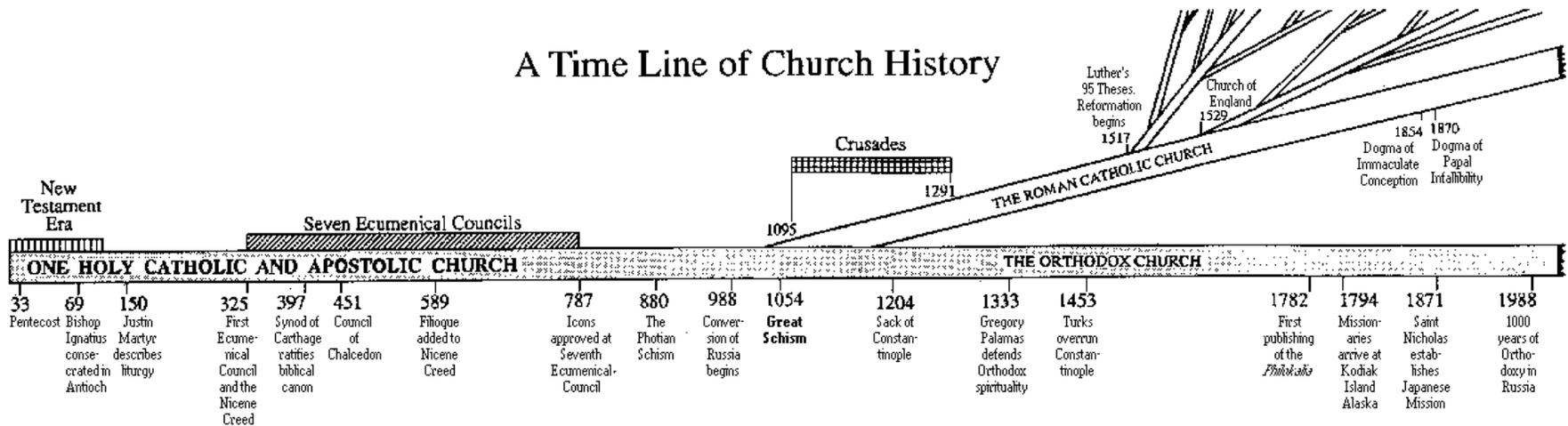


A Time Line of Church History



Know Your Roots
 Camp St. Nicholas
 Christian Education Lessons 2005

Lesson 1

A TIME LINE OF CHURCH HISTORY

TODAY WE ARE GOING TO DISCUSS THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH. IN THE BIBLE, THE GREEK WORD FOR CHURCH IS “ECCLESIA” (pronounced EH-CLEE- SEE-AH). THIS WORD MEANS “ASSEMBLY”. BUT THIS ASSEMBLY IS LIKE NO OTHER ASSEMBLY- IT IS THE “ASSEMBLY OF GOD”.

GROUPS 3&4: BEFORE WE BEGIN, LET US FIRST POINT OUT A QUOTE BY FR. ALEXANDER SCHEMANN:

The true orthodox way of thought has always been historical, has always included the past, but has never been enslaved by it. . . [for] the strength of the Church is not in the past, present, or future, but in Christ.

-Fr. Alexander Schmemmann

REMEMBER THAT AS WE LEARN OF THE EVENTS OF THE PAST, WE MUST REMEMBER THAT THE EVENTS DON'T DEFINE US, BUT CHRIST DOES. WE ARE TRULY THE ORTHODOX CHURCH, IF WE PROCLAIM CHRIST CORRECTLY. BEING THE BODY OF CHRIST EACH TIME WE COME TOGETHER- TREATING EACH OTHER WITH LOVE AND HAVING NO ANGER OR DIVISIONS AMONGST US COMES FIRST- NOT OUR HISTORY.

(hand out time lines) PLEASE FOLLOW ALONG WITH THIS TIMELINE AS I POINT OUT THE SIGNIFICANT EVENTS THAT BROUGHT US TO WHERE WE ARE TODAY.

**GRPS 1 & 2 SHOULD JUST FOCUS ON THE STARED ITEMS*

***33 Pentecost-** The Holy Spirit descends upon the Apostles, and they are able to speak in many languages. The Church officially begins! (**READ ACTS 2:1-4**) The people were amazed, knowing that some of those speaking were Galileans, and not men who would normally speak many different languages. They wondered what this meant, and some even thought the Apostles were drunk (Acts 2:7-13).

Peter, hearing these remarks, stood up and addressed the crowd. He preached to the people regarding the Old Testament prophecies about the coming of the Holy Spirit. He spoke about Jesus Christ and His death and glorious Resurrection. Great conviction fell upon the people, and they asked the Apostles, "What shall we do?" Peter said to them,

"Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38-39).

The Bible records that on that day about three thousand were baptized. Following, the book of Acts states that the newly baptized continued daily to hear the teaching of the Apostles, as the early Christians met together for fellowship, the breaking of bread, and for prayer. Many wonderful signs and miracles were done through the Apostles, and the Lord added to the Church daily those who were being saved (Acts 2:42-47).

69 Bishop Ignatius is made the Bishop of Antioch in the heart of New Testament era—

*St. Peter had been the first bishop in Antioch.

150 St. Justin Martyr describes the liturgical worship of the Church, centered in the Eucharist.

***325** The [Nicene Creed](#) is established at the first Ecumenical Council. (the Creed that we say today). The Ecumenical Councils were meetings where all the Bishops would get together and make decisions about the Church. There were **7** of them.

