



Diocese of South-West America  
Sunday School

# 1st Grade

## O Wonderful World



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## LESSON 1 - MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH

### *God is the creator of everything*

God created everything. He made the heavens and the earth. He made the things we see, and the things we do not see.

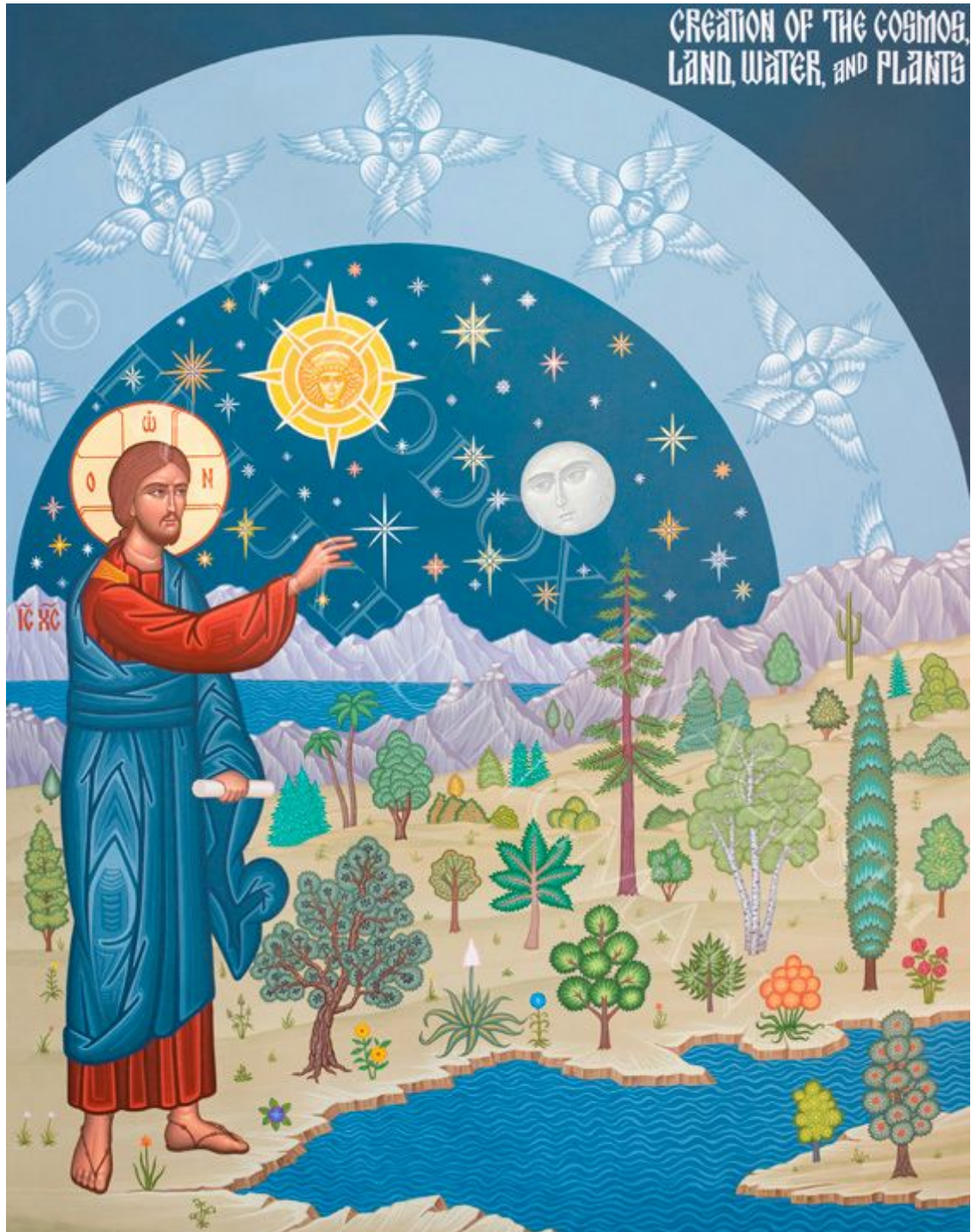


When God made our world, He started by saying, “Let there be light!” ... and there was light! God saw the light, and it was good. He called the light “day”, and the darkness “night.”

On the second day, God spoke and created the Earth. He made the heavens and the sky over the Earth, and separated the water. God saw that it was good.

On the third day, God spoke and the waters made oceans, seas, and rivers. The dry land appeared. God spoke and made all different kinds of plants and trees and grasses grow on the land. There was evening and there was morning, and God saw that it was good.

On the fourth day, God said, “Let the great lights appear in the sky!” And that’s how God made the sun, the moon, and the stars. He made them out of nothing! God saw that it was good.



On the fifth day, God looked at the waters and said, “Let the waters have life!” All of a sudden, millions of fish and other life began swimming in the ocean. God made birds, too. He sent them flying through the air. God saw it was good, and blessed them.



On the sixth day, God added creatures to the land. He made lions, tigers, and bears. He made rabbits, sheep, and cows. He added everything from ants to zebras to the land.

God still felt something was missing. So He created man and woman in His own image to enjoy and take care of all that He had created. God blessed them, and was happy with all that He had made.

After six days, everything was made. God saw everything, and it was good.

So, on the seventh day God had a nice long rest and enjoyed looking at all that He had made.



## LESSON 2 - GOD'S IMAGE

***We are made to look and be like God***

Do you remember what God created on the sixth day of creation?

He created the animals of the earth ... **AND US!**

God created man and woman to be different from all the other animals. God said, "Let us make humankind in our **image**, according to our **likeness**."

**What does the word image mean?**

"Image" is another word for picture. All humans are made to look like God.



**What does it mean to look “like God?”** God is loving, patient, kind and forgiving.

Can you share a time when you were loving? Or patient? Or kind? Or forgiving? How about if someone was loving, patient, kind, or forgiving towards you?

