

Sunday School Syllabus

Year 1



COPTIC ORTHODOX DIOCESE *of* LONDON

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I Will Not be Afraid for You Are with Me

David and The Lion and The Bear

Bible References: 1 Samuel 17:34-35

Lesson Aim:
To not be afraid.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: God gives us strength to help others in need.

Feel: The hand of God which takes away our fear.

Practice: How to make sacrifices to protect others.

Memory Verse:

"Though an army may encamp against me, my heart shall not fear."
(Psalms 27:3)



Background Information for the Servant

Who is David?

He is Jesse's son from a city called Bethlehem, the same city of the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was one of the greatest kings in Israel, who lived nearly 1000 years before Christ. The Scriptures, which are inspired by the Holy Spirit, refers to him as "a man after the Lord's heart" (1 Samuel 13:14), because he had a humble heart. Prophet Samuel referred to him in 1 Samuel 16:12 as one "with bright eyes and good-looking". He was brave in keeping sheep, to the extent that he killed a lion and a bear which had taken a lamb out of the flock and saved the lamb. He lived a life of meditation and was singing his psalms while looking after the sheep. And so he deserved to be called the "sweet psalmist of Israel" (2 Samuel 23:1).

Keeping the sheep is a way that God used more than once to prepare his great servants like the prophets Moses and David.

God chose David as king

The Lord said to Samuel: I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite because I have seen in his sons a king. So Samuel did as the Lord said. And Jesse showed his seven sons to Samuel but the youngest one was not present. So Samuel sent for him. Then God said: "anoint him for this is the one to be king".

Q: What can we learn from God choosing David the youngest of his brothers?

We learn that God doesn't use the limited human measures when he chooses his prophets.

The greatness of David is because of the following three reasons:

1. God's witness to him "I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will." (Acts 13:22).
2. Jesus Christ was a descendant from him "the Son of David, the Son of Abraham" (Matthew 1:1).
3. His good characteristics which remained with him all his life, like when David kept Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son at his table (2 Samuel 9:10).

The problem of fear in children

It's not strange to be afraid! Fear is something normal that people feel in some situations when they are threatened with danger. These fears can appear clearly from the age of three years, and its levels can differ between being cautious, panicking and being horrified.

And the normal sane fear is good for man; if someone doesn't get afraid of fire it can burn him or destroy him. However, there is also obsessive fear, and such exaggerated fear is abnormal. For example, the fear of darkness is normal for a 3-year-old child, but if it results in a severe panic, the fear is abnormal.

Where does fear in children come from?

- Parents constantly threatening and frightening their child(ren).
- Children watching violent, horror and/or crime movies, and listening to frightening stories, especially those involving witches and ghosts.
- Lack of love and care, which can lead to insecurity in the children, for example fearing the loss of his/her mother or father, the parents deserting him/her, the separation of the parents, abuse, hatred and/or deprivation.
- Fear by contagion, the state of fear is like any other emotional state which is passed from one person to another. For example, many mothers show fear and panic in front of their children, like being afraid of animals, so their children end up growing to have this same fear.
- Exaggeration of fear and anxiety from the fathers and mothers. So, if a young child sees his mother's face confused and pale when he gets a small injury; he/she will tend to panic and be afraid, and the child will grow up with a strong fear about himself.
- The environment of the family, when it is full of tension and arguments, can affect the child's contentment and make him grow up in fear.

Sometimes parents (and servants also) jokingly frighten kids, and then laugh from his fear, but this is cruel and should not happen.

Dealing with fear:

Parents and educators play an important role in helping children to deal with fear and the feelings and behaviours accompanying it, by:

- ✓ Accepting the child's fear and the crisis he's facing.
- ✓ Hugging and kissing him/her, and to be close to him/her. And you should help him/her to face his/her fears, so that his fears do not accumulate.
- ✓ Calming down him/her and assuring him/her of his/her safety.
- ✓ Giving the child his/her space to express his/her feelings and to respect it.
- ✓ Encouraging the child to know the source of his/her fear.
- ✓ Using role play and exchanging roles to train for fearful situation.

Activities to Introduce the Lesson

You can use one of the following ways to introduce the lesson:

**Story**

Is there anyone of us who doesn't get afraid at all?

How do you face your fears?

In a faraway city, there was a boy called Jack, and he was the same age as you. Every night he used to stand up and pray with his dad and mum and his sister, Christine, asking God to protect him all night and take away from him any bad dreams.

One day Jack woke up very early, and after he got out of bed he washed his face and came back to his room to pray to God and thank Him for the night which has passed.

And when he nearly finished praying, he heard something strange. He heard a strong tapping on the glass of his window, and his window was facing a garden. So, slowly, he went to the window and raised the curtain, only to see something very strange!

He saw a bird outside the window, and a butterfly inside the room. The bird was trying to reach the butterfly to eat it, but it kept hitting the window with its beak because it didn't see the glass between it and the butterfly! On the other side of the window, the butterfly was so afraid, flying up and down to flee from the bird, and it also didn't notice that it's in the protection of the glass.

Dad heard the tapping sound, so he came quickly to Jack's room, and he saw this strange scene. Then he said to Jack: "Did you see that? This is how we are with God who always protects us like the glass protected the butterfly and it didn't see it. We don't see God's protection that's why we get afraid in any situations."

Lesson Content

A long time ago there was a man named Jesse who had eight sons. The youngest of them was called David. He was a beautiful boy who always wore brightly coloured clothes. Even though David was young, he used to happily look after his father's sheep and take them to the hills near the river so that they can play and eat with the birds and other animals.

He used to hold a staff in his hand and carry a small bag where he kept small stones inside. David also had a slingshot and a harp. He always used to play the harp and sing "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want".

One day David took his father's sheep near the water. One of the sheep was quite naughty and ran off far away to play. Then he got lost! David looked for him everywhere and found him between a lion and a big bear. David got scared but remembered the strength of God and said "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want". David ran towards the lion and bear to save the little sheep.

David killed the lion and the bear and saved his sheep through God's strength. David hugged the sheep and took him back to his friends.

Application



Comprehension Questions

- What is the name of David's father?
- What was the job of David when he was young?
- What was David using to get the sheep back when it gets out of the flock?
- Who attacked David's sheep?
- Why wasn't David afraid when he killed the lion and the bear?
- How did David feel when he saved his sheep?
- How can you serve others? (Start a discussion).



Exercise

To write down the following verses and keep these verses in their bags, taking them out when they are afraid to remember God's words to us that he grants us power to support us. The following verses are:

- * "Though war break out against me, even then I will be confident." (Psalms 27:3).
- * "The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing." (Psalms 23:1).



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Lord Jesus Christ, please help me and lead me not to sin. Stop me from making any mistakes. Have mercy upon me and do not turn me away. Amen.



God Chose Me by Name

Samuel Chooses David

Bible References: 1 Samuel 16

Book References:

- www.madareselahad.org
- www.dltk-kids.com

Lesson Aim:

To understand God's love for me, knowing that He chose me by name.

Lesson Objectives:

- Know:** God chose David as King, regardless of his age.
- Feel:** Joyful in knowing that he is accepted by God and is given strength.
- Practice:** To pray before making choices/decisions.

Memory Verse:

"I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will."
(Acts 13:22)



Background Information for the Servant

- The first and second books of Samuel, according to Jewish tradition, are in fact one book called 'Samuel'.
- The first book carries Samuel's name because he is the main character in the first chapters, as well as being the first person to anoint kings for Israel (Saul and David), the first to write prophecies and historical facts, driven by the Holy Spirit. He was the first leader to be sent in the most perilous period during the Israelite's transition from the generation of Judges to the generation of Kings, and during that time he helped to improve the situation for the people.
- Samuel was a patriotic and a spiritual leader.
- The meaning of the name 'Samuel': 'the Lord heard' (I asked the Lord and He responded).
- The book of Samuel was divided in two parts during the translations of the 70 Apostles (1 Samuel, 2 Samuel), this was for practical reasons since there was a need to use both languages, and the translations of the books of Samuel and Kings by the 70 Apostles were considered to the books of the Kingdom.
- 1 Samuel ends with the death of Saul, 2 Samuel begins with David being enthroned over the Kingdom and historical events of David's life as a King. David was the one who established the Kingdom, not Saul, as well as being the one who prepared for the building of the Temple, and has provided many psalms, many of which contained prophecies about Christ. It is therefore not a surprise to find David as the main subject of the books of Samuel, he is the grandfather of Christ, in the flesh.
- In order to understand the Psalms of David in detail, the books of Samuel should be read.
- In David's life we find phenomenal grace as well as falls.
- The books of Samuel feature the stories of the last two judges of Israel (Eli the priest and Samuel the prophet), and the first two kings of Israel (Saul and David). Saul's sin is the disobedience of God, but David's virtues are admitting his sins, obedience, submitting to God's will, even when he was being disciplined [by God] he remained silent and did not grumble, hence he was deserving of the description "I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will."
- According to Jewish traditions, the books were written by Samuel the prophet until his death, then Gad and Nathan the prophets completed the chapters. We would find the source of this assumption in 1 Chronicles 29:29-30, "Now the acts of King David, first and last, indeed they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer, with all his reign and his might, and the events that happened to him, to Israel, and to all the kingdoms of the lands."
- Date of the authorship [of Samuel]: the book was written after the split of the Kingdom, before the captivity [of Jerusalem]. The full term of David as King was mentioned, "In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah." (2 Samuel 5:5), a distinction between the kings of Judah and the Kings of Israel was also mentioned; "So Achish gave him Ziklag that day. Therefore Ziklag has belonged to the kings of Judah to this day." (1 Samuel 27:6).
- During the period of Judges, God reigned as King over His people, He chose for them a judge. The book shows God's ways in dealing with people, whether they were good or bad, individuals or a nation. We are shown His judgement, His discipline, forgiveness and mercy.
- In his book, Samuel demonstrates the power of prayer, since Samuel was a fruit of his mother's prayers, and the nation gained victory by Samuel's prayers.

Activities to Introduce the Lesson

You can use one of the following ways to introduce the lesson:



Discussion

God looks at the heart, not the appearance, He chooses the weak, the poor, the humble, the simple, to be saints, servants, ministers, and even kings. God chose David, the goat herder, to become the greatest leader of His people. Likewise, He chose you to be sons and daughters.



Story

Tell a story of a clown knocking the door to surprise a birthday boy with balloons and to sing Happy Birthday to him. The birthday boy was delighted, he asked his mum and dad if someone had informed the clown of his birth date. The parents told the boy that there is a special friend who knows the date of his birth without being told. This special friend is Christ, who loves, knows what the boy likes and dislike, knows what to give. The boy is told that he can trust this friend and talk to Him whenever he wants.

Lesson Content

Samuel was one of God's servants, he loved God very much and listened to everything He says. One day, God told Samuel, "I would like you to go to Bethlehem to Jesse, take oil with you in order to anoint Jesse's son as king over Israel. I know that he has a good heart and he will be faithful to My people". So, Samuel went joyfully because he was going to see the king that God has chosen, when he arrived in Bethlehem (the city in which Jesus Christ was born), Jesse called his sons to take part in offering a sacrifice for God.

Samuel asked to see Jesse's sons, the eldest son Eliab was presented, Samuel saw that Eliab was a handsome and tall young man, he thought to himself "Surely this must be the one". Samuel prayed and asked God if Eliab was the chosen one, God said to him, "Do not look at beauty and height [appearance], because I look at the heart, is he willing to obey Me and serve Me?!" The second son was presented, but he was not chosen by God. Samuel viewed all 7 sons, but none of them were chosen by God.

Samuel asked Jesse if he had anymore sons, Jesse told him that he has one young son left, his name was David, but he herds goats, Samuel told him, "Send someone to call him, I would like to see him". When David arrived, God said to Samuel, "This is the boy that I would like to make king, and to serve me". So, Samuel anointed David's head with oil, as a symbol of being chosen by God. God gave David strength to serve Him and do what is pleasing to God. God looks at our heart, our love for Him, and our deeds.

We should know that "God knows me by name... He chose me since I was in my mother's womb... He plans my life like a true Father... therefore I ought to trust in His promises, in His love as a Father, obey His commands, and depend on His strength".

Application



Comprehension Questions

- Who is the prophet that God sent to anoint a king for Him?
- Which of Jesse's sons was chosen to be king?
- What was David's job? A shepherd, a doctor, or engineer? David's heart was always with God, that is why God chose him to be king.
- Does God know me by name? if so, how should I work with Him? (Open a discussion).



Exercise

God looks at the heart, not the appearance, He chooses the weak, the poor, the humble, the simple, to be saints, servants, ministers, and even kings. God chose David, the goat herder, to become the greatest leader of His people. Likewise, He chose you to be sons and daughters.



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Thank You God because You know everything about me. Thank You for loving me and caring about me. God please help me to share with You all that I feel inside of me. Amen.



God Always Saves Me

The Three Youths in the Fiery Furnace

Bible References: Daniel 3

Lesson Aim:

To understand that He can always save me.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: God is able to save us from danger.

Feel: The presence of God in times of difficulty.

Practice: To seek refuge in God during difficult times.

Memory Verse:

"Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high, because he has known My name."
(Psalm 91:14)



Background Information for the Servant

- The book of Daniel is the last book of the large prophecies, it features 14 chapters. The last two chapters and part of the third chapter are considered as part of the Deuterocanon books and are referred to as the sequel of Daniel.
- The book consists of a historical section, chapters 1-6, which includes the events of Daniel and the three Youths, Daniel's service in the Babylonian kingdom, and his diligence in remaining faithful to his God despite all the difficulties that he and the three Youths have faced. The other section of the book is about prophecies, chapters 7-12, which includes Daniel's visions and prophecies related to the end of time.
- Nebuchadnezzar is the greatest Babylonian king, he reigned for 43 years, from 562-605 BC. He continued to rule over the land of Judah, and to receive taxes for three years. At that time, the king [of Judah] was Jehoiakim (2 Kings 24:1). In the year 602 BC, Jehoiakim rebelled [he refused to pay the tribute that he was obliged to send annually to Babylon], he took advantage of the opportunity that Nebuchadnezzar was busy fighting other wars away from his kingdom and was preoccupied away from the Kingdom of Judah because of its distance from Babylon. However, Nebuchadnezzar conquered his enemies quickly and returned to the Kingdom of Judah. He invaded Jerusalem, put an end to the revolution, and seized Jehoiakim. He then freed Jehoiakim and appointed his son [18-year-old] Jehoiachin as a new king in his place (2 Chronicles 36:6,10). Jehoiachin also rebelled, so Nebuchadnezzar came for the third time, invaded the city, took treasures from the house of the Lord, and took people captive with him to Babylon (2 Kings 24: 12-16). Then Nebuchadnezzar appointed Jehoiachin's uncle, Mattaniah, as king, and changed his name to Zedekiah. Zedekiah looked after the state for Nebuchadnezzar for eight years, but on the ninth year, Zedekiah got greedy and wanted to be independent. When he found out that the Egyptian army was nearby their kingdom, he hoped that the Egyptians would help him against the Babylonians (Jeremiah 37:5). However, Nebuchadnezzar [the king of Babylon] did not spare him, he besieged Jerusalem for the fourth time, following a hard siege he killed Zedekiah's sons in front of their father, and put out Zedekiah's eyes and carried him off captive to Babylon in 587 BC. Nebuchadnezzar's army burnt God's Temple and took thousands of captives to Babylon.
- Nebuchadnezzar ordered some of the king's descendants and some of the noble young men to be taken captive, amongst them was Daniel and his friends, the three Youths (Daniel 1:3-7). "And he carried out from there all the treasures of the house of the Lord and the treasures of the king's house, and he cut in pieces all the articles of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the Lord, as the Lord had said. Also he carried into captivity all Jerusalem: all the captains and all the mighty men of valor, ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths. None remained except the poorest people of the land." (2 Kings 24:13-14).
- Prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah and Micah have all prophesied about the captivity of the kingdom of Judah by the Babylonians. Isaiah's prophecy came 100 years before the Babylonian captivity. Jeremiah prophesied that the period of captivity will be for 70 years, but the people did not believe him.

Lesson Content

A long time ago, Babylon was ruled by an arrogant king called Nebuchadnezzar. He created a large image of gold and put forward a strange law that said: when people hear the different musical instruments play, they have to fall down to worship the gold image, and whoever doesn't fall down to worship the gold image will be thrown into the fiery furnace. So King Nebuchadnezzar held a celebration for the dedication of the gold image that he had set up. He gathered the judges, governors and important officials to celebrate and worship the gold image when they hear the sound of the music.

On the day of the celebration all the people and nations in Babylon came, and fell down to worship the gold image when they heard the music. However, the three young men called Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, did not do this. Some evil people rushed to tell the king that those three young men did not obey his commands by worshipping the gold image.