787 The era of [Ecumenical Councils](#) ends at Nicea, with the Seventh Council bringing the use of [icons](#) back into the Church. (we will discuss this later on in the week)

988 The Orthodox Church began in Russia.

***1054** The **Great Schism** occurs---the church splits. The Roman Church split away from the four other centers of the Christian Church. Those cities were Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, Egypt and Constantinople, Greece.

1095 The Crusades begun by the Roman Church.- Holy Wars to regain the Holy Land of Jerusalem. *Why did they begin?* Because the Christians wanted to regain control of the Holy Land from the Turkish Muslims.

1291 The Crusades end. There were **7** Crusades. Result of the Crusades: Failures. They made no permanent conquests of the Holy Land.

***1517** Martin Luther nails his 95 Theses to the door of the Roman Church in Wittenberg, starting the Protestant Reformation. (protestant church begins). What are the 95 Theses? Martin Luther's objections to that church's practices. This event lead to the over 20,000 "Christian" churches that exist today.

***1794** Missionaries arrive in Alaska. Led by St. Herman of Alaska; Orthodoxy is introduced to North America. **Who was St. Herman?**

*Saint Herman was born near Moscow, Russia in 1756. When he was young he became a monk. While he was at his first monastery, the most holy Mother of God appeared to him, healing him of a very bad sickness. When he was at his second monastery, he often went into the wilderness to pray for days at a time. In 1794, answering a call for missionaries to preach the Gospel to the people of Alaska, he came to the new world with the first Orthodox mission. He brought many people to Christ by the example of his life, his teaching, and his kindness and holiness, and was granted the grace of working miracles and of seeing the future. Since he was not a priest, Angels descended on the Feast of Epiphany to bless the waters in the bay; Saint Herman used this holy water to heal the sick. He has been called a Wonderworker since he died in 1837.

REMEMBER THAT THE CHURCH IS NOT AN ORGANIZATION, OR A BUILDING, BUT THE “ASSEMBLY” OF GOD’S PEOPLE COMING TOGETHER FOR SALVATION. THE TEACHINGS OF THE CHURCH PROTECT US FROM BEING CARRIED AWAY BY THE LIES OF MEN, WHICH IS WHY THERE ARE SO MANY CHRISTIAN CHURCHES TODAY.

THE WORD “**ORTHODOX**” MEANS:

- 1- **TRUE TEACHING**- THE ORTHODOX CHURCH HAS NOT CHANGED ITS TEACHINGS OF THE GOSPEL FROM THE DAYS OF THE APOSTLES.
- 2- **TRUE PRAISE**- WORSHIPPING THE FATHER, SON, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE TRUE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH. ALL THE CHURCHES ACTIVITIES ARE DIRECTED TOWARDS THIS GOAL.

AS WE WILL COME TO SEE THIS WEEK, EVERYTHING THAT THE CHURCH TEACHES IS ROOTED IN REVEALING THE TRUTH OF GOD AND HIS WILL TO US.

REVIEW QUESTIONS- GROUPS 3 & 4

- 1- What year did the church officially begin with Pentecost?
33AD
- 2- True or False- the Nicene creed was established at the last ecumenical council. *False- the first ecumenical council*
- 3- The Great Schism- 1054- one of the cities split away from the rest of the Christian Church. Which city was it? *Rome*
- 4- Who began the Protestant Reformation? *Martin Luther*
- 5- In 1794, Orthodoxy was introduced to America. What state did the missionaries come to? *Alaska*

REVIEW QUESTIONS- 1 & 2

- 1- When did the Holy Spirit descend on the Apostles? It was when the church began.
 - a- Ascension
 - b- Pentecost**
 - c- Pascha
- 2- When Orthodox people first came to America, they arrived in what state?
 - a- Arizona
 - b- California
 - c- Alaska**
- 3- **True** or False: The Orthodox Church teachings stayed the same from the time when Jesus' apostles lived until now.

CLOSING ACTIVITY

- ❖ **BREAK THE CLASS UP INTO GROUPS OF 3 OR 4**
- ❖ **HAND OUT A BLANK TIMELINE AND SHEET OF EVENTS TO EACH GROUP (there's 1 for 1&2, one for 3&4)**
- ❖ **ASK EACH GROUP TO WRITE THE EVENTS ON THE TIMELINE THAT CORRESPOND TO THE CORRECT DATE.**
- ❖ **GO OVER THE ANSWERS AS A GROUP WHEN ALL ARE FINISHED**

GROUPS 1 & 2

**PLEASE WRITE THESE EVENTS ON THE TIMELINE
ACCORDING TO WHEN THEY OCCURRED:**

❖ **GREAT SCHISM**

❖ **PENTECOST**

❖ **ST. HERMAN- FIRST MISSIONARY TO ALASKA**

❖ **MARTIN LUTHER BEGINS PROTESTANT
REFORMATION**

❖ **CREED ESTABLISHED AT FIRST ECUMENICAL
COUNCIL**

GROUPS 1 &2 – TIMELINE OF CHURCH HISTORY

33

325

1054

1517

1794

GROUPS 3 & 4- TIMELINE OF CHURCH HISTORY

33

150

325

787

1054

1095

1517

1794

GROUPS 3 & 4

**PLEASE WRITE THESE EVENTS ON THE TIMELINE
ACCORDING TO WHEN THEY OCCURRED:**

- ❖ **GREAT SCHISM**

- ❖ **CRUSADES BEGUN BY ROMAN CHURCH**

- ❖ **ST. HERMAN- FIRST MISSIONARY TO ALASKA**

- ❖ **JUSTIN THE MARTYR DESCRIBES LITURGICAL
WORSHIP**

- ❖ **PENTECOST**

- ❖ **LAST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL- ICONS PUT BACK IN
CHURCHES**