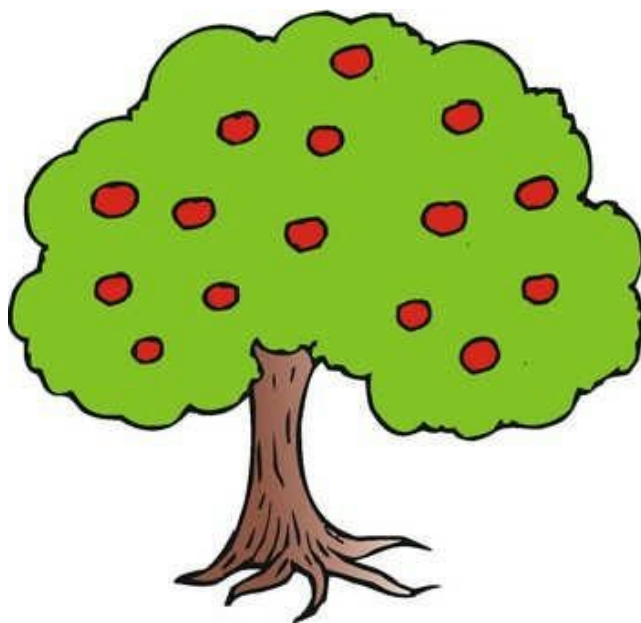
God created Adam from dust, breathed into him and Adam became alive.

God loved Adam. God wanted to take care of Adam, so He planted a garden in Eden for Adam to live in and enjoy. God commanded Adam to take care of the garden.

Even though Adam had everything he could have wanted, God saw that Adam was lonely. God put Adam to sleep, took a rib from him, and from the rib made a woman named Eve to be his partner. They lived together in the garden of Eden.

God let Adam and Eve eat the fruit from all the trees in the garden except for the fruit from the **Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil**. God loved Adam and Eve very much, and warned them that if they ate the fruit from that tree without God's permission, they would die.

God knew they were not ready to eat from the fruit of the tree, and wanted them to trust and obey Him. God planned to give them the fruit when it was time.



**THINK:**

Have your parents ever made something for you and told you not to eat it yet?

Why did they make something for you and tell you to wait?



### LESSON 3 - ADAM AND EVE DISOBEY

***When we disobey God, it's called sin.  
There are always consequences when we disobey.***

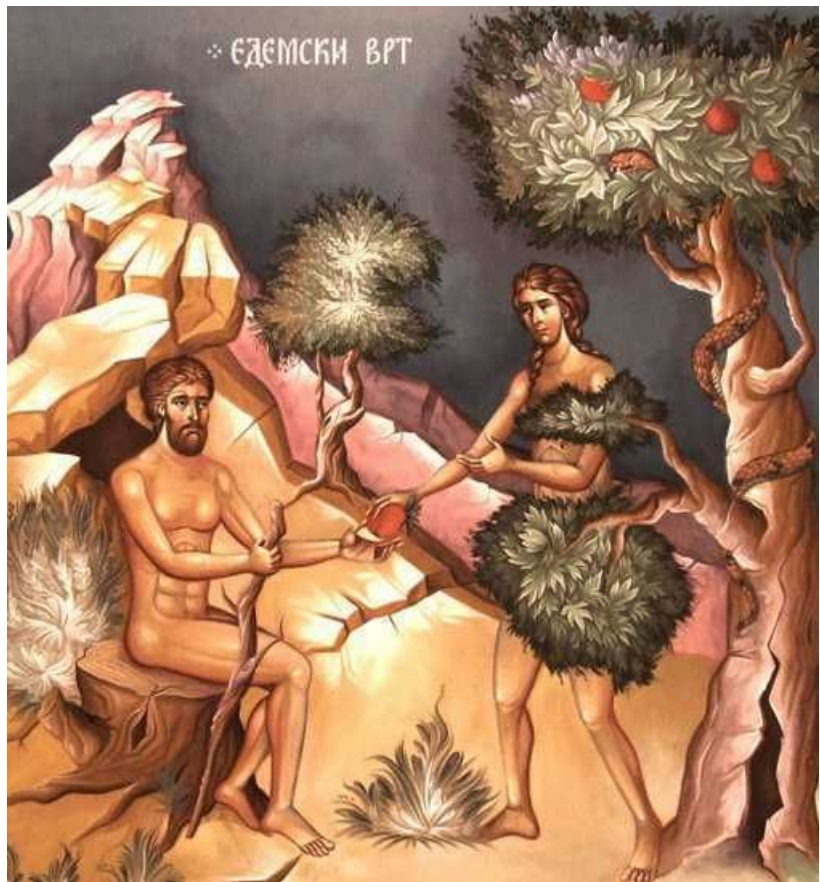
God created us special, because He created man and woman in His **image** and **likeness**.

God created Adam and Eve, and let them live in the beautiful **Garden of Eden**. He gave them everything to eat, except for the fruit from the **Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil**.

Adam and Eve trusted God and obeyed Him and lived together in the garden of Eden.

But, there was a snake in the garden who was jealous of Adam and So, the snake went to Eve to trick her. It told her that she would not die if she ate the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.

The snake promised, "Eat it, then you'll know everything, just like God!"





God created us and loved us. So who should we trust - Him, or the snake? But, Eve wanted to be like God. She listened to the snake and ate the fruit. Eve disobeyed God.

This happens to us sometimes. Have you ever disobeyed to get something you wanted? Instead of trusting that God will give us everything we need, we disobey Him sometimes to get what we want when we want.

After Eve ate the fruit, she gave it to Adam and he also ate it. They then got scared and tried to hide from God.

### **THINK:**

Have you ever disobeyed someone? Have you ever been afraid of being caught while doing something you were not supposed to do? That is why Adam and Eve hid from God, but can anyone truly hide from God?

When we make a mistake or disobey, should we hide it from God? Can we hide it from God?

**No. God sees us and knows everything that we do.**

When God asked Adam what He did, Adam told God that Eve gave him the fruit to eat. Instead of telling God that he was disobedient, he tried to blame Eve. When God asked Eve what happened, Eve tried to blame the serpent. Both Adam and Eve tried to blame someone else for their own mistakes.

