



CATEGORY I INTRODUCTION

Our Wonderful World GRADE 1

ORTHODOX SYRIAN
SUNDAY SCHOOL
ASSOCIATION

Diocese of UK, Europe and Africa



ORTHODOX SYRIAN
SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION
OF THE EAST



Our Wonderful World
Grade 1

Category
Introduction

2024

OSSAE : DIOCESE OF UK, EUROPE & AFRICA

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON SERIES - 1

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FOREWORD



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FOREWORD

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

+ Metropolitan Abraham Stephanos

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Glory to the Triune God!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Maker of Heaven and Earth

God made everything! He made all the things we can see and even the things we can't see. And guess what? He made us extra special too!

Vocabulary Words

Create To make something.

Firmament Another word for Heaven, but also used for the sky and everything above it, like the Sun, the Moon, and the stars.

Creatures Living beings, and can include animals, bugs, and other organisms that are alive

Sanctified to make something special and holy

Eternal Lasting forever and ever



Creation of light

God **created** everything in the world, even things we can't see.

On the first day, God said, "Let there be light!" and there was light. God made it bright during the day and dark at night. He saw that it was good. This was the first day.

On the second day, God said, "Let there be a **firmament** in the midst of the water". He made a big space in the middle of the water. It was called Heaven, and God saw that it was good.

On the third day, God gathered all the water in one place and made the land appear. The land is called earth, and the water is called seas. God saw that it was good. Then God made all different kinds

of plants, trees, and grass to grow on the land. God saw that it was good.



Creation of land, water and plants

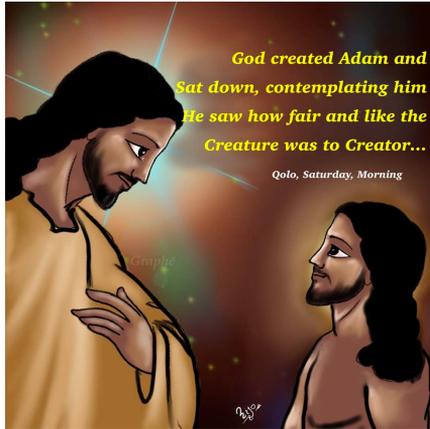
On the fourth day, God made the sun, moon, and stars appear in the sky. They helped us tell the difference between day and night. God made all this from nothing! God saw that it was all good.

On the fifth day, God said, "I want to see fish and other **creatures** swimming in the ocean and birds flying in the sky!" And just like that, the ocean was filled with fish and other sea animals, and birds were soaring in the sky. God saw that it was good, and he blessed them.

On the sixth day, God talked and said, "Let the earth make different kinds of **creatures**. There were big animals like lions, tigers, and bears. There were also smaller animals, like rabbits, sheep, and cows. God also made all kinds of ani-

mals, from tiny ants to big zebras, on the land. God looked and saw that it was good, and he blessed them.

Then God said, "Let us make man in Our **image**, according to Our **likeness**". God **created** man and woman and blessed them.



Do you know what "image" means? Image is another word for picture. So God made us, and we are like a picture of God! God made us very special.

Remember

Look at yourself and your friend ...
You both are made in God's image.



Do you know what it means to be "like God?" It means being very loving, patient, kind, and forgiving, just like God



Creation of living beings

is. God made us to be like Him, and that means everyone can be like Him too!

Love. God loved us very much so He made us special. He created us to take care of everything He made.

Learning Outcome Check

Every person is made in the image and likeness of God!

Learning Outcome Check

God made us boys and girls and He made us in His image!

After six days, God finished making everything. He looked at everything He had made and saw it was really good. So, on the seventh day, God rested. He blessed and **sanctified** the seventh day.

Everyone no matter where we live, what we do, or how we look is special to God!

God made everything because God is



Creation of Adam

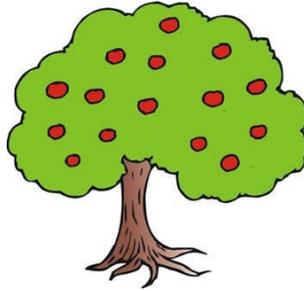
The Garden

God made a special place for Adam and Eve. It was called the Garden of Eden. In this garden, Adam and Eve could eat fruit from all the trees, except for one special tree called the **Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil**.

God told Adam and Eve not to eat from the special tree because something bad would happen. If they ate before God said it was time, their bodies would become weak and die.

God loved Adam and Eve a lot and didn't want them to be hurt. He knew they weren't ready to eat from that tree

yet and it was important for them to trust and listen to Him.



There was another special tree in the Garden called the **Tree of Life**. Adam and Eve were not allowed to eat this fruit also because they were not ready.

Think

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

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



Did you know that today we eat from both trees? God gives us knowledge through the Church. We learn more about God and how to be like God. We do this through Jesus!

We also get a special gift at Church if we pray and are ready. The Priest gives us Holy Qurbana which is the Body and Blood of Jesus. This special gift gives us **eternal** life!

Learning Outcome Check

Just like the fruit from the Tree of Life was to make Adam and Eve strong, when we receive the body and blood of Christ through Holy Qurbana, we are made strong

The Church is a paradise like the Garden of Eden and Holy Qurbana is like the fruit of the Tree of Life. In this holy place

and to receive this holy gift, we must pray and be ready to receive Jesus. God shares this with us because He loves us just like God loved Adam and Eve. God is the one who gives us life!

Remember

Each and every person, no matter where we live, what we do, or how we look - is equally precious to God!



Reflection Questions

1. How did God make us special?
2. What are the names of the two special trees in the Garden of Eden?
3. Where can you find something that reminds you of the beautiful Garden of Eden, the special fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and the powerful fruit from the Tree of Life?

God's Will Be Done

God loves us very much. We become more like Him when we listen to Him. But what happens when we don't do what God wants?

Vocabulary Words

Sin When we do something that we know is wrong or not pleasing to God.

Humility When we remember that we are not better than others and that it is God who gives us everything and makes us special.

Repent when we feel sorry for something we did wrong and want to make it right.

Forgive To let go of hard feelings like anger or sadness when we or someone else makes a mistake.

Confession Talking to our Priest about what we did wrong and asking for forgiveness from God.



The Fall of Man

The Devil was not happy. The Devil did not like that God loved Adam and Eve so much. It was jealous of the love God had for Adam and Eve.

Think

What does it mean to be jealous of someone? Can you give an example of jealousy?



The Devil made itself look like a snake and pretended to be nice. It told Eve a lie and said that if she ate the fruit from the

Tree of Knowledge, she would become really smart, just like God.

God made Adam and Eve and really loves them. So, should Eve believe and listen to God or the snake?

Sadly, Eve listened to the snake and ate the fruit. She gave some to Adam, and he ate it too. They did not listen to or obey God. Adam and Eve then got scared and tried to hide from God.

When God asked Adam what he did, Adam said that Eve gave him the fruit to eat. Instead of telling God that he did not listen, Adam blamed Eve. When God asked Eve what happened, Eve tried to blame the snake. Both Adam and Eve

tried to put the blame on someone else for their mistake.

Think

Have you not listened to someone you love? Maybe your Mom and Dad? Were you scared that you would be caught? That IS why Adam and Eve hid from God! But can anyone truly hide from God?



Think

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

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



What can we learn? God knows everything and can see everything, so when we make a mistake, God wants us to say sorry for what we did wrong. This is how we can grow closer to God.

Remember, God always loves us!

Sometimes, when someone makes us sad or hurts our feelings, we might not feel like we love them any more. But when Adam and Eve didn't listen to God, did God stop loving them? No way!

Remember

God wants us to come to Him right away and admit when we make a mistake and feel sorry about it.



God made us like him. He wants us to become like him too. Sometimes, we make mistakes, but if we say sorry and mean it, God **forgives** us. This is called **humility**, and when we are sorry, we **repent**.

But Adam and Eve made a mistake, and they did not say sorry. They blamed each other and the serpent. God still loved Adam and Eve very much, but because they made a mistake, they began to die.

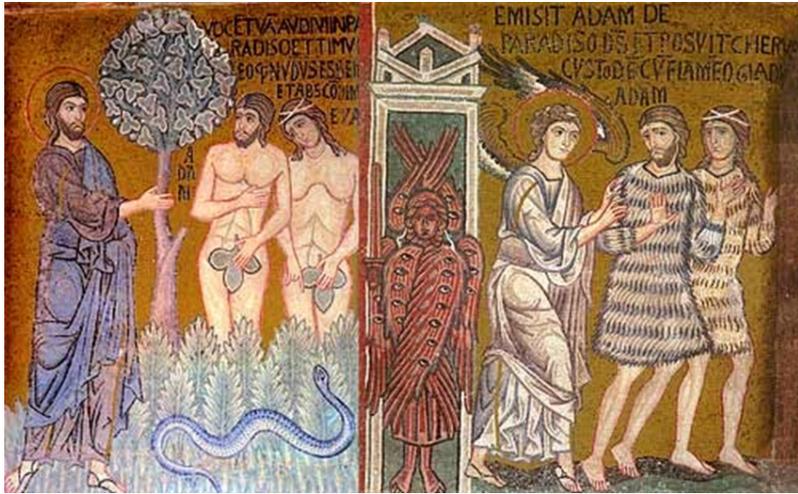
Remember

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



Adam and Eve committed a great **sin**. They did not listen to God, and the fruit made them sick. So God had to send them away from the Garden of Eden.

This was not because God was angry or wanted to punish Adam and Eve. God loved them so much! God did not want to see Adam and Eve be like this forever.



God punishes Adam and Eve for their sin and expels them from the Garden of Eden

Learning Outcome Check

When Adam and Eve sinned by eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, sin entered The world.

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

Remember, in the garden, there was another special tree called the Tree of Life? Because Adam and Eve did not have humility, if they ate that fruit, they could never get better. Just like a loving father, God knew what was best for His children and that it was important for them to leave the garden. Even though

they would die outside the garden, he still loved them and would save them.

What is Sin?

Sin is when we do something that God does not want us to do. Remember that God is always good and holy. So when we sin, we do something that Jesus would not do.

Learning Outcome Check

Sin is anything That takes us away from God. Sin caused death to enter this world.

Telling lies, being mean to your brother or sister, not listening to your parents, and not praying are all exam-

ples of sin. We are supposed to always be like God, but sometimes we make mistakes.

Learning Outcome Check

When we do something, we should always stop and think, "Would Jesus be happy with what I am going to do or say?" before we do or say it.

Sometimes we may do something that is wrong without even realising it! But don't worry; God always loves us and just wants us to say sorry and try to do better. God wants us to come back to Him if we have turned away. Turning away from God is called sin, and coming back to him is called **repentance**.

Adam and Eve made a bad choice and didn't listen to God. They felt ashamed and tried to hide from God by covering themselves with leaves. But God still loved them and didn't want them to live like that. So, God sent them out of the special place they lived in, called Eden, to help them realise their mistake and trust Him again. God wanted Adam and Eve's children, which includes all of us, to learn from their mistakes and to always trust and obey God.

God knows that we sometimes make mistakes, and that's okay because nobody is perfect. But it's important for us to always try our best to make good choices. We should try to be like God.

When we do something wrong, we need to say sorry to God and talk to our

priest in **Confession**. Confession is a special time where we admit our mistakes, promise to do better, and receive God's forgiveness.

Adam and Eve made a mistake that brought death into the world. But God loves us so much that He made a plan to save us.

God came to Earth and died on the cross. Jesus is God, and on the cross, He died and rose again. This is how we are saved!