- ❖ **MARTIN LUTHER BEGINS PROTESTANT
REFORMATION**

- ❖ **CREED ESTABLISHED AT FIRST ECUMENICAL
COUNCIL**

Lesson 2

THE BIBLE - THE REVEALED WORD OF GOD

The church grew as the Word of God brought people into the Way of the Lord. The church was established on this Word, and the church is the people of God gathered in the name of the Word of God- the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Without this Word, we would not know Him or His will for us. He is the Living Word.

The Bible, the inspired word of God, is an important record of revelation in that it goes above and beyond being just an historical document or just a classic piece of literature. **It reveals to us God Himself and His Will.** The Bible is the divine account of God's Design for the **salvation of man**; it is an account of the Incarnation of the Word of God in the Person of Jesus Christ who became flesh and dwelt among man. It was written to be read with reverence and faith. The Revelation and Message of the Bible should not be hidden or altered by words and phrases that have lost or changed their meaning over the years. The Bible was given to man so he might know the True God and His Revealed Truths, for **without the preaching of the Word of God revealed to us in the Bible, guided by the church Fathers, and guarded by the Church, Christ would be unknown to man.** God speaks to man through the Bible. Therefore, the written word in its original context is very important for belief in Christ and for living His Commandments. The important words of the Holy Bible are:

"written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name",

John 20:31.

IMPORTANT POINTS

- **It's so important to know the Bible because that is the most important way we know Christ and His will for our lives.**
- **If we call ourselves Christians, we need to know what that means. We can't know what it means if we don't know Christ. We can't know the fullness of Christ if we don't know the Bible.**
- **So if we read scripture, and come to know Christ through God's Word, we can show Christ to others by living out His**

Word! We need to know Christ so others will, too! You may be the only Jesus some may ever see!

WHO IS THIS GOD THAT SCRIPTURE REVEALS TO US?

GOD THE FATHER- God the Father is the source of everything. The Son of God and the Spirit of God come from the Father. Christ is "begotten of the Father", which means that God caused Christ to exist. Christ is God's only Son... if we believe in Him, and live according to His commandments, we will have a place in God's Kingdom. The Spirit "proceeds from the Father", which means that the Spirit originates with the Father, or begins there.

JESUS CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD- Christ is God's only Son. The Son was sent by the Father. Jesus Christ was the perfect man who showed us how to be perfect. Only He alone is perfect. When we are baptized, we put on Christ, which means that everything we do should be Christ-like. *"God became human that we might be made God," St. Athanasius.* So God showed Himself to us through His Son, so that we may work very hard to be in union with Him through His grace (gift) and our choosing, two unequal, but necessary elements to achieve oneness with God. How do we do that? By loving God and each other!

THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD- The Spirit of God was promised to us by Christ before he ascended to Heaven 40 days after He resurrected. As we heard yesterday, the promise of the Holy Spirit was fulfilled on Pentecost, 50 days after He resurrected. God showed us the Way to be through His Son, but He wanted to give us His Spirit to guide us in that Way. Every time we allow Christ to live through us, we are letting the Spirit of God guide what we do.

ONE GOD- Here's a little analogy to help us understand Trinity. God is like the sun... Christ is like the rays of the sun... and the Holy Spirit is the heat we feel from the sun. God sent His son to us, so that we might live like Him and do God's will. When God works through us, and we follow Him, it is the Spirit working... and we feel it, just like we feel the heat from the rays of the sun. And just like the rays and heat cannot work or exist without the sun, Christ and the Spirit cannot work or exist without the Father. So the 3 are 1!

PLEASE READ THESE SCRIPTURE VERSES AND DISCUSS THEM WITH THE CHILDREN. ASK THEM WHAT THEY THINK GOD IS SAYING TO US, AND THEN READ THE EXPLANATION.

Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures.

~ **Luke 24:45** What does it mean to have an open mind? *It means that you are ready to learn and open to what you are about to hear. Sometimes people find it hard to understand God's Word because they aren't open to hear it. Remember that this Word was not written for scholars, but for the poor and uneducated. It is truly something we all can and must understand, and God assists us in our understanding through the church guided by the Holy Spirit. He uses our Priests and teachers to help us know the Way He wants us to go, which is contained in His written Word.*

You search the scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness to me;

~ **John 5:39**

*Scripture is the Lord- it is not the word or pages of the bible that give us life, but what is contained in them- Christ Himself! There were no video tapes or radios in the time that Christ lived- what we have are the writings of the Prophets and Apostles. **Fun fact:** The Apostles thought that the Christ would come again in their lifetime. When they realized that they would not see the second coming, they began recording His Word so that all the nations of people would know Him and continue to spread the good news!*

Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. ~Proverbs 30:5

There is only one truth- and that is Jesus Christ. Everything else that we hear that goes against God's teachings is a lie. If we hold on to the truth and live the way we are commanded to live, than God will keep us from physical and spiritual harm that sin causes. If we choose Him, we will find safety and peace.