What can we learn? Since God sees everything and knows everything, what does God want us to do when we make a mistake or disobey Him? **He wants us to come to Him right away and admit when we make a mistake.**

## LESSON 4 - GOD STILL LOVES US

***God loves us and will always love us,  
even when we make mistakes***

Sometimes when people hurt our feelings or make us upset, we may stop loving them even though that is not right. But when Adam and Eve disobeyed God, did He stop loving them or caring for them? No way!

**God still loved Adam and Eve even after their disobedience.**

Remember, God created us in His image and still wanted us to become LIKE Him. So God decided to send Adam and Eve out of Eden.



If God loved Adam and Eve, why wouldn't He let them stay in Eden?

In the garden of Eden there was another important tree called the Tree of Life. If Adam and Eve had also eaten the fruit of the Tree of Life, they would never get better.

**What is sin?** Sin is when we do not listen to God, and do something bad that is not what Jesus would do. Sometimes we sin without even knowing we are doing something wrong!

Telling lies, being mean to your brother or sister, not listening to your parents, not praying .. all of these are examples of sin. We are supposed to always be like God, but sometimes we make mistakes.

Adam and Eve were separated from God because of their disobedience. They no longer obeyed and trusted in God. If they ate the fruit of life and stayed in Eden, then they would live forever as sinners. That's why God sent them out from Eden, so that they could **repent**, and trust God to make them like Him. God didn't let them eat the fruit from the Tree of Life, so that they could choose to come back to Him.

To *repent* means to say you are sorry, and come back to God.

We say sorry to God, and go to Confession to talk to our priest who will help us by praying over our head. This is a Sacrament, or mystery. Confession is a time for us to promise to try extra hard to do good things.

After Adam and Eve died, people continued to live in sin. But, God found people who loved Him and used them to teach the world about His love. They were examples of how to become like Him.

Some of the people who loved God and chosen by Him were: **Enoch** (Genesis 6: 21-24), **Noah** (Genesis 6-9), **Abraham** (Genesis 12:-21), **Moses** (Exodus 1:22-2:10, 3:1-6, 11-15), **Samuel** (1 Samuel 2:18-19, 26, 3:1-18), and **David** the Shepherd (1 Samuel 16:1, 6-13).



## LESSON 5 – SAINT MARY, THE MOTHER OF GOD

***St. Mary was chosen to be the mother of Jesus because she lived a life of humility and prayer***

In the Holy Bible, 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 in God. God chose Mary. We sometimes call her the new Eve.

St. Mary was very humble and listened to what God told her. St. Mary has the title the "Theotokos" which means the "Mother of God." Through her humility and obedience, she brought life into the world by giving birth to Jesus Christ.



### **How was Mary prepared to become the Mother of God?**

She was raised by her parents, St. Joachim and St. Anna.

They had prayed for a child from God, and were very old when God blessed them with a baby girl who they named Mary.

They raised her in prayer, and dedicated her to the Temple when she was three years old to serve and please God.

**Why did God choose St Mary?** St. Mary loved God. She grew up obeying, serving, praying, and praising the Lord. She read the Scriptures and prayed everyday. She was also very humble. She was the model Christian.

**How did God tell Mary that He had chosen her?** He sent one of his mighty angels, Gabriel. St. Mary was a little scared at first, but Gabriel said, “Peace be with you,” and she became calm.

He told her that he had good news and that she was chosen by God. Gabriel told St Mary that she would be the Mother of God and have a child named Jesus. She was very surprised and confused. Why was Mary so confused? At that time she was not yet married to Joseph, and she was still very young. But St. Mary had great faith in God and knew that she must obey God. St.

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

Because Mary listened to God, Jesus was able to save all of us. We honor and remember Mary as the Theotokos which means the “Mother of God.”

We love St. Mary like she was our own mother, and she is most Holy because she had Jesus inside of her.



## LESSON 6 – PEACE TO YOU, MARY

***We ask St. Mary to pray for us, and remember how holy she is by saying a special prayer***

St. Mary is special to all Christians. We have special pictures called icons, which teach us about Jesus. In this Holy Icon of St. Mary, we see she holds baby Jesus in her arms. We also see Jesus holding His mother lovingly.

Like us, Jesus needed His mother to feel safe and loved. At the same time, Jesus is also comforting her. Mary is sad because she knows that, one day, her Son will suffer on the Cross.

Jesus's loving face as He looks at His mother, tells us that we should not worry as this is God's plan. With God's help, we can get through hard times, and we will enjoy the glory of the Resurrection forever.

In Church we pray a special prayer that starts with "Peace be with you Mary", or "Hail Mary". We are not praying to St. Mary like we pray to God. Instead, this important prayer reminds us that she was a blessed person because God was very happy with her. She was worthy to be chosen as the Mother of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. She is the **Theotokos**, or "bearer of God."





God chose the young Mary to be the mother of Jesus, and sent his angel Gabriel to visit Mary. The angel said to Mary that God loved her (Luke 1:28):

**“PEACE BE WITH YOU, MARY, FULL OF GRACE”**

The angel Gabriel told Mary not to be afraid, and that God was very happy with how Mary lived her life. Gabriel said that God chose her to be the mother of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (Luke 1:31-34):

**“THE LORD IS WITH YOU”**

After the angel left her, Mary went to visit her cousin Elizabeth who was pregnant with St. John the Baptist. The baby jumped for joy in Elizabeth’s womb when Mary came close. Elizabeth knew how good God was to Mary and that her baby was Jesus Christ, and said (Luke 1:28, 42, 48):

**“BLESSED ARE YOU AMONG WOMEN AND  
BLESSED IS THE FRUIT OF YOUR WOMB,  
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST”**

We also say this prayer because Mary had strong faith and trusted God. We should all try to be like her so we can also have Jesus inside of us. As Christians, we want to be “Theotokos”, or bearers of God. This means that we want God to fill our heart so that others can see His love through our actions. We also ask St. Mary to pray for us – until the last moment of our life - just like we ask our friends and parents to pray for us (John 2:1-11):

**“HOLY MARY, MOTHER OF GOD, PRAY FOR US SINNERS  
NOW, AND AT THE HOUR OF OUR DEATH, AMEN!”**

## LESSON 7 – SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

*If we trust in God, He will provide for us*

In Jerusalem, there lived a priest named Zacharias. His wife's name was Elizabeth. They obeyed and loved God. God loved them both.