Learning Outcome Check

God loves us so much that He died on the Cross to save us from death

Cain and Abel



Cain and Abel offering sacrifices to God

After Adam and Eve left the beautiful Garden of Eden, they had two sons named Cain and Abel. Cain was older, and he liked to grow plants in the fields. Abel was younger, and he liked to take care of animals. Abel was a shepherd.

Both Cain and Abel learned to worship God and give Him presents to show their love. Even today, we should remember that God gives us everything we have. Because we love God, we should give Him the best things we have to show Him how much we love and appreciate Him.

Cain brought some plants as a gift to God, but Abel brought the best and tastiest meat as a gift. God was happier with Abel's present because he gave it with all his love.

Did God love Abel more than Cain? No! Abel gave God the very best things he had, while Cain just gave God the leftover plants that he didn't need any more.

Cain gave his gift to God, but he didn't do it with love. He made a bad choice, and God wasn't as happy as He was with Abel. Abel made a good choice and gave

his very best to God with love. This made God happy.

Cain felt angry and jealous of Abel. God loved Cain and tried to teach him how to do better. But Cain did not listen. Instead of listening to God, Cain let his jealousy grow and became so angry with his brother that he killed him.

Cain made a bad choice and committed a great sin. Abel died at the hands of his brother, and God was so sad. Cain turned away from God.

God loves it when we are humble. When we choose to listen to God and trust Him, we become humbler and more like Him. If we believe in God and listen to Him, we become good and holy.

Do You Know?

During Holy Qurbana, we give each other the Kiss of Peace. During this time we are giving each other the peace of Christ and also asking each other for forgiveness if we did anything to hurt the other person.



Reflection Questions

1. Did God punish Adam and Eve when they ate the fruit?
2. What does it mean to sin? What does it mean to repent?
3. During Holy Qurbana, we give each other the Kiss of Peace. Why do we do this? What does it mean?

The Holy Trinity

We believe in One True God. God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Vocabulary Words

Doctrine A teaching or lesson that we learn from God through the Prophets, Saints, and Apostles. It is something that God wants us to know and understand.

Holy Trinity A special and important teaching we have in our Church. It means God is One True God, but also three persons. The first person is God the Father, the second person is God the Son (Jesus), and the third person is God the Holy Spirit.

Faith Trust or confidence in something or someone. In Church, it is our trust or confidence in God.

Mystery Something we can not explain.



One True God

Learning Outcome Check

When we say The Nicene Creed, we say we believe in The Holy Trinity when we say, "We believe in One True God, The Father Almighty... And in The One Lord Jesus Christ, The Only-Begotten Son of God...And in The one Living Spirit"

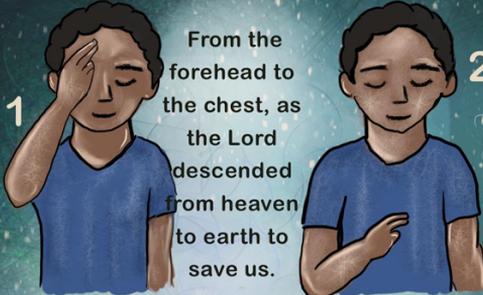
They are all God. When we say the Nicene Creed, we remind ourselves as a church that this is true!

There is only one God, but He is also three people. It is confusing, but we don't have to worry about understanding exactly how it works.

We believe this because of what the church teaches us. Any teaching of the church is called **doctrine**. We trust the church because we have **faith** as Christians. The doctrine of the Holy Trinity is a **mystery**, which means it's something that only God knows, and we do not understand how it can be true. But we believe any mystery of the church is true because God told us so!

We believe in the One True God, who is three special and unique persons - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

How to make the sign of the Cross ?



From the forehead to the chest, as the Lord descended from heaven to earth to save us.



With the right hand, place the Thumb, First and second finger together.



From Left to Right,
We who were children of the left because of adam's sin,



became children of the right, by His death on the Cross.

St Severus of Antioch



This represents the Holy Trinity:
God the Father ,
God the son,
God the Holy Spirit

Graphie

Do You Know?

There are many mysteries in the church. For example, did you know that during Holy Qurbana the priest takes bread and wine and offers it to God, who then makes it the real Body and Blood of Jesus? This is also a mystery of the Church.



A mystery of the church does not mean it is a secret or that we should not think about it. It just means we can never

explain how it is possible.

The doctrine of the Holy Trinity is a mystery. It is very important as Christians to believe in the Holy Trinity.

Learning Outcome Check

A mystery means it is something only God knows and it is not something people can fully explain or understand, but we know it is true because God Taught us it is True and that is our faith.



Holy Trinity

We pray to the Holy Trinity during Holy Qurbana. For example, the priest prays in Syriac “**Shub’ho Pabo Pbro val rooho qadisho**” which means “Glory be to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”

In response to this, we pray “**Men olam v’adamo lolam olmeen**” meaning “from the beginning for ever and ever.”

Every day, we should make the **Sign of the Cross**. We do this by touching our forehead, chest, left shoulder, and right shoulder. While doing this, we say, “In the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”

This helps us remember the Holy Trinity, which is very important to us as Christians. The Holy Trinity is God being the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It reminds us of how much God loves us!

Remember

“**Shub’ho Pabo Pbro val rooho qadisho**” means “Glory be to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”



The Holy Trinity is God, and the Holy Trinity was there from before the beginning of all time and forever.

In the Book of Genesis, the first book of the Bible, we learn how God created the world. Did you know that we also hear the Holy Trinity at work? The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are there!

The Holy Trinity was also present at the baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ. We read about this in the Bible, but we also see it in the Holy Icon.

An icon is a special type of art used in the church to teach us about God. In the Bible and in the icon, we see the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity revealed at the time of the baptism of Jesus.

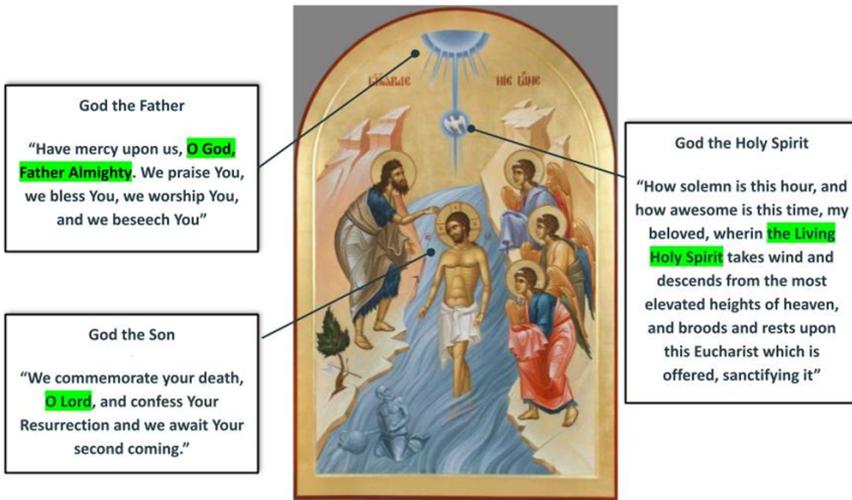
Jesus, God the Son, was baptised on the Jordan River by John the Baptist. As Jesus came out of the water, the heavens opened, and the Holy Spirit came down upon him in the form of a dove. A voice then came from heaven, saying, “You are my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” This was the voice of the Father!

The Father is God

God is our Father, and He made everything in the world. God did this because He loves us! God created us very special. We are like him, and we look like him. He wants us to be kind and loving, just like him.

The Son is God

The One Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is fully God because He comes from the Father, and He is fully man because He was born to St. Mary. Jesus is equal and the same as the Father and the Holy Spirit.



The icon of baptism of Jesus Christ



The “Trisagion” is a special prayer we say every day. We pray, “Holy art Thou, O God!” and at the end, we say, “Crucified for us, have mercy on us!” In this

prayer, we say Jesus is God!

The Holy Spirit is God

The One Living Holy Spirit is God. He is fully God because He comes from the Father. He is equal to the Father and the Son.

The Holy Spirit is our special helper and is equal to the Father and Jesus. During Pentecost, we learn a lot about the Holy Spirit and how He is our guide. He helps us become more like God.

We read about the Holy Spirit helping people in the Old and New Testaments. The Holy Spirit talks to important people, like prophets, apostles, and saints, so they can teach us about God.

Remember

The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit exist and always will exist. There was no time when there was no Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.



Reflection Questions

1. Can we explain the Mystery of the Holy Trinity?
2. Who do we remember when we make the Sign of the Cross?
3. Have you heard the Nicene Creed?

Our Father

What can we learn about love and saying sorry from the story of the Prodigal Son? This story teaches us that God loves us very much!

Vocabulary Words

Parable Stories that Jesus Christ used to help teach about God.

Prodigal Being wasteful with money or resources. It refers to someone who spends more money than they have and makes bad choices.

Humility To remember that we are not better than others and that it is God who gives us everything and makes us special.

Unconditional Love Loving someone no matter what happens.



Do your parents or teachers ever tell you stories to help you learn something really important? Jesus Christ did the same thing! He liked to tell stories called **parables**. When Jesus taught lessons as stories, it helped people understand them better.

One of the **parables** Jesus Christ taught was the story of the **Prodigal** Son. This **parable** is about a man who had two sons. The younger son decided that he wanted to go live on his own and have fun. But the older brother wanted to stay home and help their family. The father felt sad that the younger one wanted to leave, but he still let him go.

The son left his home and started living by himself. However, he spent all his

money on silly things and ended up very poor. He had no more money and could not buy food. He is the **prodigal** son because he spent more than what he had on bad things. He felt sad and sorry for his actions, and he was so hungry that he wanted to eat the food that the pigs had! So he decided to go back to his father and say sorry. He learned **humility**.

Think

Can you think of any other parable in the Bible?



Was the father angry when his son came home? No! The father was so happy to see him that he ran to the son



Parable of the prodigal son

and kissed him!

The father told everyone to have a big party for the prodigal son. He had come back home! But the older brother was not happy. He did not understand why everyone was happy because the younger brother had left the family. He was also upset because he stayed in the house and helped.

The older brother was upset because his younger brother wasted all his money, but then was given a party! He asked the father why he let the younger brother come back home. The father explained that he was really scared because he thought the younger brother was gone forever. He was so happy and relieved that the younger brother came back safe. The father said it's more important to

celebrate that the younger brother came back rather than punish him for making a mistake. The father was proud that the younger brother realised he was wrong for being selfish and irresponsible and still chose to come home and say sorry. This shows that the father's love is always there, no matter what. This is called **unconditional love** and means that the father loves his son no matter what!

Remember

Always remember! God, our Father, loves you!



Who is the father in the parable? The father is God! God loves us no matter

what! We should always remember, like the prodigal son, to be humble and return to God when we make a mistake. God will always love us, but He is so happy when we come back to Him!

Jesus told this parable to teach us that God loves us no matter what we do wrong. Just like the father in the story was so happy to see his young son after he made mistakes, our Father in Heaven is always happy when we repent and come back to God. It doesn't matter if our sin is big or small. If we are sorry and mean it, God will forgive us. He will always accept us and love us if we are honest and really mean what we say. We should also be like this with the people

in our lives. God's love is always there for us, no matter what!

God is our loving Father who always takes care of us, helps us, and forgives us when we make mistakes. Jesus taught us a special prayer (**St. Matthew 6: 9-13**) that we say every day called the **Lord's Prayer** or the **Our Father Prayer**. This prayer is important because it shows how much God loves us, just like a dad who loves his kids a lot.

Learning Outcome Check

God is a Father to everyone and we are His children. He loves all of us!

