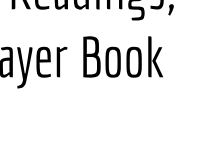




35th Sunday After Pentecost

WEEK 11 - Four Discussions, One Activity:
Sunday's Epistle and Gospel Readings,
Festal Hymns, Faith, and Prayer Book
Additions



OPENING PRAYERS:

In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen
Glory to thee, our God, glory to thee!

Prayer to Holy Spirit

O heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, who art everywhere present and fillest all things, Treasury of blessings, and Giver of life: come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One.

Trisagion Prayer

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities, for thy Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

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, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Before Study

Lord Jesus Christ, open the eyes of my heart that I may hear thy word and understand it and so fulfill thy will. Amen.

DAILY LESSON / ACTIVITY: See pages below. For each topic, please note **Parent roles, **notes**, and **(child responses)**.**

Prayers

Before and after each lesson, please say a short prayer in front of an icon according to your family's prayer rule or the following, taken from the red St Tikhon's Prayer Book:

CLOSING PRAYERS:

"Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb: for thou hast borne the Savior of our souls.

Pray to God for me, O holy [name of your patron saint], pleasing to God, for with fervor I run to thee, swift helper and intercessor for my soul.

O Lord, save thy people and bless thine inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries, and by virtue of thy Cross preserve thy habitation.

It is truly meet to bless thee, O Theotokos: ever-blessed and most pure and the Mother of our God. More honorable than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim; without corruption thou gavest birth to God the Word: true Theotokos, we magnify thee.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, through the prayers of thy most pure Mother, of my holy guardian angel, of [name of your patron saint], of [saint(s) of the day], and of all the saints: save me, a sinner. Amen."

Day 1: Talk About Sunday's Epistle & Gospel Readings

Prayer Before Reading Holy Scripture: O Lord my God, enlighten my mind with the light of the understanding of Thy holy Scripture, and teach me to do Thy will.

Parent Explains: Today's epistle was written by St. Paul to St. Timothy. It is one of the books (or letters) in the New Testament of our bible.

Parent or child may read aloud from 1 Timothy 1:15-17. [Click here for OCA website link.](#)

Parent Asks: "What the author of this Sunday's epistle talking about?" *Possible Answers:* (St. Paul tells St. Timothy that Christ came to the world to save sinners. He says Christ's example of long-suffering is an example for everyone who seeks eternal life. St. Paul offers his praise and thanksgiving to God in his letter to Timothy as a prayer, showing everything is done for the glory of God.)

Parent Asks: "How does the message of this epistle apply to our lives?" *(Possible Answers:* We can speak our own belief in Jesus Christ as God. We should reflect on our sins and how we can follow Christ, not what other people are doing. God's mercy is for us; it's a free gift and blessing from God. God grants us forgiveness when we repent--turn back to Him. We can (and should) glorify and praise God in all things - even in our moments of pain or suffering.)

Parent Explains: This Sunday's gospel was written by St. Matthew. It is one of four written accounts of the life of Jesus Christ, found in the New Testament of our bible.

Parent or child may read aloud from Matthew 15:21-28. [Click here for OCA website link.](#)

Parent Asks: "What happened in this Sunday's Gospel reading?" *Possible Answers:* (Jesus visits the land of Tyre and Sidon, where he encounters a woman of Canaan, begging for mercy for her demon-possessed daughter. The disciples tried to send her away. Christ didn't stop them, and even "reinforces" what they did by saying He was sent to tend to the lost sheep of Israel--not the Canaanites. The woman says even dogs get to eat crumbs from the table. Christ commended the woman's faith, and her daughter was healed.)

Parent Asks: "Why is this important for us now, living in the 21st century?" *Possible Answers:* (We are called to be merciful to everyone. Our own faith and belief in God is necessary to draw closer to Him for healing and salvation. Being vulnerable before God allows us to accept His healing and love.)

