feast of the Nativity every December. We remember the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ as a man.

Vocabulary Words

Census Counting of the number of people who live in an area

Manger A long box that holds food for horses or cows

Nativity Another word for birth and in the Church we often use the word to mean the day our Lord Jesus Christ became man



Jesus and Mary goes to Bethlehem

St. Joseph and St. Mary lived in a little town called Nazareth. Before Jesus was born, the Roman Emperor who ruled the land decided that a **census** should be

taken in the entire empire and that everyone should go to their home city.

As St. Joseph was also born in Bethlehem, they had to go to Bethlehem for census.

There were no cars or buses those days, and their only option was either to walk to Bethlehem or ride an animal's back.

It was close to the time when the baby Jesus would be born and as they had to travel nearly 90-100 miles, St. Mary rode on the back of a donkey.

After a very tiring journey, they reached the little town of Bethlehem but there was no room in any of the inns in Bethlehem because of the great number of persons who had come for **census**. The only place they could find was a cave and this is where Jesus was born!

After Jesus was born, an angel ap-



The Nativity icon

peared to a group of shepherds in a field near Bethlehem. The shepherds were scared, but the angel told them not to be afraid (St. Luke 2:10-11).

Notice

In the icon, where do you see that Jesus is born? That is right! He was born in a cave.

The shepherds were then surrounded by more angels, all shining bright. They were praising God and singing! (St. Luke 2:14). The shepherds decided that they had to see this baby, and found St.

Mary and St. Joseph with the baby lying in a **manger** in a cave.

Christmas in the Church is called the Feast of the **Nativity** of our Lord Jesus Christ, **Christmas** or **Yeldho**. The Icon of the **Nativity** teaches us, through the colours and images, very important ideas about Christmas that we may not often think about.

Learning Outcome Check

In the Nativity icon, we can see how Jesus was born in a cave and laid in a manger. Can you point to the cave and manger in the icon?

God loved us so much that he did something very special, He became a man! God can shine brighter than the sun, but he used his power to become a poor and humble person, born in a cave and laid in a stable surrounded by animals. He did this so he could be closer to us. For the first time ever, God became someone we could see, touch and hold. Jesus was God, and Jesus was a human just like any one of us.

Learning Outcome Check

Christmas in the Church is called the Feast of the **Nativity** of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is a very important Feast because this was the day Jesus was born!



In the Nativity icons, Jesus is wrapped in white cloth and laid in the **manger** inside a stable. This is very important! The white cloth has another meaning. Jesus was born as a man to save us! He did this through his death on the cross, after which he was also wrapped in white

cloth. But we know God cannot die, and the Resurrection saved us. The Nativity icon teaches us that our Lord Jesus Christ was born to save us by the Resurrection!

Learning Outcome Check

Jesus is fully man and fully God!

Three wise men

In this icon, three wise men came to worship Jesus because they saw a strange and bright star in the sky when Jesus was born. They knew it was a sign that the King of Kings was born. The wise men decided to find the great new born king so that they could worship him.



Wise men visiting infant Jesus

Guided by the star, the three wise men went to Bethlehem. The star seemed to move ahead of them. The star led them until it stopped right above the place

where baby Jesus lay. They went inside and saw Jesus with his mother, Mary. The wise men fell down on their knees and worshipped the child. Then the wise men gave Jesus three gifts fit for a king: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The wise men were very rich and powerful, but they still worshipped little baby Jesus because they knew He was the Son of God. Even though Jesus is a poor little human baby, he is still God! That's why the shepherds, the wise men, the animals and all creation worship Him!

Different icons of the Nativity show angels, rich kings, poor shepherds, and even animals. This means that creation was so happy that the Son of God was born as a man! We learn that God became man for all, whether we are rich or poor. Even the animals worshipped Jesus, peeking into the manger where He lay on His bed of straw.

During Christmas, we give gifts to our friends and family. But what kind of gifts can we offer to Jesus? The best gift that we can give Jesus is **love**. We can show our love for Jesus by loving our neighbours - the poor and all others. When we give gifts to the poor, we are also giving gifts to Jesus.



Learning Outcome Check

Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. Who do you think these sinners are?



Christ is born! Let us glorify Him!

Reflection Questions

1. Was God born on Christmas, or did God become a man in Jesus?
2. Why did Jesus become a baby to this world?
3. What gifts can we offer Jesus?

Jesus's Baptism

St. John baptised Jesus to teach us about Baptism and to begin His journey to the Cross. We remember this day as Denaha on our Church calendar.

Vocabulary Words

The Holy Trinity The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three persons and One God. Trinity means three. We remember this every time we make the sign of the cross. We hold our first three fingers together, -remembering that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are One God.

Theophany When someone sees or experiences something really special from God

Denaha This Syriac word, meaning sunrise or dawn, is used to refer to the feast day on which we remember the baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ



When St. Mary visited St. Elizabeth

Jesus was still in St. Mary's womb when she visited her relative, St. Elizabeth. Elizabeth was also pregnant with a baby named John, and the baby in Elizabeth's womb leaped with joy when Jesus was near. Even though he was a baby who was not even born, John knew he was near the Lord. This tells us that we can feel the grace of God even when we are in our mothers' womb.

When John grew up, he remained dedicated to the Lord. He lived in the wilderness and chose to wear simple clothing made out of camel's hair. He ate food from the wilderness, such as locusts and honey.

John knew that a Saviour was coming -



This is the icon of Jesus's baptism, and this is especially important because we see all three persons of the Holy Trinity revealed.

someone who was powerful and holy. He taught people about God and told them to ask God for forgiveness for all their sins. He also baptised people with water in the River Jordan. That is why he is known as John the Baptist.

One day, John was surprised to see Jesus coming to him at the Jordan River to be baptised. Just like John knew when Jesus was a baby in his mother's womb, he recognised that he was in front of the Lord again. John thought he was not worthy to baptise Jesus, but Jesus insisted and reminded John that it was important for him to be baptised by John. The most amazing thing happened when John baptised our Lord! The Bible says that the heavens opened up, and the Holy

Spirit came down upon Jesus like a dove.

And God, the Father, spoke! Those who were there heard a voice from heaven saying, "This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." They realised at that moment that Jesus was not just an ordinary human being. God announced that Jesus was the Son of God!

In the icon of Jesus's baptism, we see all three persons of the **Holy Trinity** revealed. We see the Son of God as Jesus. The Holy Spirit is coming down in the blue circle like a dove. The voice of the invisible Father is heard, especially by St. John and the ones standing around. We see that evil spirits flee away as water creatures from Jesus. In other words, as Jesus went down into the water, evil spir-

its vanished.