Those young men refused to fall down and worship any one other than God whom they believe in, and would not worship and obey the commands of anyone other than their God, "You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve." (Luke 4:8). When the king heard of those three young men who did not worship the gold image, he got very angry and called them to ask if this matter was true. They replied to him "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up." (Daniel 3:16-18). When the king heard this, he became even more angry, he ordered that the fiery furnace be heated up seven times more (increase the heat of the fire), and for the three young men to be tied up with ropes and thrown into the fiery furnace to die. They were thrown into the furnace as the king had ordered, and the Angel of God (God) [note, 'Angel of

God' here refers to Christ, in an illuminated body], came into the fiery furnace to accompany them and to quash the power of fire so that it does not burn them. The king watched what was happening and suddenly he screamed out and said, didn't we throw in three men, " 'Look!' he answered, 'I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.' " (Daniel 3:25). He called them, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here." (Daniel 3:26). When they came out, he saw that they are well, the fire has not affected their bodies and not a single hair on their head had been burnt.

This is how God saved the three Youths, because they stuck to him and remained true to His Words. After seeing this, the king believed that the God of the three young men is the One true God, because He saved them from the furnace. The king put forward an order, that none of the people should speak disrespectfully against the real God.

Application



Comprehension Questions

- Who was the evil king?
- What law did the king issue?
- What did the three Youths do when they heard the music?
- Were the three Youths alone inside the furnace? Who was with them?
- Who saved the three Youths from the fiery furnace?
- Who is the true God? Why did the king end up believing in Him?



Exercise

Ask for God's help when you don't feel so good, or when you are afraid or in danger. Repeat this verse, "Save me O God!" (Psalms 69:1).



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Thank You God for preserving us, and for Your speed in helping us in difficult times, Lord do not leave us in difficult times, be with us and save us like You saved the three Youths from the fiery furnace, because You are God Who is capable of anything. Amen.



The Church is the House of the Lord

The Towers, Domes and Bells

Lesson Aim:

To understand that God always invites me to His house and to memorise the seven sacraments of the Church.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: The appearance of the church, and her sacraments/mysteries.

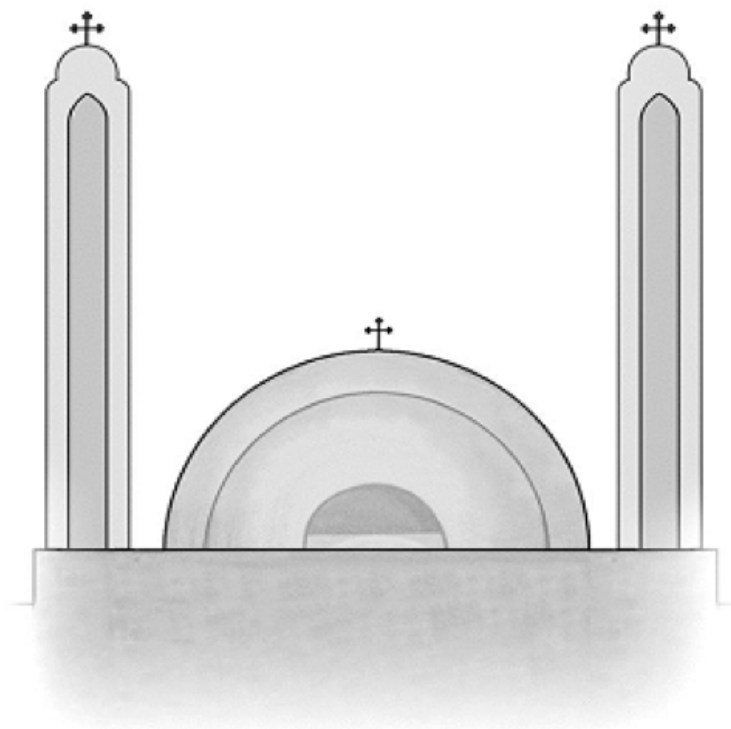
Feel: God loves me and calls me to His house.

Practice: Learning the 7 Holy Sacraments.

Memory Verse:

"I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go into the house of the Lord.' "

(Psalms 122:1)



Background Information for the Servant

It has been called the Allegiance, the Holy Vine, and it is a congregation of the faithful, it is the House of God dedicated for worship, it is the home of the angels who praise with us.

The word 'church' is originally Hebrew, and it means a 'consortium/convention', some say the name is of Greek origin (Ekklesia) meaning a 'group' or a 'calling/invitation'.

Appearance of the Church

1. It is usually built as a rectangle toward the East, in the form of a ship (to symbolise Noah's Ark), sometimes it is built in the shape of a Cross, and at times it is built as a circle (as a symbol that God has no beginning and no end).
2. On the inside it is divided into the main part of the church, chorus of the Deacons, then the Altar. The iconostasis is the sanctuary door which carries icons and separates the Altar from the Deacons' chorus.
3. On the outside some churches have one tower whilst others have two towers. Towers are symbolic of the mast of a ship, and a lighthouse that guides ships and people. Bells are usually hung in the church towers and were used to call the faithful to church. They are rung when bishops visit, during the offertory, and on feasts. The Cross standing above this, is a symbol of deliverance and salvation.
4. The church has three doors, as a symbol of the Trinity.
5. The church ceiling is characterised by domes (which symbolise heaven), or wooden beams, or tiles.

Sacraments

The Sacraments or mysteries of the church are Baptism, Holy Myron Oil, Repentance & Confession, Holy Communion, Anointing of the Sick, Marriage, Priesthood.

Lesson Content

- Question 1. Have you ever heard the church bell? Do you know where it is located?
- If the present church has a bell, take the children to look for it.
- Question 2. So, does anyone know what the word 'church' means?
- Bravo! It means God's house. What else? The place where we gather together to pray.
- Question 3. Do you know that our churches are built in a specific way?
- In the shape of a rectangle, or circle or a Cross.
- Question 4. When you look at the church from outside, what other things do you see?
- Bravo! Towers. Like the mast of a ship. This is if the church is built in the form of a ship.
- Question 5. How many towers do we have?
- Bravo!
- Question 6. What other special things do you see in the appearance of the church?
- The domes of the church ceiling.
- Question 7. We have just seen the church bell, do you know what it is used for?
- Bravo! To call people to church to pray.
- And when a Bishop visits. And during the offertory.
- Do you know that our church has sacraments or mysteries - who is going to count with me? Count each sacrament on our fingers (Baptism, Holy Myron Oil, Repentance & Confession, Holy Communion, Anointing of the Sick, Marriage, Priesthood.)

Application



Comprehension Questions

- What shapes are the churches built into?
- What are the roles of the bells, towers and domes in the church?
- What sections is the church divided into on the inside?
- How many church sacraments do we have and what are they?
- How do you feel about the appearance of the church, its towers and domes? (Start a discussion).



Exercise

Servants to ask children to learn Psalm 122 from the 11th hour of the Agpeya (or Psalm 123 in NKJV) within a month after the lesson has been taught. Recite the Psalm every time on their way to church.



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Lord Jesus Christ, good lover of mankind give us joy in Your Holy church, by Your works in the church, bless us, give us the strength of Your life-giving Cross, so that we may live to glorify Your Name, let those be put to shame and brought to dishonour, who seek after my life. Amen.



God Loves Me, He Knows My Needs

God Looks After Elijah

Bible References: 1 Kings 17

Lesson Aim:

To understand how God provides for us.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: How God fulfils my needs.

Feel: God's love and His care for fulfilling my needs.

Practice: How to thank God for His gifts.

Memory Verse:

"Yet the Lord thinks upon me."

(Psalms 40:17)



Lesson Content

A long time ago when God's people loved Him and prayed to Him, there was a king called Ahab. King Ahab was married to a lady called Jezebel, who was a very bad lady and did not love God and worshipped an idol called Baal. Baal was made out of stone which meant he could not hear or talk or help anyone. Not like God, who created the heavens and earth and everything for us to enjoy.

During that time there was a man called the Prophet Elijah who loved God and knew that those who worshipped Baal were doing wrong. He always told the people not to worship Baal because it was made out of stone. However, the people were afraid of the King and Queen. Elijah told the King and Queen to stop worshipping Baal and to worship God instead. Unfortunately the King and Queen did not love God and refused to listen to Elijah. Elijah warned the king and said to him "As the Lord God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word". This means there will be a famine and people may die.

However, the queen and king did not listen to Elijah and indeed it stopped raining for many years because God was upset with them. But because God looks after His children, He told Elijah to go and sit next to a brook and sent him a raven every morning and evening to give Elijah bread and meat. God looks after His people just as He looked after Adam and Eve in paradise and created everything for them.

Application



Comprehension Questions

- What was the name of the king?
- What was the name of the wife of King Ahab?
- What was the name of the idol which Ahab and Jezebel worshipped?
- When God was upset with Ahab and Jezebel, what did He tell Elijah to say?
- How did God send food to Elijah?



Exercise

1. To always thank God for taking care of us all the time and to thank Him for everything (dad, mum, brothers/sisters, friends, my church, my toys...)
2. To memorise the Prayer of Thanksgiving "Let us thank the beneficent and merciful God... till this hour".



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Thank You God for Your love for us and thank You for looking after me. Thank You for creating everything for me to enjoy. Thank You for looking after me just as you looked after Elijah the Prophet. Please be with us always and forever. Amen.



I Feel the Needs of Others

Joseph and the Famine

Bible References: Genesis 41-45

Lesson Aim:

To understand that we can help others.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: The importance of helping others.

Feel: They are unique because they are children of God, therefore they are able to serve and help, and God will make them successful.

Practice: Covering the needs of others and helping them.

Memory Verse:

"The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a successful man..."
(Genesis 39:2)



Background Information for the Servant

Who is Joseph?

Joseph is a Hebrew name meaning 'He will add'. In the Old Testament, Joseph is the eleventh son of Jacob and the first with his wife Rachel. He was born in the land of Paddan-Aram, Rachel named him Joseph and said, "The Lord shall add to me another son" (Genesis 30:24), thinking that God will give her more children.

Book of Genesis

Information on Joseph is found in the book of Genesis, chapters 37-50. Review Genesis 37: Jacob loved Joseph more than he loved his other sons, the jealousy of Joseph's brothers and Joseph's dreams, which further provoked his brothers' hatred, caused them to plot against him.

Jacob sent Joseph to check on his brothers. When the brothers saw Joseph approaching at a distance, they plotted to kill him, they took his coat and threw him into the pit. They then sold him into slavery to traders, who took him to Egypt. Joseph is symbolic of Christ who obeyed the Father, came down for our salvation, but the Jews who He came to save plotted against Him, Judas handed Him over for the price of a slave.

Joseph in Egypt

The traders sold Joseph in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard. Joseph proved to be very loyal, diligent and successful, the Lord blessed everything that Joseph did (even after he was imprisoned), thus, Potiphar made Joseph his personal attendant, putting him in charge of the entire household. The reason for this, as the Holy Spirit revealed to us, was because this Hebrew slave [Joseph] held on to his God, despite all the harsh events and conditions that he went through, "The LORD was with Joseph, and he was a successful man" (Genesis 39:2).

A Difficult Test

Joseph went through a difficult test as a young man, the wife of his master, who put him in charge of his household as a result of God's blessings, tried to seduce him. He responded with a phrase that has become well-known across all generations by every young man, "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Genesis 39:9).

A Successful Prisoner

Joseph was thrown in prison under the false accusation [of rape], but it wasn't long before the prison warden was pleased with Joseph [because the Lord gave him favour in the warden's eyes], Joseph was put in charge of all the other prisoners [including Pharaoh's butler and baker], "because the LORD was with him; and whatever he did, the LORD made it prosper". Joseph gained the gift of being able to interpret dreams, he used this skill to help other prisoners. This skill resulted in his eventual progress to Pharaoh's palace, at the specific time that God had appointed.

A Minister Managing All the Lands

After interpreting Pharaoh's dream, which all Egypt's magicians and wisemen had failed to do, Joseph was appointed as the wise commissioner/overseer to all the land. Pharaoh gave Joseph the Egyptian name 'Zaphenath-Paneah', which St Jerome believes to mean 'saviour of the world', symbolic of the Lord Jesus Christ, who saved the world from the death of sin.

Dear servant, by sticking to God you are called to be a strength to all those whom you serve, so that none of them would hunger or perish, be a source of fulfilment to them, in your wisdom, care and diligence.

Read the relevant chapters in Genesis – when teaching about the wisdom and success of Joseph, ensure that you explain that all this wisdom was given by God to his loyal children, it is not a matter of intelligence or extraordinary human ability. May God be with you.

Activities to Introduce the Lesson

You can use one of the following ways to introduce the lesson:



Story

The preliminary story can be in the form of historical facts about Joseph.

- Joseph is one of Jacob's sons. Jacob had 12 boys, 10 older boys, then Joseph and Benjamin were the youngest.

- Their father Jacob loved Joseph more than all his other sons, so he bought him a coat of many colours, the other brothers became jealous of Joseph.
- One day, the older brothers went to herd their sheep, but their dad Jacob got worried, so he said to Joseph, "Joseph go check on your brothers, see why they are late and let me know".
- When Joseph's brothers saw him coming from afar and thought "what if we use this opportunity to get rid of him?" so they threw him in a pit. After a while they took him out and sold him as a slave to some traders who were travelling to Egypt. Joseph said to them, "I'm your brother, do not do this to me", but they did not listen to him.
- When the traders arrived in Egypt, they sold him to Potiphar, captain of the guard to Pharaoh, the King of Egypt. What do you think Joseph is going to do in Egypt? Is he going to leave God? Of course not. Let's find out together.

Lesson Content

A long time ago there was a great Pharaoh in Egypt, Pharaoh was the ruler of the country, he was the King of all of Egypt. One day Pharaoh had a strange dream whilst he was asleep, he dreamt that he was standing by a river when he saw seven cows come out, they were fat and looked good. Then another seven cows came out of the river, but they were ugly and gaunt [very thin]. Suddenly the seven thin cows ate the seven fat cows that looked good, then Pharaoh woke up. He slept again and had a second dream. He dreamt that seven heads of grain came up on one stalk, plump and good. Then seven thin heads. The seven thin heads ate the seven plump and full heads. Pharaoh woke up in a fright, he asked the magicians and wise men to interpret his dreams, but no one was able to interpret Pharaoh's dreams. Pharaoh had a butler whose job is to serve Pharaoh's beverages, the butler then remembered Joseph and told Pharaoh, 'when I was in prison I met another prisoner who could interpret dreams. He interpreted my dream and everything Joseph told me was true'. Pharaoh asked for Joseph to be brought to him, he told Joseph the dreams and asked him to interpret them. God had blessed Joseph and had given him wisdom, Joseph told Pharaoh that both dreams have the same meaning, the seven fat good looking cows and seven plump heads of grain are seven years of plentiful goodness for Egypt, the seven ugly thin cows and seven thin heads of grain are a great famine that will overcome Egypt, the land will be poor and depleted by the famine. When Pharaoh saw how much wisdom God had bestowed on Joseph, he made Joseph second-in-command in Egypt, and told him to do whatever he wanted in order to prepare for the seven bad years of famine that are coming.

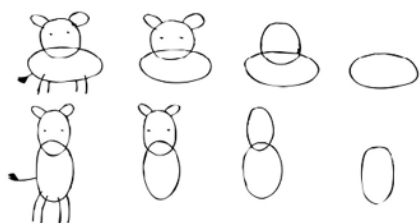
The good years of plentiful goodness were passing, Joseph told people to gather and storing enormous amounts of grain from each city for when the famine comes. When the seven years of famine eventually came, it was according to what Joseph had told Pharaoh, the land dried up and there was no crop. People were hungry and had nothing to eat, so they used to go to Joseph to give them from the food and grains that had been stored during the seven years of goodness.

Joseph's brothers lived far away in the land of Canaan, they were hungry, their land was dry and they had no crops, so their father Jacob told them to go to Egypt and buy food. So the brothers went to Egypt to buy food from Joseph, when they saw Joseph they did not recognise that he is their brother, Joseph recognised them but did not want to reveal to them yet that he is their brother whom after all these years had become in charge of all the land of Egypt. He gave them all the food they needed without even charging them money, then he revealed himself to them and asked them to send for their father Jacob and ask him to come and stay with him to enjoy the goodness of the land of Egypt. Indeed, they brought their father Jacob and all their families and stayed with Joseph in Egypt, instead of dying from hunger in their own land. This is how Joseph took care of his family and all the people of Egypt, he provided all their needs, he helped to overcome the famine and to survive.

Image of plump and thin grains.



Image of fattened and gaunt cows.



Application



Comprehension Questions

- What dreams did Pharaoh have?
- What was Joseph's interpretation to those dreams?
- How did they prepare for the famine?
- Why did Pharaoh choose Joseph to govern the country?



Exercise

- Recite the verse of the lesson.
- Learn to help others: my classmates, my mother at home, my younger siblings etc.



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Our Beloved Jesus Christ, we thank You for Your gifts at all times, and just as You take care of me Lord, also make me able to care for and help others who are in need, like Joseph helped his brothers during the famine. Lord teach me to serve all my brethren, be successful throughout my life to gladden Your heart, because You like to see Your children successful, so that they become a light in the world. Amen.



I Am Different – Speaking the Truth

The Samaritan Woman and Telling the Truth

Bible References: John 4

Lesson Aim:

To understand why we should tell the truth.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: God rewards those who tell the truth.

Feel: The importance of telling the truth.

Practice: How to always tell the truth no matter what happens.

Memory Verse:

"But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes'..."
(Matthew 5:37)



Lesson Content

One day Jesus was walking with His disciples. They kept walking until they got really tired and decided to rest in a town called Sychar in the city of Samaria. Jesus sent his friends to get some food and waited for them by a well called Jacob's well.