Little children, let us not love in word or speech but in deed and in truth. ~ 1 John 3:18

Truly living according to the Word of God is truly loving all men, which means that we must keep our eyes open to see the needs of those around us and to fill them. What we say is not as important as what we do. What we do is what shows love. We can say that we love, but if we don't treat people with love, than we do not have love for them.

FUN FACTS ABOUT THE BIBLE- Please share these facts with the children, using the bible as a visual aid.

- 1- There are 81 total books of the Bible.
- 2- There are 54 books of the Old Testament.
- 3- There are 27 books of the New Testament.
- 4- The Bible was originally written in Hebrew, Aramaic, & Greek.
- 5- There are over 40 authors of the Bible.
- 6- The largest Book of the Bible is Psalms.
- 7- The largest Book of the 4 Gospels is Luke, which is also the largest Book of the New Testament.
- 8- The shortest Verse of the Bible is John 11:35,

"Jesus wept."
- 9- The word "God" occurs over 4,000 times.
- 10- Amen is the last word in the Bible.

Review Questions- Groups 3 & 4

- 1- The Bible reveals to us God Himself and His _____. *Will*
- 2- True or False: Without the revealed Word of God, Christ would be unknown to man. *True*
- 3- The Bible was originally written in _____, Hebrew, and Aramaic. *Greek*
- 4- How many books of the Bible are there? *81*
- 5- We can't know Christ if we don't know _____
 _____. *The Bible*

Review Questions- Groups 1 & 2

- 1- What do we have to read in order to know Jesus?
The Bible
- 2- Yes or No: The largest book in the Bible is Genesis.
No- It is Psalms
- 3- What is the last word in the Bible?
Amen

CLOSING ACTIVITY

- ❖ Break the class up into groups of 3 or 4
- ❖ Hand out the sheet of scripture verses, with blanks, to each group (one sheet is for groups 3 & 4- the other for groups 1 & 2)
- ❖ Ask each group to work together to fill in the blanks correctly
- ❖ Go over the answers as a group when they are finished

CLOSING ACTIVITY- GROUPS 1 & 2

**Then he opened their _____to
understand the scriptures. ~ Luke 24:45**

Answer is: A- hearts
B- minds
C- books

**Every word of God proves _____; he is a
shield to those who take refuge in him.
~Proverbs 30:5**

Answer is: A- true
B- right
C- good

**Little children, let us not _____ in word or
speech but in deed and in truth.
~ 1 John 3:18**

Answer is: A- give
B- teach
C- love

CLOSING ACTIVITY- GROUPS 3 & 4

Then he opened their _____ to _____
the scriptures. ~ **Luke 24:45**

You search the scriptures, because you
think that in them you have _____ _____;
and it is they that bear _____ to Me;
~ **John 5:39**

Every Word of God proves _____; He is a
_____ to those who take refuge in Him.
~ **Proverbs 30:5**

Little children, let us not love in _____ or
speech but in _____ and in truth.
~ **1 John 3:18**

Lesson 3

OUR CALLING TO BE SAINTS

It must be stated at the beginning that the only true "saint" or holy one is God Himself. The Bible states *"For I am the Lord your God; you shall name yourselves holy and keep yourselves holy, because I am holy ... "* (Levit. 11:44; 19:2 and 20:7). Man becomes holy and "sainted" by participation in the holiness of God.

Holiness or sainthood is a gift given by God to man, through the Holy Spirit. Man's effort to become a participant in the life of divine holiness is very important, but sanctification (*being made holy*) itself is the work of the Holy Trinity, especially through the sanctifying power of Jesus Christ, who was incarnate, suffered crucifixion, and rose from the dead, in order to lead us to the life of holiness, through the communion with the Holy Spirit.

In the Second Letter to the Thessalonians St. Paul suggests: *"But we are bound to thank God always for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because from the beginning of time God chose you to find salvation in the Spirit that consecrates you (makes you holy), and in the truth that you believe. It was for this that He called you through the Gospel we brought, so that you might possess for your own the splendor of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2: 13–14).*

CATEGORIES OF SAINTS

Many people that came before us walked the holy path that we must aspire to. As we struggle to become true disciples of Christ, we must look to them for example and strength. In our society, who can be addressed as a saint? Who are those men and women and children who may be called saints by the Church today? Many Orthodox theologians classify the saints in six categories:

1. **The Apostles**, who were the first ones to spread the message of the Incarnation of the Word of God and of salvation through Christ. The word "Apostle" means "one who is sent." This is a different mean that the word "Disciple", which means "someone who assists in spreading the doctrine or teachings of another."

2. **The Prophets**, because they predicted and prophesied the coming of the Messiah, who is Christ the Savior.
3. **The Martyrs**, for sacrificing their lives and fearlessly confessing Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Savior of mankind.
4. **The Fathers and Hierarchs(bishops) of the Church**, who excelled in explaining and in defending, by word and deed, the Christian faith.
5. **The Monastics**, who lived in the desert and dedicated themselves to spiritual exercise reaching, as far as possible, perfection in Christ.
6. **The Just**, those who lived in the world, leading exemplary lives as clergy or laity with their families, becoming examples for imitation in society.