Learning Outcome Check

In the icon of Baptism of our Lord, we see the presence of the Holy Trinity. How do we see the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in this icon?



Remember

In the icon of Jesus's baptism, we see all three persons of the **Holy Trinity** revealed. We see the Son of God as Jesus. The Holy Spirit is coming down in the blue circle like a dove. The voice of the invisible Father is heard, especially by St. John and the ones standing around.



Remember, **Trinity** means “three in one.” We believe in one God, but He is in three Persons - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This can be confusing, but we must remember that the Father is God, Jesus, who is the Son, is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. All three in the **Holy Trinity** are One God. At the baptism of Jesus, the Son of God, we see the Holy Spirit come down from Heaven like a dove, and The Father speaks from heaven.

We remember these important events during Holy Qurbana every Sunday and especially during a feast day once a year.

We begin the first song of the Holy Qurbana service (Ma'nitho of Mar Severus) by singing, “*By the prayers of Your Mother and those of all Your Saints*”. The priest represents Jesus Christ and walks around the altar. An altar assistant who walks backwards in front of the priest, holding a candle as they walk around the altar. This altar assistant represents John the Baptist because John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus Christ.

When we look up at the altar, we may see the symbol of the dove. The dove reminds us of the Holy Spirit, just like how the Holy Spirit came down from heaven like a dove when Jesus was baptised.



Keep Watch

Doves remind us of the Holy Spirit. Where do you see doves in your church?

In the church calendar, we celebrate Jesus's baptism on the Feast of Theophany- also known as **Denaha**. **Theophany** means that God is revealed to us! The amazing things that happened at Jesus's baptism showed that He was not only a human being, but he was also God - a person of the Holy Trinity.

Learning Outcome Check

The Feast of Theophany is the feast of Christ's baptism.

We celebrate **Denaha** each year on January 6th. During this service, the priest blesses the water. Then, he holds the water in his hand to bless the four sides of the world (North, South, East, and West) and prays for the world's people. The water reminds us of the waters of Jesus's baptism.

Learning Outcome Check

Denaha is celebrated each year on January 6.

The blessed water is also given out to families to take home. This blessed water is used to bless people. When people are sick or going through difficulties in life, the holy water of Denaha can be used to ask God for help and guidance. It can also be sprinkled around the home, asking God for His presence, protection, and even to drive evil spirits away.

Remember

Remember, trinity means "Three in One". We believe in one God but He is in three Persons- the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. This can be confusing, but we must remember that the Father is God, Jesus, who is the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God.

Reflection Questions

1. Who baptised Jesus Christ?
2. What special event happened after Jesus was baptised, and what is that called?
3. Can you point out the Holy Trinity in the Denaha icon? Who is St. John the Baptist pointing to?

Symbolism

The Church uses symbols to teach us about God.

Vocabulary Words

Symbol An object or sign that means something

Holy Qurbana A special worship where we receive the Holy Body and Blood of Jesus, also known as Liturgy.

Gesture Moving our body in a special way

Nativity Another word for birth and often used for the day our Lord Jesus Christ became man



Did you know everyone in the church is one family? We are all children of God. We are brothers and sisters in Christ.



How do we become members of the family of God? When a baby is born to a mom and dad, they are part of that family. Similarly, when we are baptised with blessed water and the Holy Spirit, we are born again into God's family. God's family includes everyone who was baptised! Yes, your classmates and friends in the church are your brothers and sisters.

God's family also includes everyone who has died in the church. This is why we pray for all the departed, including our saints and our relatives. We are all brothers and sisters through Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit keeps us together in love.

The church is God's house. In church, we learn about the teachings of the church, pray and sing songs, hear the gospel, and receive Holy Qurbana with other people who love Jesus. During church, we love each other and give each other the kiss of peace using our hands. It shows that we are not angry or upset with anyone and are ready to receive the Holy Qurbana.

Symbolism

God's House is very special and holy. God's House is sacred, which means it is set apart from everything else. We are in God's house, and so we are sacred and set apart. Many people don't believe, and we pray for them because God called us to love everyone (**St. Matthew 22:36-40**).

We keep our doors open and should always welcome everyone to visit our church. But when we are members of the church through baptism, there are many important things we need to learn and believe. Inside the church, we are safe, and we learn more about God.

Symbols are one way we can learn about the important teachings of the church. Symbols are used everywhere.

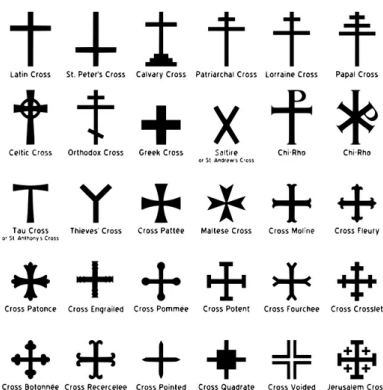
Have you seen this symbol before? Even without the words, many people know this is used for "STOP" signs. This shape and colour are *symbols* for "stop."

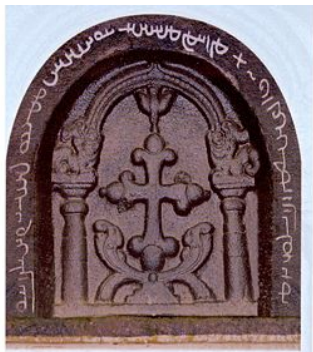


But everyone needs to be taught this! And sometimes, if a person is from another country or cannot see colour, the teaching has to be done in a way that helps them understand. This is why attending church every Sunday to receive Holy Qurbana and learning at Sunday school are so important!

In church, all our symbols point to our Lord Jesus Christ. Everything we do in church brings us to Christ. What we learn in Sunday school helps us come

closer to Christ. The Holy Qurbana is the best example there. Similarly, the symbols also bring us closer to Christ. One of the most common symbols we use as Christians is the cross. We see crosses everywhere in the church and in our homes, and they come in all different shapes and sizes.





Have you ever seen this special cross?

This granite cross is very old. It is from the 7th century AD and was found in India, showing that Christianity in India was very much alive even before America and Canada as we know them today were formed!

Look

Can you find this Cross in your church?

This does not mean the Holy Spirit is a dove! Rather, the dove is a symbol of the Holy Spirit, and when we see it, especially in icons, paintings, or crosses such as this one, we remember it.