They were old and had no children. But, they still prayed to God for a child.



One day Zacharias was praying for himself and the people, and offering **incense** in the temple of God. Incense is burned and has a sweet smell. While it is burned it creates a lot of smoke. Our church teaches that this smoke is like our prayers. Both of them rise toward heaven and God.

The Angel Gabriel then appeared on the right side of the altar, next to Zacharias. Zacharias was frightened, but the angel had good news. Gabriel told him that Elizabeth would give birth to a child. The baby's name would be John, and he was going to be a great man. Instead of praising and thanking God, Zacharias did not believe what the angel told him. So to prove the power of God, the angel told Zacharias he would not be able to talk until the baby was born. Zacharias came out of the temple silent and could not talk. How would you feel if you couldn't speak for nine whole months?

Like the angel said, Elizabeth gave birth to a son. All of her family and friends were very glad. They all celebrated with her saying, "God is gracious."

In those days, the baby was given a name only when he or she was eight days old. So, the friends and family of Zacharias and Elizabeth came together so they could hear the baby's name. They thought that the baby should be named Zacharias, but Elizabeth said that she wanted to name her son John. Her family didn't like that name, because they didn't know anyone named John. When the family asked Zacharias what he wanted to name the baby, he could not speak so he wrote, "His name is John."

Suddenly, Zacharias could talk! He started to sing and thank God. Soon, everyone joined him in praising God. After nine months of not being able to speak, what is the first thing you would say?



Little John grew and became strong in the Holy Spirit. St. John the Baptist became a prophet of God. A prophet is a holy person who is chosen by God and teaches the word of God. His teachings helped people get ready for the coming of Jesus the Savior.

As well as "the Baptist", John is also known as "glorious prophet and forerunner of Christ". Many Holy Icons show St. John the Baptist with wings. This shows he was a messenger of God.

Jesus called St. John the greatest born of a woman.



## LESSON 8 – CHRIST IS BORN!

***The Church celebrates the Feast of the Nativity (birth) of our Lord Jesus Christ every December***

Joseph and Mary lived in the little town of Nazareth, but St. Joseph's home was Bethlehem. Right before Jesus was born, the Emperor who ruled the country decided that a census (a record of the number of people who live in an area) should be taken in the entire empire.

Because St. Joseph was born in Bethlehem, they had to leave Nazareth and walk to Bethlehem. It was close to the time when the baby would be born and they had to travel nearly 100 miles.



During the trip Mary rode on the back of a donkey.

After that very tiring journey, they reached the little town of Bethlehem. There was no room for them in any of the inns that they went to, so they had to stay in a stable.

Jesus was born and wrapped in swaddling clothes. He was laid in a manger full of straw.

After Jesus was born, an angel appeared to a group of shepherds in a field near Bethlehem. The shepherds were scared, but the angel said "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (**Luke 2:10,11**). When the angel finished, the shepherds were surrounded by more angels, all shining bright. They were praising God and singing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill

toward men". The shepherds decided that they had to see this baby, and found St. Mary and St. Joseph with the baby lying in a manger. The shepherds began glorifying and praising God.



The Holy Icon teaches us more about Christmas, which in the Church is called the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ. The icon teaches us through colors and images very important points about Christmas that we may not think about.

God loved us so much 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 or stable surrounded by smelly 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.

In the icon, we see angels, rich kings and poor shepherds – all creation is so happy that the Son of God is born. Even the animals worshipped Jesus, peeking into the manger where He lay on His bed of straw

Three wise men also came to worship Jesus, because when Jesus was born they saw a strange and bright star in the sky. They knew it was the 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.

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.



During Christmas, we give gifts to our friends and family. But what kind of gifts, can we offer Jesus?

The best gift that we can give is **love**. We can show our love to Jesus by loving our neighbor - the poor and all others. When we give gifts to the poor, we are also giving gifts to Jesus.

**Christ is born! Glorify Him!**

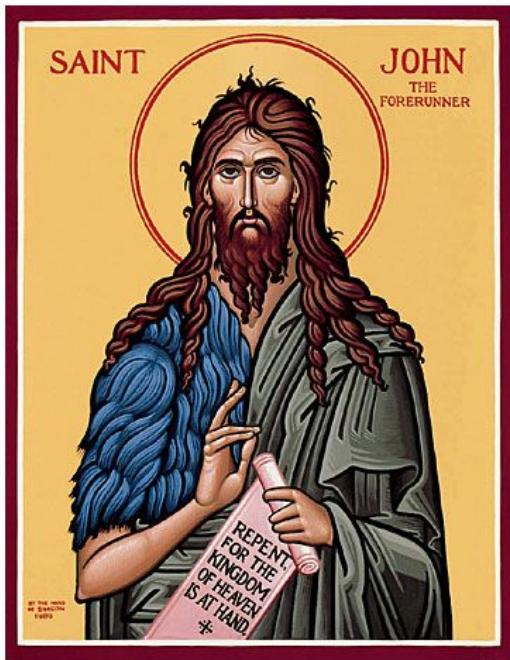


## LESSON 9 – BAPTISM OF OUR LORD

***We remember the Baptism of Jesus on January 6th,  
which is we also call the feast of “Denaha.”***

St. John the Baptist was Jesus' cousin, and he was a prophet. A prophet is someone who shares God's message to many people. Since he was a child, St. John lived alone in the wilderness and spent his time praying. St. John made his clothes with camel's hair and leather. He ate only food that he found in the wild, like locusts and honey. Out in the wilderness, God spoke

to John and gave him a message to preach His word.



John first went to the River Jordan. When he began to preach, people came from all parts of the land to listen. He preached that they should prepare themselves to receive the Lord Jesus Christ. They should stop sinning and ask for forgiveness. John told them that the Lord Jesus is greater than all men, including himself. "He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worth to carry," said John about Jesus. Many people who came to listen to John repented of their

sins. John baptized people in the River Jordan so that they could turn away from sin and prepare themselves to receive the Lord Jesus.