"Our relationships with God are an active experience, and we use our time to grow closer to God, deepening our faith and abilities to lead profitable lives. As we come to know more about God, we come to know more about ourselves and how we have a responsibility to make use of the time we have and forgive others as we want God to forgive us."

Day 2: Talking About Faith

Parent Explains: “Let’s look at the important moments in this Sunday’s Gospel reading, and how we can learn from them as Orthodox Christians.

Jesus left the lands of Israel and went into the region of Tyer and Sidon. Jesus’ reputation precedes Him, resulting in large crowds wanting to be get close to Him, be healed, following Him from town to town, listening to His words. Do you follow Christ with a desire to learn from Him, and to be closer to God the Father? Why or why not?” (*Child answers.*)

“A woman from Canaan called to Christ, ‘Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David....’ But Jesus was silent. Jesus doesn’t initially say anything to the woman’s pleas, suggesting He is ignoring someone in pain. Why is it important for us to stay focused on Christ, even when it may seem He is silent? What might He be teaching us?” (We can learn patience and how to trust God.)

“The disciples urged Christ to send her away. In that part of the world, a woman from Canaan certainly wouldn’t be allowed to speak to a Jewish man, let alone a teacher. That would be improper. Why is it important to balance school, friends, and play with time set aside to pray and think about God?” (Helps us build a relationship with God for our whole life.)

“Christ tells the woman He was only ‘sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel’ The woman responded by worshipping Jesus, again pleading for help. The woman bows down before Christ, showing in words and deeds that she believes He is God. What can we do during Great Lent to change our way of life to be more like Christ?” (Pray. Turn to God. Help others. Go to church.)

“Our Lord responds by saying it’s not appropriate to ‘take the children’s bread and throw it to little dogs.’ Jesus is not calling the woman a dog, but explaining that His teachings are ‘spiritual food’ because He is the Bread of Life. **The Canaanite woman acknowledges what Jesus says, noting that even the crumbs which fall from the table are of value. Our Lord acknowledges the faith of the woman, responding to her desire.** The woman recognizes that even the smallest amount of God’s mercy--the size of a crumb--can heal her daughter. Christ praises the woman for her faith in Him as God. Why is it important to be willing to risk everything, even our life, for the sake of believing in Jesus Christ as God?” (*Child answers.* Faith and trust in God.)

The daughter was immediately healed. In a word, Jesus is able to heal the daughter! How would you react if you were standing there when Jesus told the woman her daughter was healed? Would you believe Him? Why or why not?” (*Child answers.*)

Parent Explains: “Christ’s behavior towards the woman of Canaan teaches us something more important than whether a miracle occurred or not: It’s about our **faith**. Now think about pets - in particular a dog. Dogs tend to be near the table at dinner, ready to eat whatever might fall off a fork or plate. They wait with anxious eyes and anticipation, because every morsel from the table is precious.

And that is exactly what the woman told Christ: like a good and loyal puppy dog, waiting for a treat, the woman understands that Jesus has wonderful words and the power to heal her daughter. She desires His mercy. How can we appreciate the crumbs of joy and greatness that come from a life in Christ?” (Say thank you in our prayers) “How can we remember to pay attention to everything that falls from the table?” (Come to church prepared to listen to the Gospel reading, receive the Eucharist prayerfully, and say ‘thank you, God’ afterwards) “We can have a loving and meaningful relationship with God when we follow Him, doing what He wants for us - to be merciful, forgiving, kind, and appreciating the blessings of grace we receive in our daily lives.”

Day 3: Festal Hymns

1. Parent Asks: "What is the troparion (tro-par-ee-ohn) and **Kontakion** (kon-tahk-ee-ohn)?" (**Theme songs** for each feast, celebration, or saint. These hymns describe what or who we're celebrating and how this event or saint is important to our lives as Orthodox Christians)

These are celebratory hymns, rejoicing in God's mercy and wonders. Feel free to add them to your mealtime or daily prayers!