Whilst Jesus was sitting next to the well, a woman came to the well to fill a water pot. Jesus asked her if she could get Him some water to drink. She answered and said to Him how could He ask her for some water when He was a Jew and she was a Samaritan. The Jews and Samaritans did not speak to each other so she thought it was unusual that He asked her for a drink.

Jesus told her that if she knew who He was, she would have asked Him to give her a drink and Jesus would give her the living water. Anyone who drinks of the living water will not die. This meant that anyone who follows Jesus and listens to His words would live forever.

The Samaritan woman replied by asking Jesus to give her this living water so she would not have to return and keep filling her jar. Jesus asked her to go and call her husband and He would wait for her. She said that she did not have a husband. Jesus was happy that she did not lie to Him and told Him the truth.

Jesus is pleased with us when we do nice things and tell the truth. Even if we do something wrong and are asked about it, we should always tell the truth. Jesus rewarded the Samaritan woman and left her to preach about Him in her city. She became a saint and was the first lady to preach about Jesus.

Application



Comprehension Questions

- What is the name of the city that our Lord Jesus and His disciples went to?
- Where did the disciples of the Lord Jesus go afterwards?
- Who did our Lord Jesus meet next to Jacob's well?
- What was the discussion about between the Lord Jesus and the Samaritan woman?
- What did the Samaritan woman do after she believed in the Lord Jesus?



Exercise

- To always say the truth at all times, whatever the circumstances are.



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear Lord Jesus, thank You for Your love for us, our God of tenderness, because You have created me who is distinct and different from everyone. I thank You Jesus because I am Your son and You teach me good things. Help me to always tell the truth. Amen.



I Enjoy His Blessings

Adam and Eve in Paradise

Bible References: Genesis 2

Lesson Aim:

To see God's love through His creation.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: God created everything for my benefit.

Feel: The love and care of God.

Practice: To thank God for everything He created for me.

Memory Verse:

"Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good."

(Genesis 1:31)



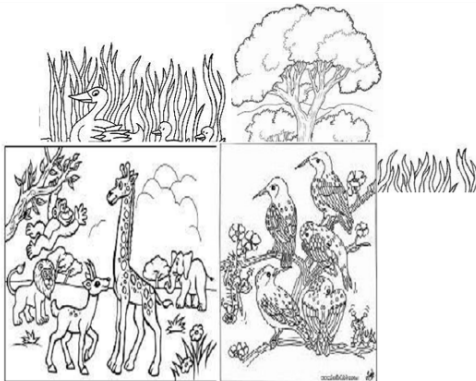
Lesson Content

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth and on this earth God wanted to create man. The earth was dark and had no form, but because of God's love for man, He started to prepare the earth so that it would be suitable for man... so what did God do?

God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light and God divided the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. This is why He created the Sun, to give light and heat during the day and He also created the moon to reflect light in the night.



God also created the trees, plants and rivers so that we can eat and drink and for man to enjoy the beautiful views on the earth.



God also created all the birds, animals and fish. Like what? (Ask children)

When God saw that everything was good and ready for man, He created Adam in His image. God made Adam from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. God placed Adam in Paradise to enjoy the blessings he was given.

The animals were not given names yet, so God brought all the animals and birds to surround Adam and He told him to give every living thing a name. God saw that Adam was alone and needed a companion, so He put Adam to sleep and took a rib out of his side and created Eve. He called her woman because she was taken out of man.

God created everything, not only for Adam and Eve, but for all of His children including you and me. We thank God for everything He created and all the blessings He has given us.



Application



Comprehension Questions

- Who created the plants and the animals?
- Why did God create all of that?
- Who gave names to the animals?
- Who did God create after He created Adam?



Exercise

- To thank God that He has created me and created everything around me to enjoy.
- To look after everything God created for me such as the trees, the birds and the animals, the rivers...
- Not to refuse to eat or drink from God's blessings as He has created it for me.



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear Lord Jesus, thank You for Your great love for me and creating so many things on earth for me to enjoy, just as You did for Adam and Eve. Thank You for all the food, plants, water, birds, animals, fish and all the good things you have created. Amen.



He Teaches Me in His House

The Lectern and the Church Readings

Book References:

- The Synaxarion – 22 Toba (30 – 31 January)

Lesson Aim:

To hear God's words through the Church books.

Lesson Objectives:

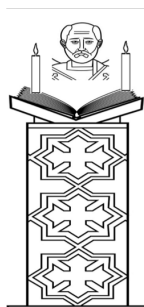
- Know:** The Church books and their use.
- Feel:** The importance of God's words in their lives.
- Practice:** How to be punctual and respectfully listen to the readings during the Divine Liturgy.

Memory Verse:

"Speak, Lord, for Your servant hears."
(1 Samuel 3:9)



Lesson Content



Background: The Mangeleya (lectern) is a Coptic word, which originates from a Greek word meaning 'Bible holder'. It is made out of wood and has four legs. It is around 128cm in length and is used to hold the Bible and books containing rites of the Church.

There are usually two lecterns in the Church. The one placed northwards faces the east (towards the altar) and is used to read the Bible in Coptic. The second placed southwards also faces the east and is used for other readings in English and Arabic.

Lesson: The lectern is placed at the front of the Church, in the deacons' chorus. It looks like a closed box and has a drawer where the books are kept. The lectern is used during the Divine Liturgy to read the Bible from as well as other books.

1. The first reading in the Divine Liturgy is from the Pauline Epistles. It is made up of one of the letters that were written by St Paul. St Paul wrote 14 epistles (letters) to different people or countries
2. The second reading in the Divine Liturgy is from the Catholic Epistles. These are made up of seven letters including James, I Peter, II Peter, I John, II John, III John and Jude which were addressed to the early Christian churches.
3. The third reading in the Divine Liturgy is from the Acts of the Apostles. It describes the Acts of the Apostles and the Church after Jesus' ascension. How they preached and spread the word of God around the world.
4. The fourth reading in the Divine Liturgy is from the Synaxarion. This book contains the stories of the lives of the martyrs and Saints of the Church. For example, when it is the Feast of St Mark, the story of St Mark will be read from the Synaxarion.
5. The fifth reading in the Divine Liturgy is the Psalms and the Gospel. A reading from one of Matthew, Mark, Luke or John is read depending on the Church calendar. The Gospels contain details on the life of Jesus and everything He did. For example; the birth of Christ, His baptism, the Sermon on the Mount, the healing of the blind as well as the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of Jesus etc.

This is why before the Gospel is read, the deacon says "stand up in the fear of God and let us listen to the Holy Gospel". This is why we have to stand up and listen to what Jesus wants to teach us and we should follow His teachings.

For example, St Anthony followed Jesus' teaching when He said "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." (Matthew 19:21).

Application



Comprehension Questions

- How many readings from the Holy Bible do we hear during the Divine Liturgy?
- How many Epistles were written by Paul the apostle?
- Why did they name the Catholic Epistles as such?
- Who listened to the readings today in the Divine Liturgy and applied it?



Exercise

- To be punctual and respectfully listen to the readings during the Divine Liturgy.
- To draw a chart of the arrangement of the church readings in the Divine Liturgy.



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Thank You Lord Jesus for Your great love for us and for sending us Your word in the Bible. Thank You for teaching us how to follow Your commandments. Please help us to listen to Your word and fulfil all Your commandments. Amen.



My Longing for Heaven

Elijah Travelling to Heaven

Bible References: 1 Kings 17, 2 Kings 2

Lesson Aim:

To learn that Heaven is a privilege.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: God has prepared a place for us in Heaven and our actions lead us to this place.

Feel: A desire to enter heaven.

Practice: How to stop behaving in a bad way and learn how to behave well.

Memory Verse:

"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden..."

(Matthew 5:14)



Lesson Content

A long time ago there was a prophet called Elijah. He lived before the birth of Jesus. God sent him to help people to stop worshipping idols. Elijah was very close to God and loved Him very much. He was also very upset that people worshipped the idol Baal instead of worshipping God. This was all because of King Ahab. King Ahab was married to Jezebel, who worshipped Baal and they made everyone also worship Baal.

Jezebel wanted to kill anyone who worshipped God. Although most of the people were doing wrong, Elijah still stuck to God. Because of his love for God, he went to King Ahab and told him that the people are worshipping idols and have forgotten the true God.

Elijah told the king there will not be any rain until Elijah says so. God listened to Elijah's prayers and stopped the rain until Elijah prayed again to God.

The king did not believe Elijah but God told Elijah to sit next to a brook called Cherith and told him that He would look after Elijah. Elijah used to drink from the brook and God sent him a raven that carried meat and bread for Elijah in the morning as well as the night. Indeed, it did not rain just as Elijah told King Ahab.

Elijah always prayed to God and told Him to reveal Himself to the people so that they know that He is the true God. At this time, the king was looking for Elijah to punish him for stopping it from raining. Elijah was certain that God would protect him amongst the wrong doings of the people.

After a while, because there was no rain, the brook dried up. God told Elijah to go to a widow who lived in Zarephath in Sidon and she would look after him. Elijah listened to God and stayed with the widow for three years. After three years of no rain, God told Elijah to go back to King Ahab to speak to him so God can make it rain again. Elijah obeyed and told the king to gather the people and the prophets of Baal at Mount Carmel. The king listened to Elijah and did so.

Elijah asked the people how long they will do wrong for and for how long they will be far from God. He also told them 'if Baal was the true God, he will answer you when you pray. Let us make a sacrifice to our gods. Then call on the name of your god and I will call the Lord and the god who answers by fire is the true God.' The prophets of Baal asked Baal to listen to them but of course he did not because he was just an idol. After a long time of trying, Elijah started to prepare his sacrifice. He placed his sacrifice on the altar and prayed to God and asked Him to reveal to the people that He is the true God. Fire came down from heaven and burnt the sacrifice. When the people saw this, they bowed down to God and asked Him for forgiveness. All of this happened because of Elijah's loyalty to God and because of this; God told Elijah that he would be with Him in heaven.

Elijah had a disciple called Elisha and they went to a place God told Elijah about. When Elijah was speaking to Elisha, a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire and separated the two of them. Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

Elijah was a good example to the people. We too, as the children of God, should behave in a good way. This is why all the Saints of the Church behaved in a good way, as they loved God and wanted to be with Him forever in Heaven.

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear God, teach me how to behave well and show others that I am Your child. Help me to stop any bad things I do. Through the intercessions of Saint Mary and all the Saints. Amen.



Merciful Character

St Nicholas

Book References:

- The Synaxarion of 10 Kiahk (19 - 20 December)

Lesson Aim:

To learn about the story of St Nicholas and how we can learn from him to help and be compassionate towards others.

Lesson Objectives:

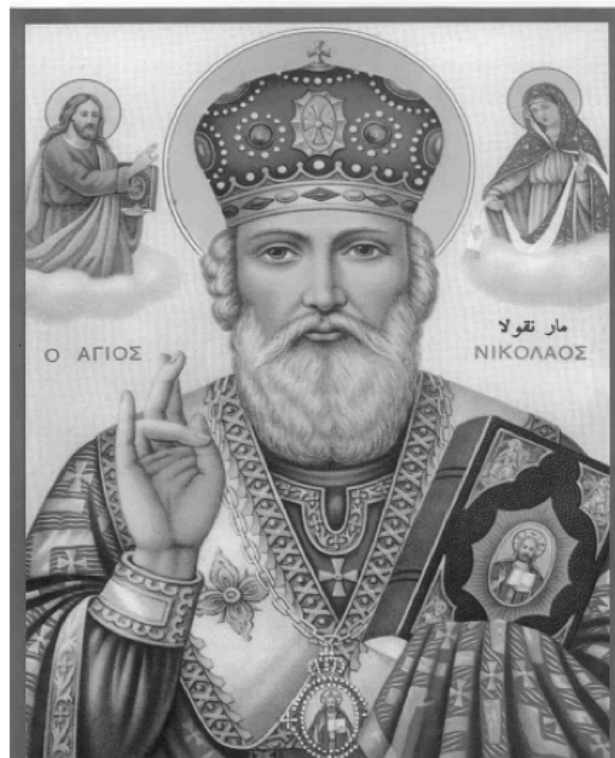
Know: How to help others.

Feel: The needs of others.

Practice: How to be compassionate towards everyone.

Memory Verse:

"Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful."
(Luke 6:36)



Lesson Content

St Nicholas was a man who loved to help the poor and those in need. God helped him to find out that there was a poor man who needed money so that his three daughters could get married. The man did not know how he would find all this money for his daughters to get married. St Nicholas visited the poor man and saw how upset and worried he was.

One night when the father and daughters were asleep, St Nicholas threw a bag of money into their window and quickly walked away before anyone could see him. When the father woke up and found the bag of money, he was so excited! This meant that his first daughter had enough money to get married. The father wanted to find out who it was that had given him this money.

However, there was still not enough money for the other two daughters to get married. One day, whilst the father was sitting down and thinking of how he could make enough money to help his daughters, he found a second bag thrown into his house from the window. He did not manage to find out who it was that threw the second bag into his home.

The second daughter was now able to get married and the father and his daughters were all really happy. However, he really wanted to know who it was that was giving him this money. He came up with an idea and decided as soon as he heard a bag of money being thrown into his house, he would run outside to see who it was.

It happened again. A bag of money was thrown into the poor man's house for the third time and so the man ran out to see who it was. He managed to catch the generous man this time, it was indeed St Nicholas. St Nicholas was the Bishop of Myra (now in Turkey). He was born to a rich Christian family. His father's name was Epiphanius and his mother was called Tona. He was known for his love and care for the poor.

Just like St Nicholas helped others, nowadays we see Santa Claus doing likewise during Christmas. St Nicholas helps us to remember that we should help the poor and remember them, especially during Christmas. During Christmas we get many presents and new toys and clothes and we should thank God for all of this. We should also remember our brothers and sisters who might not get any presents or nice gifts because it might be too expensive for their parents. We should think of ways we can help them. We can give our toys and clothes to charity and even give donation to the Church on a Sunday if we can.

Application



Comprehension Questions

- What was the real name of Santa Claus?
- What was the name of the city over which he was a bishop?
- What was the name of his father and mother?
- Who can tell me the story of the three girls?
- How was St Nicholas throwing the money?
- How did the father of the girls come to know about St Nicholas?



Exercise

Helping the children to mention different acts of mercy and ways of helping others such as:

- I have a shirt or dress which became too small for me, so I can give it to someone smaller than me who is in need.
- I have a friend in my class who is poor, I can buy him a notebook or a pen and I can give it to him as a gift etc.
- This next week, each one of us should write what they have done to help a poor person this week.



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

My beloved Jesus, thank You for Your love and care for us. Thank You for teaching us about St Nicholas and how he helped those in need and how we too can help others. Help us to learn from You how we can be compassionate towards others in need so we can put joy in their hearts. Amen.



The Birth of the Lord Jesus

Angels and Shepherds

Bible References: Luke 2:1-10

Lesson Aim:

To understand the joy that Christ gave us through His birth.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: The story of the birth of Christ.

Feel: The joy of the Shepherds when they met Jesus.

Practice: How to know Jesus through prayer and the Church.

Memory Verse:

"Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

(Luke 2:14)



Lesson Content

Do you know what the job of a shepherd is? I will tell you; a shepherd is someone who looks after sheep and helps them to find a nice patch of grass to eat and some water to drink. One day a shepherd and his friends went to find a place for their sheep to eat and drink. Eventually they found a beautiful place to rest in. They sat down and lit a fire to keep them warm and give them some light and had a chat about their day. Whilst they were talking, a strong light appeared in the sky and they saw angels dressed in white. The angels were singing "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

The shepherds were afraid from what they had seen, but in the midst of their fear, an angel approached them and said "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this *will* be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."

The shepherds were filled with joy and wanted to know more about the baby that had been born. They left everything and went to find the newborn in the place that the angels told them about. The shepherds set out to Bethlehem and found the stable that the angel had told them about. They entered and found St Mary, Joseph and the baby in the manger.

When the shepherds found out that this was the baby Jesus, they bowed down to Him. They thanked God for loving us and sending us His only son. The shepherds were really happy to have met Jesus and when they left, they told the good news to everyone they saw.

Just as the shepherds were filled with joy when they got to see Jesus, we too should spend time with Jesus and talk to Him as we will also be filled with the same joy. We can spend time with Him through prayer, reading the Bible, coming to Church and attending Sunday school.

Application



Comprehension Questions

- What was the job of the shepherds?
- What were the shepherds doing during the night?
- What did the angel say to the shepherds?
- Can you describe how the angels look like in Heaven?
- Did the shepherds go to the stable after they finished their work; slowly or quickly? Why?
- Who was there in the stable?



Exercise

- Train your children to go to the church and stand up to pray to meet the Lord Jesus.



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear Lord Jesus, thank You for forgiving my sins. Thank You for always being there for me and making me feel special. Thank You for all the joy You give me when I spend time with you. Amen.



Serving Others

St Mary and St Elizabeth

Bible References: Luke 1:39-45

Lesson Aim:

Learn the importance of serving others.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: That the Lord Jesus calls us to serve our society.

Feel: True happiness when serving others.

Practice: How to help society by serving others.