Lord's Prayer

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

Reflection Questions

1. In the Icon of the Parable of the Prodigal Son, where does the son show humility?
2. Does God love us the way the father loved his son?
3. When we say the Lord's Prayer, who do we call our Father?

God's Will Be Done

Our Church is the House of God. We can show God we love Him by singing, praying, and listening.

Vocabulary Words

Holy Something or someone that is very special to God. It is a word we use to describe things that are set apart and sacred.

Communion A word used to describe being very close to God. In the Orthodox Church, we have a special gift called "Holy Communion" where we eat the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

Reverence Showing and treating something or someone with deep respect.



Every day we wake up and get ready. During the school year, we eat breakfast, get our backpack, and head to school. Sundays are different. On Sunday, we wake up to go to a special place called church!

We go to church to be with God and show Him we love Him. God has given us so many things, and going to church is a way to say thank you. Even though God is everywhere, the church is a special place where we can feel closer to Him.

The church is God's house. Just like our house is special, God's house is too. It's a **holy** place where we can go to be close to God.

Remember

The Church is a **holy** place. This why we don't run, eat food or play games inside the Church



Do you know about Moses? One day, Moses saw a bush that was on fire, but it didn't burn up! It was very special because God was there. God spoke to Moses and told him to take off his shoes because the ground where he stood was very holy, which means it was like a special place.

This is what we do when we go inside the church! We need to take off our shoes before entering the church because



Burning bush and Moses, which indicates the virgin birth of Jesus Christ.

it is a special and holy place.

When we go inside the church, we say a special prayer: *“In reverence, will I enter Thy house, and offer my vows to Thee”*

This prayer is from **Psalm 5:7** and helps us get ready. The prayer helps our heart, our soul, and our body get closer to God. We talk to God when we pray, and during Holy Qurbana, we come even closer to God. When we receive Holy Communion, we have God inside us!

The Holy Qurbana is special, and we should pay attention and participate. Even if we don't know how to read, we can still say “Amen”, “Barekmor”, and

”Kurielaison”.

Remember

Barekmor *Bless me, O Lord!*

Amin *So be it!*

Kurielaison *Lord, have mercy!*



We can also sit and stand nicely when we're supposed to. This helps us listen to the priest and understand what's happening. We can also make the sign of the cross.

When we make the sign of the cross, we use three fingers on our right hand to

represent the **Holy Trinity**: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Learning Outcome Check

When we make the Sign of the Cross, we remember the Holy Trinity [Father, Son and Holy Spirit]



To make the sign of the cross, we use our hands to draw a cross on our body. It is a special way to talk to God and show that we believe in Him. We make the Sign of the Cross in **reverence** for God.

Showing reverence means treating something with deep respect. It's important for us to make the Sign of the Cross when we go inside the church, walk in front of the special ta-

ble called an altar, and when the curtain opens during the church service.



Learning Outcome Check

Show your teacher how to make the Sign of the Cross and explain why we make the Sign of the Cross over our whole body.

Even when we are outside of church, we should make the sign of the cross whenever we see a cross. We may have the cross at home, in our books and Bible, or even outside on some buildings. We should also make the sign of the cross when we pass by a church or if someone is sick or in need of our prayers. We can also carry a cross on a necklace or prayer rope.

We see the cross in church in many places. One important place we see the cross is on the Holy Altar. Whenever we see the cross, we can make the sign of the cross, as it connects us with God.

We also make the Sign of the Cross during Holy Qurbana. When the curtain opens and we see the Holy Altar, we should make the Sign of the Cross. We also make the sign of the cross when we hear the bells ring and when the priest talks about the Holy Trinity. Every time we hear the word "cross" in songs or prayers, we also make the sign of the cross.

Learning Outcome Check

We see the Holy Cross in many places. We see the Cross on the altar, in our prayer books, around our neck, etc. Where else do you see a Cross?

This may seem like a lot of times, but we do this as Christians because the cross is very special and important to us!

It is very special when we are in church during the Holy Qurbana. The priest celebrates at the Holy Altar with the whole Church - the angels, those who have died and gone to God, and the saints! When we believe in God and listen to Him, we can see things that others might not see. The church is a special place where we are with God, especially during Holy

Qurbana. This is why we make the sign of the cross so many times.

Learning Outcome Check

We make the sign of The Cross whenever? we Talk about The Holy Trinity. For example, when Achen says Shubho labo Iabro walrooho qadisho (Glory to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit) and whenever we say Sleeba (Cross).

A very important moment during Holy Qurbana is when the priest gives us the body and blood of Jesus. If we are ready, we can receive this most special gift. We hold our hands together to receive, and after the priest gives us the Holy Communion, we make the Sign of the Cross.

It's important to be respectful in the church even after the service is done. We shouldn't yell, run, or play rough. Instead, we quietly leave the church and put our shoes back on before going about the rest of our day.

We show our love for God by spending time in His Holy House. We join the Holy Qurbana and thank Him for everything He does for us!

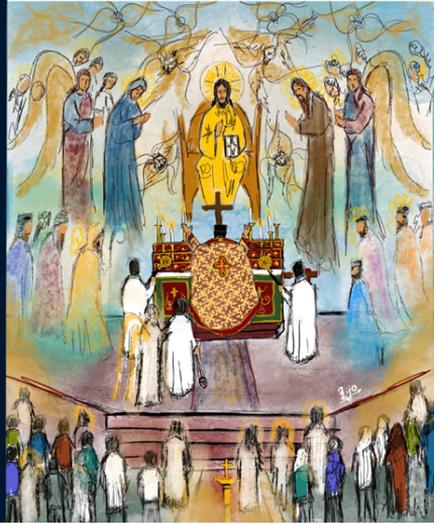
Think

Where in the Church do you see the Holy Cross?

What we see



What actually happens



Reflection Questions

1. Why is the Church a holy place?
2. How do you make the Sign of the Cross?
3. Do you make the Sign of the Cross only in Church?

Christ is Born!

Jesus is God and was born of St. Mary to become man.

Vocabulary Words

Nativity Nativity means birth and usually we mean the Nativity of Jesus Christ. Also known as 'Yeldho' or 'Christmas', the Nativity of Jesus is when He became a man.

Magi Kings from the East who followed the star to find baby Jesus



Birth of Jesus Christ

Let's think about our favourite birthday. What made it great? Did you have cake and presents? Were your friends and family with you? In this lesson, we will learn about the most wonderful birthday - the day when Jesus was born!

St. Joseph and St. Mary lived in

Nazareth. But they had to go to Bethlehem because the ruler said they must. This was hard because Mary was going to have a baby, and Bethlehem was very far away. Just think about walking for a lot of days! But Mary and Joseph were brave and started their trip to Bethle-

hem. Mary rode on a donkey, while Joseph walked alongside her to get to Bethlehem.

world, had his first bed made of straw.

Pause

Have you gone on a trip and stayed in a hotel? Even though Joseph looked for a place to stay he could not find one, so Mary and Joseph stayed at a small space meant for animals to take care of Jesus.



The Birth of Christ

After a long trip, Mary and Joseph finally arrived in Bethlehem. They were very tired, and it was almost time for their baby Jesus to be born. Joseph looked for a room, but they couldn't find any place to stay!

They went to many inns and tried, but all of them were full. Joseph found a cave that was used as a stable, and that is where Mary gave birth to Jesus. Jesus, who is our Lord and the Saviour of the

Learning Outcome Check

Jesus became a man with St. Mary as His mother.

We sing about this during the Christmas Service:

*Mary told Joseph, "The pains of labour strike me
Let us depart for Bethlehem, O righteous man.
I have no bed – I have no dwelling,
For I am poor – as I walk this earth.
In the cave I give birth to the Ancient of Days;
And place the Saviour of the world in a manger"
Halleluyah w'Halleluyah*

Visitors: The Shepherds and the Magi

When Jesus was born, an angel came to some shepherds who were close by. The light of the Lord shone all around them,

and they got scared! But the angel said, "Don't be afraid; I have good news that will bring a lot of joy to everyone!" The angel told the shepherds that they would find a little baby wrapped in a special

cloth in a place where animals eat. The shepherds were told that this baby is the Saviour of the world! Suddenly, there were many angels in the sky, singing and praising God. They said, "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth for everyone!" The shepherds found Jesus, and they were so happy. They celebrated and praised God!

Before Jesus was born, there were three wise men called **Magi** who saw a very shiny star in the sky. They knew it meant that the special Saviour of the world had been born. They decided to follow the star, and it led them to Bethlehem and the stable where Jesus was lying. When the wise men saw Jesus, they

got down on their knees. They gave him three special presents: shiny gold, frankincense, which has a nice smell, and a special perfume called myrrh.



Visiting of Magi



Nativity icon : Adoration of Magi

Jesus is God!

The Holy icon of Christmas teaches us something very important. The icon shows us that God loves us! Angels, shepherds, wise men, and even animals all knew the newborn baby was special.

But how special?

They recognised that the new baby was God! God loved us so much that he became a man with St. Mary as his mother. We know this because Jesus is the Son of God, and He is God.

Jesus wanted to be closer to us, so he came to live with us. It was the first time that God became someone we could see, touch, and hold. Everyone, including

angels, kings, and shepherds, was very happy because the Son of God was born. Even the animals were happy and peeked into the manger, where Jesus lay on a bed made of straw.

On Christmas, we give presents to our friends and family. But the most special gift we can give is love. We can show our love for Jesus by loving people who need help. When we give presents to people who need help, it's like giving a present to Jesus, just like the Magi!

Learning Outcome Check

Jesus is the Son of God

Christ is born! Glorify Him!

Reflection Questions

1. Who is the Mother of God?
2. What other words do we use for the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ?
3. Was Jesus alive before He was born in Bethlehem?

The Last Prophet

St. John the Baptist is a very special and holy person. He is called the “forerunner” because he was born before Jesus and spoke about Him.

Vocabulary Words

Prophet Someone who shares God’s message to other people

Forerunner A person who helps prepare others for something or for the coming of someone special

Sacrament A very special event in the Church where God changes something or someone to new and holy in a way we cannot explain. A Sacrament is also called a “Mystery” of the Church

Baptism When our old way of life is washed away. Holy Baptism is one of the important Sacraments of the Church through which we become a full member of the Church



There was a priest named St. Zachariah and his wife, St. Elizabeth. They were very old and wanted to have a baby, but they couldn't. They prayed to God for a long time.

After many years, something amazing happened! The angel Gabriel came to them and said that they would have a special baby boy that they needed to name John. God blessed them because they had been praying and believing in Him. Zachariah was very surprised to hear what the angel said. He and his wife were very old, and he had never seen other old people having kids.



Saint Elizabeth and holy prophet Zachariah



St. Mary (Mother of God) visits St. Elizabeth (Mother of St. John the Baptist) Discuss : In the Icon above, which baby is Jesus, and which baby is St. John the Baptist?

Could God really give them a baby? God decided Zachariah needed to understand that He can do amazing things, so He made it so Zachariah couldn't talk until the baby was born.

St. Elizabeth's cousin was St. Mary.

After the angel Gabriel invited St. Mary to be a mother, she went to see her cousin St. Elizabeth right away.

St. Mary didn't know that St. Elizabeth was going to have a baby too! But when St. Elizabeth saw St. Mary, she was really happy because she knew that St. Mary was going to be the Mother of Jesus and the Mother of God!

She told St. Mary that the baby inside her, St. John the Baptist, also started moving happily. She said to her cousin, St. Mary, that she was blessed among all the women in the world. She was so happy that the Mother of God had come to see her!