One day when John was preaching to a large crowd beside the River Jordan, he saw Jesus coming towards him. Jesus asked John to baptize Him. John was surprised because he didn't think he was worthy of baptizing the Son of God. Instead, John wanted to be baptized by Jesus.





But Jesus told him that they needed to show others how to live a good Christian life. Jesus should be an example in everything. Jesus also needed to purify the waters and bless the Sacrament of Baptism with water and spirit.

So, John baptized Jesus in the waters of the River Jordan. All of a sudden, something amazing happened! As Jesus came out of the water, the heavens were opened. The Holy Spirit came down from heaven in the form of a dove. Then a mighty voice was heard from heaven, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

## LESSON 10 – GOD’S FAMILY

### *When we are Baptized, we join God’s family*

Have you ever seen a Baptism? Or, maybe you have seen photos of your own Baptism?

Holy Baptism is the first Sacrament we receive as Orthodox Christians.

Baptism is like being born again. God washes us clean of all sin. We begin our new life with Jesus in God’s family, His Holy Church. Babies and adults can be baptized as everyone is welcome in God’s family. We are baptized only one time in our life.



Did you know you have Godparents, who promised when you were Baptized to look after you and teach you about Jesus? Your

Godparents and your parents make sure you grow up close to God.

Through our Baptism, we all become part of God’s family and members of the Church. Have you seen the Baptismal font made of stone inside the Church?

During Baptism, the priest pours water into the font and blesses it. In our Church, we usually see babies being baptized, but even adults can become members of the Church through Baptism if they haven’t already done so.

The priest baptizes a 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 your body with the holy oil. This is the Sacrament of Chrismation, and



the special oil is a way of receiving the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit helps us do good things in life.



The oil washes away. But the seal of the Holy Spirit stays with us forever, and this is why we are baptized only one time in our life. We are born again into God's family.



You also have a new name! Your Baptism name is a special “name saint”. Sometimes, the name we use in school and the name you use at Church are different .. we are always known by our special Saint's name in the Church.

Do you know your name saint? Saints are holy people who fully lived God's way. After our baptism, we try to live God's way by learning more about the Saint, so that we can be holy like Jesus.

Once we are baptized, we are full members of the Church. And all members of the Church can receive Holy Qurbana. Even little babies!

When we eat the Body and Blood of Christ, 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!

The priest dresses the person in white clothes, and the person receives the Holy Qurbana (Eucharist) for the first time. Even as a baby, Christ is given as Body and Blood, so the child can be more like Jesus.

Jesus was also baptized like us. He was immersed in the river Jordan by St. John the Baptist. We all get baptized so that we can become more like Jesus, even when we are babies! Once we get baptized, our sins are forgiven and we become part of the Church.

All Orthodox Christians are part of one Church family and even though we are different, we should all love one another.



## LESSON 11 – THE LIFE OF JESUS

***Jesus' life and actions show us that He is God,  
He cares for us, and can do anything.***

### **JESUS IS BROUGHT TO THE TEMPLE (Luke 2:22-38)**

Forty days after Jesus Christ was born, Mary and Joseph brought him to the temple to present him before God.

As they entered the temple, there was an old man named Simeon who lived in Jerusalem. He was righteous and spent a lot of time in prayer. He had been waiting all his life to see the Savior. The Holy Spirit had told him that he would not die until he had seen the Son of God. On the day when Joseph, Mary and little Jesus visited the temple, Simeon was inspired to go to the temple as well.



In the temple there was also a very old lady whose name was Anna. She was a prophetess who shared God's messages to the people. She spent all her time in the temple fasting and praying, night and day. When Anna touched Jesus, she had a feeling and she knew that He was the Savior. Joseph and Mary presented Jesus before God.

### **JESUS SPEAKS IN THE TEMPLE (Luke 2:39-52)**

Jesus was often called the Teacher. He taught people using very good stories. Jesus taught about God the Father, Himself and the Holy Spirit. He began to teach very early, even when He was a boy. Jesus was also very eager to learn and listened to the teachers.

Every year, Joseph and Mary went to the temple in Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of the Passover. When Jesus was twelve years old, they went to Jerusalem as usual. When the feast was over, Joseph and Mary returned home. They were traveling with a lot of people, so Joseph and Mary thought that Jesus was with them in this large group. But at the end of the first day's journey, the parents realized that Jesus was not with them. Joseph and Mary were very scared, so they went back to Jerusalem to try and find Jesus. After three days, they found Him in the temple, sitting with the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. What would your parents do if they didn't know where you were for three days?

Mary and Joseph were upset at Jesus because He caused them to worry so much. Mary went straight to Him and said "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been looking for you anxiously." Then Jesus answered, "How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" But Mary and Joseph didn't understand what Jesus told them.



Jesus had great interest in God's teachings. He carefully listened to the teachings and tried to teach others too. Jesus loved to stay in the House of God for days praying, listening to God's teaching, and talking about them with the teachers. Everyone who heard Jesus was surprised because he was young but still had very good questions and answers. Later, Jesus went home back with Joseph and Mary. He was a good son and always obeyed His parents. As Jesus grew older, He became very wise.

Like us, Jesus had to take time to learn new things. We need to be like Jesus and spend time learning God's teachings so that we can be a stronger Christian and please God.

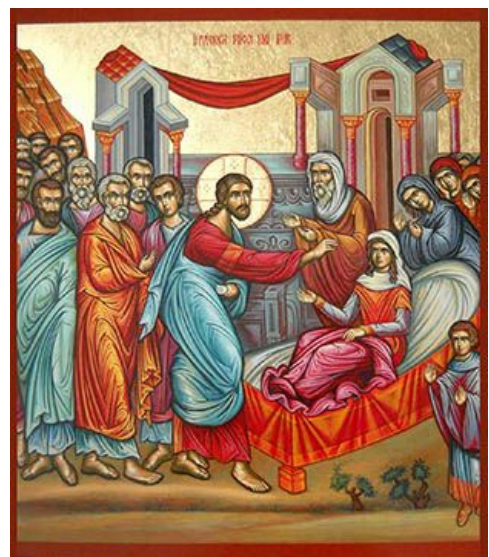
## **JESUS CARES FOR CHILDREN (Luke 18:15-17; 7:11-16)**

Jesus loved all children, and he liked to be around them. One day some mothers brought their children to Jesus so that He could bless them. The disciples of Jesus did not like that. They got upset and wanted to stop the mothers from bringing their children to Jesus. But Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the Kingdom of God." Jesus took the little children in His arms, put His hands on their heads and blessed them.