Memory Verse:

"If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all."
(Mark 9:35)



Lesson Content

After the Angel Gabriel visited St Mary and told her the good news about Jesus' birth, the angel also told her that her relative Elizabeth was going to have a baby and that she was six months pregnant. St Mary knew that Elizabeth was very old. She thought about Elizabeth and how tired she must be and decided that she would go and visit her so that she can help her. St Mary did not think about herself at this time and that she also may be tired, but wanted to do whatever she could to help Elizabeth.

St Mary gathered her belongings and started her journey to Elizabeth's house. She greeted Elizabeth and when Elizabeth heard her, the baby moved in her tummy. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!" She also said to her "why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" Elizabeth knew that St Mary was going to be the mother of Jesus and was so happy that she had come to visit her in her home.

Mary replied to Elizabeth and told her that she had come to serve her as she must be really tired because she will give birth soon. St Mary stayed and helped Elizabeth for three months until John the son of Elizabeth was born. Mary then returned home. St Mary was so kind as to put Elizabeth first before herself and serve her until she was better.

We too can help others whenever they are in need, no matter how young we are. Ask the children the different ways they can help others, how they can help out at home, at school etc.

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear Jesus, thank You for looking after me wherever I go. Thank You for all the nice gifts you have given me. Please fill my heart with love so that I can love everyone. Please help me to always help others who are in need so that they can be joyful. Amen.



You Blessed My Nature

The Baptism of the Lord Jesus

Bible References: Luke 3

Lesson Aim:

To understand the importance of Baptism.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: The story of the baptism of Jesus.

Feel: An appreciation for the importance of baptism.

Practice: That through baptism, we are reborn through the Holy Spirit.

Memory Verse:

"You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."
(Mark 1:11)



Lesson Content

Long ago, there was a man who used to wear camel hair and often talked loudly to the people telling them to repent and to be baptised and confess their sins because the Kingdom of Heaven is near. This man's name was John. Many people listened to his words and confessed and were baptised by John himself.

A young man appeared from the crowd and stood in front of John and asked him if he could baptise Him in the River Jordan. In the beginning, John refused and told Him "I need to be baptised by You, and are You coming to me?" John told Him that he is not worthy to loosen His sandal straps. Nevertheless, the young man told John to baptise Him.

As soon as the man came out of the water, a dove (the Holy Spirit) rested on His shoulder and a voice came from Heaven saying "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." This was the voice of God the Father.

The man that John was baptising was the Lord Jesus. During the baptism, the Holy Trinity (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit) appeared altogether.

John was the son of Elizabeth, Mary's relative who she went to serve when she was pregnant. When Mary visited Elizabeth, John moved in his mum's tummy.

Our Lord Jesus established the sacrament of baptism. This is why every one must be baptised. However, the baptism of John and Jesus are different. The baptism of John was through water for the purpose of repentance. This meant every time someone sinned they could be baptised again. But the baptism of Jesus is through water and the Holy Spirit. It is performed only once.

Baptism is performed by immersing the child into the water just as John immersed Jesus into the River Jordan. The priest immerses us into the water three times and then we are blessed with holy oil (called Holy Myron) to receive the Holy Spirit. We celebrate Jesus' baptism during the feast of Epiphany.

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear God, just as You entered the River Jordan and blessed it, please enter our hearts and bless our lives. Amen.



The Rites of the Coptic Church

Holy Bread

Bible References: Luke 3

Lesson Aim:

The learn about the Holy Bread and understand its symbols.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: The meaning of the Holy Bread, what it looks like and its various symbols.

Feel: God's love for us and the suffering He endured for us.

Practice: To attend the Divine Liturgy regularly and receive Holy Communion.

Memory Verse:

"For My flesh is true food indeed, and My blood is true drink indeed."
(John 6:55)



Lesson Content

The Holy Bread is prepared in a place we call "Bethlehem," named after the city where Jesus was born. There is a special oven inside this place which is used only for the preparation of the Holy Bread and cannot be used for anything else. The meaning of "Bethlehem" in Hebrew is "house of bread" as the Lord Jesus Christ is the Bread of Life. The Lord even said: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven." (John 6:51)

The Holy Bread has to be made very early, before the morning prayers so that it is fresh. We too should come to Church very early. The Holy Bread is made out of flour, which comes from pure wheat grains, because our Lord Jesus is pure. We also add yeast when making the Holy Bread, which represents sin that Lord Jesus carried on our behalf.

We do not add any salt or sugar. Salt is used to preserve food but The Holy Bread through The Holy Spirit is changed into Lord Jesus' flesh, which does not perish. We do not add sugar as the aim of Jesus' life on earth was to suffer on our behalf to save us.

While the Holy Bread is being made, the Psalms are read as there is a lot of symbolism related to Jesus in the Psalms.

The grains of wheat represent the people in the Church and the Bread brings us together as one through Jesus' body.

The Holy Bread is also called the offering as the Lord Jesus offered Himself for us. It is in the shape of a circle which has no beginning and no end, just like our Lord Jesus. The Holy Bread has a large cross in its centre, surrounded by twelve smaller crosses. The large cross (Spadikon) represents Lord Jesus and the small crosses around it represent His twelve disciples. The Holy Bread also has five holes to represent the five wounds of our Lord Jesus: three for the nails, one for the spear, and one for the crown of thorns. There is also some Coptic words (the Trisagion) written on The Holy Bread which say "Holy God, Holy mighty, Holy immortal." (*"Agios O Theos, Agios Ischyros, Agios Athanatos"*). This is how the angels in Heaven praise God.

Before the liturgy, an odd number of loaves are presented to the priest and he picks the most perfect one which will become The Holy Body of Jesus.

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear God, thank You for giving your life for us and making us worthy to receive Your Holy Body and precious Blood. Please help us to be one in the Church and love one each other. Amen.



What's Appropriate and Inappropriate

My Body is the Temple of God

Bible References: Genesis 1:26

Lesson Aim:

The learn about the sanctity of our body and know what's appropriate and inappropriate.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: That God loves me and gave me a beautiful body.

Feel: God cares about me and my body (He is always with me).

Practice: How to take care of my body.

Memory Verse:

"Glorify God in your body."
(1 Corinthians 6:20)



Lesson Content

Who created us and gave each of us our body? Everyone is unique. The Holy Bible tells us the following story. In the beginning before God created anything, there was nothing except for God. There were no places, no people and no light. There was only God who has no beginning and then God started to create things. He created a beautiful world filled with wonderful things.

He created the mountains and the flowers and plants. He created the birds with lovely feathers and fish in many different forms and colours. After this, God created the first human: Adam. He created him in an interesting, unique way compared to the rest of creation because He loved man a lot. God created Adam from the earth's dust, by blowing life into it. He created Adam in His own image and likeness; in holiness and freedom. Adam opened his eyes and found himself in a beautiful place called the Garden of Eden. Because God loved Adam so much, He created everything for him to enjoy.

God did not leave Adam alone, but created a helper for him, called Eve. Adam was very joyful and both Adam and Eve had authority over the Garden of Eden. They always felt the presence of God surrounding them and the abundance of great things God had made for them. They praised and thanked God all the time. They used their senses to show how thankful they were to God. They used their mouths to thank God and their eyes to admire what God had created for them and their ears to listen to God. If we were in the place of Adam and Eve, would we be as happy as they were?

Every one of us is also special just as Adam and Eve were. God created our bodies with care and allowed us to become His children through baptism. We receive the Holy Spirit through the blessing of the Holy Myron which sanctifies every part of our bodies. Because of this, we should take care of our bodies and this is why there are some things we should do and other things we should not do.

For example, our hands were made for us to lift up in prayer, not for us to hit our friends. Our mouths were made to praise God and thank Him, not to be used to swear. We should also make sure we are always presentable, by maintaining good personal hygiene. We should also make sure we don't play with dangerous things, including electricity and fire.

We also should not speak to strangers or let anyone approach us in any way. When we play with elders we should make sure that we don't sit on their laps or hold their hands unless they are our parents or brothers or sisters. If we notice people behaving in strange ways towards us, then we should immediately run to tell our parents.

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear God, we thank You for everything You have given us and making us all unique. Thank You for giving me a tongue to talk to You, eyes so that I can see everything You created for me, and for my hands that I use to help my parents and siblings. Please Lord, help me to do good for everyone. Amen.



My Body is Clean

Saint Verena

Book References:

- Synaxarion of 4th Thout

Lesson Aim:

The importance of cleanliness in our lives.

Lesson Objectives:

- Know:** The importance of cleanliness in our lives.
- Feel:** Joyful when helping our parents to clean.
- Practice:** How to take care of our own personal hygiene.

Memory Verse:

"Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good."
(Genesis 1:31)



Lesson Content

I would like to ask you all a question. What do you think about cleaning up? Do you think it's an important task or can we just avoid doing it? Do you think we can live in an unclean place? Could we live without street cleaners or doctors?

There once lived a great saint who taught us that cleaning is important as well as how to clean our wounds and look after our own personal hygiene. Her name was St Verena. She was a Christian who lived in Egypt, in a city called Tiba in Luxor. From a young age, St Verena loved the Lord Jesus and always looked after her own personal hygiene and helped her mum at home. She also enjoyed tidying up the Church.

When she grew up, St Verena joined the medical battalion (within the army). She was travelling from Luxor to Europe and the head of the battalion at that time was called Maurice. When they arrived in Italy, she helped the soldiers by cleaning their wounds. There was a group of women with her who loved Jesus and helped others. St Maurice was also a Christian who loved Lord Jesus. When the emperor asked him to worship the idols, he refused. Many of the members in the battalion also refused to worship the idols. The emperor was very angry and ordered them to be killed, so they became martyrs.

St Verena and the women who were with her decided to move to Switzerland. She served there and preached to everyone about Lord Jesus. She also taught them how to be clean and how to clean their wounds. She also taught them how to brush their hair with a comb as this was a pharaonic act and not known outside of Egypt. She also taught them how to wash their bodies and how to pray, and to pray for others when they are sick.

St Verena became well known to the people in Switzerland and many went to see her so she could help them and talk to them about Lord Jesus. From her teachings, they started to believe in the Lord. The emperor found out that St Verena was teaching others about Lord Jesus and so put her in prison. She prayed whilst in prison and eventually she was made free.

She passed away when she was 64 years old on 1st September. On this day, the Swiss people celebrate the feast day of St Verena to celebrate what she taught them about cleanliness and also about the Lord Jesus. There are more than 60 Churches in Switzerland named after St Verena. In her icon, you will notice she is always carrying a comb and a jar of water.

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear God, You created everything in detail. Teach us to do everything accurately just as You did. Teach us to do everything well. Amen.



The Creation

A Description of Heaven

Bible References: Genesis 1:1-23

Lesson Aim:

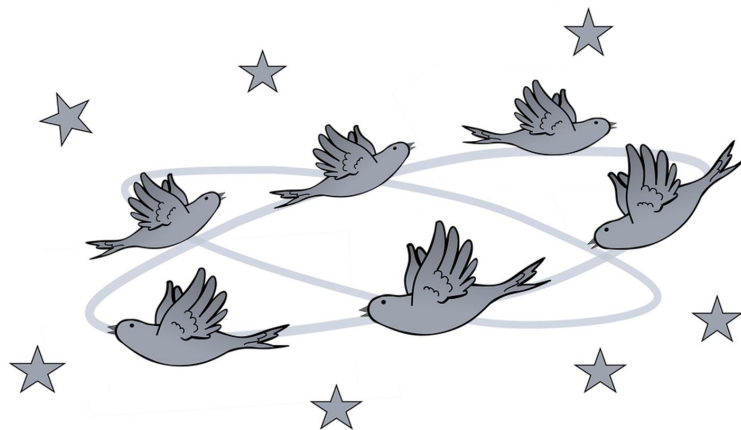
The teach about the creation and the different types of heaven.

Lesson Objectives:

- Know:** The different heavens that exist: heaven of birds, heaven of stars and the Heaven of heavens.
- Feel:** To love the heavens and God who created the heavens for us.
- Practice:** To ask God to live a heavenly life on earth.

Memory Verse:

"When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained..."
(Psalms 8:3)



Lesson Content

God loves us all very much. His love for us is more than the grains of sand on the beach and more than the number of stars in the sky. This is why before He created humans, He created a beautiful place; the Earth, where we could be happy for our entire lives. God continued to create things on earth for six days and then He created man.

However the earth was still empty and dark and had nothing on it. It looked empty so God said on the first day 'let there be light' and He separated the darkness from light and called the light 'day' and the dark 'night'.

On the second day, God created a firmament in the midst of the waters and divided the waters under the firmament (on the earth) from the waters above the firmament (in the heavens). He called the firmament Heaven, but the earth was still empty.

On the third day, God said let the water on the earth gather together into one place and let the dry land appear. On this same day, God created the plants and flowers. They were beautiful.

On the fourth day, God created two great lights. One to light the day and one to light the night. He also made the stars.

On the fifth day, God created the fish of the sea and birds of the sky.

On the sixth day, God created all types of animals on earth. After the earth was ready for man, God created a human who He used to speak to every day and He called him 'Adam'.

Adam lived a happy life with God but wanted to create a companion for Adam, so He created Eve to live with Adam. They were created to be happy and live with God. However Satan was not happy seeing Adam and Eve living peacefully with God. He wanted to make man fall into sin and eventually made Eve eat from the forbidden tree. Adam and Eve had to leave paradise because they disobeyed God. Their lives became very difficult. After many years, Adam and Eve had so many children and there were many people on earth. Some of them were good and listened to God. God has a special place in Heaven with the angels for those who listen to Him and obey His words.

We have to try to be good and listen to God's word so that we too can enter this special place.

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear God, we thank You for everything You have created for us. We thank You for the heavens, the birds, the sun, the stars and the clouds. We also thank You for the special place in Heaven that You have prepared for us, so that we can live with the Angels and Saints. Help us to be nice and kind so that we can be with You in this special place. Amen.



I Do What I'm Told

The Book of Jonah

Bible References: Jonah

Lesson Aim:

To learn to do what I'm told and that my body is the temple of God.

Lesson Objectives:

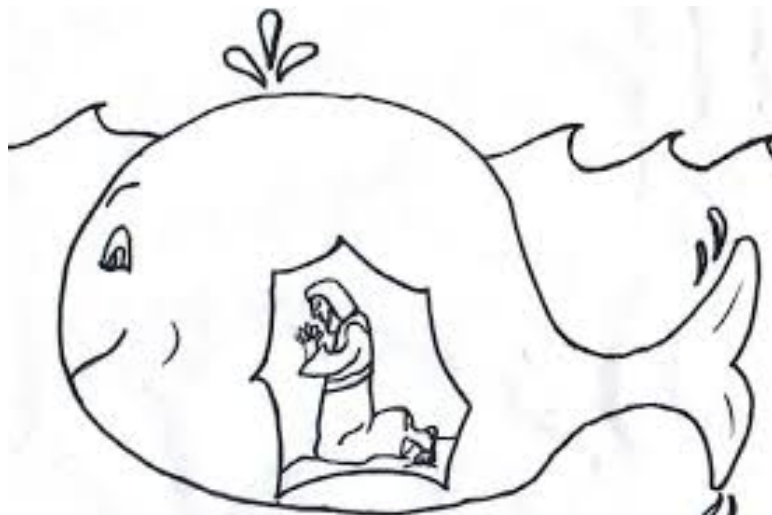
Know: The importance of obedience.

Feel: God is present everywhere.

Practice: What obedience is and use it in their daily lives with their parents and teachers.

Memory Verse:

"Keep my commands and live..."
(Proverbs 7:2)



Lesson Content

A long time ago there was a man called Jonah. He loved God and that's why one day God told him that He needed him to do something and that Jonah should do it quickly. Jonah agreed and told Him he would do it. God told Jonah to travel to Nineveh and call out and tell the people that God is upset with them and their city will be destroyed in forty days because of their sins.

Unfortunately Jonah did not listen to God and decided to escape from God. He caught a boat travelling to the city of Tarshish and paid the sailor his fee and got on the boat and fell asleep. However, God knew where Jonah was and could see him wherever he went and knew where he was going. God was upset that Jonah ran away.

God made the waters in the sea and the winds become violent. The wind and sea became so strong and hit the boat causing it to nearly break. The sailors became scared and tried to throw all the items on the boat into the sea so that it could be light and to help stop the boat from sinking. However, this did not help and the boat was going to sink all while Jonah was still asleep. The sailors approached Jonah and told him to stop sleeping and wake up to help them. They told him to pray to his God to help stop the winds and strong waves. Jonah told them that all this was happening because of him because he didn't listen to God and he ran away from Him. The sailors became scared of what Jonah had told them. Jonah told them that if they threw him from the boat, the winds and the sea would become calm. The sailors listened to Jonah and threw him into the sea. Instantly, the wind and sea became calm.

God commanded a whale to swallow Jonah. The whale obeyed and swallowed Jonah. He stayed inside the whale for three days. He prayed and asked God to forgive him. God listened and forgave Jonah and ordered the whale to spit him out on the shore of Nineveh. God commanded Jonah to speak to the people of Nineveh and tell them that He was upset with them because of their sins. Jonah obeyed and went into Nineveh and told the people what God had said. He told them after forty days, God will destroy Nineveh. The people and the king became scared and fasted and repented and asked God to forgive them. When God heard their repentance, He forgave them because they realised their sins and didn't go back to their evil ways. Therefore God did not punish them.