She told St. Mary that the baby in her womb, St. John the Baptist, also jumped with joy. She said to her cousin, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. How does this happen to me, the mother of my Lord comes to visit me?"

Think

“Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb...”

Does this prayer sound familiar?



St. John the Forerunner

St. Elizabeth had a strong and healthy boy. They named him John, just like the angel Gabriel had said. St. Zachariah was able to talk again, and he was so happy. God always keeps his promises.

St. John prayed to God a lot. He was so close to God that the angels talked to him! He didn't eat a lot and lived a very simple life. St. John was a special person chosen by God. God talked to John and gave him messages to share with others. He talked to everyone and told them that a very special person was coming soon. He was talking about Jesus!

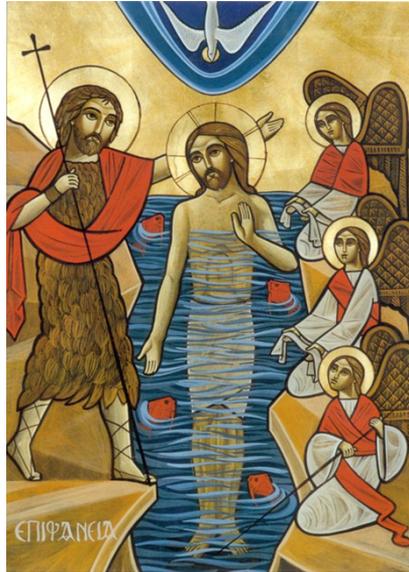
St. John told people to repent, which means to say sorry for their mistakes. He told them they needed to be ready because Jesus was coming. That's why John is called the **forerunner**, because he was the person who came before Jesus.

St. John was the last **prophet** before Jesus came down to Earth. A prophet is like a special messenger from God. God talks to the prophets and tells them important things to tell other people.

St. John helped prepare everyone to receive God's son by baptising them. **Baptism** is when someone is washed

with special water and becomes a part of God's Kingdom.

St. John was a special person who was able to baptise Jesus Christ! Because of this, he is also called St. John the Baptist. He was a friend of Jesus, and they worked together to teach people about God's kingdom and how to say sorry for their mistakes.



Baptism of Jesus Christ

Today, when someone is baptised in church, they receive the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit helps us be good people and be like Jesus and the saints. Once we are baptised, we become a part of God's family and start a new life with Him.

After baptism, we can take part in all the church services. Just like how peo-

ple were forgiven for their sins when they were baptised by St. John, we also receive forgiveness for our sins at baptism.

Sin is when we do things that make us sick inside because we are not listening to God. It's like having a sickness. But the church has special ways to help us feel better and get closer to God again.

Learning Outcome Check

We can come to Church to receive complete healing of sins.

We can pray to God and do what the Church tells us to do, and that makes God happy.

When we say sorry to God and ask for forgiveness, it's like a special medicine that heals all the sickness in our hearts and makes us feel better again.

Remember

From the moment we are baptized, the Holy Spirit stays with us forever! We become a part of the Church family, and can start a new life with God.

Reflection Questions

1. Who is the forerunner of Jesus Christ?
2. When we are baptized, what happens to our sins?
3. After we are baptized and we sin, where should we go?

By Your Light

God loves us and has a plan. We can see by following God's Light.

Vocabulary Words

Person A living being that includes you, your family, and your friends. Every person is special. We say that God is a person because God is alive and is special.

Messiah Someone who comes to help and save. In the Church, the Messiah is Jesus Christ.

Thubden A special prayer ready during Holy Qurbana



Pretend you are in a very dark room at night. It might feel scary because you cannot see anything in the room.

But what happens if someone turns on the light switch?

The room is now filled with bright light, and you can see! Won't this make you feel safe and happy?

Jesus taught everyone that He is the light of the world. Just like the darkness of a room went away when the light was turned on, so also sin and bad things in the world disappear when we are with Jesus.

Jesus helps us see how we can become children of God! He wants us to be like Him and also be the light for others in the world.

Qolo, Monday, Sapro / Pre-Qurbana Hymn

*By your light we see the light,
Jesus full of light (Psalm 36:9)
You are the True light
which enlightens all creation
Shine your Joyous light on us
O splendour of the Father*



St. John the Baptist knew that Jesus was the **Messiah**. A messiah is someone who saves. Remember what happened when Adam and Eve ate the fruit? All men and women began to die because of sin. The world became dark.

But God loved the world and all His children! Jesus came to save the world from sin and death. He is the light that shows how everyone can come back to God and be in communion with Him.

St. John the Baptist knew this and told everyone to be ready and repent, and after they were sorry for their sin, he began to baptise them to clean them.

One day, John was talking to a big group of people next to the Jordan River. He then saw Jesus walking towards him. Then Jesus asked John to baptise him! John was surprised and said he didn't think he was holy enough to do that for Jesus. Instead, John wanted Jesus to baptise him!

But Jesus said that they needed to show others how to be good Christians. Jesus is our example in everything. He shows us how we should be like God.

When Jesus was baptised, it made the water special and blessed the sacrament of baptism with water and spirit.

The Holy Trinity

St. John baptised Jesus in the river. And then something amazing happened! When Jesus came out of the water, the sky opened up, and the Holy Trinity appeared.

A very loud voice from the Father spoke from the sky, saying Jesus is God's special son and God is very happy with him. The Holy Spirit came down like a special bird called a dove came down from the sky.

The Father, Son, and Holy are One God, but they are also three **Persons**. It's



Do you see? In this icon of the Baptism of Jesus Christ do you see creatures are running away from the feet of Jesus? We read about this in Psalm 113:3 (114:3) "the sea saw them and fled, the Jordan turned back."

a little confusing, and the Church calls this a mystery. It's something special that we do not need to understand.

God the Father is drawn in holy icons as a part of a circle with rays (sometimes with a hand) because He is the Creator.

Do You Know?

The Holy Trinity is with us during Holy Qurbana



The first Person of the Holy Trinity is God the Father.

We believe God is the maker of everything. The Father created everything because He is love.

The second Person of the Holy Trinity is Jesus Christ.

We believe that Jesus is God and also the Son of God. He loved us so much that he became a man!

St. Mary is his mother. Jesus was baptised by St. John the Baptist. Jesus also

died on the cross.

But most importantly, Jesus rose again on the third day to defeat death! He did all of this because he loves us.



The third Person of the Holy Trinity is the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is God. He is special and does so many things for us! He is called the helper and the protector. The Holy Spirit completes everything.

The Holy Spirit is shown in icons like a dove, but in a special circle. This is because that is how he is described, but he is not a bird! Nobody can really describe the Holy Spirit, so they tried their best to explain.



Remember that Jesus taught us to be like God? How do we do that? By trying to be like Jesus!

Jesus is God. God knows that we are not perfect, but it is important that we always try our best!

Just like God forgives us when we make mistakes but come to Him and re-

pent, we should forgive others and treat them with kindness.

Learning Outcome Check

- The first Person of the Holy Trinity is God the Father.
- Jesus died for us because He loves us.
- Jesus talked about His Father and also taught us to be like God the Father.

Remember

When we pray *Our Father*, we say 'Forgive us our debts and sins as we also have forgiven our debtors'. This means we are asking God to forgive us of our sins, just like we should forgive those who hurt us.

Jesus is the Light

The Church teaches us important things about God. We know these things because God first spoke to special people called prophets. Some of the prophets are Moses, Isaiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, and St. John the Baptist.

But then Jesus came and was a friend to the Apostles. He lived with them and ate with them. He spent a lot of time teaching them about himself! We know a lot about God because of the Apostles.

There are also many saints who followed the light that Jesus showed the apostles. They never changed the teachings that were given to them. The church makes sure to never lose the true light.

Do You Know?

The Apostle that came to India was St. Thomas. He came to Kerala in 52 AD.



In the Fifth **Tubden** of the Holy Qur-bana, we remember many great saints who taught us about God. We call them

our church fathers. But there are even more saints, including both men and women, who shared with us what God taught. If we tried to remember all their names, we would be in church for a very long time!

We are so lucky and blessed that the saints and teachers never forgot what Jesus taught, so we can still learn and be part of it today!

Learning Outcome Check

Our Church fathers are great teachers and guides of the Holy Church.

Reflection Questions

1. Can you name the three persons of the Holy Trinity?
2. How does Jesus love us?
3. How do we know that Jesus called Himself the “Light of the World”?

Our Lord Jesus Christ

Jesus loves us very much. He shows us that He is God by the things He did and how He lived.

Vocabulary Words

Incarnation God becoming man. This happened when St. Mary gave birth to the baby Jesus.

Disciples People who followed Jesus and learned from Him



Nativity icon

God Becomes Man

God loved us so much that He did something very special - He became a man! In the picture, we see angels, kings, and shepherds - everyone is so happy because God's Son is born. Even the animals loved Jesus and peeked into the place where He was sleeping on straw.

Even though Jesus became a baby, remember that there was never a time that Jesus was not alive. He was there before everything was created! Jesus is very powerful and made everything in the world. But he became a baby in a cave with animals around him because he loved us so much. He wanted to be closer to us!

Learning Outcome Check

Jesus is the Son of God!

Anna also knew that Jesus was the Saviour when she saw him.



Jesus is brought to the temple of Jerusalem and Simeon takes infant Jesus in his hands.

Jesus is Brought to the Temple

After baby Jesus was born, his parents, Mary and Joseph, took him to a special place called the temple.

There, they met an old man named Simeon and a prophetess named Anna.

Simeon had been waiting his whole life to see Jesus because he knew Jesus was very special. When Simeon saw baby Jesus, he was filled with joy and said that he had found God's salvation.

He prayed, "Lord, my eyes have seen your salvation!"

Learning Outcome Check

One of The events of Jesus Christ's life was that he was brought To The Temple by His parents.

Jesus Teaches in the Temple

(St. Luke 2:39-52)

Jesus was a very special person, and people called him the teacher. He liked to tell beautiful stories to teach others. Je-

sus taught about God. He started teaching when he was just a little boy. Jesus really loved to learn too, so he would listen carefully to the people who were teaching him.

Every year, Jesus and his parents, Joseph and Mary, would go to the temple in Jerusalem to celebrate a special holiday called the Passover. When Jesus was twelve years old, they went to Jerusalem like they always did. After the holiday was over, Joseph and Mary started going back home with a big group of people. But they didn't realise that Jesus wasn't with them. They were really worried about him, so they went back to Jerusalem to look for him.

They looked for three whole days until they finally found him in the temple. Jesus was sitting with the teachers, listening to them, and asking them questions.

Mary and Joseph were very upset with Jesus because they were so worried about him. Mary went straight to Jesus and said, "Son, why did you make us so worried? Your father and I were searching for you everywhere." Then Jesus said something that they didn't understand. He told them that he had to be at his father's house. But his parents didn't really know what he meant.

Jesus really loved learning about God's teachings. He would listen very carefully and even try to teach other people too. Jesus liked to stay in the temple for many days, praying and listening to God's teachings. He would talk with the teachers there about what he learned. Everyone who heard Jesus was amazed

because he asked really good questions and had great answers, even though he was still very young.

Afterwards, Jesus went back to his house with his mom and dad, Joseph and Mary. Jesus was really good, and he always listened to his parents. As Jesus got older, he became very smart.

Just like us, Jesus also had to learn new things. We should be like Jesus and spend time learning about what God teaches us, so that we can become stronger Christians and make God happy.



Young Jesus teaches the elders in the temple.