2. Read or sing together, then discuss:

Sunday Troparion - Tone 2

When **Thou** didst descent to death, O Life Immortal,
Thou didst slay hell with the splendor of Thy **Godhead**.
And **when** from the depths Thou didst raise the dead,
all the powers of **heaven** cried out:
"O Giver of life, Christ our **God**, **glory** to Thee!"

Sunday Kontakion - Tone 2

Hell became afraid, O almighty **Savior**,
seeing the miracle of Thy **Resurrection** from the tomb!
The dead arose! Creation, with Adam, beheld this and **rejoiced**
with Thee,
and the world, my **Savior**, praises **Thee forever**.

Festal Troparion - Tone 1

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, Full of Grace!
From thee shone the Sun of Righteousness, **Christ** our God,
enlightening those who sat in **darkness**.
Rejoice and be glad, O righteous **Elder**,
thou didst accept in thine arms the **Redeemer** of our souls,
Who grants us the **Resurrection!**

3) Parent Asks: "What do the hymns teach us about the resurrection?"
Possible Answers: (After Jesus died on the cross, He descended to Hades. In Hades, Jesus freed all of the souls trapped by Satan. Jesus defeated the power of death through His own death. The angels of heaven continuously sing rejoicing in God's power. The presence of God in Hades made the demons fearful. The dead, including Adam, were raised from the dead by Christ's resurrection. Jesus Christ is the provider of life for everyone.)

Parent Asks: "How can the message of the hymns apply to our lives?"
Possible Answers: (We glorify God for the resurrection, giving thanks for His mercy. Our lives have new meaning because Christ destroyed the power of death. We can be like the angels - praising God for the miracle of the resurrection. By following Christ's commandments, we avoid sin and being condemned to Hades. If we call out to God when in need, the demons will flee from us by the power of Christ's name. Glorifying God is natural for us since we were created by God.)

Parent Asks: "Who are we calling the shining Sun, the enlightener of people in darkness?" (Jesus is the Light) "How did Simeon recognize Christ when St. Mary brought Jesus into the temple?" (Faith in God)

Day 4: Great is Your Faith!

Parent Explains: In this week's gospel reading, we heard about Christ's meeting with a woman of Canaan, and His healing of her daughter, possessed by a demon. The woman expresses her faith in Christ, not for herself, but for her daughter, a sign of her love and compassion for another. Have you ever felt someone else's struggles in your own heart? What does that feel like?" (*Possible Answers:* I felt the pain of someone who was struggling, because their pain was so real. It hurt me to see others upset, and I prayed to God asking for His mercy to ease their pain)

"The woman is persistent, asking Jesus for mercy. When He doesn't respond, she doesn't give up - worshipping Him, calling Him the Son of David. She's not a Jew, but still recognizes Jesus as the Messiah. Christ is aware of the woman's pleas for mercy. As God, He certainly knows she's telling the truth about her daughter. Yet, He tests the strength of her faith."

Parent explains about prayers and having faith: "Glory to Jesus Christ!" (Glory forever!) "During His earthly ministry, Jesus Christ did very specific things: He preached of repentance, healed the sick, and provided a path to salvation through His voluntary death and resurrection. Christ showed us how a strong faith and deep belief are necessary for us to experience our own repentance, healing, and salvation."

"Lord, Help Me!" (O Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me) "Facing difficult situations, we might ask for help from a parent or friends, or the saints to intercede for the wisdom to know what to do and the courage to do it."

Ultimately, the source of any help we receive is God, Who hears our prayers, knowing our every need. What happens if we feel our prayers are left unanswered?" (*Child answers.*)

"Silence is an Answer. Why does it feel like God doesn't always answer our prayers? It might make us feel hurt or abandoned if it seems God is ignoring us. Doesn't He love us? Doesn't God want what's best for us?" (Yes!) "God does love us, and He wants us to have what is necessary for our salvation. If we don't hear the response we want, perhaps we need to reflect on what we're asking of Him, seeking to better understand God's will for us."