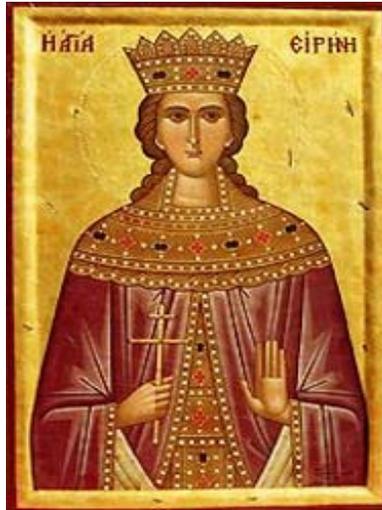
THE VENERATION OF THE SAINTS

In the Orthodox Church the worship given to God is completely different from the honor of love and respect, or even veneration, given to the saints. The Orthodox honor the saints to express their love and gratitude to God, who has "perfected" the saints. *As St. Symeon the New Theologian writes, "God is the teacher of the Prophets, the co-traveler with the Apostles, the power of the Martyrs, the inspiration of the Fathers and Teachers, the perfection of all Saints ... "*

The Saints, for us in the Orthodox Church, are the people we should look to as our Heros. Their commitment and dedication to Christ is what we should try our best to have.

TV, Video Games, and movies show us a lot of people that they want us to model ourselves after. A lot of times, these people are not the best examples for us. That is why we should read the lives of the saints! The saints are people, just like us, who lived on earth and lived very Holy lives. This shows us that we can also live very Holy lives. Let's hear now about the lives of some of the greatest saints:

The Great and Holy Martyr Irene



St. Irene was a Persian princess. She was baptized by St. Timothy. When she converted to Christianity her father sought to have her put to death, but instead was himself converted by her. She later suffered martyrdom by being beheaded. The Emperor Justinian built a magnificent church in Constantinople in her honor. The name "Irene" means peace in Greek.

❖ What can we learn from St. Irene?

Prophet Isaiah



Isaiah was the first of the four major prophets of the Old Testament. The book of Isaiah is called the "Gospel of the O.T." because of its many and detailed prophecies about Christ. His prophecy is very eloquent, poetical and to the point. He was killed in 681 B.C. by Manasseh, son of King Hezekiah. His relics were brought to Constantinople, where a church was dedicated to him by the Empress Pulcheria.

- ❖ Why would God give the gift of foretelling the future to the prophets?

St. John Chrysostom

One of the Great Fathers of the Church



St. John was born in Antioch in 347. He studied Greek philosophy but found no sure answers there. He repented and wholeheartedly embraced Christianity. After he was baptized, his parents followed him in baptism. After they died, he became a monk. He wrote a book "On the Priesthood". Apostles Peter & John appeared to him and prophesied that he would do great service and receive great grace and great suffering. When John was ordained, an angel appeared to him and the patriarch that was ordaining him. As he was ordained Priest, a shining, white dove appeared over his head. John was an eloquent and persuasive speaker. He used to sit while the people stood to hear him preach and they would interrupt him with applause and be disappointed if he spoke for less than a couple of hours. That is how he earned the name "Chrysostom" after his death, which means: "golden mouth". His

messages were verse by verse from the Scriptures. A secretary took down his sermons and they now form a multi-volume commentary on the Scripture. Most of his ministry was in Antioch. But he became Patriarch of Constantinople at the request of Emperor Arcadius and served for six years. He died in exile in Comana in Georgia on Holy Cross, September 14, 407. His last words were: "Glory to God for everything!" In his hands is a scroll which reads: "Like the thief will I confess Thee. Remember me, O Lord, in Thy Kingdom." This is from the communion prayer which is recited in the Liturgy. This icon commemorates St. John Chrysostom's contribution to the development of the Liturgy. The Liturgy celebrated on most Sundays bears his name.

❖ **What significant things do you remember about the life of St. John?**

St. Anthony the Great



St. Anthony was the forerunner and shaper of the monastic movement. He was born about 250 in a village near Heracleopolis, Egypt, of rich and noble parents. After the death of his parents, he secured his sister's position preserving her half of their inheritance for her. He gave his half away and retreated into the desert near the Red Sea. He spent 20 years in the company of no one but God. After that, others were retreating to the desert and discovering his great wisdom. He disciplined many ascetics in the deserts of Egypt. He was unable to read, yet confounded the philosophers with his great wisdom. He reposed at the age of 105, leaving behind a multitude of monastics, in the year 356. With the toleration of Christianity and the threat of martyrdom greatly reduced, many men and women

sought the martyrdom of asceticism in their pursuit of holiness. St. Anthony was there to give order and lead the way. His scroll reads: "I no longer fear God but love Him."

- ❖ **Discuss what is written on the scroll in this icon. What do you think the difference is**

between fearing God and loving Him? How do you get from one place to another?

Review Questions- Groups 3 & 4

- 1-Scripture says, "*For I am the Lord your God; you shall name yourselves holy and keep yourselves holy, because _____ _____ ...* " (Levit. 11:44; 19:2 and 20:7). *I am Holy*

- 2-Fill in the blank: Holiness or sainthood is a gift given by God to man, through the _____
Holy Spirit

- 3-Who wrote the Liturgy that we say almost every Sunday? *St. John Chrysostom*

- 4-Who began monasticism? *St. Anthony the Great*

- 5-Who are those who predicted the coming of the Messiah? *The Prophets*

Review Questions- Groups 1 & 2

- 1-What do we call people that are holy because they live in God's holiness? *Saints*

**2-How many categories of saints are there?
Let's all name them together. 6- answers
in lesson**

**3-One of these saints wrote the Divine
Liturgy we say almost every Sunday, and
one of them began Monasticism. Who did
what?**