Jesus Cares for the Children

(St. Luke 18:15-17; 7:11-16)

Jesus loved all children and enjoyed being around them. One day, some moth-

ers brought their children to Jesus so that he could give them a special blessing. But Jesus' friends called disciples didn't like that, and they wanted to stop them. But Jesus said, "Let the kids come to me because God's kingdom is for kids too!" Jesus then picked up the little children and placed His hands on their heads to give them a special blessing.

One day, Jesus went to a town called Nain. His friends and many people followed him. When Jesus reached the entrance of the town, he saw a sad thing. A little boy had died, and his mom was very sad.



Jesus takes the kids in his hands and blesses them.

The boy's dad was already gone, so this made the mom even more sad. Many people followed the boy's body. Jesus felt really sorry for the mom. He wanted to cheer her up, so he said, "Don't cry." Then Jesus went up to the boy, touched him, and said, "Get up, young boy." And something amazing happened! The boy

woke up and started talking again! Everyone was so surprised and happy. They praised God for what Jesus did. Jesus always cares about parents and their children.

Remember

Jesus loved all children, and He liked to be around them.



Jesus Gives Life

(St. Luke 8:40-42, 49-56)

Once, Jesus was teaching, and a man named Jairus came to see him. Jairus was very worried because his daughter was very sick, and he wanted Jesus to help her get better.

Jesus went with Jairus to his house along with his friends. On the way, Jairus received a message that his daughter had died, but Jesus told Jairus not to worry and to believe that everything would be okay.

When they arrived at Jairus' house, Jesus went inside with only a few people, including Jairus' daughter's parents. Everyone in the house was very sad and crying. But Jesus said that they shouldn't cry because the girl was not really dead; she was just sleeping.

Some people laughed because they didn't believe in Jesus. Then, Jesus held the girl's hand and said, "Wake up, little girl!" And guess what? The girl suddenly woke up! Jesus asked for some food for

her, and everyone was so amazed and happy. Jairus and his family thanked and praised God for what Jesus had done.



Jesus Christ raises the daughter of Jairus

Jesus Calms the Storm

(St. Mark 4:35-41)

Jesus and his disciples were in a boat on the sea. Jesus was tired, so he went to sleep at the back of the boat. Then, a really big storm came and made the waves bumpy. Water started coming into the boat, and everyone got scared. They woke Jesus up and said, "Help us, Jesus! We are going to sink!" Jesus woke up and talked to the storm. Immediately, the wind stopped and the waves became calm because Jesus is very powerful.

The disciples of Jesus were very brave when he was with them. But they got scared when a big storm came and hit their boat. Even though they saw Je-

sus do amazing things many times, they still did not have a strong belief. Jesus was surprised that all of his friends were scared of the storm and did not trust him more. He asked them, "Why are you scared? Don't you believe in me?"

We should always remember that Jesus is always with us. We need to have faith and trust that He can protect us from anything. Jesus was a person just like us, but He is also God. He was perfect, and he taught us to be like God as well!



Power of Jesus over nature : Jesus calms the storm and the sea.

Reflection Questions

1. Can you name one event in Jesus' life and explain how we know Jesus is God?
2. How can we be more like Jesus in our life?
3. Did Jesus ever sin?

The Priesthood

Priests help us learn about God. They take care of us just like a shepherd takes care of his sheep.

Vocabulary Words

Contemplating Thinking about something

Exalted Something or someone who is very important or special

Role a job or something that a person needs to do

Pharaoh The powerful ruler of Egypt who thought he was god

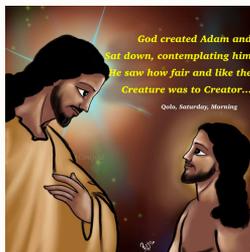
Stewardship Taking care of something or someone



Quqlion (Intercessory Prayers)

(Daivam srustichadathe..)

*God created Adam and
Sat down, contemplating him
He saw how fair and like the
Creature was to Creator
The earthly one came and went
Through the trees of Paradise
The angels marvelled
At how he was exalted*



Adam: The First Priest

Qurbana:

We sing this special song during the Quqlion (intercessory prayers) in Holy

In this song, we hear that Adam looks like God! But “Adam” in the song means

all boys and girls. So if God made Adam to look like God, that means we also look like God! God loves us very much, and even the angels were very surprised and happy.

After God created everything, He asked Adam to take care of it for Him. This was a special job for Adam. This is why we say Adam is the first priest (Achen) of the world. Priests are helpers of God, and they take care of things just like God would. This is called **Stewardship**. Our priests continue to take good care of God's people.

The song continues:

*Moses and Aaron received
The priesthood which was passed
down
It went to Zachariah
Then it was given to John
John then gave it to our Lord
Who ordained the apostles
And the apostles
Spread it throughout creation!*

(Aadyacharyathwam..)

Moses and Aaron

*Moses and Aaron received
The priesthood which was passed down*

Moses was a really important person in the Bible. Did you know that he wrote the first five books of the Bible?

When Moses was a baby, his mother placed him in a basket in the river to save him from being killed. Pharaoh's daughter

found the baby Moses in the river. She kept and raised him.



Pharaoh's daughter finds infant Moses in a basket floating in the river

Moses lived in the Pharaoh's house when he was little, but when he got older, he decided to leave and live in the desert. He became a shepherd. God loved Moses, and one day on Mount Horeb, God talked to him. Moses was scared at first, but God told him that he wanted Moses to help free the people of Israel. God wanted Moses to be their leader.

A priest is a leader chosen by God to help him. Moses was a priest because, just like Adam, he was chosen by God.

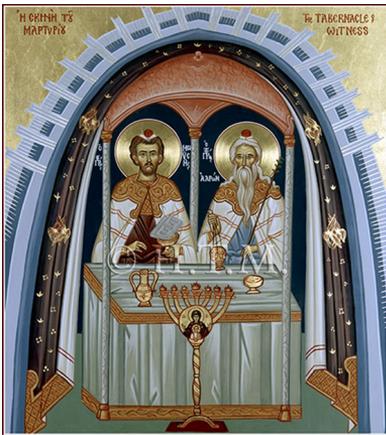
But Moses was very nervous. He was afraid he would make a mistake when he talked to Pharaoh.

But God already knew that Moses would feel this way because God knows everything! God asked Moses to bring his brother Aaron to help. God knew

that Aaron and Moses would make a great team and be able to free the Israelite people together. Moses was happy because he didn't have to do it alone.

Do You Know?

When Moses was living with the Pharaoh, he lived a very rich life. He became close to God, only when he left the riches and led a simple life in the desert.



The Tabernacle

God then talked to Aaron and told him to meet Moses. Aaron listened and went to see Moses. Moses told Aaron everything that God had told him. Aaron didn't argue or go against God's words. They both went to tell their people what God had said, and it made the people happy.

Moses and Aaron became priests for the people of Israel. They helped lead the people of Israel to worship God, and we see them dressed in a special way like our priests in the icons.

Our priests (Achens) also lead us in worshipping God. We now come to church to be with God, and our priests pray and celebrate the Holy Qurbana. They pray to God for us, and God forgives our sins.

Learning Outcome Check

We can come to Church to receive complete healing of sins.



Zachariah and John the Baptist

*It went to Zachariah
Then it was given to John*

The Israelites made a special place called the Temple of Jerusalem to pray to God and show that they loved him. Many priests served God and helped the people. Worshipping God is a way for us to show that we love Him and to thank Him for all that He has done for us. Helping the people worship is an important thing that priests do.

We don't just come to church and let the priest do everything; we also pray and worship God. This is why we say "Amin" after every prayer the priest starts during Holy Qurbana. We pray for us, our family and friends, and even those

who do not like us. Praying and worshipping God are important in the life of a priest and for us.

Learning Outcome Check

As Christians we should pray for those around us.

In Jerusalem, there lived a priest named Zachariah. Elizabeth was his wife. They loved God, and God loved them. They were old and had no children, so they also prayed for a baby.

Once, when Zachariah was praying and offering special incense to God in the Temple, an angel named Gabriel appeared right next to him! This scared Zachariah a bit. But the angel had some exciting news for him!



Zachariah and Elizabeth

The angel told Zachariah that his wife, Elizabeth, was going to have a baby. This baby would be a very important person named John. But instead of being happy and believing the angel, Zachariah didn't trust what he heard. So, to show Zachariah that God's words were true, the angel said that Zachariah wouldn't be able to talk until after the baby was born. And that's exactly what happened!

When Zachariah left the temple, he was not able to say a single word until the baby was finally born. As the angel said, Elizabeth gave birth to a son. All of her family and friends were glad. They all celebrated with her saying, "God is gracious."

Do you know who this baby was? It was St. John the Baptist!

The baby was named only when he was eight days old. As Zachariah could not talk yet, everyone thought the baby should be named Zachariah. But Elizabeth trusted God and said the baby's name was John. Everyone asked Zachariah what he wanted to name the baby, but he could not speak. So he wrote, "His name is John."

Suddenly, God opened Zachariah's mouth, and he could talk! He started to sing and thank God.

St. John grew up and was filled with the Holy Spirit. St. John the Baptist was a prophet of God. A prophet is a special person chosen by God to teach his word. He helped people get ready for Jesus, and this is why he was a priest.

St. John was called "the Baptist" because he baptised many in the River Jor-

dan. He was also called the “forerunner” because he told everyone that Jesus was coming. In many icons, he has wings because, just like an angel, he was a messenger from God.



St. John the Baptist

Jesus, the High Priest

*John then gave it to our Lord
Who ordained the Apostles
And the Apostles
Spread it throughout creation*

St. John the Baptist was at the River Jordan teaching people to get ready for

Jesus. He would baptise anyone who wanted to say sorry and repent. John would use the water of the River Jordan to help them be clean, but he would tell everyone that Jesus would do much more.

One day, Jesus himself came to see John! Jesus asked St. John to baptise him in the river. John was surprised because he did not think he should baptise God and wanted Jesus to baptise him instead!

Jesus told John that this was important, as He needed to show everyone how to be a good Christian. Jesus wanted to set an example for people. He also wanted to bless and make holy the river and all the water on Earth. Jesus blessed the water with the help of the Holy Spirit.

So, John put Jesus in the water of the River Jordan. And something really amazing happened! When Jesus came out of the water, God the Father spoke! The sky also opened up, and the Holy Spirit came down from heaven like a dove. It was a very special moment!





Baptism of Jesus Christ

Our Priests Guide Us Towards Christ

God loves us and has special plans for us. He created us to be like Him so that we can love others like He loves us. Adam was the first priest, and like Adam, we are also priests because God has chosen us.

There are special people who are called priests (or Achens) because they help the people of God in worship. The priesthood started with Adam and went to Moses, Aaron, Zachariah, St. John, and then to Jesus. Jesus chose the apostles, who chose bishops. The bishops then chose our priests!

Do you see how there is a connection between our priest all the way through Christ to Adam? Our priests pray for us,

bless us, and heal us from sin.

Our priests are able to do many things through the Holy Spirit. They have a special job during Holy Qurbana and wear special robes. On the Holy Altar, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, the bread and wine become the body and blood of Jesus!

We should love and help the people around us, just like a priest takes care of and loves the people in the Church. Jesus teaches us to love our neighbours just like we love ourselves. It is important to treat others with kindness and care, just as we would want to be treated. We also take care of the world that God created. Remembering this will help us become more like Jesus. **(Matthew 22:39)**

Learning Outcome Check

The Priest is a loving father and shepherd for his flock. He was chosen/ordained by the Holy Spirit through the bishop to administer the sacraments.