Jonah was upset that God forgave the people of Nineveh because he felt that God was too kind. He left Nineveh and stayed outside city. It was very hot so God commanded a small plant to grow and shade Jonah from the heat of the sun. The plant listened to God's command and provided shade for Jonah. Jonah was really happy because of the plant. God then commanded a worm to eat the plant and so the worm ate the plant. The heat of the sun was too strong for Jonah to handle. He was upset that the plant had been eaten and called out to God and asked Him why He let the plant die as it protected him from the sun. God questioned Jonah asking him "how can you be upset that the plant has died and you only knew it for a day and you wanted the people in the city of Nineveh to be punished, who I have created and known for their whole lives?" The people are more important than the plant.

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear God, cause me to know the way in which I should walk, for I lift up my soul to You. Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God; Your Spirit is good, lead me in the land of uprightness. Amen. (Psalms 143:8-10)



I am Subject to my Family

Moses Grows Up in Pharaoh's House

Bible References: Exodus 2

Lesson Aim:

To learn that I am subject to the love of my family.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: Mum and dad take good care for them.

Feel: Fatherly love.

Practice: Noticing the concern of his/her family and to thank God for them.

Memory Verse:

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right."
(Ephesians 6:1)



Lesson Content

A long time ago, Egypt had a Pharaoh (a ruler) who was a very harsh man. He used to treat people in a very bad way. At that time, the Jewish people lived in Egypt, but it was not their native country; they started living there when there was a great famine, and Joseph was in command of everything in Egypt.

The Jewish people worshipped God, but the Pharaoh worshipped idols, so he used to treat God's people very badly. One day, he decided that any new born baby from the Jewish people is to be killed! Why did he want to do this? Because the Jewish people were increasing in number and were very strong, so he was afraid that they will become a great nation and they will control Egypt instead of Pharaoh and his children.

There was a young handsome Jewish boy and he was born when that order was issued from Pharaoh. When his mum found out, she kept praying very hard and saying: "My Lord, you gave me this boy, so I ask You to please protect him." She was praying with his dad and his sister, Miriam all the time for the baby's safety.

They hid the baby for a long time, but one day his mother kept thinking and praying about what to do. So, she had an idea! She brought a small basket made from palm leaves (you can use a visual image) and coated the basket with a special material to stop the water from filling the basket. Then she placed the baby in the basket and put the basket in the river.

Why do you think she did that? Did she love him or not? (Allow time for discussion.)

And after that his mother asked Miriam, his older sister, to watch the basket from a distance and to come and tell her what happened. Meanwhile, they were all praying and asking God to protect him. And what happened, my children, is that the basket kept floating and floating in the river, until it arrived at a place where Pharaoh's daughter was standing! So she took the basket from the water, and when she opened the basket she found a very cute baby crying. But she noticed, from the way he looked and from his clothes, that he was from the Jewish people. And she realised that the mother must have put the baby in the basket because of the order of Pharaoh. God softened the heart of Pharaoh's daughter and made her to love the baby and to care for him, so she decided to raise him as her son in the palace.

Who was watching all of this happen? (Give time for discussion) His sister Miriam, and as soon as she saw that Pharaoh's daughter took the baby, she ran to her and said to her "I know a lady that can take care of him for you!" So Pharaoh's daughter agreed and Miriam ran to her mum to tell her.

Pharaoh's daughter said "I will call him Moses," and she asked the nanny (which was his mother) to take him and raise him till he grows up. In this way Moses returned safely, and he lived with his mother to care for him, and she taught Him all about God.

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Thank You God for taking care of me. Come O Lord and fill my life and cast away from me the devil and sin. Help me to follow your commandments, and to help the poor and the sick, and anyone else who needs help. Help me to show mercy to everyone, just as You are merciful with me. Look after mum and dad, my siblings, friends and all Your children. Amen.



Christ is My God

The Healing of the Paralytic at the Pool of Bethesda

Bible References: John 5:1-18

Lesson Aim:

To understand the authority of the Lord Jesus on diseases.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: The power of God over healing the sick.

Feel: Secure, peace and joy because you are a child of God.

Practice: How to pray for the sick.

Memory Verse:

"Rise, take up your bed and walk."
(John 5:6)



Lesson Content

There was a pool called the pool of Bethesda which was by the Sheep Gate in Jerusalem. There were many sick people that lay around the pool. Some were blind, some were lame and some were paralysed. They were all waiting for the angel to come down and move the water. The first person who would enter the water after it was moved by the angel, would be healed.

This is why people would stay around the pool, so that they could be that first person to enter once the angel moved the water. One of the men around the pool was completely paralysed which meant that he could not move at all so could not enter the water on his own. He had no friends or family who could help him which meant that someone would always go in before him.

The paralysed man was sleeping next to the pool for 38 years. One day Jesus went to the temple in Jerusalem to celebrate a feast. The pool of Bethesda was close to the temple and Jesus saw the sick people lying next to the pool. He approached the paralysed man in particular, as He knew He needed the most help. Jesus asked the paralysed man, "Do you want to be made well?" The man answered and said "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me." Jesus told him "Rise, take up your bed and walk". The paralysed man was healed and could move and he listened to what Jesus said and took his bed and happily walked away.

Application



Comprehension Questions

- What was the name of the pool?
- Why did many sick people stay around the pool?
- How many years did the paralysed man spend at the pool?
- Who healed him?
- What did He say to him?



Exercise

- Every child to pray for anyone who is sick, from their family, friends or neighbours and to ask God to heal them because God is the only one who can heal our sicknesses.
- Every child should thank God so much for the grace of health that God has given to them.
- Also thank Him that He has healed them or one of their relatives from their sicknesses.
- To accompany a servant to visit someone who is sick to ask about them and help them.



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear Lord Jesus, thank You for Your love and Your authority over healing the sick. I thank You for being able to heal every sick person just as You did for the paralysed man at the pool of Bethesda. I pray that You heal every sick person because You are a loving God. Amen.



I Have Got a Compassionate Father

The Prodigal Son

Bible References: Luke 15:11-24

Lesson Aim:

To understand God's love and His Fatherhood.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: God's love and forgiveness towards me.

Feel: Our heavenly father accepts whatever happens.

Practice: How to pray and ask for forgiveness.

Memory Verse:

"For the father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me."
(John 16:27)



Lesson Content

There was a small town where a man lived with his two sons. They lived in a big beautiful house and had lots of servants. Their father loved them and they had everything they wanted. In those days, when a father died all his money would be split amongst his children.

However, the youngest son did not want to wait and wanted his inheritance as soon as possible. He went to his father and asked him for his part of the inheritance. His father asked him why he wanted the money seeing as he already got everything he asked for in his father's house. The son replied saying that he did not want to stay in the house, but wanted to travel far away. The father was deeply saddened because he did not want his son to leave him. In those days, the sons actions were not respectful as this meant he considered that his father had already went to heaven.

But because the father loved his son, he did as his son wished and gave him what he asked for. He counted all the money he had and gave his youngest son his part. His son was so happy with the money. He left home and was so happy to explore another city and do whatever he wanted to do. He travelled far and started to spend his money on everything and anything he wanted. He made lots of unkind friends who liked him only because of his money.

After a while, he had spent all the money he had and so went to look for his friends, but they just left him because all his money was gone. He sold everything he had to find some money to buy food. When he sold everything, he did not know what to do. He even had to sleep on the streets because he ran out of money. After a while an old man had pity on him and told him that he could work with him on his farm. He was so happy to have found a job but his job was to look after pigs. They were wild animals but he had no other choice. He even hoped to eat the same food the pigs did because he was so hungry.

Suddenly he remembered his father's amazing house and said "my father's house was full of food and I am dying of hunger. Even the servants in my father's house have more food than me. All my clothes have torn and I smell unpleasant. I wonder if I can return to my father's house. Will my father accept me?" After a lot of thinking, the youngest son decided to that he would return home and tell his father "I was wrong and I am not worthy to be your son. Treat me as one of your hired workers". Indeed, he got up and left to return home to his father's house. For the entire journey he was thinking of what to say to his father. Once he approached the house, he found his father standing waiting for him. When he saw his son, he ran to him and hugged him. His son said "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son." The father was so happy that his son had returned and gave him sandals for his feet; he put a ring on his finger, and gave him a new robe. The father asked his servants to kill the fattened calf and have a big feast because his son was dead and now he is alive.

Application



Comprehension Questions

- How many children did the father have?
- How did the younger child make his father upset?
- What did the father do when his son asked for the inheritance?
- What did the son do with the money when he took it from his father?
- How did his father meet him after all he had done?
- What did the father ask his servants to do for his son when he came back?



Exercise

To draw something and present it to their father showing their love to their fathers.



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

O Lord and Master of my life, grant me not a spirit of sloth, meddling, love of power, and idle talk. But give to me, Your servant, a spirit of sober-mindedness, humility, patience, and love. Yes, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own faults and not to judge my brother, since you are blessed to the ages of ages. Amen.



Feast of the Cross

Queen Helena and the Cross

Book References:

- HG Bishop Youannes, "Christianity and The Cross"

Lesson Aim:

To learn about the power of the Cross.

Lesson Objectives:

- Know:** The story of Queen Helena and The cross.
- Feel:** The power of the sign of the Cross.
- Practice:** To do the sign of the Cross at any time.

Memory Verse:

"But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ..."
(Galatians 6:14)



Lesson Content

Once upon a time there was a queen her name was Queen Helena. She wanted to find the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. So, she asked her son King Constantine to let her go to Jerusalem where the Lord was crucified to find the Cross. So, King Constantine gave her money and soldiers to go with her to Jerusalem and help her find the Cross. She went to Jerusalem and was looking everywhere for the Cross but could not find it. She asked everybody about the Cross of Jesus Christ but no one could tell her.

Finally, she found an old man his name was Judas who told her where was the Cross. The bad people were trying to hide the Cross so they were covering it with papers and garbage. Queen Helena went and removed the big mountain of paper and finally found three crosses under it.

Queen Helena did not know which one of the three crosses is the one the Jesus Christ was crucified on. So, she put each Cross on a dead man, nothing happened with the first Cross and second Cross but when they put the third Cross of Jesus Christ, the man woke up. They knew that this is the Cross of our Lord. Queen Helena was very happy that she finally found the Cross and she told her son king Constantine about what she found and sent him part of the Cross and nails that were in the Cross. She built a big nice church and put the Cross inside it.

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear God, thank you for Your love for us. Thank You for allowing us to know the power of Your Cross. Thank You for showing Queen Helena the location of Your Cross because we know from her story how powerful the Cross is and was even able to raise the dead. Through the intercessions of Your holy Cross, be with us and protect us. Amen.



I Say Thank You

Healing of the Ten Lepers

Bible References: Matthew 18:6-7, Luke 17:11-19

Lesson Aim:

To say thank you.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: How to always thank God.

Feel: Happiness for God's gifts to us.

Practice: To thank God at all times.

Memory Verse:

"We give thanks to God always..."
(1 Thessalonians 1:2)



Lesson Content

When God was on earth, He used to travel to many cities to preach to the people. One time, He was travelling to one of the cities. On the gate of this city, there were ten men who were very ill.

They had a skin disease called leprosy. This was a very contagious disease. In those days, anyone who had leprosy would be banned from staying in the city with the rest of the people who did not have the disease. They stayed together outside of the city.

One time, the ten ill men saw Jesus coming from afar. They shouted with a loud voice saying "Master, have mercy upon us, Jesus, have mercy upon us." What do you think Jesus did?

Jesus told them to go and show themselves to the priests. Whilst, they were on their way, something very unusual happened. What do you think happened? They found their skin changing and healing. They no longer had leprosy. They were so shocked and confused. What do you think they did? One of the men went back to find Jesus and thank Him for healing them. Sadly, the nine others did not return to say thank you. What do you think about the man who returned to say thank you?

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear God, thank You for all You have given us. Thank You for making me your child. Thank You for this Church and for my family, friends and health. Please be with us always. Amen.



The Church is always Lit

Palm Sunday

Bible References: Matthew 21:1-11, John 12:12-19

Lesson Aim:

To know why the Church is always lit.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: What happens on Palm Sunday.

Feel: Love for the Church and be proud to be a member of the Church.

Practice: To attend events and feasts in the Church.

Memory Verse:

"Hosanna to the Son of David! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' Hosanna in the highest!"
(Matthew 21:9)



Lesson Content

Imagine your mum promised you a great gift. How would you feel? You would probably wait very excitedly and would be sure she would keep her promise because you trust your mum.

A long time ago, God promised us that He would come to us as a king who would save us and make us happy. The people of God, who He always looked after and performed many miracles for, waited for the coming of Jesus for a long time. When Jesus came to earth and lived with the people and continued to perform many miracles, many people followed Him, especially after He raised Lazarus from the dead. This was a great miracle and many people saw Lazarus after he was raised. Many people wanted to see the man who had raised Lazarus from the dead.

The next day, Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem with His disciples. He asked two of His disciples to go to a nearby village and there they would find a donkey and a colt tied to a tree. Jesus asked the disciples to bring them both to Him and if someone asked them why they were taking them, to say that the Lord is in need of them. The disciples obeyed and indeed found what Jesus had told them. They took the donkey and colt and laid their clothes on them as a sign of respect for Jesus so He can ride them.

Jesus entered Jerusalem and everyone was so happy to see Him. Some of them laid their clothes out on the ground and some waved palms. People were shouting "Hosanna to the Son of David! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!'" Jesus entered as a loved king but some of the people wanted to stop the children and adults from welcoming Jesus. Jesus said to them "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."

The children were happiest the most that day and felt that Jesus had come to make each person happy, just as we are every Palm Sunday in the Church. We hold palms and listen to the prayers that Abouna says with the deacons as they go around the Church carrying the Cross. We sing special hymns which talk about the prophecies about Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem.

Palm Sunday is the beginning of Holy Week where we enjoy the hymns and special readings read in the Church.

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Thank You God for Your humility and coming to our land. Please enter our hearts just as You entered Jerusalem. Please clean our hearts from any sin so that we will be ready to welcome You. Amen.

Weeks 2-3 of April:

No lessons due to Palm Sunday
and the Feast of the Resurrection.



Resurrection is Light

The Resurrection and the Appearance of the Angel to the Marys

Bible References: Luke 24:5-6

Lesson Aim:

To know about the resurrection of Christ.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: That Resurrection is light.

Feel: The joy of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus from the dead.

Practice: Putting together the events of the resurrection using pictures.

Memory Verse:

"Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen!"

(Luke 24:5-6)



Activities to Introduce the Lesson

You can use one of the following ways to introduce the lesson:



Drama / Pantomime

If you wish you can present this lesson as a small sketch. The play will show one of the Mary's telling her story with wonder and joy about what happened to her on Resurrection Sunday.

Lesson Content

At the beginning of the lesson, the servant should present to the children the character of Mary:

The servant: today we're expecting a wonderful surprise visit. We've been thinking, who could tell us the story about the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. So, we found someone who is very joyful of His resurrection and she wanted very much to come herself to tell us her story.

...Please come in Mary.

Mary: Hello my friends... what is this?! Why do I see many sad faces... is someone upset or what? Today I won't leave from here until I see you all as happy as I am now. I'll tell you my story.

I was spending time with my friends, the Marys, and we were walking and listening to our Lord Jesus. His presence in any place brought great joy to that place. He told us beautiful stories, cured people, and whoever He made whoever He met joyful. But suddenly, after all the good things Jesus had been doing, bad people arrested Him and crucified Him. So, the Lord Jesus died, and my friends and I were watching all of these things and were crying... crying hard. And before the Lord Jesus died, He looked at us and told us "Don't cry for me", but we could not stop crying. Our Lord Jesus was the reason of our joy, but He has now left us.

The Lord Jesus died on the cross on Friday, and on the same day they took Him down from the cross and buried him in a newly-built tomb. This tomb was prepared by someone who loved Jesus Christ so much, and his name was Joseph of Arimathea, and we followed Him until He was buried in the tomb, and they brought a huge stone roll against the door of the tomb. And they also placed guards at the door of the tomb to guard it. So, we went back home, and we stayed at home all of Saturday and we were weeping all day. We were waiting for Sunday to come so we can take with us spices with a beautiful smell, to place on the body of our Lord Jesus. We couldn't go on Saturday, so before the break of dawn on Sunday, even before the Sun came out, I met with my friends and we went towards the tomb. I looked into the distance and asked my friends: "Do you see what I see?!" Mary's voice full of surprise as she was telling the story. "Look everyone! The stone is not covering the entrance of the tomb!! The stone has been rolled away!!! What's going on?!! What happened?!"