**St. John Chrysostom – Divine Liturgy
St. Anthony the Great – Monasticism**

CLOSING ACTIVITY

**WHY DO WE CALL THESE SAINTS?
DRAW A LINE TO THE CORRECT ANSWER.**

The Fathers and Heirarchs

The Just

The Apostles

The Monastics

The Martyrs

The Prophets

the first ones to spread the message of the Incarnation of the Word of God and of salvation through Christ.

for sacrificing their lives and fearlessly confessing Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Savior of mankind

who lived in the desert and dedicated themselves to spiritual exercise reaching, as far as possible, perfection in Christ.

because they predicted and prophesied the coming of the Messiah, who is Christ the Savior.

who excelled in explaining and in defending, by word and deed, the Christian faith.

those who lived in the world, leading exemplary lives as clergy or laity with their families, becoming examples for imitation in society

Lesson 4

THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN TEACHING ON ICONS

From the year 726- 843, people were fighting about whether or not icons should be in churches. Some people called **iconoclasts** were saying that there should be no art depicting people in churches. They were mistaken and thought that people were worshiping the wood and paint as idols. The people that wanted icons in churches were called **iconophiles**. (*pronounced- icon-o-files*) They were saying that what icons really were for was to tell people about Jesus and His life. We give respect to the person or people in the icon, not the wood and paint. For example, you keep pictures of your family and friends because when you look at the picture, you remember that you love that person.

In 787, the Orthodox teaching about icons was established:

"We define that the holy icons, whether in color, mosaic, or some other material, should be exhibited (**shown**) in the holy churches of God, on the sacred vessels and liturgical vestments (**what the deacons and priest wear**), on the walls, furnishings, and in houses and along the roads, namely the icons of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ, that of our Lady the Theotokos, those of the venerable angels and those of all saintly people. Whenever these representations are contemplated (**looked at and thought about**), they will cause those who look at them to commemorate (**remember and honor**) and love their prototype (**the person in the icon**). We define also that they should be kissed and that they are an object of veneration and honor, but not of real worship, which is reserved for Him Who is the subject of our faith and is proper for the divine nature (**we only worship God who is depicted in the icon; we don't worship the icon**); he who venerates (**kisses and respects**) the icon, venerated in it the reality for which it stands (**venerating the icon is venerating the person depicted in the icon**)."

LET'S REVIEW THIS TEACHING:

What are the icons for? *To remember and honor the person in the icon & to understand God. When the icon is*

venerated (kissed and respected), the person in the icon is venerated.

Do we worship icons? *Of course not. We don't worship wood and paint. We worship God alone. **GROUPS 3&4: St. John Damascene wrote, "In former times God, who is without form or body, could never be depicted. But now when God is seen in the flesh conversing with men, I make an image of the god whom I see. I do not worship matter; I worship the Creator of matter who became matter for my sake, who willed to take His abode in matter; who worked out my salvation through matter. Never will I cease honoring the matter which wrought my salvation! I honor it, but not as God."***

When this teaching was established by the bishops of the church in 787, the first part of the fight against icons was over. In the year 843, the battle over icons was put to rest for good, and icons were restored, or put back, in the churches. From that point on, the first Sunday of Lent was called the "Sunday of Orthodoxy" in celebration of this victory. That is why we make a procession around the church with holy icons.

EVERY ICON TELLS A STORY

Icons are there for you to think about God and understand Him. Everything in an icon means something- from the colors to the way the faces of Christ, the Theotokos, and the Saints are shown. Let's talk about what some of the things in icons mean:

- ❖ The colors red and blue are very important. Red means divine (godly) and blue means human. Christ is always shown wearing blue over red because He is God and became human. The Theotokos is shown wearing red over blue- she was human and became divine because she is the Mother of God.

- ❖ The evangelists- Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John- the ones who wrote the Gospels- are always shown holding Gospels.
- ❖ Martyrs, those saints that died in the name of Christ, are shown with a crown of martyrdom, a cross, or holding the object by which they died. For example, if the martyr died by a sword, there may be a sword in their icon.
- ❖ The forehead of the person in the icon is often large to show how you gain wisdom by being close to God.
- ❖ The noses of the people in icons are often long and thin. This shows graceful and obedient ways- it no longer smells the odors of this world, but the sweet incense of heaven.
- ❖ The lips are closed; expressing that to truly think about God requires total silence.
- ❖ The halo around their head symbolizes the divine light that comes from a person who is living a holy life.

The iconostasis, the screen that unites the altar to the rest of the church, is a very important part of the church. It isn't there just for us to have something beautiful to look at. It acts as a bridge that connects us, the faithful people, and the eternal heaven. The saints and angels shown on the iconostasis are there to remind us that we are not praying alone, but that we are surrounded by the saints and the heavenly angels when we worship together. They also call us to a deeper love and commitment to God. They instruct us in our faith and remind us that we are not the first to walk the sometimes hard road of faith.

The Orthodox Church, in its love for its faithful, has for hundreds of years provided us with icons that we may come to a deeper understanding of God. To man, God is a mystery, and the Church in its wisdom and love for man has given us the icon to help us gain a glimpse of Heaven.

TEACHERS: YOU MAY USE THESE ICONS IN YOUR LESSON AS TIME PERMITS, AND AS YOU SEE FIT.