"I Believe, Help My Unbelief. If we're honest with ourselves, what do we really want in life? Is our belief in God based on temporary needs in the moment? Or do we have a serious desire to reject the temptations of this world in favor of a life centered on God?" (*Discuss.*) "Even if it seems He's not listening. God hears our every prayer. As we pray more intently, strengthening our faith, and being more intentional in devotion, we can more clearly see the image of God in ourselves."

"Let it be as You Desire" (Thy will be done) "As Orthodox Christians, every day we renew our commitment to carry our cross and follow Christ. This daily affirmation is possible when we humbly admit we need God's help every day."

The beauty of our relationship with God is that He accepts our faith, leading us through struggles to the same healing and joy the saints received from Christ."

Day 5: Daily Prayers Activity

Throughout the course of our day, we can pray to God whenever we feel the desire or need. Saying “Lord, have mercy” or “Amen” is a great way to remain close to God. There are also specific times each day when we are encouraged to pray to God.

Our personal prayers begin with the prescribed prayers of the Church, helping us keep God at the center of our thoughts regardless of the situation. As we learn these prayers, making them our own, we will incorporate other prayers and verses from scripture.

Like breathing, prayer is a natural experience for humans. As breathing fills our lungs with air, keeping our body physically functioning and healthy, prayer fills our heart with thoughts of God, keeping our mind and body spiritually healthy.

Print and cut out the prayers on the following pages, or take them from the Little Church School basket. Older children can fill in the blanks to help memorize them. Add them to your ‘Prayer Hands’ or daily prayer booklet.

These prayers are yours to learn, memorize, adopt as your own, and to say with joy, gratitude, and humility to God.



Morning Prayers to the Holy Trinity (I)

To be said with the Trisagion upon waking up.



Psalm 50 (I)

*To be said once a day with repentance. It can also be said before confession,
or before receiving the Eucharist.*



Evening Prayers (I)

To be said before going to sleep.



Psalm 50 (II)

+ Have _____ on me, O God, according
to Your _____ love; according to Your
abundant _____, blot out my _____.
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse
me from my _____!
For I know my _____ and my sin is ever _____
me....

Against _____, only You, have I sinned
and done that which is _____ in Your sight,
so that You are justified in Your _____ and
blameless in Your judgment. Behold! I was
brought _____ in iniquity and in sin did my
_____ conceive me. Behold! You desires
_____ in the inward being;...

+ Having arisen from _____, we fall
down before You, O _____ One, and sing
to You, O _____ One, the angelic hymn:
_____! Holy! _____! are You, O
_____ ; through the Theotokos, have
_____ on us.

+ Have _____ on us, O Lord, _____
mercy on us; for laying aside all excuse, we
_____ offer to You, as to our _____ ,
this supplication: Have _____ on us.
*+ Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the
Holy Spirit.*



Prayer to My Guardian Angel (I)

To be said with morning and evening prayers.



Psalm 50 (III)



Midday Prayer to the Holy Trinity

To be said with the Trisagion at noon.



Prayer to my Patron Saint

To be said whenever there's a need for the saint's prayers.

Therefore teach me _____ in my secret
_____. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be
clean; _____ me, and I shall be whiter than
_____. Fill me with _____ and
gladness; let the _____ which You have
broken _____. Hide Your _____
from my sins and blot out all my _____.

Pray unto God for me, O Holy Saint
_____, well-pleasing to God:
I turn to you, as a speedy helper and
intercessor for my soul. Amen.

+ O Holy _____, keeping guard
over my wretched _____ and my
passionate _____, do not forsake me,
a _____, nor depart from me because
of my lack of self _____. Do not give
the _____ enemy room to overcome me
by force of this mortal _____....

O most Holy _____, have mercy on
us.
O _____, cleanse us from our sins.
O _____, pardon our transgressions.
O _____ One, visit and heal our
infirmities, for Your _____'s sake.