At another time, Jesus was going to a city called Nain. His disciples and a big crowd followed Him. As He got closer to the gate of the city, He saw the dead body of a boy being carried out of the city. The little boy was the only son of his mother and she was a widow. A large crowd followed the dead body. Jesus saw the mother and He felt sad for her. He tried to make her feel better by saying, "Do not weep." Jesus went to the boy, touched him, and said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." At once, the dead boy sat up and began to speak. Everyone was amazed and praised God. Jesus is compassionate towards parents and their children.

## **JESUS GIVES LIFE TO BOYS AND GIRLS (Luke 8:40-42, 49-56)**

Once while Jesus was teaching, a ruler named Jairus pushed through the crowd to meet Him. He fell down at Jesus' feet and cried out, "Lord, my daughter is dying, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live." Jesus followed the man to his home with the disciples. The girl was only twelve years old. On the way, a messenger came from Jairus' home. He told Jairus, "Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the Teacher any more." Jesus heard what he said, but Jesus told Jairus, "Do not fear; only believe, and she shall be well."



When they reached Jairus' house, Jesus entered the room. He told no one to come into the house except three of His disciples and the father and mother of the child. All of her family was crying. Jesus told them, "Do not weep; for she is not dead but sleeping." Some of them laughed at what He said because they were sure that the girl was dead. Jesus took the girl by the hand and called her saying, "Child, arise!" The girl got up right away. Jesus asked to give her food. Her parents were amazed. Jairus and his family were very happy and praised God.

### **JESUS CALMS THE STORM (Mark 4:35-41)**

Jesus was very tired after a long day of teaching. He wanted to rest and spend some time in silence. He and His disciples went on a boat so that they could cross the Sea of Galilee. As soon as the boat started sailing, Jesus went to the back of the boat and fell asleep. Suddenly, there was a huge storm in the sea. The waves grew so strong that water started to fill the boat. The little boat was rocking back and forth, and it was very dangerous. The disciples were very scared of the storm, and they thought the boat was going to sink. They went to Jesus, woke Him up and screamed, "Save us Lord, we are perishing!" Jesus got up from His sleep, and He spoke to the storm, "Peace, be still." All of a sudden, the wind died down and the waves calmed because of Jesus Christ's great power.

The disciples were brave when the Lord was with them. But they were afraid when the storm beat against their boat. The disciples were with Jesus when He performed miracles many times, but their faith was still weak. Jesus was surprised that all of the disciples were afraid of the storm and that they didn't have stronger faith. He asked them, "Why are you afraid? Have you no faith"?

We have to remember that Jesus Christ is always with us. We must have faith and trust in His power to protect us from all.



## LESSON 12 – PALM SUNDAY

***When Jesus entered Jerusalem, He was praised by the people shouting, “Hosanna in the highest!”***

Jesus and His disciples were on their way to Jerusalem, to participate in the feast of Passover. They came to a little village called Bethphage, near to the city of Jerusalem. Jesus sent two disciples into the village, and told them bring a donkey to him.



The disciples brought the animal to Jesus, and put their clothes on top of it so Jesus can sit. As He began slowly to move along the road into Jerusalem, a huge crowd welcomed Him into the city, just as they welcome a King!

Some of them spread their clothes on the way, while others cut down palm branches and spread them on the road. They also held palm branches in their hands and they shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

When Jesus and His disciples reached the outskirts of Jerusalem, all the people who saw them and heard the shouts of praise were puzzled and asked "Who is this?" Then the joyous crowd shouted back to them, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth of Galilee!"





## LESSON 13 – CHRIST IS RISEN!

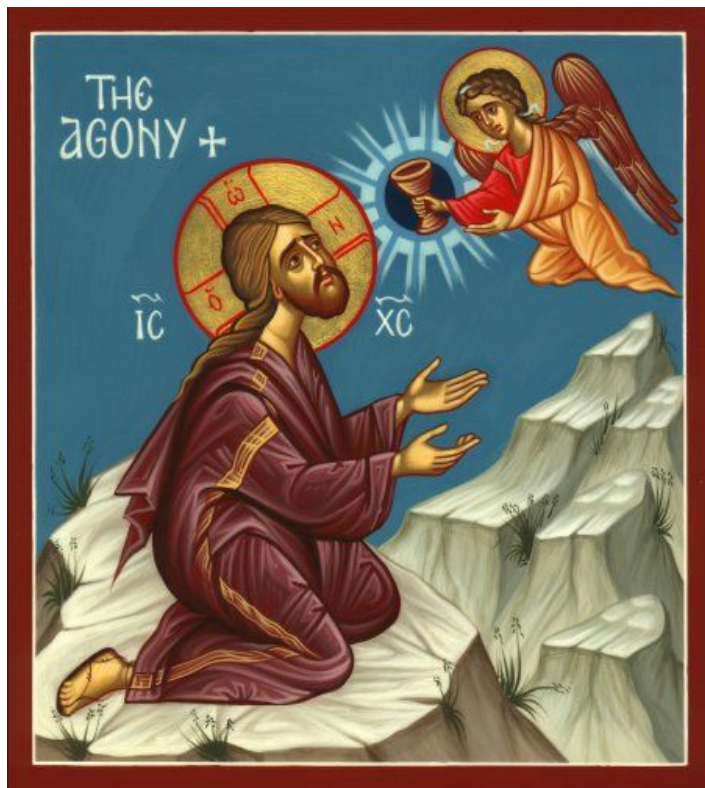
***Jesus died on the Cross for us. He defeated death by rising again and is the giver of new life.***

Do you remember the processions in Church that we do on Good Friday? The priest carries a Cross on his shoulders and goes around the Church while we all sing. What does this procession mean?