He Who Does Not Sleep

Infinite, powerful, God the Father in Heaven "Does Not Sleep." Yet God became man fully in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus slept. In becoming a man this man although fully God who "Does Not Sleep" slept. This is a powerful, mind-boggling mystery that shows us the depths to which God goes in order to reach us. He will even become a vulnerable little child. So, if the God "Who Does Not Sleep" is sleeping, He must have power and control over such things. It is interesting that Christians have always viewed death as merely sleep. So in this icon we are getting the message that even before Christ's



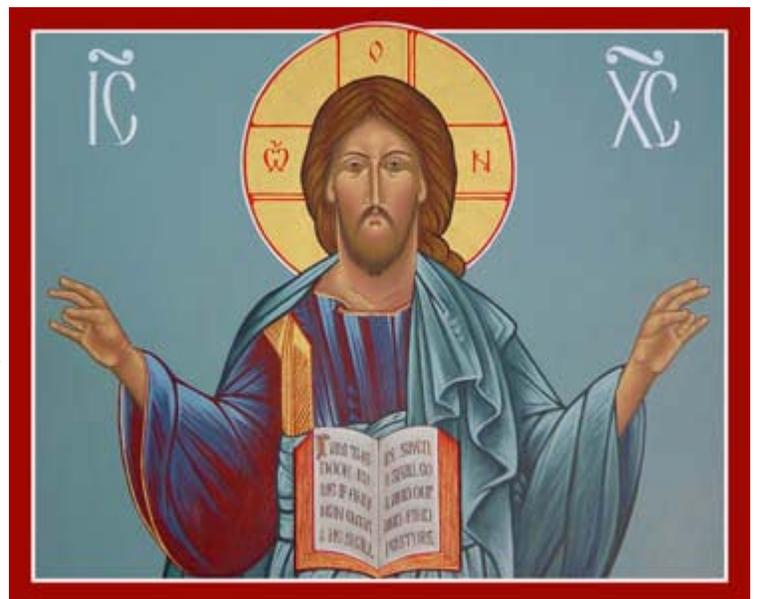
passion on earth, while He was a little child, God was in charge. He was (and is) showing us about His control over life and death in a tiny little way before He shows us in an awesome way with Christ's resurrection. Just as God has control over the image of life and death, which are sleeping and being awake, He has control over the real life and death. This icon becomes an assurance and comfort of God's will, His love, and His promises to us that He will take care of us in our deaths just as He takes care of a vulnerable, sleeping, innocent child. We can trust that our deaths will merely be a final sleep.

Jesus Christ - "I Am the Door"

"I am the door. By me if any man enter in he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture."

- John 10:9

This Icon shows Christ as the only way through which we can receive eternal life. He is "the door" by which we enter into safety and comfort.



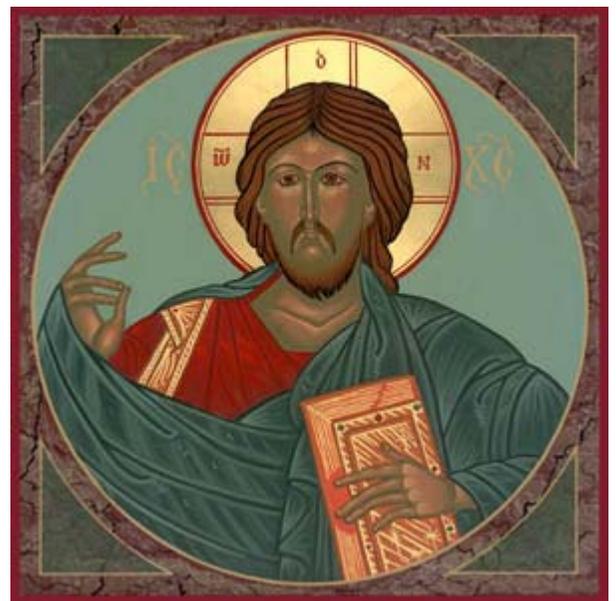
The Good Shepherd

In this icon the Cross is behind Christ, powerfully communicating the message of the Good Shepherd: "I lay down my life for the sheep." It reminds us that Christ is our Shepherd and we are His sheep that he gathers together and leads. He is the head of His sheep and instructs them, but also keeps them safe and out of harm.



Jesus Christ, Pantocrator (Judge of All)

Christ is depicted with his right hand raised in blessing. In his left hand, the Gospel Book is closed, signifying that the time for repentance is over. This is Christ as the Judge of All (*Pantocrator*) at the end of the ages. His cloak is blue, to symbolize His humanity which he put on in His Incarnation, and His tunic is red, to represent His divinity that He always is in eternity.



The Most Holy Theotokos & Ever-Virgin Mary

This Icon is a common icon that we often see on the iconostas of our churches. This icon depicts the Virgin with child, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Something significant to point out: The three golden stars which adorn her mantle, one above the forehead and one on each shoulder, signify her virginity before, during, and after giving birth.



The Mother of God More Spacious Than the Heavens

In this icon, Mary, the Theotokos, is an icon of the Church, because she once held Him and we first received Him from her, and now the church is how we received Him. Christ is enthroned in her womb. Her hands are outstretched in a way that anyone will recognize as "Welcome home!"



The inscription reads: "Mother of God - More Spacious Than the Heavens." Her womb contained the uncontainable God, which is why she is more spacious than the Heavens. She became the gateway for Salvation to enter the world. Now she asks us to receive the Christ whom she bore in the Church which He built.