We also make a **gesture** when we see the Cross or hear the word “Cross.” A gesture is an action we do with our body, like making the Sign of the Cross. This is another important connection we have with symbols, as it helps us remember the important truths we need to believe.

Learning Outcome Check

What are some gestures of the Holy Qurbana? Can you demonstrate how to make the sign of the Cross? How do we give each other the Kiss of Peace? How should we stand when we pray?

We see the cross in a special shape and can see it in our churches today. The cross always brings us to Jesus. We remember the love of God when we see the cross. This particular cross has many more symbols, though. Do you see the Holy Spirit? Those who are not familiar with Christianity may only see a bird, but we know that the dove symbolises the Holy Spirit, and we remember how the Holy Spirit descended like a dove when Jesus was baptised in the River Jordan.

Symbols in the Church

The first thing that we notice as we enter the Church is the beautiful **curtain**. What do you think it is used for? It is to separate that part of the church, which is called the Sanctuary. You may notice that the priest and the altar servants enter the sanctuary and lead us in worship.



The sanctuary with the curtain closed.

During the services, the sanctuary is brightly lit up. What does the **Sanctuary** remind us of? The sanctuary reminds us of heaven, which is a place of light and joy. The sanctuary is a little higher than the rest of the church, so there are two or three steps leading to it.



The sanctuary

There is a special table called the **altar** at the centre of the sanctuary. The priest celebrates the Holy Eucharist on the altar. The altar is beautifully lit up with candles. The altar is also the throne of God. This is where God rests, and all creation (including us!) worships and praises Him.



The altar

In the middle of the altar, there is the cross. Jesus, our Lord, was crucified for us on the cross.

The **Cross** is everywhere in the Church. The Cross reminds us that Jesus loves us, died for us, and is with us in the house of God. On the two sides of the Cross, there are twelve **candles**. The candles represent Jesus's twelve disciples. Candles give off light like the disciples did when preaching about Jesus Christ. The apostles are present with us in God's house.



The Cross in the middle of the altar

We can see many **icons** in the Church,

icons of Jesus Christ, St. Mary, the apostles, the saints, and all the believers who departed from us.

The **censer** is used in the church for the Holy Eucharist and for other sacraments or prayers. The priest places incense in the censer. The **incense** rises up along with our prayers, which go to heaven. The incense is sweet; our prayers also become sweet when we are good, and it pleases our heavenly Father. The censer with the incense shows that the church stands in prayer in God's house.



The censer

Do you know the names of the vessels that the priest uses for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist? They are the **Chalice** and the **Paten**. What is not a symbol is the Body and Blood of Christ, which begin as bread on the paten and wine in the chalice. During Holy Qurbana, the Holy Spirit makes this the real Body and Blood of Christ!



The chalice



The Paten

On the right side of the Altar, there is another table that is moveable. The Holy Gospel is placed on that table, and therefore the table is called the **table of the Holy Gospel**. The Holy Gospel contains God's Word, taught by Jesus.

All of these items make the church, God's house on earth, or heaven on earth.

Learning Outcome Check

Symbols are objects or signs that hold meaning. In the church, we have many symbols that point us to Jesus Christ. What are some symbols you have learned in this lesson?



What do we do in the church?

What do we do when we first enter the Church? We say the prayer, "I will enter Your house in awe and offer my vows to You" (**Psalms 65:13-15**).

After we enter the church, we stay silent. We stand before God with our faces turned towards the east. We fold our hands on our chests and participate in the worship by praying and singing.

When the Holy Eucharist begins after the completion of the morning or evening prayers, we see a procession around the altar. The curtain that separates the sanctuary is pulled to one side.

We see that the priest, who is beautifully vested, starts the procession around the altar.



He holds a censer in his hands. He censes the altar and the Holy Gospel. The incense rises to heaven along with our prayers. One of the servants of the altar goes before the priest, holding a lighted candle. The priest also turns towards the west and censes the congregation (people). The candles at the altar are lit. All the church bells ring to tell us and

the world that this time is important. We feel like we are taken into heaven.

There are other processions, too, during the Holy Eucharist. The priest and the servants at the altar come in procession to read the gospel to us. The priest holds the Holy Bible (Holy Evangelion or Holy Gospel). The altar servants hold lighted candles on each side of the priest. They turn to the west and walk towards us. The table of the Holy Gospel is placed in the centre of the sanctuary. The priest blesses the congregation and reads out the gospel. We hear God's word. Two acolytes stand holding the lighted candles. The Word of God is light. It shows us God's ways and how to keep them.



During the Holy Eucharist, we give one another the hand of peace. It is called "the kiss of peace." We know that we kiss our parents and our brothers and sisters to show that we love them. Giving the kiss of peace during the Holy Eucharist shows that we love and remain at peace with one another, and there is no hatred between us. (**St. Matthew 5: 23-24**)



There are times when we bow our heads. When the altar servant asks us to bow our heads before the merciful Lord, we do so and pray for God's mercies.



The priest turns towards us and blesses us with the sign of the cross several times.

The priest once again comes in procession towards us. He holds the cup and chalice in his hands. The acolyte comes before him with the censer. All the altar servants hold lighted candles. The church bells ring, and all those who are prepared come to receive the Holy Qurbana. They cross themselves and receive the Holy Qurbana.

The priest gives us the final blessings. Then we come one by one, make our offering, kiss the priest's hand or the cross, and return home in peace.

We do all of these gestures, and we see all these symbols during Holy Qurbana. The Holy Qurbana is perfect and complete and is the full worship. Through the Holy Qurbana, we come into communion with God.

This is why we should want to go to church all the time! God calls us to come together for worship, and when we are among other believers, we feel the presence of God. The Holy Church is where the faithful gather together to worship. But at the same time, the gathering of the faithful is also called the Holy Church. Let us remember that Christ tells us that where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them. (St. Matthew 18: 20)

Reflection Questions

1. Can you name one symbol that you see at church? What does it mean?
2. How do we hold our hands during Holy Qurbana?
3. What should you do with your hands when you hear the bells during Holy Qurbana?
4. Is the body and blood of Jesus Christ a symbol?

The Bread of Life

We receive the real Body and Blood of Jesus Christ during Holy Qurbana.

Vocabulary Words

Holy Eucharist Also known as the Holy Qurbana or Holy Communion. This refers to the special worship where we receive the real Body and Blood of Jesus, or sometimes the real Body and Blood of Christ.

Apostles the 12 disciples chosen by Jesus Christ



Whenever someone does something nice to us, we feel happy and say, 'Thank you!' It also makes us want to do something nice. God has given us so many great things - family, friends, food, water, and clothes are a few of these gifts from God. What can we do to thank Him?