Reflection Questions

1. How did God make us?
2. A shepherd cares for his flock. What are examples of how the priest cares for his people?
3. Can you find the song we reviewed here in your Holy Qurbana book?

Our Saviour

God loves us very, very much. So much so that He became a person like us! He did this because He wanted to save us.

Vocabulary Words

Saviour Someone who comes to help or rescue others when they are in trouble or danger

Paradise A holy place with God

Resurrection Jesus coming back to life after dying on the Cross

Sheol A place where people in the Old Testament went



Every year, the church has a special celebration on a very important Sunday. We celebrate the day when Jesus came back to life after he died. We call this day Resurrection Sunday, or Qyamtha in Syriac. It is also called Easter. This is very special because Jesus saved us on this day!



The Resurrection



In the Beginning ...

God made everything we can see and also the things we cannot see. He made everything because God is love. And remember that He made us just like Him!

There was a special place called Eden where Adam and Eve lived happily with God. But something bad happened. Satan tricked Adam and Eve. They did something they weren't supposed to do. This is called sin. This made God very sad, and we couldn't be with Him like before. Because of sin, a very sad thing happened, and Adam and Eve started to die. Death came into the world.

But God still loves us even when we do not listen to Him. He loved Adam and Eve, even though they listened to Satan. God did not want us to die.

God loved us so much that He came to earth as a man! Jesus came to save

us from death and all the bad things we did. As a man, he died. But because He is God, He could not die!

Remember

We know that we can all get sick. We can have accidents. We know that sometimes people can die. When people die we can be sad. But we do not have to be afraid of dying because when we die we are with Our Creator, Our Lord Jesus Christ.



This is why we sing in each Holy Qurbana, "He trampled death by His death and destroyed our death."

Do you remember the procession or special walk we do at church on Good Friday?

The priest carries a cross, and we all

sing while he walks around the church. This helps us remember what Jesus did for us.



Jesus Christ carries His Cross

Jesus had to carry a heavy cross to a place called Golgotha, where he was killed. Jesus was crucified on the cross. Jesus is our Saviour because He died on the cross.

”Save” means to keep someone or something safe from getting hurt or anything bad. Doctors and nurses save many sick people in hospitals, and fire-fighters and police save people who are in danger.

Learning Outcome Check

To **save** means to keep someone or something safe from getting hurt or anything bad.

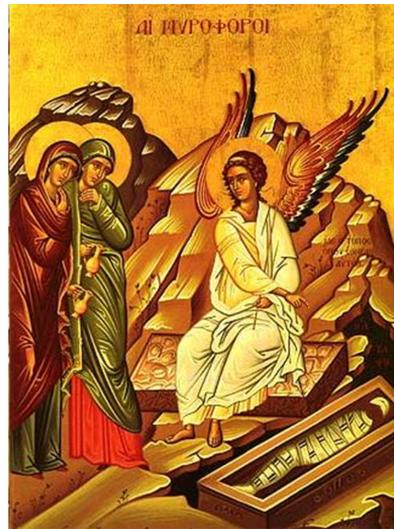
So, what did Jesus save us from?
He saved us from death!

Because Jesus died on the cross on Good Friday and rose again, we know we will go to God and live through Him when we die.

This is a great mystery we can never explain, but we know it is true because God told us! This is why we call the day Jesus died the **Good Friday** or **Holy Friday**.

Even though we feel sad when we think about how the soldiers took Jesus, hurt him, and crucified him on the cross, we know that Jesus won!

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



The empty tomb of Jesus Christ



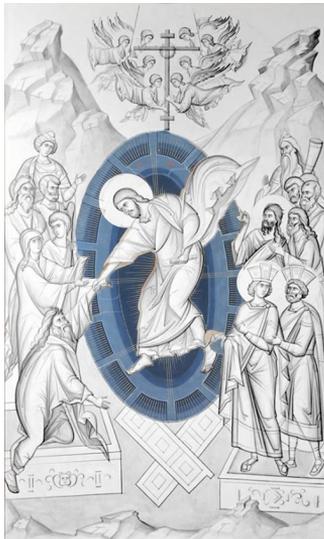
The Icon of Resurrection. Jesus Christ breaks the doors of hell and raises Adam and Eve to their original place.

The Icon of Resurrection

An icon is special as it teaches us so much about our church and our faith. An icon is holy because it teaches us more about God. In the icon of the Resurrection, we learn more about how much God loves us!

Mandorla

In many icons, there is a special shape called a *mandorla*. The Resurrection Icon has one!



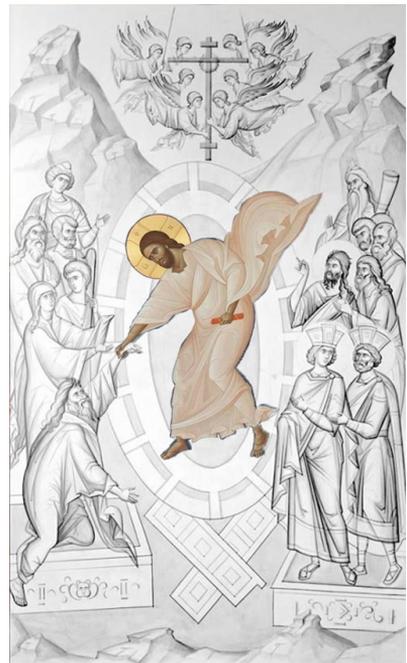
A mandorla is a shape that looks like an almond or half circle. When we see a mandorla in an icon, it means something special is being shown!

In the Resurrection Icon, there is something that people who do not believe that Jesus Christ is God will never

really understand. This is called a mystery. In the icon, we see Jesus is alive! Jesus did defeat death. This is a mystery that we cannot explain. But we know it is true because Jesus is God!

Do you see the mandorla in the Resurrection Icon?

Christ in Glory



In the mandorla and in the centre of the icon is Jesus. We see Jesus in beautiful white and gold in this icon. Jesus is full of glory!

Do you see the cross at the top? This is to remind us that Jesus just died on the cross. On Good Friday, we are reminded

of His death, which was very sad. Jesus suffered a lot on the cross.

But the Resurrection Icon reminds us that Jesus defeated death! Our God is too strong and has power over all things in heaven and earth, including death.

Why did Jesus then die on the cross? For only one reason - to save us from death!

Our Salvation

The icon reminds us that Jesus died on the cross to save us. Do you see these two people in the icon?

One is an old man, and one is an old woman. This is Adam and Eve!

Remember, we learned that Adam and Eve had to leave Paradise. Outside of Paradise, they grew old and died. Adam and Eve, along with all the people who lived before Jesus died on the Cross, would go to a place called **Sheol** when they died. This was a place where there was no life. In the icon, we see many people in Sheol.

But that all changed when Jesus rose again! After dying on the cross, Jesus brought life to everyone, including those who died before Him, starting with Adam and Eve!



Do you see how Jesus is holding Adam in the icon? He is pulling him up from the dead. This is how much God loves us! He would not allow his children to die and came to save them.

Learning Outcome Check

Through The Resurrection icon we understand That Christ saves Adam and Eve. This means he saves all of us as well.

Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

On Easter, we greet each other with these words. But once we learn about the Resurrection and what it really means, we

will shout this with even more joy!

On that Sunday of the Resurrection, we sing a special song after the priest reads the gospel:

Qyomtho : Post Gospel Hymn

*O Holy Temple - Praise the Son of God who
dwells upon the - Holy Altar!
Praise Him, who saved us - and has raised us up by
His body - and life-gi-ving blood!
Am-Halleluyah! - O Bridegroom, when You rose
from the tomb, Your children rejoiced*

(like "Sweekaranam Nedi")

We sing and pray, not just on Resurrection Sunday, about how wonderful and loved we are by God and how He saved us from death. This is the song we

sing after the Great Procession, when the Body and Blood of Jesus are brought to us:

Recessional Hymn

*All shall worship and bless You,
and each tongue confess Your name,
for You give life to the dead
and good hope to those entombed! Halleluyah!*

("Bhoovake namikkum...")

When we call Jesus our Saviour, we know that He saved us because He loves us. Because of the Resurrection, we know that nothing will happen to all who have died, as they are now alive with God. And one day, Jesus will come again, and then we will be with God forever.

Reflection Questions

1. What did Christ save us from?
2. In the Resurrection Icon, who do Adam and Eve represent?
3. Can you remember any of the songs of the Holy Qurbana that teach us that Jesus brought life to the dead?

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is God, just like the Father and Jesus. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is One God. We cannot explain this and we call this a Mystery.

Vocabulary Words

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

Pentecost Celebration of receiving the Holy Spirit

Disciple Someone who believes and follows Jesus

Apostle A special disciple who was chosen by Jesus



Do you know about **Pentecost**?



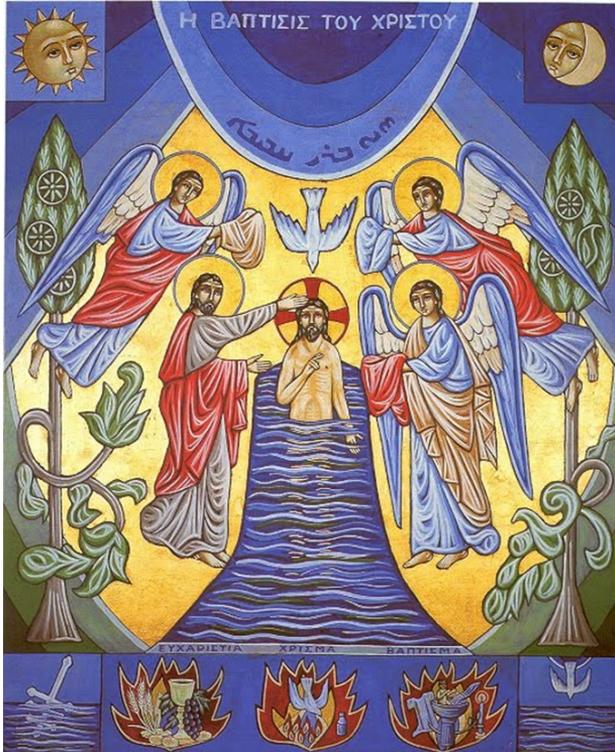
Icon of the event Pentecost : Holy Spirit coming to disciples as tongues of fire

Pentecost is a special day for the Church. It was when the Holy Spirit came down on the apostles and disciples and gave them new life. The Holy Spirit helped them become smart, strong, and brave.

Jesus said that after he went to heaven, the Holy Spirit would come and help his friends do what God wanted them to do. The Holy Spirit even gave them the ability to speak different languages so they could tell everyone that Jesus is alive and God loves them.

Another important day is when we celebrate the Baptism of Jesus.

When we are baptised, we become members of the church. But the day Jesus got baptised was not when He became a member of the church, because



Baptism of Jesus Christ : Holy Spirit coming to Jesus as a dove

the church is God's people! When Jesus was baptised, he went into the water and made it special and holy. The Holy Spirit was there.

Do you see the Holy Spirit like a dove in both of these icons? This does not mean that God, the Holy Spirit, is a bird!

The Bible says the Holy Spirit came down upon Jesus like a dove. This is what we see in the icons. The Holy Spirit is God, just like Jesus is God and the Father

is God. But only Jesus became a man.

When we see the icon or read about the Holy Spirit being like a dove, we have to know that's how the Holy Spirit looked to the person who saw it.

Just like how the Apostles and Disciples received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, we also receive the Holy Spirit. On the day of our baptism, the priest uses holy oil and makes the Sign of the Cross, and this cleans us so we receive the Holy

Spirit inside us through the sacrament of Holy Chrismation. The Holy Spirit is God, so that means God is always inside you!