So, we ran quickly to the tomb and we found the tomb empty; the body of Jesus wasn't there. We kept wondering to ourselves what could have happened? And then all of a sudden, we saw a very bright light, and two men were wearing white and standing in front of us. We were both afraid and sad, so our heads were bowed. But they were talking to us with joyful words; and their words made us overjoyed. They told us: "You are coming to seek the Lord Jesus, but the Lord Jesus is alive; He is risen from the dead!! Don't you remember what He said to you before His crucifixion?" At that moment, we remembered what Jesus told us; He told us all of this before happened and we didn't understand it! We were so very joyful, so we ran to the disciples to tell them what we saw. Our Lord Jesus is risen from the dead! "Khristos Anesti!" There is nothing that could ever make us sad, so from that day when we see someone sad, we tell him or her "You cannot be upset! Our Lord Jesus is risen, and He has made us all joyful. And we will all rise with Him, just as He has risen. And this was just the beginning, and after that our Lord Jesus appeared to us and too many others, and there was nothing to make us sad or afraid after the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus."

Application



Comprehension Questions

- On what day of the week was our Lord Jesus crucified? And on what day did He rise from the dead?
- What is the name of the man who prepared the tomb for the Lord Jesus?
- Who told the Marys about the resurrection of the Lord Jesus?
- Where did the Marys go after they knew about the news of the Resurrection?



Exercise

No one can be sad during the holy 50 days after the Resurrection. If you find yourself sad or upset, repeat the saying “Khristos Anesti - Alithos Anesti” and remember that “Christ is risen – truly He is risen”



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

My Lord Jesus, when You were lifted upon the cross, darkness filled all the Earth as the Sun was embarrassed to see Your nakedness. As they put You in the darkness of the tomb, You illuminated in Your glory with heavenly light. O true Light that enlightens every man that comes into the world, let the senses and thoughts of light shine within us, and let us not be covered by the darkness of pain. O You who entered the tomb and transformed it from a place of darkness to a place of light, come and enter the darkness of my heart and enlighten it with the light of Your Resurrection, and cast away, O Lord, all the darkness of sin, temptation and sadness. Amen.



God Loves Me and He Gave Me a Family

Abraham was Promised Isaac

Bible References: Genesis 17-18

Lesson Aim:

To know that God loves me so He gave me a family; He is the origin of my family tree.

Lesson Objectives:

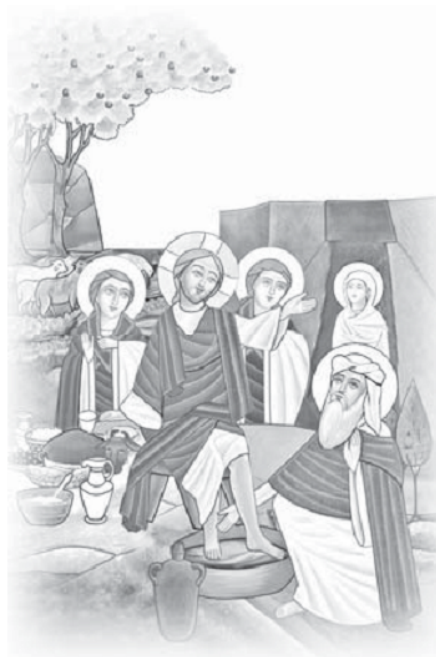
Know: The story of Abraham and how God gave him a child.

Feel: Their importance within their families and that God is the One who gave them their families.

Practice: Love being a part of their family which God gave them.

Memory Verse:

"May He grant you according to your heart's desire, And fulfill all your purpose."
(Psalms 20:4)



Lesson Content

Abram was 99 years old and his wife Sarai was 90 years old. God appeared to Abram and told him that his name will be Abraham. God also told Abraham that Sarai's name will be Sarah and that Abraham will be a father to many nations. Abram asked God how this could be when he did not have any children. God replied to Abram that He will be "a father of many nations" and that God will give Abram many children and He will be their God and they will be His people.

God said "Sarah will bear you a son and I will bless you both". Sarah and Abraham were astonished at what God said because they were old in age.

God visited Abraham another time and with Him were two angels. He appeared to him by the terebinth trees of Mamre as he was sitting in the tent door in the heat of the day. He lifted his eyes and saw the three men standing in front of him. He invited them for a meal.

God said to Abraham "I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son". Sarah heard Him from the tent door and laughed to herself.

She said "After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?" God asked Abraham why Sarah laughed and questioned that she would have a child in her old age. "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" I will return to you at an appointed time and Sarah will have a son. Sarah said that she did not laugh because she was afraid, but God told her that she did laugh.

Sarah and Abraham were very happy and after a short time, Sarah became pregnant even though she was very old. She had a son and named him Isaac "the son of laughter and pleasure".

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Thank You God for giving me a family, just like you gave Isaac to Abraham and Sarah after they became old. Help me to love my family and my family to love me. Help me to obey them. Please support me and guide me. Amen.



St Mark in Egypt

Book References:

- HH Pope Shenouda III, "The Beholder of God, Mark the Evangelist, Saint and Martyr"

Lesson Aim:

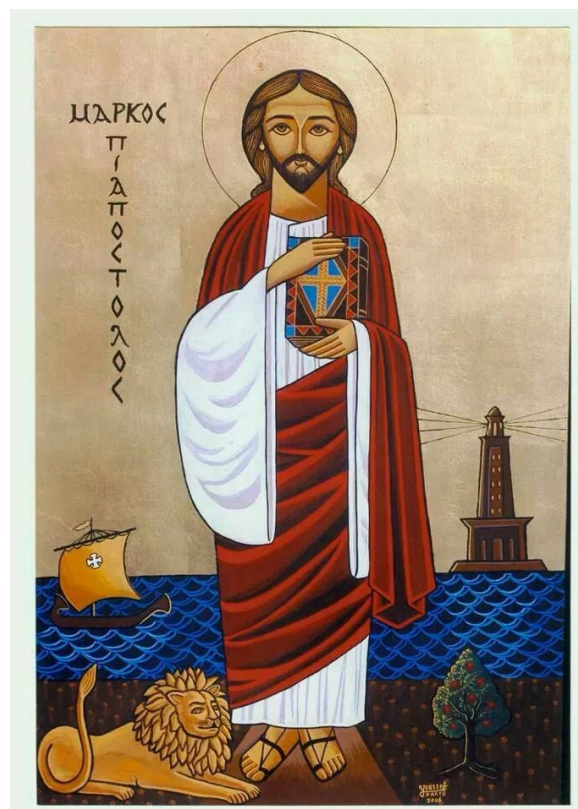
To understand how Christianity came to Egypt.

Lesson Objectives:

- Know:** The story of St Mark and how Christianity spread in Egypt.
- Feel:** The importance of St Mark within the Coptic Orthodox Church.
- Practice:** Being good examples of Christians to our friends.

Memory Verse:

"Preach the gospel"
(Mark 16:15)



Lesson Content

St Mark is one of the seventy Apostles who the Lord Jesus Christ chose. He saw many of the miracles of Christ such as the healing of the sick and raising the dead.

After Christ's resurrection and ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit, St Mark went to Egypt to speak to the Egyptians about Christ. The first city he went to was Alexandria.

He was praying before entering Alexandria to God, to provide him with the spiritual needs for the success of his mission.

By the time he arrived, his sandal was already torn, so he went to Anianus, a cobbler, to repair it. While Anianus was holding the needle, it went through his finger and he screamed from pain and said, "O' the One God". The Apostle put some mud on his finger and Annianus was healed at once.

The shoemaker was amazed to hear St Mark speaking about Christ and to be healed by the power of Christ. St Mark told him about many miracles performed by Christ. The shoemaker and his household believed and Annianus was ordained a bishop. Subsequently, Christianity spread throughout Egypt and Christians grew in number.

As the Lord was with St Mark in his service and helped him because he was honest and sincere, the Lord will also be with us if we are honest and sincere.

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Thank You Jesus for allowing St Mark to travel and speak to the Egyptians about you. Please help us to be good examples of Christians to others so they can know more about you and how loving you are. Amen.



Jesus Enters the Land of Egypt

Bible References: Matthew 2:13-23

Lesson Aim:

To understand that the land of Egypt was blessed when Jesus entered it.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: Through the Bible, Jesus blessed Egypt.

Feel: Egypt is blessed because Jesus entered it.

Practice: To attend the feasts in our Orthodox Church.

Memory Verse:

"...Blessed is Egypt My people..."
(Isaiah 19:19-25)



Lesson Content

A long time ago there was a family who travelled for three years and six months. Do you know who this family was and where they were going?

At that time, there was a king called Herod who found out that Jesus was born. He thought that Jesus was going to take his throne and become king instead of him. He was so worried so he ordered all children in Bethlehem to be put to death. However, an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him to "arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt". Do you know who His mother was?

Joseph listened to the angel and took Saint Mary and Jesus out of Bethlehem and travelled to Egypt. It was a long journey, so they rested whenever they could from one city to another. They blessed every home or city they went to and many miracles happened.

For the long parts of their journey, the holy family travelled on boats or a donkey to help them get from one city to another. They travelled for three years and six months.

Egypt was blessed by the visitation of the holy family. Many knew God because of the holy family and many Churches and monasteries were built in some of the places where the family stayed. Do you know the name of any of these monasteries? (Gabal al Teir in El Minya, St Mary's Monastery in Dronka, Assuit, The Monastery of Wadi Natroun). There are also many churches in different cities in Egypt. The Coptic Church has a special feast day for the entrance of the Holy Family into Egypt.

Isaiah's prophecy from the Old Testament which says "Blessed is Egypt My people" was fulfilled.

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Thank You Jesus for entering Egypt with Saint Mary and Joseph and blessing it. Please protect all your children and keep them safe. Amen.



The Feast of The Ascension

Bible References: Acts 1

Lesson Aim:

To learn about the Ascension and its importance.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: What happened when Jesus ascended into Heaven.

Feel: The importance of the Ascension and the beauty of Heaven.

Practice: How to act to inherit eternal life.

Memory Verse:

"So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God."
(Mark 16:19)



Lesson Content

After Jesus' resurrection, he appeared to Mary Magdalene. He appeared to His disciples who were gathered together in the upper room. He appeared to the two disciples travelling to Emmaus. He also appeared to the disciples again when Thomas was with them.

After that, Jesus appeared to the disciples regularly to strengthen their faith. He spoke to them about their roles as preachers and provided them with the foundations to allow them to be founders of the Church which can be passed down from generation to generation.

One day, Jesus took His disciples to the Mount of Olives, close to Jerusalem. When they were assembled together, He rose from the ground and ascended towards the heavens. The disciples were astonished. Jesus became out of sight of the disciples as the clouds covered Him.

Whilst they were looking up at Him, two men dressed in white stood and told the disciples that Jesus had ascended to Heaven and that He will also come back in the same way as they saw Him go into Heaven.

After this, the disciples returned to the upper room as they were and prayed together.

Why did Jesus not stay with us on earth? He ascended so that He could prepare a place for everyone. Through His ascension, Jesus makes us look towards gaining this place. This is what our aim is, to live a life of love just as the Saints and Angels do in heaven.

The Church celebrates the Feast of The Ascension every year 40 days after the Feast of The Resurrection. It is one of the major feasts in the Church.

The 7 major feasts in the Church which affect our salvation:

- Annunciation
- Nativity
- Epiphany
- Palm Sunday
- Resurrection
- Ascension
- Pentecost

The 7 minor feasts in the Church which are events related to the life of Jesus:

- Circumcision of Jesus
- Entrance of Jesus into the Temple
- Escape of The Holy Family to Egypt
- First miracle at the wedding in cana
- The Transfiguration of Christ
- The Last Supper
- Thomas's Sunday

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear Jesus, open my eyes to see Heaven. Thank you for preparing a place for me. Help me to do good for others so I can be with you. Amen.

Six weeks kept free for
Coptic Festival programme.



Feast of The Apostles

Peter heals a crippled man at the gate called Beautiful

Bible References: Acts 3

Lesson Aim:

To know that miracles are performed in the name of Jesus.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: Who the Apostles are and their story.

Feel: The faith that we received from them.

Practice: How to live a life of repentance as the Apostles preached.

Memory Verse:

"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God"
(Matthew 16:16)



Lesson Content

I will begin by asking a few questions. (Discussion with children).

Does anyone know what the word Apostle means?

These are people who were appointed by Jesus to teach the people the way to God and how to live a happy life with Him. Jesus chose 12 disciples and 70 apostles.

Does anyone know what a miracle is?

This is something that no one can do except for God or by someone in the name of God. It is very powerful and cannot be done without God's will.

Does anyone know what a temple is?

This is the place in Jerusalem where Jews used to pray. It was the place of worship for the Jews just as the Church is our place of worship.

What does it mean to be crippled or paralysed? This is when someone is not able to move and needs someone to help them move from one place to another.

Today we are going to talk about a miracle that was performed by two of the disciples. There was a crippled man sitting begging at the gate of the temple. The gate was called Beautiful.

One day St Peter and St John were going to pray in the temple. On their way up the stairs, they noticed the crippled man begging by the gate. People used to help him by giving him food or money as he was not able to work. Peter and John looked towards the crippled man and he looked towards them hoping that they would give him some money.

What do you think happened next? (Discuss with the children). Peter told the crippled man "silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give to you". Peter held the man's hand and pulled him up saying "in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk" (Acts 3:6). Indeed, the man rose and was able to walk.

He was so happy and everyone who knew him was astonished and happy for him. Peter sat with the people and preached to them about Jesus. He told them that the miracle was performed in the name of Jesus and so they believed in Him.

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear God, thank you for all the nice things you give us. Thank you for the miracle St Peter performed. Help us not to do anything that might upset you and to keep our faith just as the Apostles have done. Amen.



The Sanctuary and The Church

An Image of Heaven

Book References:

- The Holy Bible and The Monastery of Baramos, "The Icon of Heaven"

Lesson Aim:

The contents of the sanctuary and sacred vessels used on the altar.

Lesson Objectives:

- Know:** That the Church is the house of The Lord.
- Feel:** Respect for the sanctity of the Church and feel comfort inside it.
- Practice:** To be calm and to pray to God whilst entering the Church.

Memory Verse:

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



Lesson Content

The Church is the house of God and the angels

We all have a home that we return to after school. We eat and drink there as well as sleep there. God also has a lovely house just as we do. It is the Church, this is the house of God. The difference between God and us is that we sleep in our homes, but God always stays awake waiting for us to visit Him in His house so that we can talk to Him. We eat and drink in our homes, but when we visit the House of God, He welcomes us by giving us His Body and Blood. We also play in our homes and have fun with each other, but when we visit God's house, we listen to His words in Sunday School and enjoy our day in the Church. This is why, as soon as we enter the Church, we greet God as He is waiting for us and thank Him for allowing us to visit His house.

God's house is also filled with angels who serve Him during the mass. We should be calm and respectful inside the Church just like the angels.

How to respect the house of God and its organisation

As the Church is God's house, there are some things we should not do inside it. For example;

- We should not eat or drink inside the Church.
- We should not throw anything on the floor.
- We should not run in the Church or speak loudly.

There are some things we should do inside the Church. For example;

- We should help to keep the Church tidy.
- We should take our shoes off before entering the Sanctuary as it resembles Heaven, where Jesus is sitting listening to our prayers.
- We should respect the Priests and elders in the Church.

The sacred vessels and the altar

The Altar is a table in the shape of a cube. It is made out of wood to symbolise the Cross or out of marble to symbolise Jesus' tomb.

The holy tablet also known as Tabot in Ethiopic. This is a rectangular piece of wood blessed with the holy Myron where the cross is drawn in the corners and the middle. The name of Jesus and verses are written on the tablet. It is present on the altar during the mass, making the altar a place of sanctification. When needed, the tablet alone can be used to sanctify, instead of the altar. When the mass cannot be done in the Church, the tablet can be placed on a table somewhere else outside of the Church instead of the altar, to pray the mass.

The paten (plate) is a small round tray, without a stand and having no engraving. It is usually made of silver or gold. It is where the Body of Christ is placed during the mass. This paten has a symbolic meaning, as it represents the Lord's manger and tomb.

The dome (star) consists of two silver arched bands, held by a screw, crossed over each other into the shape of a cross, usually surmounted by a small cross. It is placed upon the paten to keep the Holy Bread in a prescribed order, and to support the coverings. It represents the star that appeared to the Wise men.

The Ark is a wooden box in the middle of the Altar and is used as a Chalice-Stand. It is called 'the Throne' for it represents the throne of God.

The Chalice is the Communion Cup, into which wine mixed with water is poured.

The Spoon in Coptic is called "Mystir" and is used by the Priest to give the holy Blood to the congregation.

The Censer is a brass or silver vessel in which incense is burned. The censer container is suspended on three chains which represent the Holy Trinity. The censer container symbolises St. Mary who bore the "True coal burning with Fire", that is the Incarnate Son of God.

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear God, thank you for the Church, the altar and your love for us and for choosing us to be your children. Please Lord, help us to be good and protect all our families, friends and Church. Amen.



Respecting the House of God

Saint Mary in the Temple

Book References:

- Fr Athanasius George, "Respecting the Holiness of the Church"

Lesson Aim:

To learn how to respect the Church.

Lesson Objectives:

- Know:** The story of the journey of St Mary to The Temple.
- Feel:** The fear (respect) of God within God's house.
- Practice:** How to respect God's house.

Memory Verse:

"Holiness adorns Your house, O Lord, forever"
(Psalms 93:5)



Lesson Content

A long time ago, there was a very kind man named Joachim and his wife's name was Hannah. They were very kind people and loved God very much, but they both had a small problem that made them really unhappy. This problem was that they did not have any children. Although they were not happy, they used to stand in front of The Lord and pray to Him, and they trusted that God could give them a child, even if they were really old.