One way to show our love for God is through the Holy Qurbana. This is a Syriac word for "sacrifice". A Greek word for Holy Qurbana is **Holy Eucharist**. This means Thanksgiving. Sometimes the **Holy Eucharist** is also called Holy Communion. Eating the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ allows us to become closer to Him. As Orthodox Christians, we want to become more like Christ. Participating in Holy Qurbana and having Holy Communion is one way we can become closer to Christ.

In this special worship, where we give

thanks to God, we receive more! If we are prepared, we can receive the real body and blood of Jesus. Sometimes the words Holy Qurbana, **Holy Eucharist**, and Holy Communion refer directly to the body and blood of Christ.

Learning Outcome Check

Through communion, having the Body and Blood of Christ, we have a deeper interaction and relationship with Him.



The service is also called the Divine Liturgy because we are with God. This is the way for us to be closer to Jesus and to show our love to Him.



Institution of Holy Qurbana

Learning Outcome Check

Holy Qurbana : sacrifice

Holy Eucharist : thanksgiving

Divine liturgy : our service

Passover

Jesus came to Jerusalem before His death at the time of the Passover feast. Passover is a great festival for the Jewish people. God commanded them to observe this day to celebrate their escape from slavery in the land of Egypt by having a special feast. The feast is called the Passover meal.

Jesus wished to eat the Passover meal

together with His disciples. The disciples arranged the meal in a house. In the evening, Jesus and his disciples sat down to eat. Jesus knew that it was His last supper with His beloved disciples. He was ready to give himself to be crucified on the cross for the salvation of man.

As they were eating, Jesus took bread and blessed it. He broke it and gave it to the disciples, saying, "Take, eat; this is My body." Likewise, he took the cup. He gave thanks and gave to the disciples, saying, "Drink of it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." Jesus Christ gave His body and blood to His disciples.

Christ also asked them, "Do this in remembrance of Me." As Jesus has com-

manded, we gather together in the house of God and participate in the **Holy Eucharist**. We remember Jesus Christ and how He saved us through His death. Jesus Christ gives Himself to us through the Holy Qurbana. He gives us His Body and Blood.

We believe that during Holy Qurbana we receive Jesus Christ. This is a mystery and cannot be explained. Because we receive God, we must prepare ourselves. We should not eat after the last meal, which means if Holy Qurbana is on Sunday, we should not eat again after dinner on Saturday. We should have a good night's sleep and not do anything that takes our mind and heart from God. In other situations we must fast at least 6 hours before receiving the Holy Qurbana. We must pray. Before going to church, we must clean ourselves, take a shower, and wear our best clothes. Our parents and priests can help us better prepare for Holy Communion.

Remember

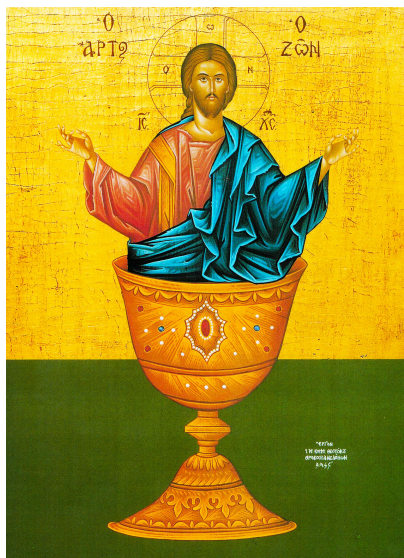
If Holy Qurbana is on Sunday, we should not eat again after dinner on Saturday.



The body and blood of Jesus Christ we receive may look and taste like bread and wine. But it is really God!

Many people do not believe in or understand this teaching. But for Orthodox Christians, the Eucharist is real and not a symbol.

We read in the Bible (**St. John 6:50-68**) that Jesus teaches us this truth. He is the living bread, and by eating His body and drinking His blood, we will have eternal life.



By receiving the Holy Qurbana, we accept Christ Himself

Jesus is God, and as God, He can do anything He wants. Through the Holy Qurbana, God wants to give us new life and save us.

The **Apostles** believed this. When Jesus asked if they also wanted to go away, St. Peter answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also, we have come to believe and know that you are the Christ, the Son of the living God." (v.68-69)

What begins as bread and wine becomes the body and blood of Christ dur-

ing Holy Qurbana. The priest and the members of the church pray and believe this is real through the power of the Holy Spirit. Eating the body and blood of Christ gives us strength and allows us to have a closer relationship with Him. We receive the Holy Qurbana with all faithfulness and holiness.

Every hour of every day, we can thank

God for all the blessings he has given us. On Sunday, we can all come together and say a very special “thank you” to God!

Learning Outcome Check

The body and blood of Jesus Christ are real and not just bread and wine.



Divine liturgy

Reflection Questions

1. How should we prepare ourselves before Holy Qurbana?
2. Is the body and blood of Christ just bread and wine?
3. How do bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ?

Hosanna in the highest

Did you know that during Holy Qurbana, we sing along with the angels?

Vocabulary Words

Invisible Something we can not see

Demons An angel who no longer serves God

Choirs A group of angels



The icon of creation



Together with the angels, we worship God

Look

Do you see any angels in the icon of creation?

God created everything. God made the heavens and the earth. He made all the things we see and the things we do not see. In the Bible, the book of Genesis tells the story of how God created everything.

The creation story is in Genesis, the first book of the Holy Bible. God is love, and He created everything out of love. When God created everything, he was happy. He also created living things we don't see, including **angels**.

The holy icons of our church often

show angels to remind us they are real. In many songs, we sing that angels are made of fire and spirit. In the icons, the angels may look like humans sometimes, but it is important to remember that they are not humans. When we die, we do not become angels!

Remember

In the post communion hymn, we sing, "Surrounded by hosts of angels - is the altar ..." Together with the angels, we worship and love God.



Angels love and worship God just like we do, but God made us special. God made us in His image and in His like-

ness! Angels are also special, and God loves them, but only we are created to look like God and be like Him (**Genesis 1:27-28**). Together with the angels, we worship and love God.

Learning Outcome Check

Understand the story of Angels.

Angels and Demons



Adam and Eve

God does not force anyone, including humans and angels, to worship and obey Him. But some angels were not happy that God made men and women special. They did not like that God made us and

loved us so much. Therefore, some angels chose to disobey God. Those angels who no longer love and serve God are called **demons**.