Remember

Just like the Holy Spirit made the disciples and apostles wise, strong, smart, and brave, the Holy Spirit makes us wise, strong, smart and brave too!



When you receive the Holy Spirit, it's like getting a special mark that lasts forever. That is why we have only one baptism. God loves us so much and will never leave us, even if we make mistakes or forget about Him. We don't have to get baptised again because the Holy Spirit stays with us always.

Learning Outcome Check

Close your eyes and see The Holy Spirit descending as a dove at Theophany and as tongues of fire at Pentecost.



How does the Holy Spirit help us?

The Holy Spirit is in everyone who is baptised and Chrismated. The Holy Spirit helps us each day. He helps us to love and help each other. The Holy Spirit

helps us know God and talk about God with others.

The Holy Spirit makes everything complete and **perfect**, including us! The Holy Spirit comes down to complete and **perfect sacraments**.

Learning Outcome Check

The Holy Spirit is present in all our Sacraments, as the perfecter of Sacraments.



We love God, and therefore, we listen to Him. We try to be like God, and the Holy Spirit in us will make us **perfect**. We know that we are obeying the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is **perfecting** us when other people see us and act like Jesus.

We clean the church because it is God's house. We also need to keep ourselves clean because we are God's house!

After baptism and Chrismation, the Holy Spirit lives in us. We are special, and we should try to be like God on the outside too. We should love our neighbours and treat them how we want to be treated

Remember

The Holy Spirit is God, but it is important to know that *Jesus is God and He became a man*.



Reflection Questions

1. Is the Holy Spirit different from God?
2. What does the Holy Spirit do when we are baptized?
3. Is the Holy Spirit present during Holy Qurbana?

Beyond the Walls of the Church

We worship God at Church. But our relationship with God is so important that we should also remember Him at home and outside.

Vocabulary Words

Yield Means to let others go first before we do

Hymn A song that offers praise to God

Preach To deliver a message or sermon to a group of people



Sometimes we may think that we only need to be good when we are at church. But that's not true! When we are baptised, the Holy Trinity—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit—is with us. This means they are with us wherever we go.

Our Home: The Mini Church

When our priest blesses a house, it becomes our home. In our home, the love of God grows as the house is made holy. A house is built with wood, cement, and plastic. A home is built with the love of God and blessings from God.

Learning Outcome Check

The blessing of the house makes it into a home.

Did you know we are able to use all five of our senses at church?

We *see* the priest or bishop at the altar, *see* the people around us worshipping God, and *see* all of the icons. We *hear* the people around us pray aloud and sing **hymns**. We *touch* one another to give the Kiss of Peace, and we hold the Holy Qurbana Service Book and follow along during each service. We *smell* the incense coming from the censor. And of course, we *taste* the body and blood of Jesus Christ Himself during the Holy Qurbana!

In the same way, our homes can be special, and we can feel closer to Jesus. We can *see* a picture or an icon of Jesus or another saint. We can *hear* the words when we pray, sing songs to Jesus, and *hold* the Bible to read. When we do these things, we can feel Jesus' love inside our

hearts and in everything we do!

Just like how we go to church to worship God, we can also have a special place in our homes where we pray. This makes our homes look like little churches!

Learning Outcome Check

Our home is where God lives, and with God we live to become like God.

Every family might pray in different ways. Some families pray in the morning or evening. Some families pray in the living room, bedroom, or at the dining table.

It's okay if we don't have a special picture or object to pray in front of. The most important thing is to always make time to pray, even if we are busy.

Jesus himself found time to pray, even when he was doing important things. Once, He prayed in a special garden called Gethsemane (**St. Matthew 26: 36-44**).

Besides singing hymns and reading the Bible, what else should we do?

We should learn to talk to God through prayer. P-R-A-Y can also stand for *Praise, Repent, Ask, Yield*.¹

You can start off your prayer by *praising* God, and use this time to think about all of the things you are thankful for.



Where is your home altar?

- Examples: Thank God for the food on the table, for providing us with a home, for giving us good friends and family, and so on.

Then, take a moment to think about the things you might have done wrongly and *repent*, which means to feel sorry for what you have done but to also try to do better next time.

- Example: I feel bad that I lied to my parents. I will say sorry and try to be honest next time!

Even though God is also your Father in Heaven and He knows the things you need before you even ask for them,

¹“The Mechanics of Prayer: The P-R-A-Y Method,” pursueGOD.org, January 24, 2021, <https://www.pursuegod.org/the-mechanics-of-prayer-the-p-r-a-y-method/>.

it is still okay to *ask* God for things. Even King Solomon asked God to grant him wisdom so that he could be a good leader! (3 Kingdoms 3:1-15)

- Sometimes we don't get what we want when we want it, but if God thinks we should have it, He will make it happen.

Lastly, *yielding* means taking a step back after praying and letting God do His work. This does not mean we just sit on the couch and be lazy.

- Instead, it means that we should still make the effort to do the things we are supposed to do (like studying, doing homework, or helping your parents at home, doing household chores), and that God is still there protecting you no matter what.

You might also think, “If I can pray and worship God at my own home, why do I still need to come to church? Isn't my home a mini church already?”

Yes, your home is still a mini church! But when we go to church to receive the body and blood of Jesus Christ. This special gift gives us true healing from our sins!

Learning Outcome Check

Our home is the mini Church.

Living Like Jesus Christ Outside of the Home

Since we are Christians and we are believers of Jesus Christ, it is important that we try to behave like Christ no matter where we are! This means we should be Christ-like at home, at school, when we are with our friends, and even when we think that nobody is watching us. What does that mean exactly?

Jesus shares the two greatest commandments in the Gospel of Saint Mark, chapter 12, verses 30 to 31 (you might also see the Bible verse written like this):

Bible Verse

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.

St. Mark 12: 30-31



By showing others the love that Christ has shown us, we are closer to living a life that is centred around Christ. But how can we do that?

If you see someone sitting alone, seek permission to sit next to them and talk to them so that they do not feel lonely.

- When Jesus chose his 12 disciples, he picked the people who were not popular. He chose fishermen, carpenters, tax collectors, and sinners to be His disciples and close friends. He chose

the people who were usually lonely and whom other people ignored. (St. Mark 1: 16-24, St. Mark 3: 13-19)

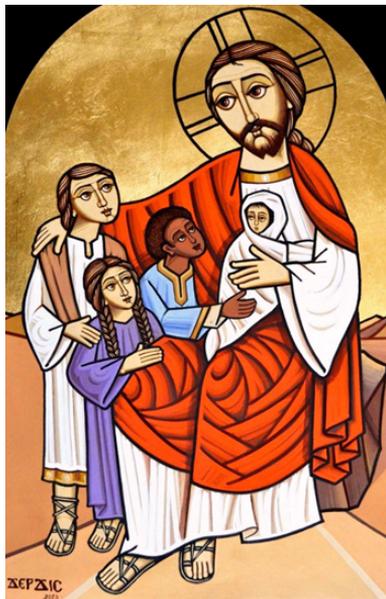
If you see that someone is hungry, you can share a snack.

- When over 5,000 people came to hear Jesus, receive healing of the sick, learn, and hear Him preach for a whole day, they became very hungry. Instead of telling everyone to go home and eat, Jesus wanted to feed everyone right where they were. A little boy shared 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish, and Jesus performed a miracle so that everyone had enough to eat and there was even extra food leftover! (St. Matthew 14: 13-21)

If you see that someone is sad, you can try to cheer them up!

- When Mary and Martha were sad that their brother, Lazarus, had died, Jesus visited them and also cried! He used that moment to show God's wonderful

ways by raising Lazarus from the dead! (St. John 11: 1-44)



Jesus with kids.

There are so many ways that we can behave like Christ!

Reflection Questions

1. How would you describe the church?
2. How can you pray at home?
3. How can your house be like a church?

God Shows Us the Way

The Holy Spirit plays an important part in our lives.

Vocabulary Words

Kingdom of God Heaven

Fruit of the Spirit Actions you take to bring other people joy, happiness and peace

Parable A story used to teach a lesson, especially by Jesus Christ



God made us, and we are His children. We believe in one God, and we believe He made us in His image and likeness.

God is also Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is one, and God is three persons. This is called the Mystery of the Holy Trinity.

Learning Outcome Check

The Holy Spirit is God.

As Christians, we receive the Holy Spirit to dwell within us. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and comes to us at the time of our baptism. We become a part of God's family through baptism. It is a special celebration where we are cleaned with water and blessed by the Holy Spirit. A priest baptises babies and adults by saying the names of the Father,

the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The Helper

During the Feast of Pentecost, there are many prayers that describe the Holy Spirit and how much He is helping us become holy like Christ. This is why the Holy Spirit is called the Helper.

The Holy Spirit helps us in many ways. He helps us understand God's word and the teachings that God has given us through the apostles. It was the Holy Spirit who made the Apostles understand what Jesus had been teaching them and gave them the gift of speaking many languages. It is the Holy Spirit who helped the Church not forget any of these teachings and helped us learn them and become better Christians.

With God inside of us, we understand and learn. However, we must work with

the Holy Spirit. God will not force us to do anything! God is love, and because He loves us, He will let us make our own choices.

Learning Outcome Check

The Holy Spirit helps guide us to make choices in life.

How do we know when we are doing God's will and working with the Holy Spirit inside of us? We act more like God. We love everyone like God loves us! The Holy Spirit helps us grow, and just like a special plant that grows fruit, we also grow fruit. This is called the "Fruit of the Holy Spirit." (**Galatians 5:22-23**) The Holy Spirit grows this wonderful fruit that others will see, which makes you a better and kinder person.

- **Love:** It's like giving big hugs and smiles to everyone around you. You care for others just like you care for your family and friends.
 - **Joy:** It's like feeling super happy inside, like when you play with your favourite toys or eat your favourite ice cream!
 - **Peace:** It's like being calm and not worrying, even if things get a little scary. The Holy Spirit helps you feel safe and peaceful.
 - **Patience:** It's like waiting calmly without getting frustrated when

things take time, like waiting for your turn on the playground.

- **Kindness:** It's like sharing your toys and helping someone who's sad. Being kind makes others happy.
- **Goodness:** It's like doing nice things for others, like picking up trash or helping your parents at home.
- **Faithfulness:** It's like being a good friend and keeping promises. You can trust the Holy Spirit to be with you always.
- **Gentleness:** It's like using soft and caring words when you talk to others. It's important to be gentle with your friends and family.
- **Self-control:** It's like being in charge of your actions and not doing things that are not right, even when it's hard.

When you have all of this fruit growing in your heart, you become more like Jesus. The Holy Spirit helps us become like God.

Parable of the Mustard Seed

When Jesus was alive, He told stories to teach people about how to live as God's children on earth. These stories are called parables. One of these parables is the Parable of the Mustard Seed.

Once, a person asked Jesus, "What is the Kingdom of God?" Jesus said it was like a tiny mustard seed. Mustard seeds are really small. When a farmer plants this tiny seed in the ground, it grows into a big tree with branches. This tree is helpful for birds to rest on. When birds come together on the tree, they sing and make everyone happy.

Just like the mustard seed, we should

let God's word grow in us. If we do that, we can enter the Kingdom of God. By growing in God's Word, we can bring joy, peace, and love to ourselves and others. These are good things that come from God. The Holy Spirit helps us grow this special fruit that will help us and others. We become like God to our friends and to our family.

Reflection Questions

1. Who are the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity?
2. What is another word for stories told by Jesus Christ?
3. How do you know if the Holy Spirit is guiding you? Give some examples.