They kept praying to God and when they became very old they still kept praying for God to give them a child. They promised God that if He gave them a child, they will send the child to the Temple to serve the Lord for his/her whole life.

One day, when Joachim was praying on top of the mountain, he slept for a while and Angel Gabriel appeared to him and told him that his wife Hannah was going to have a baby who would make them very happy and would also be the reason for the world's happiness. Joachim awoke from his sleep and was really happy and ran home to tell Hannah the good news.

Hannah became pregnant and after 9 months, Hannah gave birth to a beautiful little girl and they called her Mary. Do you know who this child will become? St Mary the mother of the Lord Jesus. When Mary grew older and was three years old, Joachim and Hannah had to fulfill their promise of sending Mary to the Temple to serve the Lord.

She lived in a place in the Temple for many years, with other children who were also promised to God by their parents. She lived in the Temple serving and praying. She regularly prayed and fasted and had a lot of respect for the house of the Lord.

She always thanked God and said "But as for me, I will come into Your house in the multitude of Your mercy; In fear of You I will worship toward Your holy temple." (Psalms 5:7) She was always respectful and fulfilled the verse that says "...Holiness adorns Your house, O Lord, forever" Psalms 93:5

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear God, thank You for Your great love, thank You for the Church. Teach me how to respect Your house as St Mary did since she was a young child. Amen.



Speak With God

Samuel The Child of The Altar

Bible References: 1 Samuel 3

Lesson Aim:

To speak with God.

Lesson Objectives:

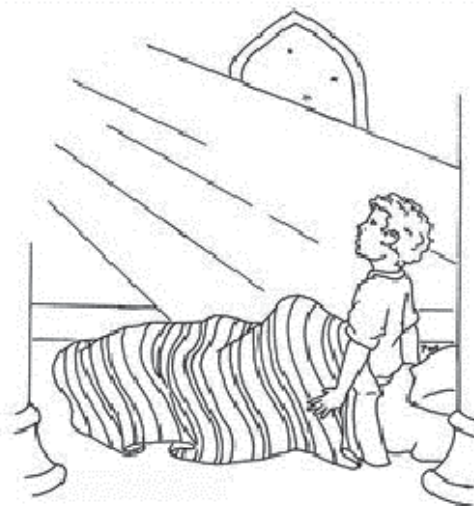
Know: That God knows us each by name.

Feel: Joy as God knows us by name and calls us.

Practice: How to pray from our hearts.

Memory Verse:

"...Speak, for Your servant hears."
(1 Samuel 3:10)



Lesson Content

There are two books in the Old Testament which talk about the life of Samuel. These are 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel. The Prophet Samuel wrote these books. 1 Samuel talks about the kings that ruled over the Israelites and how Samuel was a prophet used by God as a messenger to talk to the people.

Samuel's mother was called Hannah and his father was called Elkanah. They both loved God but something was missing in their lives. Hannah was not able to have a child for a long time and prayed to God for a baby boy. Every year, she would visit the temple and pray whilst crying, asking God to give her a child. One time whilst praying, she promised God that if He gave her a child, she would give him back to serve the Lord in the altar.

After a while, Hannah had a baby boy and named him Samuel. His name means "God heard". She looked after him for three years, then fulfilled her promise by giving Samuel to the serve in the altar.

One day, when Samuel was asleep in the altar, he heard a voice calling him saying "Samuel, Samuel". He thought it was Eli the priest. Eli told him that he did not call him so Samuel went back to sleep. He heard the voice again. Samuel woke up and went to Eli and said to him "Here I am, for you called me". Eli again told him that he did not call him. And the voice called Samuel again for the third time. So he rose again and went to Eli and told him "Here I am, for you did call me". This time Eli told Samuel to go and lie down and if he hears the voice again he should say "speak, Lord, for Your servant hears". Samuel lied down and when he heard the voice again, Samuel replied saying "speak, Lord, for Your servant hears".

God spoke to Samuel and then he went back to sleep. The next day, Eli the priest asked Samuel "what did God tell you?" Samuel told Eli everything that God said and that He was upset with Eli's sons because they were not good people and that Eli did not advise them to change.

Samuel grew to be a good prophet and used to speak to God a lot. He would always tell the Israelites to change their bad ways and turn back to God.

Samuel was very obedient to God and prayed from a young age, talking to God about everything. God is a compassionate father to us all and knows how to help us with everything.

This is why when we pray, we should stand respectfully and talk to Him about anything and everything we want to.

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear God, please help us to always listen to you. Please forgive us if we have upset you in any way. Teach us how to talk to you. Amen.



Love is the Way to Heaven

A bunch of Grapes

Book References:

- Pope Shenouda III, Al Ahram Newspaper, Sunday 17th April 2011

Lesson Aim:

How to reach Heaven. Love is the way to Heaven.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: Love helps us to inherit our place in Heaven.

Feel: A desire to get to Heaven and feel happy by doing acts of love.

Practice: Acts of love with their friends, for example asking about their friends and family.

Memory Verse:

"By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."
(John 13:35)



Lesson Content

A long time ago there was a man who planted grapevines. On one of the days he was watering the grapevines, he found a bunch of grapes growing out of their season. He was so happy to see this and took the grapes to the monastery. He gave it to Anba Macarius the great, who was the head of the monastery at that time.

Anba Macarius thought a lot about who was in need of the grapevine. He remembered that there was a monk who was not feeling well so sent him the grapes. He told the monk "you are not well and you are in need of these". The grapes looked delicious but the sick monk told Anba Macarius that there was another monk who was more in need of the grapes. "I am not well but the other monk will need them more than me", he said.

The second monk was given the grapevine as he was very sick. He had not eaten anything in a long time and looked to the grapes and felt that it was a gift from God as he was hungry. He took the grapes and washed them and placed them onto a plate. Before he ate them, he remembered another monk and said "the monk who lives next to me needs these grapes more than I do".

The grapevine travelled from one monk to another. At the end, the grapes returned to Anba Macarius the great. He called one of the monks and told him to ring the monastery bell and to gather all the monks as he wanted to speak to them. The monk did so and they all gathered in the Church.

Anba Macarius asked them all to sit down. He told them "I have gathered you all today to tell you something important I witnessed in this monastery and I want you all to listen carefully to what I am going to say. Two days ago, a man came to me and gave me a grapevine. This is not an ordinary grapevine. This is a vine of love which has emerged from all of you. The grapes travelled to every monk and you all put another before yourself. This is what true love is, that we all love others more than ourselves. With this love, we can get closer to Our Lord Jesus Christ, who loves us and died for us".

The monks stood to pray to thank God that He had given them the gift of love. They asked God to help them maintain this love. They left the Church feeling very happy and praising God.

Why did Anba Macarius gather them to tell them about the love they had for each other? Is love important? For example I might say that I love my parents but still do things that upset them. This is not true love. To prove to them that I love them, I should obey them. When I do something that upsets them, I should apologise to them. If one of them is sick, I should help them. Likewise, with my siblings and friends. I should share my things with them. I should also respect my elders.

This love will help us to reach Heaven to be with God for eternity. We know that God has reserved a special place in Heaven for each one of us. So that we can be with God, we should love everyone. Love can be given through actions, not just words.

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear God, thank you for loving me and dying for me. Teach me to love everyone just as you told us to and to do everything for them out of love. Amen.



Memoirs of a Small Camel

Saint Ruwais

Book References:

- Biography of the Church Fathers and Saints and Holy Figures of the Church, Father Tadros Yagoub Malaty. The History of the Coptic Church, Father Menassa Youhana.

Lesson Aim:

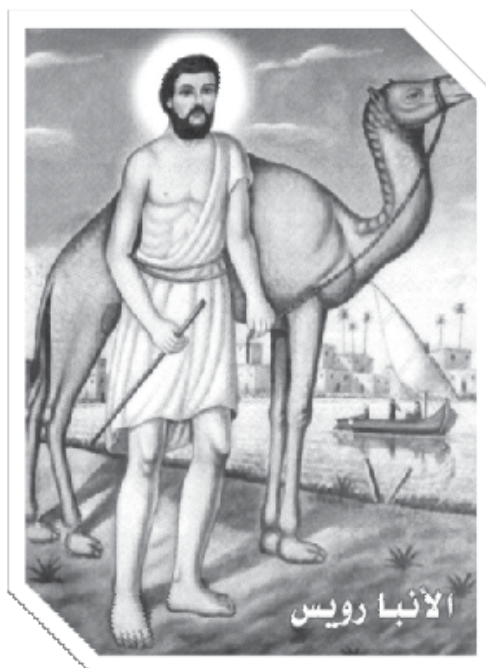
God fulfils my needs.

Lesson Objectives:

- Know:** The story of Saint Ruwais's life.
- Feel:** That God loves us and fulfils our needs.
- Practice:** How to be thankful and how to give back to God for all He has given me.

Memory Verse:

"What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward me?"
(Psalms 116:12)



Lesson Content

This story is in the form of a puppet show, where the main character is a camel named Ruwais.

Teacher: You all know that today we are waiting for an important guest. He is going to tell us about his friend. As soon as he knew our story was going to be about him, he wanted to come for himself to tell us the story...please come in Ruwais, hello how are you? We are so happy to have you with us today. I am so excited to talk to you and find out more about your friend. I found out that you were very close to him and you're so lucky that you were able to meet him and speak to him. I have a question . . . Was your friend called Ruwais or Freig? Isn't Ruwais your name?

Camel: I just wanted to let you all know that I am so happy to be with you today. I am always happy when I speak to people about my friend Anba Freig.

Teacher: So you said his name was Freig, what exactly was his name?

Camel: I will tell you the story from the beginning because I want you all to notice two important things. Open your ears and get ready to listen. The first thing I will show you is how much my friend loved God. The second thing I will show you is how God looks after each one of us and cares for everyone.

Teacher: I am so eager to hear your story and learn from it.

Camel: My friend was from a very poor family. His dad was a farmer and when he was born, his parents named him Freig. When he grew older, he started to help his dad in the fields. Not only that, after he finished working with his dad, he used to take me with him to go out and sell salt.

Teacher: Wow, so he had two jobs. he was a very hard worker.

Camel: Yes he did work very hard. I was so happy when I was with him and he really liked me. I used to play with him a lot and he named me Ruwais. He always used to wake up in the middle of the night to pray and I felt that God sent me to him so I can help him. Because he was so nice, everyone in the village loved him.

Teacher: I can really see from what you've just said, that Anba Freig loved God a lot as he prayed and helped his dad. I can also see that God was looking out for him as he sent you to help him. Please continue Ruwais, this story is lovely.

Camel: When my friend Freig was 20 years old, he took me and we travelled to another town which was a bit far from home. Throughout the journey I was so happy because I was walking with him. During the journey, Anba Freig would sometimes pray and sometimes sing praises. Halfway through the journey, we got a bit tired and so rested. Freig went to sleep and when he woke up he told me about the dream he had.

Teacher: This sounds nice, what happened in the dream? Who else wants to hear what happened in the dream?

Camel: He saw two men with a bright light surrounding them. They took Freig to Heaven with them. There he saw a beautiful Church and many people standing praying. He heard a voice telling him to come and have communion. He entered and had communion with the two men. Then they returned him to the place where they took him from. After he woke up from the dream, we continued our journey. He changed his name from Freig to Ruwais.

Teacher: So now I understand that his birth name was Freig and then later on he changed his name to Ruwais, like your name.

Camel: Yes I became so happy that we shared the same name and while we walked, he would talk about God to anyone we met. People also liked to listen to him.

Teacher: So was he a priest?

Camel: No he was just an ordinary man. But he loved God from the bottom of his heart and wanted everyone else to know about God and earn a place in Heaven.

Teacher: Your friend was truly amazing. I again can see his love for God and this is clear from how he loved talking

to people about God. I can also see how God cared for him by allowing him to see amazing dreams about Heaven. Please continue Ruwais.

Camel: My friend also loved to fast a lot. He also loved Holy Communion. Because other people loved him, they would try and help him by offering him money and clothes. However, he preferred to live a simple life so would not take any of the valuable things people offered him. He also liked to work for his own living and wore very simple clothes. Just like John the Baptist did. When he took Holy Communion, he felt not worthy to be taking the Body and Blood of Jesus. He always felt he should be pure inside just like St Mary. God also allowed him to perform miracles and see angels around him when a child was being baptised. Although he was poor himself, he loved working to help other poor people.

Teacher: Wow, I love learning about the amazing actions of your friend Ruwais. From what you have just said, we can see Ruwais's love to God through fasting and prayer and wanting to help the poor and also his love for the mass. We also see how God looked out for him by allowing him to see angels.

Camel: Note just angels, Jesus himself appeared to Ruwais several times.

Teacher: Jesus himself!?

Camel: Yes this encouraged him to love God and help the poor even more. Although he performed many miracles, he got very ill and was still thanking God and praying for the sick people, without asking God to heal him. Before he passed away, he asked St Mary to be beside him and one of his disciples said that God heard him and he saw St Mary beside him. After he passed away, his body has buried in a Church next to St Mary's Church.

Teacher: I loved the story of Anba Ruwais and saw how God was with him for his whole life. What was very beautiful was that God sent St Mary to be with him while he was sick and that he saw many saints and angels and lovely dreams. I can see that God does not leave anyone who loves Him. God also makes those who work for Him very happy. May the blessings of St Ruwais be with us all.

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear Our God, we thank you from all our hearts for your love and care for us. Even without asking, you love and care for us as you love humanity and created every good thing. Please teach us how to trust you and thank you for everything and to be happy as you are always with us. Amen.



Generosity

Abraham Welcomes the Angels

Bible References: Genesis 18:1-15

Lesson Aim:

To help those in need.

Lesson Objectives:

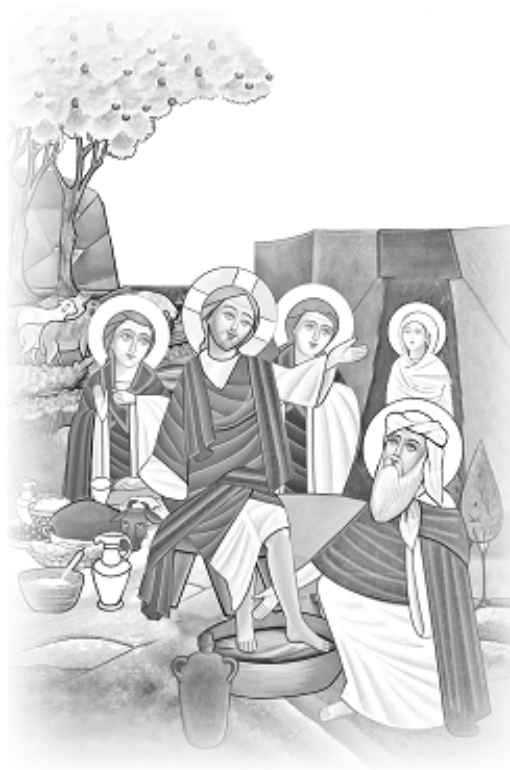
Know: God is happy when we give to others.

Feel: The strength God gives to people who help others.

Practice: How to welcome others.

Memory Verse:

"Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels..."
(Hebrews 13:2)



Lesson Content

There was once a man called Abraham who lived in a tent. He always prayed to God and was a good man. God also loved him a lot. One day when he was sitting inside his tent, he saw three men approaching him. He rose up quickly and went to welcome them and bowed to them. Abraham brought them water to wash their feet. He made them sit under a tree in the shade as it was very hot and gave them some bread to eat before preparing a meal for them.

Abraham went to his wife Sarah and asked her to make some bread, meat, milk and butter for his guests to eat. After Sarah prepared the meal, Abraham gave them the food to eat and was happy to welcome his guests. After they ate, they asked about Sarah. Abraham told them that she was in the tent. The guests came to give good news to Abraham and Sarah. The good news was that Sarah was going to have a baby and she would call him Isaac. Sarah heard this from inside the tent and was so happy. She was pleased to know that she would have a son as both she and Abraham were old and did not have any children.

They thanked God a lot for his gift. The three men were in fact Jesus and two angels. They came especially to tell Sarah and Abraham the good news. They also came to tell Abraham that God is not happy with the people in Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham loved to welcome guests and that's why God rewarded him with the visit from Jesus and the angels. God appeared to him in the form of a man.

How do you think we can welcome our guests? (Avoid discussions on welcoming strangers, discuss how we can welcome those we know and how well we can treat them).

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear God, You provide us with everything and shine the sun on all Your creation. Help me to be kind to others and honour You always. Help me to hear Your voice through others and show them Your image through me. Cover us with Your love and help us to be kind to one another. Amen.



The Cross is a Sign of God's Love

The Cross is a Sign of Blessing

Bible References: Genesis 48:8-20

Lesson Aim:

To understand that the Cross is a sign of blessing and remember Jacob's blessing of Joseph's sons.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: The story of the discovery of the Cross.

Feel: That the Cross is the reason for blessings in our lives.

Practice: To ask for the blessings of the Cross in our lives.

Memory Verse:

"The blessing of the Lord makes one rich, And He adds no sorrow with it."