Satan (also known as the Devil) was one of those demons. He was jealous of how much God loved Adam and Eve. We read in the Bible how he became like a snake to trick Eve into disobeying God. Satan did this to destroy God's favourites!

Genesis also has other angels mentioned. Do you remember hearing about the Cherubim, who guarded Eden with a fiery sword?

The cherubim is a type or "rank" of angel! And the church teaches us there are many more!



Expulsion of Adam from Eden

Heavenly Hosts

We hear the words "heavenly hosts" many times in our prayers and songs in the church. These are the choirs of angels. When we talk about each type of angel, we usually describe them in a "hi-



erarchy” or order. The angels serve God in different ways!

The Ranks of Angels

There is so much we do not know about the spiritual world. But we know about 3 **ranks** of angels, each with 3 **types** of angels. Every type serves God in a special

way! The word “angel” means messenger, but this is only one role. However, it is easier for us to talk about all the types as “angels,” even those who are not messengers. The mission of angels varies. They can comfort us or be guardians of God’s throne. But they always obey and do God’s will.



First Order

1. Seraphim
2. Cherubim
3. Thrones

Second Order

4. Dominions
5. Virtues
6. Powers

Third Order

7. Principalities
8. Archangels
9. Angels

First order

These angels serve close to God and His throne in special ways.

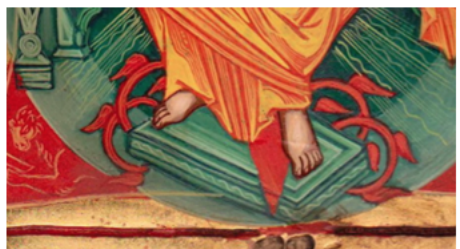
1. Seraphim: They are 6-winged angels that are so bright with love for God that they are called the “fiery ones”.



2. Cherubim: These angels are full of knowledge of God's wisdom, and through them we understand more about God. They are usually seen with 4 or 6 wings but with many eyes.



3. Thrones: These are very fast-moving angels close to where God is seated. They are also shown with many eyes and always serve God.



Second order

These angels serve God by helping with the order to the universe.

4. Dominions: These angels serve God by teaching us about God's rule. They are shown with crowns and they hold sceptres



5. Virtues: Also called "authorities", these angels always serve God and reflect His energy. They help with how the universe runs and are shown with censers and holding mirrors.



6. Powers: These angels serve God and do His will in fighting evil. They are depicted as warriors with swords.



Third order

These angels serve God in ways closer to men and interact most with us.

7. Principalities: These angels help those in power understand God's rule. They are shown holding crowns and staff

and work with us to serve God.



8. Archangels: Are special angels who carry out God's plans for us. We hear most about a few archangels like Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Uriel, but there are more. Each Archangel is shown in a special way.



9. Angels: There are many angels who work with us directly. We also have our own guardian angel!



In our hymns and prayers, we sometimes hear angels being referred to as “watchers”. This is from the Syriac name for angels and helps us remember that even though we cannot see angels, they are always with God and look over us because we are God’s beloved children.

The Holy Angels

All angels love God irrespective of their rank and serve Him in specific ways. God loves us so much, and He sends angels to help us! Together with the angels, we work to do God’s will.

This important relationship we have with the angels is most clear during the Holy Qurbana. There is a special prayer called the Sanctus:

The Sanctus

*Holy, Holy, Holy
Lord God Almighty
By whose glory the Heaven and
earth are filled,
Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is He who has come
and is to come
In the name of the Lord God;
Glory be to Him in the highest!*

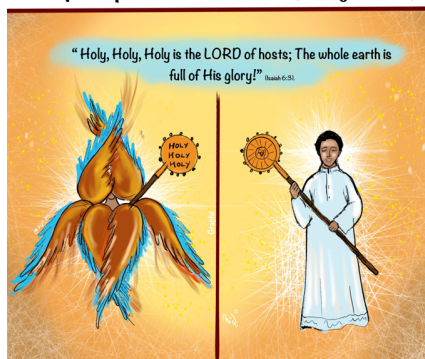
It is important to remember that during this time of the Holy Qurbana, we are saying this with the angels as well as all those who have died and are with God.

Heaven and earth together are singing and praying! The angels understand and love God, and as Christians, we also understand and love God.

“Hosanna” is a special word that means “pray, save us”. It is a cry and shout from us to God, who has created us and is the Lord of all things. How special it is that we sing along with the angels! It shows that both in heaven and on earth, there is only one God who loves us and takes care of all things!

The maravahto (or marbasa) on the Holy Altar is another reminder for us that the angels also worship God along with us. These fans are often decorated with an image of an angel, which helps us remember how the seraphim adore God:

Fiery Seraphim and Marvahtho (Liturgical Fan)



*Isaiah saw in the heights
Seraphs of fire and spirit
Each one of them with six wings
Serving Your divinity*

(Sraappikale...)

Knowing more about angels also helps us understand the Bible. Do you remember that at the time of the Annunciation to St. Mary, Angel Gabriel came to speak with her? At the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, the angels spoke with the shepherds and sang with joy at the sight of our Lord. The Holy Icons show clearly how angels also work with people to bring them closer to God.



Nativity

The angels and all of creation were also sad and crying at the time of the death of

our Lord Jesus Christ on Good Friday.

Do you see how all these special moments included even those things that we cannot see? There are so many stories in the Bible and in the church that include the angels. By learning more about the angels, we also learn how we can love God and serve Him.



Crucifixion

Learning Outcome Check

Who are some of the angels and their various roles that you learned about.

Reflection Questions

1. Who created angels?
2. Do people become angels when they die?
3. During Holy Qurbana, there is a special moment when the priest raises his hands and his voice and prays for us to “lift up” our hearts, and then we sing “Holy, Holy, Holy”. Who else is singing with us when we worship God?
4. On Sunday, during Holy Qurbana, what can you see that reminds us of how the angels worship God in heaven?

Living with love and respect

Everyone is made like God and can become like God. Everyone is precious to Him!

Vocabulary Words

Precious Something of great value that is to be treated with care and respect.

Respect Giving value and showing kindness for the feelings of others.

Sinner Someone who has done something that is not what God wanted because it was not good and holy.



The calling of Zacchaeus

How should we treat people who others do not like? What did Jesus do?

Zacchaeus was a tax collector and a rich man. Tax collectors were hated at the time of Jesus because many people

saw them as liars and cheaters.

One day, Jesus was passing through Jericho. Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus because he had heard a lot about him, but he was very short! He could not see Jesus with the crowd standing in front of him.