Mother of God of Tenderness

This icon is also called the Virgin of Tenderness or of Mercy. The relationship between Mother and Child is expressed with stunning force: taking refuge in her, He touches her chin with one hand and presses his cheek against hers. Her pensive, sorrowful eyes foresee his Passion (suffering and death) and she embraces him with affectionate, maternal protection. The three golden stars which adorn her mantle, one above the forehead and one on each shoulder, signify her virginity before, during, and after giving birth.



Holy Protection of the Theotokos

On October 1, 911, at 4 AM, the Mother of God appeared above the people in the crowded Blachernae Church of the Mother of God in Constantinople, during an all night vigil. She had in her outstretched hands a long veil. St. Andrew the Fool for Christ was standing in the back. He said to his disciple Epiphanius, "Do you see how the Queen and Lady of all is praying for the whole world?" Epiphanius replied, "Yes, Father; I see it and stand in dread." They are depicted in the lower right of this icon. This reminds us of how the Theotokos intercedes for those who ask in time of distress. [St. Romanos the Melodist](#) is depicted on the lower left holding a scroll with words from the Canon of the Nativity which he wrote: "Today the Virgin gives birth." We see St. John the Baptist and other Saints in heaven giving glory to the Theotokos, as well.



Review Questions- Groups 3 & 4

1- What is the correct definition of the word below:

Iconoclasts-

a- those that were against icons in churches

b- those that wanted icons in churches

2- The first Sunday of Lent is called the Sunday of _____ . *Orthodoxy*

3- Circle 2 of the 4 statements below that are CORRECT about icons:

1- Icons are there for decoration

2- Icons are there to teach us about God

3- We venerate the person in the icon

4- We worship the wood that the icon is on

4- The color red in icons means _____ and the color blue means _____. *Divine, human*

5- Why do all the people in icons have their lips closed?

1- because they are serious people

2- because connecting with God takes complete silence

3- to show us that we should never talk

Review Questions- Groups 1 & 2

- 1- Why do we kiss icons?
 - 1- Because they are pretty
 - 2- **Because we show love to the person in the icon**
 - 3- Because we worship them

- 2- What is the iconostasis?
 - 1- **The screen that separates the altar from the rest of the church**
 - 2- People that didn't want icons in churches
 - 3- All the icons of Jesus in the world!

- 3- Connect the color to what it means in icons:

RED- GODLY

BLUE- HUMAN

CLOSING ACTIVITY

- ❖ **There are two sheets- 1 for 3&4, one for 1&2.
Make sure your group gets the right one**
- ❖ **Break the children up into groups of 3 or 4**
- ❖ **Give each group a copy of the sheet labeled,
“Tell me about this icon!”**
- ❖ **Have them answer the questions on the sheet in their
groups**

TELL ME ABOUT THIS ICON!
Groups 3 & 4



- ❖ **Why is the Theotokos wearing red over blue?**
- ❖ **Why are their foreheads large?**
- ❖ **Why are their noses long and thin?**
- ❖ **Why are their lips closed?**
- ❖ **What is the name of this icon?**

TELL ME ABOUT THIS ICON!
Groups 1 & 2



- ❖ **What does the red mean in this icon? What does the blue mean?**
- ❖ **Why are their lips closed?**
- ❖ **Why do they have halos around their heads?**

Lesson 5

TEACHERS:

THIS DAY'S SHORT LESSON WILL GIVE YOU TIME TO REVIEW THE LESSONS OF THE WEEK AND BE CREATIVE WITH YOUR CLASS, AS YOU END YOUR TIME TOGETHER. ENJOY!

Building Upon our Foundation

Now that we know and understand the foundation of our faith, how do we build upon that? How do we become "branches" that spring up from our roots?

Let's read John 15:1-8.

John 15:1-8

The True Vine- Christ the True Vine

¹ "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. ²Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; ^[a] and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

⁵"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. ⁶If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. ⁷If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ^[b] ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. ⁸By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

What does it mean to "abide"? *To remain in place, to dwell in, to conform to.*

What is Christ telling us when He says to "abide in Him"? *To live in Him so can we produce the fruit that we are created to produce.*

What happens if we don't abide in Him? *We will be "cast out as a branch", which means that we will be "thrown into the fire", the eternal fire.*

We are called to be Disciples of Christ, to be His followers, so that the foundation that was planted 2005 years ago will continue to grow. We can only do this if we abide in Christ, so that He can live through us and that others may know Him by the way we live. The church keeps us safe from false teachings and keeps us focused on living the truth. Remember that we aren't Christian because we are Orthodox- we are Orthodox if we are truly Christian.

DAILY PRAYERS

Please say these prayers consistently so that they may learn them as the days pass. Handouts for the campers will be provided.

Opening Prayer

Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom: Enlighten by they Holy Spirit those who teach and those who learn, that, rejoicing in the knowledge of thy truth, they may worship thee and serve thee from generation to generation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

Closing Prayer

Oh Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of Truth, who art in all places and fillest all things; treasury of good things and giver of life. Come and dwell in us and cleanse us from every stain, and save our souls, O gracious Lord. Amen.

DAILY PRAYERS

Opening Prayer

Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom: Enlighten by thy Holy Spirit those who teach and those who learn, that, rejoicing in the knowledge of thy truth, they may worship thee and serve thee from generation to generation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

Closing Prayer

Oh Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of Truth, who art in all places and fillest all things; treasury of good things and giver of life. Come and dwell in us and cleanse us from every stain, and save our souls, O gracious Lord. Amen.