(Proverbs 10:22)



Lesson Content

What happened to the Cross after Jesus rose from the dead? After Jesus died and rose from the dead, some Jews hid the crosses of Jesus and the two thieves crucified with Him as well as the tomb of Jesus. They wanted to hide any presence of the Cross because of the miracles that were happening next to the tomb.

After many years, a king named Constantine was going into a big war. The night before, he saw a vision of the Cross in the sky with the following written words; "with this sign you will conquer". King Constantine's mother, Queen Helena was a Christian and so King Constantine knew about Christianity, but he was not a believer. King Constantine placed the sign of the cross on his soldiers' flags. They entered the war and defeated their enemies.

After the war, Queen Helena decided to visit Jerusalem to receive a blessing from The Holy Land, close to the mountain of Golgotha. She ordered for the cross of Jesus to be found and three wooden crosses were found. They wanted to know which of the three crosses belonged to Jesus and St Cyril, the Pope of Jerusalem at the time, decided to test the power of the crosses to be able to identify which belonged to Jesus. To do so, a dead man was brought forward and was placed on each of the three crosses. He was placed onto the first cross and nothing happened. He was then placed onto the second cross and again nothing happened. He was finally placed on the third and final cross and rose from the dead. Through this, they knew which cross indeed was the cross that belonged to Jesus Christ and they glorified God.

Application



Exercise

To ask the children to do the sign of the cross before doing anything (before food, before playing, before studying, before sleeping, when waking up).



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Thank You God for loving me and looking after my family. You listen to me when I speak to You. Thank You for being with me when I am at school. Thank You for always looking after me. Amen.

Weeks 3-4 of September:

Two weeks kept free for
Coptic Festival revision and exam.



Our Loving God

The man who was Born Blind

Bible References: John 9:1-7

Lesson Aim:

To know that God's love is great.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: Jesus has power over creation.

Feel: Thankful for being able to see.

Practice: How to be aware of those in need and help them.

Memory Verse:

"Open my eyes, that I may see Wondrous things from Your law."
(Psalms 119:18)



Lesson Content

Jesus was passing by and saw a man who was blind from birth. At this time, people thought bad things happened to those who sinned. They thought this man was born blind as a punishment for his parents. This is why the disciples asked Jesus "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents that he was born blind?"

Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him." Jesus approached the blind man and did a miracle. No one saw anything like this before. Jesus spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay.

Everyone was so surprised at what Jesus had done. Jesus told the blind man to go and wash in the pool of Siloam (which is translated Sent). Do you think the man listened to Jesus and went to wash his eyes? He did indeed listen and went to wash his eyes. What do you think happened to the man? After all those years of living in darkness, he was able to see. He could see the people, trees and everything around him. How do you think the blind man felt?

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

But You, O God the Lord, Deal with me for Your name's sake. Help me, O Lord my God! Oh, save me according to Your mercy. (Psalms 109:21,26)



Angels of Heaven

The Prophet Daniel

Bible References: Daniel 6

Lesson Aim:

To feel the love and care of God.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: That God sends His angels to protect us during difficult times.

Feel: The importance of angels in our lives.

Practice: To thank God in our prayers for the presence of angels around us.

Memory Verse:

"The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him, And delivers them."
(Psalms 34:7)



Lesson Content

A long time ago there lived a community known as the nation of Israel. They were the only nation in the whole world who worshipped God. At that time, another nation called Babylon fought with the nation of Israel. Babylon defeated Israel and took the Israelites to work in their land.

The king of Babylon was called Darius and Daniel was one of the captured Israelites who were working in Babylon. Daniel was very close to God and king Darius loved Daniel because of his wisdom which, of course, was given to him by God. As a result of his love for Daniel, the king appointed him as a satrap of the kingdom and because of this, the other satraps and governors tried to find charges against Daniel.

Indeed, one of the governors of Babylon agreed with one of the other satraps to go to the king and ask him to issue a decree stating that anyone requesting anything from any god or other leaders except for king Darius, will be put to death by throwing them into the lion's den. The king liked this idea and issued the decree, signed with the king's stamp which meant that he would not be able to go back on his word. He made sure everyone in the city knew about the new law including Daniel. Daniel knew this decree was issued as a result of the jealousy others had towards him because he always prayed to God for his people to return home.

Daniel did not obey the new rule and opened his window to pray to God. The governor saw him and went to the king to let him know what Daniel was doing. He told the king that Daniel did not care about the new decree and continued to pray to God. When the king heard this news he was deeply saddened because he loved Daniel. However, he kept his word and ordered his soldiers to capture Daniel and throw him into the lion's den.

Daniel knew the lions were very hungry, so hungry that they would eat anyone thrown into the den before they even reached the floor. The king and people of Babylon gathered to witness the consequences Daniel would face. With great sadness, the king ordered that Daniel be thrown into the den. As soon as Daniel fell into the den, he closed his eyes and prayed deeply to God and trusted that God would save him. He did not feel any movement around him and so opened his eyes to find the lions sitting around him like cats.

Daniel thanked God for saving him. The next morning, king Darius went to the den to see what happened to Daniel. He called out to Daniel asking him if he was okay and if his God had saved him from the mouths of the lions. Daniel answered saying "O king, live forever! My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you." (Daniel 6:21-22). The king was so pleased and ordered the guards to remove Daniel from the den. And the king commanded that the men who had accused Daniel be thrown into the lion's den. The king made a new decree stating that Daniel's God is the living God and His kingdom is forever because he delivers and works wonders. The entire kingdom knew of the power of Daniel's God and that He saves His children from any distress and sends His angels to strengthen them and give them joy.

Application



Comprehension Questions

- Daniel was living during the reign of the king of Babylon. What was the name of the king?
- Why was Daniel successful in his work in the palace of Darius the king?
- What was the decision that the king took? Who was the reason for that?
- What happened to Daniel as soon as he went down to the lions' den?
- What are the things that make us afraid in our lives and how can we overcome it?



Exercise

- The children to thank the Lord Jesus during their prayer as He asks His angels to protect us.
- To ask for the intercession of the guardian angel during their prayer.



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Thank You God for loving me and sending Your angels to protect us in our daily lives. Please help me not to be afraid from anything and to have faith just as Daniel did. Whatever happens in my life, I will trust that You are with me and Your angels are protecting me. Amen.



God Provides the Needs of My Family

The Widow and the Two Mites

Bible References: Mark 12:41-44, Luke 21:1-4

Lesson Aim:

God provides the needs of my family. To give when I am in need.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: Everything we give is provided to us from God.

Feel: A desire to give when also in need.

Practice: How to happily give to others.

Memory Verse:

"...for God loves a cheerful giver."
(2 Corinthians 9:7)



Lesson Content

Today, our donation box, Donny will be telling us a story. "Hello all, how are you doing? Today I want to tell you about a special day a long time ago, when Jesus was still on earth. My friends, the other donation boxes and I were sitting in the Temple and every day people would come to place their donations, which they wanted to offer.

We used to see many different people, some used to put their donations in secret and were happy doing so as they were offering something for God in return for all He gives us. Others would put their donations but look very upset as if they were being forced to do so. Others put their donations, but before doing so would make sure there were people around who can see what they are doing. Others would come to place their donations but then change their mind and turn away.

However the day I want to speak to you about was a very beautiful day. I was in the Temple and many people came to place money and gold and silver. At the end of the line, there was an old widow who had two mites (a mite is a coin of small value). She came close to me and placed her donation with so much love, faith and happiness.

I felt something different and felt that she was shy but very happy. I too was very happy. Jesus was standing in the Temple at that time and when He saw the widow and her offering, He said to His disciples "This is my daughter who has made me happy. Her offering is the greatest offering and more valuable than any other offering". The disciples were confused, but Jesus said to them "This widow was in need of the money she donated, but she offered it happily and has faith that God will fulfil her needs."

We need to learn from her, we can give some of our pocket money, which God originally gave to us and when we give, we need to do so with love, faith and happiness".

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear God, thank you for everything new we learn and for loving us and looking after us. Help us to donate so that we can make you happy, just as the widow did. Teach us to give to you the best we have with love and joy and to trust that you will give us more than we ask in return. Amen.



I am Trustworthy

Parable of the Talents. Joseph the Righteous

Bible References: Matthew 25:14-30

Lesson Aim:

The importance of righteousness in our social lives.

Lesson Objectives:

Know: To know that being righteous is required by God.

Feel: How being righteous makes God happy.

Practice: How to be righteous.

Memory Verse:

"Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life."
(Revelation 2:10)



Lesson Content

Today's story is about a parable that was taught by Jesus. Do you know what the word parable means? A parable is a short story that might have happened and might not have. It helps us understand a message from God.

Today's parable is called the Parable of the Talents. A talent is a sum (weight) of money placed in a sack. The parable goes as follows; There was once a rich man who decided to travel and gave his servants some of his talents. He chose three servants and gave the first five talents. He gave two talents to the second servant and one to the third servant as he knew he was not as righteous or hard working as the others.

After returning from his travels, the rich man called his three servants and asked them for the talents he had given them.

The first servant told him, "you gave me five talents and I traded with them and made another five talents". The man was very happy with the integrity of his servant and said to him "you were faithful, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord." The second servant came and told the man "you gave me two talents and I traded with them and I have made another two talents." The rich man was happy with him and replied to him with the same thing he had told the first servant.

The third servant came and the rich man asked him about the talent he had given him. The servant's reply was not wise. He said "I know you are a hard man and I was afraid and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours." The servant was not wise and even blamed the rich man for his own actions. The rich man was upset with him and asked for his talent to be given to the first servant and asked the servant to leave.

God loves a faithful person and gives us more depending on our faithfulness. Just like Joseph, when he was faithful in Potiphar's house and in prison. God allowed him to be a minister over Egypt. Do you know the story of Joseph? (describe the story of Joseph when he was in Potiphar's house).

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear God, thank you for looking after me and supporting me. Thank you for preparing a place for me to be with you in heaven. Help me to be faithful to you always. Amen.



A miracle by St Mary

St Mary melts steel

Book References:

- The Synaxarion, 26 Epep

Lesson Aim:

Faith through the intercession of the Saints.

Lesson Objectives:

- Know:** The story of St Mary melting steel.
- Feel:** The importance of the presence of Saints.
- Practice:** How to ask for the intercession of the Saints at all times.

Memory Verse:

"Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfilment of those things which were told her from the Lord."
(Luke 1:45)



Lesson Content

Before we start, let's talk about things that scare us. Are you scared of anything? Today I am very happy because I discovered that I am never alone. There is Someone who knows how I feel and hears me, even when I am alone, although I cannot see Him.

Today's lesson is about one of the disciples, his name was Matthew. Judas, was another disciple who betrayed Jesus and God chose Matthew to take the place of Judas. Matthew started to preach in a place far away, just as the other disciples did. The people in this place worshipped idols and Matthew was preaching about Jesus and Matthew did many miracles. Many people in the city believed in Jesus, but this made the governor very angry with Matthew and so arrested him and put him in prison with some other people who believed. They were tied with chains of steel and no one could break them or undo the chains as they were very strong. However, Matthew learnt from Jesus that he was never alone and even in the hardest times, there is Someone who hears him. Matthew stood and prayed asking Jesus to save him.

At that time, St Mary was in Jerusalem and through the Holy Spirit, she knew what was happening to Matthew. He told her to save Matthew from prison. God heard Matthew's prayers and sent St Mary to help him. St Mary arrived to the city where Matthew was imprisoned and stood in front of the prison. How would she enter the prison which was guarded with big metal doors?

Do you know what happened? St Mary prayed for the steel to melt. Melting steel through prayer is a miracle. Indeed, God listened to St Mary's prayers as she is His mother and He listens to everything she requests. What happened was bigger than was St Mary asked for. Note only did the steel of the prison or the chains the prisoners were tied with melt, but all the steel in the entire city melted. Even the swords of the guards melted. Even the steel inside the shops and homes in the city melted.

The prisoners happily left the prison and the guards ran to the governor telling him what had happened. The governor became so angry and ordered for the prisoners who escaped to be beheaded with a sword. However, the guard told him that his sword had melted and so did not know how fulfil the request of the governor. Many people in the city complained that the steel had melted in their homes and the governor was astonished and asked how this happened. The guard told him about St Mary and what she did so the governor asked to meet her. St Mary went to meet the governor and he told her to explain what happened and how the steel in the city had melted. She told him that Our Lord Jesus Christ is able to do everything and looks after His children. When Matthew prayed, God sent St Mary to save him.

The governor had a son who was ill and this made the governor very sad. Every father wants to see their son well. He presented his son to St Mary and she healed him. The governor was so pleased and believed in Jesus. Many people in the city also believed and they asked St Mary to return the steel back to how it was. She did.

This makes us sure that we are never alone or forgotten. God looks after us and heard us and sends the Saints to help us.

The saints are loved by God and every one of us can choose a saint to be their friend, in particular St Mary. God especially listens to intercessions through her. St Mary loves her children and we ask for her intercessions every day. We pray "Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, Saint Mary. (Hiten ni presvia)" because we know the power of her prayers.

At all times, we should ask God for His help and we should ask for the saints to intercede for us. When you are angry or when you are happy, we should always remember that God is with us and hears our prayers just as He heard the prayers of Matthew.

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear God, thank you for your love for us. Thank you for giving us a joyful life with you that will never end. Through the intercessions of St Mary, help us just as you helped Matthew. Amen.



Praying and asking from God

War of the Amalekites

Bible References: Exodus 17:8-16

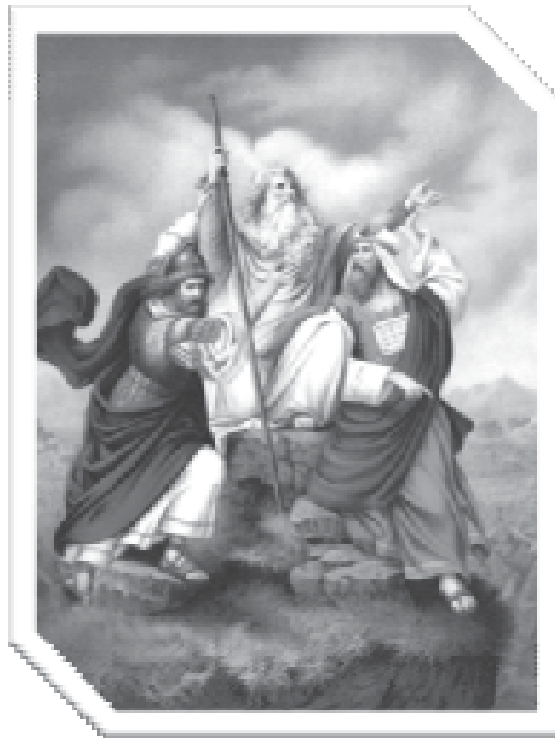
Lesson Aim:
Pray for everything.

Lesson Objectives:

- Know:** The importance of prayer in our lives.
- Feel:** God fulfils all our needs.
- Practice:** How to pray every morning and night.

Memory Verse:

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you."
(Matthew 7:7)



Lesson Content

Moses: Joshua...Joshua

Joshua: Yes, Moses, Prophet of God.

Moses: We have arrived at Rephidim. Make sure everyone is here and choose some strong men.

Joshua: Everyone is here, but why do you want me to choose some strong men.

Moses: Because the Amalekites are strong and they are coming to fight us. We have to choose some strong men to prepare for tomorrow. I will go to the top of the hill and I will have the rod of God in my hand.

Narrator: Indeed, Joshua did what Moses asked him to do, so that they could fight the Amalekites. But Moses took Aaron and Hur and went to the top of the hill.

(Moses, Aaron and Hur are now at the top of the hill.)

Aaron: Finally we have arrived, I am so tired of walking.

Hur: Why has Moses brought us to the top of this hill?

Aaron: I don't know, let's ask him. Moses, the people below are fighting the Amalekites, so why are we here?

Moses: We are here to do something very important.

Hur: What could be more important than being with our people while they are fighting the Amalekites.

Moses: To pray for them so that they can defeat the Amalekites in the war.

Aaron: This is very important. Let's stand to pray so that God can be with our people.

Narrator: Indeed, Moses lifted his arms to pray and while he was lifting his arms, the people of Israel were defeating the Amalekites. When Moses lowered his arms and stopped praying, the Amalekites were defeating the people of Israel. Moses got tired and his arms started to hurt and he did not know what to do. Aaron and Hur had a good idea.

Aaron: Hur, let's bring a rock for Moses to sit on.

Narrator: Aaron and Hur quickly brought a rock for Moses to sit on. Moses sat on the rock whilst lifting his arms. Aaron and Hur supported Moses' arms, one on one side and the other on the other side. His hands were steady until the sun went down. So Joshua and the people of Israel defeated the Amalekites. This was all a result of the prayer that Moses had prayed on the hill.

Moses: Thank you God for being with us and helping us to defeat the Amalekites. I will write what happened as a memorial in the book. I will also build an altar to remember what happened.

Narrator: After the story of Moses, the Prophet of God and the war with the Amalekites, and his defeat through prayer, we all must remember to pray while lifting our arms.

Application



Prayer

Meditate on the following prayer, live it, and pray it at the level of the children.

Dear God, thank you for your love for us and for looking after us. Help us to always speak to you through prayer at all times in our lives, just as you helped Moses when he prayed to you. Amen.