So he climbed a tall tree that was along the way to see Jesus. When Jesus walked by, he looked up from the tree and saw Zacchaeus. He said, “Zacchaeus, come down. I want to stay at your house today”.

Zacchaeus could not believe his ears. And the people near Jesus could not either! They began to complain and said - “Look at the kind of man Jesus stays with! Zacchaeus is a **sinner**!”.

But Jesus did not care. God is love, and Jesus loved Zacchaeus even though he was a sinner. Jesus’s love and kind-

ness made Zacchaeus cry because nobody wanted to go to his house or make friends with him. Zacchaeus felt the love of Jesus. He was so happy that Jesus wanted to spend the night at his house! In the end, Zacchaeus had a change of heart and he donated half of his wealth to the poor.



Jesus told the people who were upset something very important. He said, "Today, this family has been saved, and this man is part of God's special family, just like Abraham. I came to find people who were lost and save them."

This means that Jesus came to help and love everyone, no matter who they are. He wants to be friends with us and take care of us. Just like Jesus, we should also be kind and helpful to others.

Do You Know?

During the blessing of the home, we remember Christ's visit to Zacchaeus's home. "The house of Zacchaeus was Blessed by the visit of Christ. Likewise, may this home be blessed by the Trinity's presence..."



The Temple of God

Jesus taught us to treat others like we want to be treated (**St. Matthew 7:12**). This is important because everyone is made in the image of God. It is our duty to treat others with **respect** and love them so that we can be like Jesus. Also, by sharing the love of Christ, we can bring about change in people's hearts and spread the good news through our actions.

Remember

Our bodies are so important that the Lord calls them as temples of God (**1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19-20**)



Our bodies are the temple of God because God created us. This means that God lives within us through the Holy Spirit. We can take care of the temple of God by taking care of our body, hearts, mind, and soul. We can take care of our bodies by nourishing them with good food, making sure we get plenty of fresh air, and keeping our bodies clean. We can take care of our hearts and minds by

treating others with respect, gently sharing our feelings, and taking time to do things we enjoy. We can take care of our souls by making sure we spend time with God in prayer, being active participants during Holy Qurbana, and regularly attending Sunday school classes. Remember, respecting and loving others around us, respecting ourselves, and taking care of ourselves are ways that we can take care of God's temple.

Learning Outcome Check

God created us body, mind and soul and we must do what we can to take care of it.

The Jesus Prayer

It is easy for us to look at others and say that they are sinners. But did you know that we may sin without even knowing?

During Holy Qurbana, there is a very special prayer where we ask God to forgive all our sins - the ones we do on purpose and the ones we do on accident, and also the ones we remember and the ones we do not. This is very important so that we stay humble and can repent. God loves a humble heart!

There is another short but very special prayer that we can say all the time called the Jesus Prayer:

The Jesus Prayer

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

This prayer always keeps us humble and is a reminder that we are sinners. The Church teaches us that to be healthy means not only nurturing our body but also our soul. To be fully with Christ means we must be like Him.

Does the Jesus Prayer sound like another word we say a lot in Church? The meaning of "Kurielaision" in Greek is "Lord, have mercy"!

Search

Can you find this prayer in the Holy Qurbana book?

Learning Outcome Check

The Church cares and teaches about our overall wellness as a means to find Fullness in Christ.

Reflection Questions

1. What can we do to make our body, soul, and mind closer to God?
2. How do you think Zacchaeus felt when nobody would be his friend?
3. Can you sin without knowing? What should we do so we can say sorry to God for everything?

The dreamer and the ruler

Everything good comes from God. To be like God means to be good and love people, even those who are not nice to us.

Vocabulary Words

Cruel Causing pain or suffering to others on purpose.

Jealous Disliking someone because they have more than you or wanting what others have.



Joseph was a man who became a great ruler and had a lot of power, but he didn't rule the place where he was born. Joseph's story teaches us that it's important to always be loyal to God and trust Him, even when things are hard or we don't understand why they're happening. God not only helps us, but He also

helps other people, even when we can't see how. Joseph's story shows us that we should always stay faithful to God and trust that He has a plan for us, even when things seem difficult.

When Joseph was a young boy, he lived in Canaan with his parents, Jacob and Rachel (**Genesis 37:3**). He had eleven brothers, but his brothers did not like that Jacob liked his son Joseph a lot.

Jacob even bought Joseph a colourful robe, which made his brothers even more **jealous**. Joseph once had a dream where he and his brothers were tying bunches of grain when his bunch stood up while all of theirs came around and bowed to him. When he told his brothers about his dream, they made fun of him, saying, "Do you think that you are better than all of us? Do you think that we would ever bow down to you?"



One day, Joseph's father sent Joseph to call his brothers home from the field. But when the brothers saw Joseph, they wanted to kill him! His brothers stole Joseph's robe and threw Joseph into an old well.

They were so **cruel** that they even decided to sell Joseph to some other men. They went and told their father later that he had been killed by a wild animal. Jacob was very sad for the loss of his favourite son, but the brothers were glad they would not have to see Joseph ever again.

Meanwhile, Joseph was sold to a man who was a helper to the Pharaoh (or ruler) of Egypt. Joseph was very sad. But he never lost faith in God. Joseph prayed every day.

Joseph soon became a favourite of the helper of the Pharaoh and started to

help him with everything that he owned. But one day, Potiphar's wife lied about Joseph and said he tried to hurt her. Joseph was thrown into jail, but even there, he stayed faithful to God and always prayed.

Prayer is a very good way for us to help us get through difficult times. Prayer keeps us connected to God and reminds us that we are never alone.

Joseph was still able to explain the meaning of dreams. One day the Pharaoh was having bad dreams, and Joseph was able to tell him what the dream meant. Joseph said that Pharaoh's dream showed seven good years of harvest followed by seven bad years of famine.



Even though the Pharaoh put him in jail, Joseph chose to help the Pharaoh and gave him good advice to save some of the harvest from the good years so they would have food during the bad years. Pharaoh listened to Joseph's words and decided to put him in charge of all of Egypt because of his good ideas.

When the years of famine arrived, many people did not have enough grain

to eat, so they came to buy grain from Egypt. Even Joseph's brothers came to buy grain. However, they didn't recognise their brother because ten years had passed since they last saw him. In the end, Joseph's brothers bowed to him just like it was in his dream. When Joseph revealed himself to his brothers, he said, "Do not be angry at yourselves for selling me, because God has put me here to save people from starving." Joseph then invited his entire family to stay in Egypt with him, and they lived together happily all the days of their lives.