Jesus our Savior was crucified on a Cross. We have this procession on Holy Friday, so that we always remember that Jesus had to carry that big Cross to a hill called Golgotha where He was crucified.

After reaching Jerusalem, Jesus went from one place to the other healing the sick, raising the dead and teaching the ways of God. But some of the Jewish people hated Jesus because they were jealous of Him. They made a

plan to arrest Jesus and kill Him. Jesus knew He was going to die, and he wanted to tell His disciples.



After He had His Last Supper with His disciples, Jesus went with His disciples to a garden called Gethsemane to pray. He knew that He would be arrested soon and be crucified.

Jesus was very sad about this. He fell on His face and cried out to the Heavenly Father through His prayers.

Meanwhile some officers of the Jews and their soldiers came to the garden with lanterns, torches and weapons. One of Jesus' disciples was also with them. His name was Judas. He made a deal with the officers. Judas would help them find Jesus and would get thirty pieces of silver as a reward for helping them arrest Jesus. With Judas' help they arrested Jesus and brought Him to the rulers for a trial.

The officers said many lies and bad things about Jesus, so that he would be punished by death. At last Jesus was sent to be crucified.

The soldiers took Jesus. They took all of His clothes and dressed Him in a purple robe. They made a crown of thorns and put it on His head. The officers gave Him a big Cross to carry. They made Him walk to Golgotha through the streets of Jerusalem while still carrying the heavy Cross.



They nailed Him by His hands and feet on the Cross. Jesus our Savior was then crucified to death. Some of His disciples got the body down from the Cross.

They anointed the body with special oils and wrapped him in the best clothes.

His disciples laid Him in a new tomb and rolled a large rock in front of the tomb to close it off.

On the first day of the week (Sunday), early in the morning, some women who loved Jesus came to the tomb.



They were taking spices and oils to anoint His body. To their surprise, they found the stone rolled away from the door and the tomb was empty. Inside the tomb, they saw two angels and were afraid.

The angels told them, "Do not be afraid; for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He has risen, as He said," (Mt.28:6). The women were very happy and told the great news to the disciples.

Jesus died and rose again from the dead. He saved us from death and gave us new life. Jesus is our Savior and giver of new life.



Christ is risen! Indeed, He is risen!

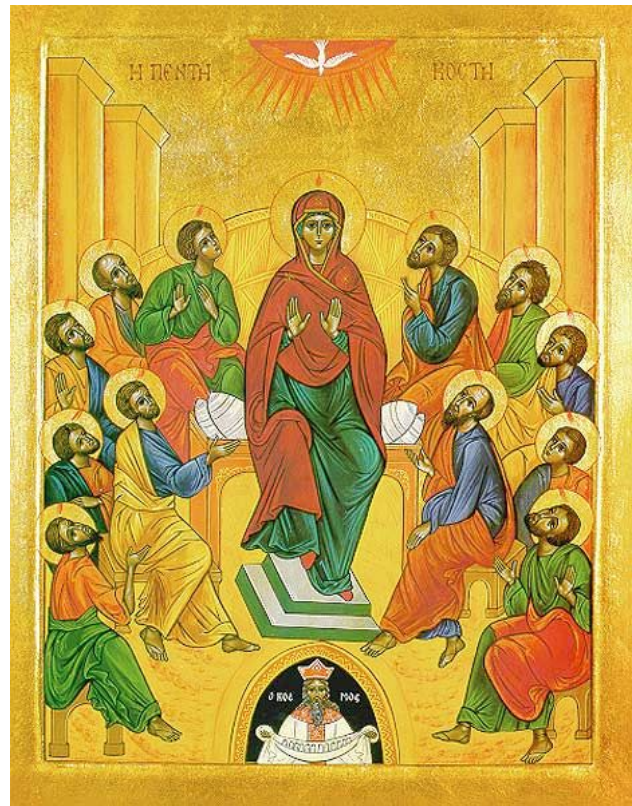


## LESSON 14 – ASCENSION AND PENTECOST

***Jesus ascended into Heaven and the disciples went out to preach His Word after receiving the Holy Spirit.***

After His resurrection, Jesus's friends and disciples saw him many times. The risen Lord stayed on earth for forty days. During these days He showed Himself to them alive and this made their faith stronger. Jesus taught his disciples about the Kingdom of God. After forty days, Jesus showed Himself to His disciples for the last time. He told them all to go to a mountain called the Mount of Olives. There He told them His final message. He told them that they would go back to Jerusalem. There they must wait and pray for the Holy Spirit to come into their hearts. Jesus stretched out His arms and blessed them. As they watched, He slowly went up into Heaven until a cloud hid Him from their view.

Jesus had already promised them before His death that He would send them the Holy Spirit. He told them that He would not be with them for a long time. He would go back to His Father and make a place for us all in Heaven. But He would not leave us alone on earth. He would ask His Father to give us a Comforter, the Holy Spirit, who would live in us forever and show us the ways of God. So it was important that the risen Lord went back to Heaven, to His Father.



The disciples then went back to Jerusalem and spent the next ten days together. They prayed and worshipped God while waiting for the coming of the Holy Spirit.



After ten days, on Sunday they were all praying together when, suddenly, there was a sound from Heaven like a strong wind. It filled the entire house where they were sitting. Then it looked like little flames landed on the head of each of person there. These little flames filled them all with the Holy Spirit. They began to speak in many different languages and they were given a lot of spiritual power. A large crowd came there after hearing about this strange event

and they were all amazed.

After the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit, they had a new power and a new life. They were courageous to face hardships for Christ. They loved each other and shared everything they had.

The Holy Spirit is in each one of us. He gives us a new power and a new life. The Holy Spirit gives us strength to face difficulties and helps us love each other and share our blessings with others.



## LESSON 15 – GOD’S HOUSE

***Once we are baptized, we become part of God’s family and the Church becomes our home.***

We all come from a family. But, when we are Christians we are part of a another, much larger family. Everyone in the Church is one family! We are all the children of God.