Women of Faith

St. Photini and St. Helena were two special women who loved Jesus. Their stories teach us that everyone is unique, and it's important to celebrate our differences.

Vocabulary Words

Messiah Saviour, or “the anointed one”; who is Jesus?

Convert To change (religion)

Saint Someone who has died and is honoured by the Church because they lived in a Christ-like way.



The Woman at the Well



Jesus Christ asking water from the Samaritan woman

St. Photini was a Samaritan woman who spoke with Jesus at a well (**St. John 4:1-42**).

Once, Jesus was travelling and stopped at a special place where people got water from a big hole in the ground called a well. Along came a woman named Photini. Jesus asked her politely if he could have some water to drink. The woman was surprised because Jesus is a Jewish person and she is a Samaritan person. Long ago, Jewish and Samaritan people didn't always get along with each other.

Photini was surprised that Jesus, who was a Jew, asked her for a drink because she was a Samaritan. But Jesus said that if she knew who He really was, she would ask Him for special water that would make her never feel thirsty again and give her eternal life. Jesus was talking

about the gift of life that He could give because He was God.

Jesus knew many things about Photini's life even though they had just met, which amazed her. He showed her that He is the **Messiah**, the special person sent by God.

Photini was so happy to meet the Messiah that she ran to tell everyone in her town about Jesus. They were surprised because, back then, men and women usually didn't talk to each other, and women were not treated equally. But Photini didn't care about that. She wanted everyone to know about Jesus.

Some people from her town also wanted to meet Jesus because they were amazed by what Photini told them. They became followers of Jesus that day.

Learning Outcome Check

We should always be respectful and treat everyone with love.

Photini is a great example of loving your enemies. Jews and Samaritans were not friends at that time, but Jesus still talked to Photini and brought her closer to God.

The story of St. Photini shows how Jesus loves all people no matter where they are from, what their gender is, what their religion is, what their colour is, or how different they are. Jesus just wants everyone to know about God and love God.

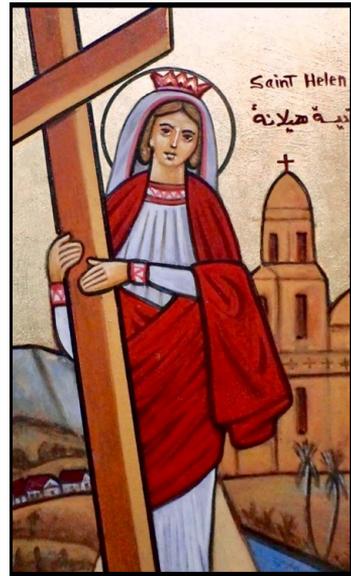
We are also called to be like Jesus and love everyone without looking at their

colour, religion, gender, land of origin, or anything of the like. No one is ugly. Everyone is like Jesus.

Learning Outcome Check

We should always remember that it is not right to call other people names or do things that may cause people to feel bad.

St. Helena the Empress



St. Helena who discovered the Cross of Jesus Christ

St. Helena was a saint who lived a long time ago.

She was the mother of a very important king named Emperor Constantine. Before they knew about Jesus, they used to pray to statues. But then Constantine saw a cross in the sky and heard Jesus speak to him. Jesus said that they would win battles if they had crosses on their shields and flags. So, Constantine started to believe in Jesus and became a Christian.

Think

How do you think the soldiers would have felt when emperor Constantine told them to put crosses on their shields and flags? They probably might have been upset and called emperor Constantine names because this went against their beliefs.



St. Helena was curious about Jesus, too. She went to the Holy Land to find special places where Jesus had been. She wanted to find the cross that Jesus was crucified on.

She asked a Jewish priest called a rabbi, and he said that they could find the cross

under an old temple. They dug there and found three crosses. They didn't know which one was Jesus' cross, so they did a test. They put each cross on a little boy who had passed away.

When they put the third cross on him, the boy came back to life! That's how they knew it was Jesus' cross.

St. Helena was very happy and knew she had found something amazing. She also found Jesus' tomb and had a church built there. She was a very important saint who used her power to help other Christians. She built churches where people could pray and gave money to help sick and poor people.

St. Helena showed us that no matter how old we are, we can always learn about Jesus and do good things for others. She is an important saint in the Christian religion because she helped spread and protect the faith.

Learning Outcome Check

God created us all to be unique from each other. Being different is not ugly but a beautiful thing!





Church of the Holy Sepulcher with the Tomb where Jesus is believed to have been buried and later resurrected.

Reflection Questions

1. What qualities do you like about St. Photini and St. Helena?
2. What made St. Photini different from the rest of Jesus's disciples?
3. How did St. Helena strengthen her belief in Christ?

Called to Serve

Everyone is called to work for the Kingdom of God. Clergy has a special role in helping people worship God.

Vocabulary Words

Vestments Clothing worn by different clergy members

Clergy Church leaders (such as deacons, priests, and bishops)



In **Ephesians 6:10-18**, St. Paul the Apostle describes the "Armour of God". The clergy wear special vestments or clothing that reminds us of their special role.

What is armour, exactly? Armour refers to protective clothing. You might have heard of a soldier wearing strong, protective armour in order to be ready for a battle. Without the armour, the soldier is more likely to get hurt.

In the same way, we must also put on the full Armour of God, which means we need to fully apply Jesus Christ and the gospel into our lives so that we are protected from sin and temptation, just like how a soldier is protected from getting hurt!

Each piece of clothing has a valuable meaning to it, and deacons, priests, and bishops say prayers before putting on each vestment. There are many different

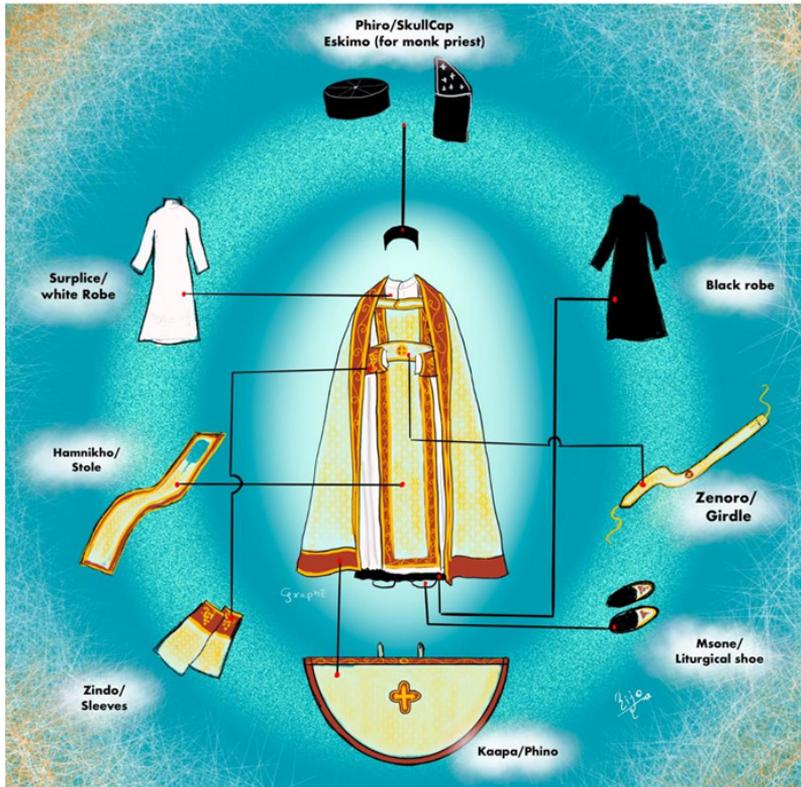
levels of **clergy** members, which mostly include deacons, priests, and bishops. In this lesson, we will look closely at the vestments of the priest.

The Priest

The priest is a loving father to the people in the church. He guides them, prays for them, and helps them find things that are good for them. He also goes into the altar and offers our gifts to God, and when God gives it back to us, the priest gives it to us, such as Holy Qurbana or when we are given palm leaves on Palm Sunday.

The priest also wears the black robe, then the white robe on top, and also the black cap. The priest wears a white robe over the black robe, puts on special shoes, a stole, a belt, hand sleeves, and a cape or kappa over everything.

LITURGICAL VESTMENTS OF ORTHODOX PRIEST



Vestments

Stole Similar to the stole of the deacon, but for the priest, there is a hole where they can put their head through, and then the stole flows down the front of the priest.



Symbolises the breastplate of Aaron

Girdle (belt) worn around the waist



Symbolises the belt of truth

Sleeves worn on both arms, from wrist to elbow



Symbolises that the hands are for good works

Cape (also called Kaapa) The large, designed outer vestment worn over all other garments



Symbolises glory and salvation, like the robe of Aaron

Shoes What do we use shoes for? To go somewhere! In the same way, we take the good news, or the gospel, of Jesus Christ to everyone around us. *We bring peace to them, just like Jesus brings peace to us.*



Symbolises the readiness of the Gospel of peace

The Faithful

Each one of us is a child of God. Some of us may choose to be clergy members, and some of us do not. Since we have all received the Holy Spirit at the time of our baptisms and since we have accepted Jesus Christ into our hearts, we still have to live like Christ wherever we are.

In some way, we are all part of the priesthood and practise **stewardship**. Stewardship means to take care of the whole creation.

Learning Outcome Check

Stewardship means that we have a responsibility to take care of all of creation. This means to take care of the animals, bugs, the environment and also each other.

A priest prays for people, and a child can also pray for people. A priest comforts people who might be having a bad day, and so can a child. A priest can offer Qurbana, or the body and blood of Christ. In the same way, together we can share the body and blood of Christ with the whole world, all people, and even the plants and animals.

As we have learned in previous lessons, we can share the love of Christ today. We can pray for our friends and talk to our friends about our love for Christ. We can talk to our families and pray for them. We can do acts of kindness and charity for people.

Learning Outcome Check

We can show our responsibility as caretakers and stewards of creation by praying for others, sharing our toys, and being kind to others.



If we receive money as a gift, we can set aside a small piece of it and give it to someone in need or to the church. We can donate cans of food or make cards for people who are sick or having a tough day.

We can also do our best in Sunday school, make sure we ask questions in class, and share what we have learned with your family. You can also try to follow along with all the things you see and hear the next time we go to Holy Qurbana, and try to learn how to pray with your family.

Always remember to keep God first before anything you do and to always make time for God every day.

Someday, you might even become a Sunday school teacher yourself and share your love for Christ with future Sunday school children!

Reflection Questions

1. What are the roles of a deacon, a priest, and a bishop?
2. What can you do to be a good steward of Christ?
3. What are some things you can do to take care of creation?

Gratitude

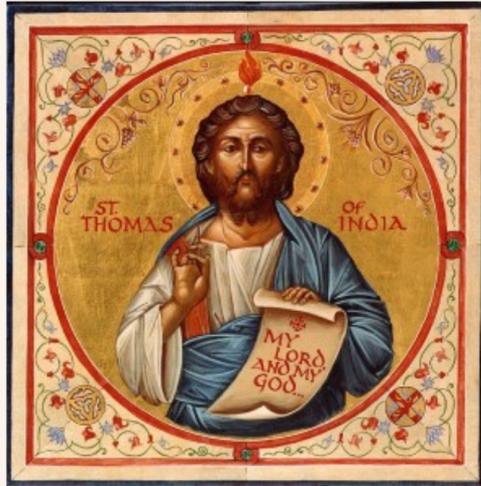
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**ST. THOMAS, THE APOSTLE OF INDIA
PRAY FOR US**



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

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