There are times when we feel left out, like Joseph was, or when people can be mean to us, like Joseph's brothers. But we have to remind ourselves that we are not alone. God is always with us.

In the story, we see that even when his brothers were mean to him, Joseph treated them with kindness and respect, just like Jesus taught us. We can pray to God like Joseph did. We can read the Bible to feel God's presence. We should also talk to our parents, teachers, coaches, or priest when we are having a tough time. These adults are all around us, ready to help and guide us.

Learning Outcome Check

If you feel stressed or upset, what are some positive ways to deal with it?

There is always Help!

Joseph was very sad, and he could have felt very alone. But he never forgot about God. Through prayer and by listening to God, Joseph was able to get through a very difficult time. He did not hate his brothers for what they did to him, and he showed God's love to everyone when the famine came.

Sometimes we are also alone, like Joseph, but thanks to God, we often have people who love us close. We have our home, our church, and many people who are ready to help! At school, we have teachers and other friends who can help.

When we get a cut on our finger, it is easy for anyone to see and give us a bandage to help. But sometimes, when we are feeling sad, upset, or **jealous**, these feelings can cause us pain, and the people around us who love us might not know we need help. It can be tough, but we should trust our parents, teachers, and priests enough to share our feelings with them so they can help.

Remember

Prayer is a very good way for us to help us get through difficult times. Prayer keeps us connected to God and reminds us that we are never alone.



Reflection Questions

1. What did Joseph do to his jealous brothers when he saw them later?
2. How can we help someone who feels alone and may not want to talk?
Sometimes they may get angry with you if you ask them. What should you do then?
3. How does prayer help us when we feel hurt or worried?

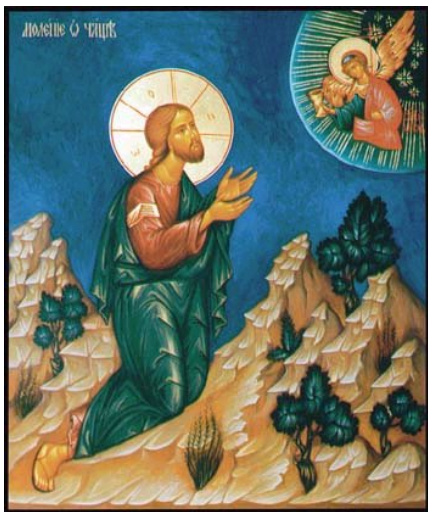
The Lord's Prayer

God wants to hear you talk to Him and He wants to see you pray the way He taught His disciples to pray using the Lord's Prayer

Vocabulary Words

Stress When we feel worried, scared, or nervous.

Prayer Talking to God. We can thank him and also ask God for help.



Jesus teaches us how to pray.

Prayer is talking to God, and God loves when we pray. The disciples, Jesus' closest friends, wanted to learn how to

pray. The disciples were with Jesus all the time and were with Him when He went to pray. Yet, they were still not sure how to pray.

Jesus teaches us how we should pray with humility. Whether our **prayers** are long or short, God always listens. God knows what we mean in our hearts, even when we have trouble finding the right words.

Jesus also teaches us that we shouldn't 'show off' when we pray. God doesn't want us to pray just so people can see us or pray loudly just so people will know we are praying. He loves when we pray in a quiet place with our own words and for our needs, what we are thankful for, praises, and what we're sorry for.

Jesus taught us a special **prayer** called "The Lord's **Prayer**", which we should say often at home and at church.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day, our daily bread
and forgive us our debts and sins as we also have forgiven our debtors.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.
For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever.
Amin.

Let's understand each part of this special **prayer** that Jesus taught us:

Our Father, who art in heaven

We start the **prayer** this way so we know that we're praying to God. He is our heavenly Father, and we are His children.

Hallowed be Thy name.

This means Holy is Your Name. Even though God wants us to call him Father, he is still God. It's sometimes really hard to understand who God is and what He's like. How did he make us? How is He perfect and never makes mistakes? God just wants us to remember that we need to treat Him as super special because He is God, and when we pray to Him, we need to be respectful.

Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

We should think all the time about living with God. This part means we are praying that people will live in peace and love with one another the way they do in heaven with God. It reminds us that we

should be living the way God wants us to every day.

Give us this day, our daily bread

God provides everything we need to live the life of a Christian. Too often, we think about asking God to give us video games and princess dolls, but we forget to thank Him for the food that we eat, the water that we drink, and even the air that we breathe. When we ask God for things, that means we trust Him, and we'll leave the decision to God.

and forgive us our debts and sins as we also have forgiven our debtors.

This next part of the **prayer** asks for forgiveness for our mistakes. Forgiveness means that we are sorry for something we've done and don't want to do it any more. But we also need to forgive people who have done us wrong. Sometimes others hurt us very badly, so we need to ask God to help us forgive them because it's really hard or we don't want to. If we forgive others, God will forgive us.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

This part of the **prayer** is really neat because it asks God to help us know the right thing to do. He will protect us against the evil that is in the world and keep us away from it. Temptation is the idea that is in our heads that might lead us to do the wrong thing. We ask God to give us the strength to listen to Him and to do what is right.

For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amin.

The last part of the **prayer** is the best part! We say out loud that God's kingdom will be forever. With God, we always win!

Learning Outcome Check

In all hours of prayer and for every Sacrament, we always say the Lord's Prayer. Saying the Lord's Prayer can help us when we feel stressed or upset. This prayer reminds us that we should be living the way God wants us to everyday.

We should not only say the Lord's

prayer, but it's so important to think about what we are saying. When we pray, we should think about all the things we have to be thankful for and how God has given us everything we need. When we pray "forgive us our debts", we ask forgiveness for those things we did wrong, including those that we may have forgotten.

Prayer is our special way of talking to God. So, remember to pray as many times as you can. God loves you and wants to know everything about you and how you're doing. Isn't that wonderful?

Sometimes we feel very **stressed** or worried due to difficult situations in life. The Church gives us several tools, like **prayer** and confession, to better take care of our minds and spirits and deal with those situations. The Church teaches us to talk to God through our daily **prayers** and seek help from our priests, church elders, and teachers.

Learning Outcome Check

Parents, teachers and church leaders are resources for help during difficult times.

Reflection Questions

1. Can you think of a time when you felt worried?
2. What did you do when you were stressed?
3. What are some ways you can talk to God and hear His voice?