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 Baptized with blessed water and the Holy Spirit, we are born into God’s family.

God's family includes everyone who was baptized! Yes, your classmates and friends in the Church are your brothers and sisters.

God’s family also are made up of everyone who has died in the Church .. this is why we pray for all the departed - the 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.

God's House is special, because it is made of those who love God. Sometimes others don't believe, but inside the Church we are safe.



## LESSON 16 – HOLY QURBANA

***In the Holy Qurbana, we experience the  
real Body and Blood of Jesus***

Jesus came to Jerusalem for the last time, at the time of the feast of Passover. We have already studied in our earlier lessons how Jesus was received by the people from Jerusalem when we learned about His arrival on Palm Sunday. The Feast of Passover was a great festival for the Jews. They observed this festival to celebrate their escape from slavery in the land of Egypt by having a special feast.

The feast is called the Passover meal.

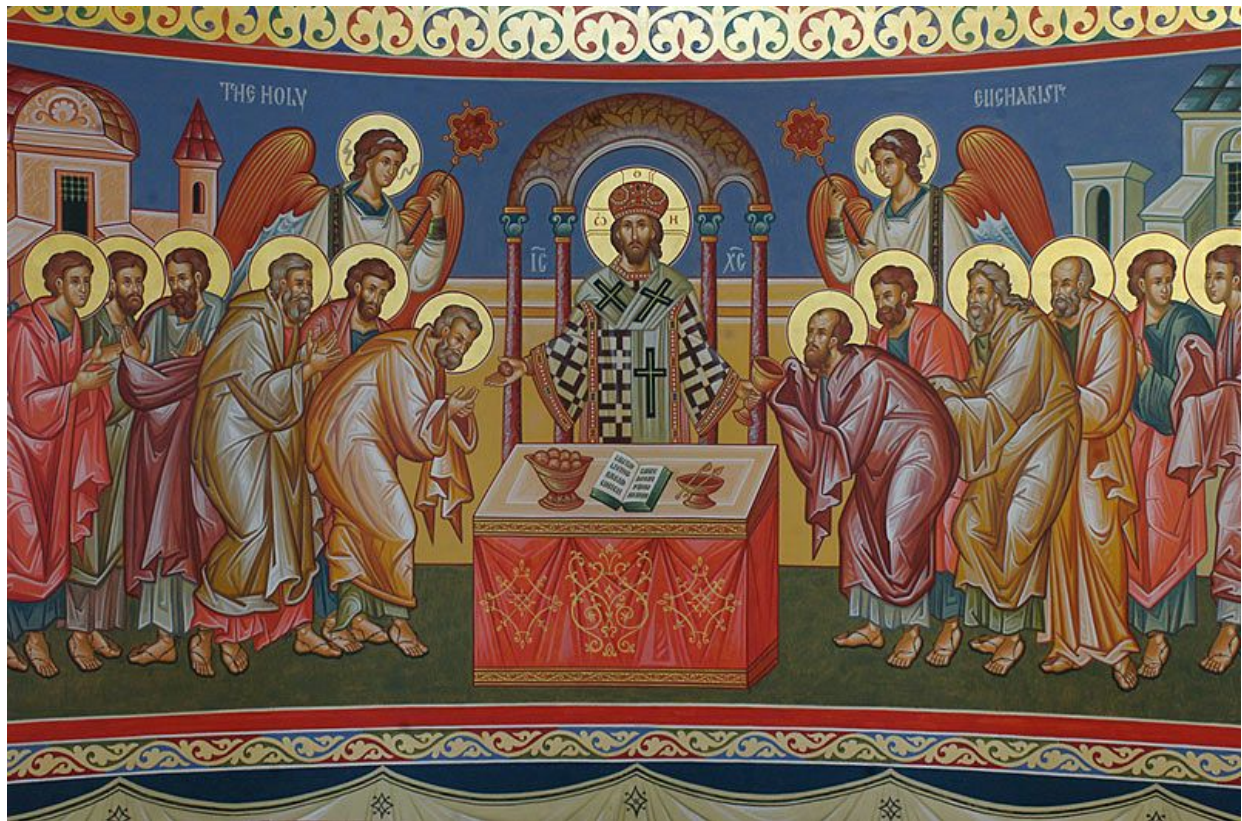
Jesus wished to eat the Passover meal together with His disciples. The disciples arranged the meal in a house. In the evening Jesus and His disciples sat down to eat. Jesus knew that it was His last supper with His beloved disciples. He was ready to give Himself to the salvation of man being crucified on the Cross. 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 commanded, 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 gave Himself to us through Holy Qurbana. He gives us His body and blood.

Holy Qurbana is offered usually in the morning. We observe fast from the previous day's supper until we receive Holy Qurbana. It prepares us to



receive Holy Communion. We receive Holy Qurbana with all faithfulness and holiness.



## What We See in the Church

The first thing that we notice as we enter the Church is the beautiful **curtain**. What do you think that 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 into the Sanctuary, and lead us in worship.

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.

At the center of the Sanctuary, there is a special table called the **Altar**. 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, where He sits and and

all of His children can praise Him. At the middle of the Altar there is the Cross. Jesus, our Lord was crucified for us on the Cross.



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 just like the disciples did when they preached about Jesus Christ. The apostles are present with us in God's house.

We can see many **icons** in the Church, icons of Jesus Christ, St. Mary, the apostles and 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 censor. The



**incense** rises up along with our prayers which goes 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.

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**.

On the right side of the Altar, there is another table which is moveable. On that table the **Holy Gospel** is placed, 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.

### **What We Do in the Church**

What do we do when we first enter the Church? We say the prayer, "Lord, in reverence have I entered Thy house, before Thee shall I offer my gifts."

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

When the Holy Eucharist begins, we see a procession around the altar. The curtain which separates the Sanctuary is pulled to the 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 lightened candle. The priest also turns towards the west and censes the congregation (people). The candles at the altar are lighted. 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 at each side of the priest. They turn to the west and walk towards us. The table of the Holy Gospel is placed at the front middle 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 in peace with one another and there is no hatred between us.

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 Holy Qurbana.

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