Spreading the Good News

The Apostles and disciples told many people about the Gospel. We can also share God's love with others!

Vocabulary Words

Evangelism Sharing the good news of Jesus with others by talking and also by our actions

Persecute To treat someone very badly or hurt them because of what they believe. This is not how God wants us to act, and we are to stop others from being treated this way.

Mission A special task or job that someone is given to do. God's mission for us is to love God and to love everybody!



Go and make disciples of all nations.

When you have good news, don't you want to share it?

The twelve apostles and many more disciples lived, walked, and learned from Jesus. They were with him when he lived and saw how he died and rose again!

They knew that Jesus was the son of God and that He came to Earth to save us. They understood that he would come again and wanted to share this good news with everyone!

One of the apostles was St. Thomas, who came to Kerala and brought the gospel directly to many of our ancestors.

The apostles and disciples travelled around the world, telling others about Him and all the amazing things they had



Vision of St. Paul

witnessed. This was Jesus' commandment (St. Matthew 28:19; St. Mark 16:15; St. Luke 14:23). This is called **mission** and **evangelism**. This means sharing your faith with others.

Learning Outcome Check

Sharing our faith with others is what we are called to do as Orthodox Christians. This is called mission and evangelism.

with their actions. When others saw them, they asked questions. Many died because they loved Jesus, and that also meant sharing the truth about Jesus. These special people are called martyrs.

In the Acts of the Apostles, there was one person who was not excited about Jesus. His name was Saul. Saul did not believe that Jesus was the Son of God, and he even tried to arrest the people who believed in Jesus. He killed many who believed in Jesus. One day, however, it all changed.

Some of them spoke to others, but many times they shared the love of God

Saul was on a journey to a city called Damascus. All of a sudden, a bright light from heaven shined around him. It was

so bright, Saul fell to the ground. Then a voice from heaven said, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” Saul asked the voice, “Who are you, Lord?” And the voice replied, saying, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.” (Acts, Chapter 9)

You can imagine that Saul was quite surprised. After the light disappeared, Saul opened his eyes, but he could not see. He was blind, and he remained that way for three days. Saul’s friends helped him continue his journey to Damascus.

Meanwhile, God also appeared to a man named Ananias who lived in Damascus. God told him to go and visit Saul. Ananias went to Saul and explained to him that God had sent him. He touched him, and immediately something like scales fell from Saul’s eyes, and he could see again!

Saul was a changed man. He became filled with the Holy Spirit and was baptised. He began to use the name Paul instead of Saul. He became a Christian, and from that time and for the rest of his life, he spread the message of Jesus Christ.

St. Paul

St. Paul went to many countries and told people about Jesus, like Jesus commanded. He helped start the first churches. He wrote many letters (or epistles) that we read in the Bible at home and at church. St. Paul is an amazing example of how one person can make a big difference in the world.

What is the message that the Saints shared with everyone? That God is love! Jesus became man and died on the cross because He loved us, and He defeated death with His resurrection. This is such wonderful news for everyone! This is how much God loves us, and this is what Jesus taught us to do. We need to love God back and also love our neighbour. Our mission is to evangelise how much God loves us. Our neighbour is wherever we may be!

Learning Outcome Check

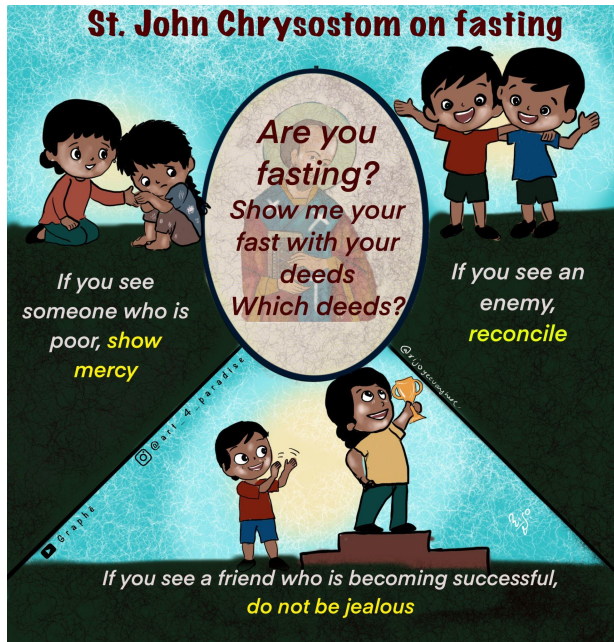
Jesus loves us and we share that love with others.

Our mission

You can also make a difference! It doesn’t matter if you are young - God can still work through you! Sharing the love of Jesus is our mission, and that is the evangelism we practise. What are some of the things you can do to share the love of Jesus?

- You can tell people about God’s love.
- Invite someone to church.
- Be kind to those around you.
- Share what you have, and be generous.
- Visit and help those who are sick or lonely.
- Use the talents God has given you.
- Pray for others.

- Teach and help those younger than you. we can also share God's love by fasting!
There is so much you can do to share God's love. And God will work through us to do amazing things also!
- St. John Chrysostom teaches us that



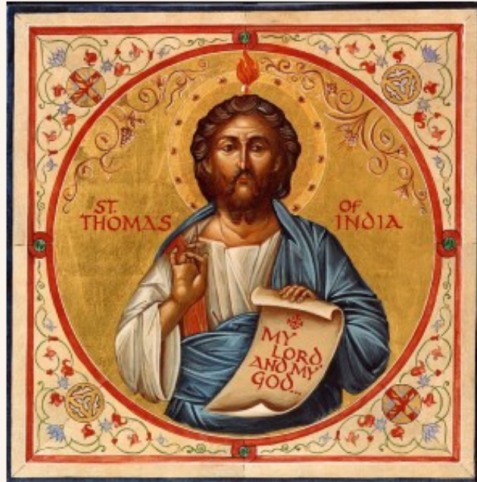
Reflection Questions

1. What did the Apostles and disciples share with others about Jesus?
2. What can be our mission?
3. What are some ways we can evangelize and share God's love?

Gratitude

Reviewers : Grade 2

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Ms. Jobitha Prince | St. Thomas IOC DUBLIN |
| Mrs. Rajee Shaji | St. Gregorios IOC WATERFORD |
| Mrs. Siji Thomas Koshy | St. George IOC MANCHESTER |
| Ms. Beksy George | St. Mary's IOC BRISTOL |



ST. THOMAS, THE APOSTLE OF INDIA
PRAY FOR US



O S S A E
Diocese of UK, Europe and Africa

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