

S P E C I A L A G E N T S O F
C H R I S T

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UNIT STUDY

PRESENTED BY JENNIFER HOCK



Enriching Our Church School Classrooms Webinar

March 9, 2013

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The Book

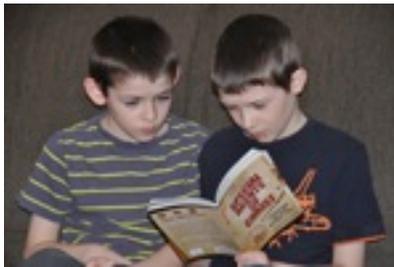
Age Range

This book is for upper elementary to middle school students.

Acquiring the Book

“Special Agents of Christ” by Annalisa Boyd is available from:

<http://www.conciliarpress.com/products/Special-Agents-of-Christ%3A-A-Prayer-Book.html>



Reading to his brother

Ideas for Acquiring a Classroom Set of the Book

It would be beneficial to have a classroom set of the book when doing this unit. Children who are auditory learners will do fine if the teacher reads it aloud but visual learners will be left out. Visual learners will do better if they can follow along with their own copy of the book. This will also allow for possible home activities to do with parents as well.

- Classroom Wishlist: Before the beginning of the school year, post a wishlist for your entire church school program or by classroom. Place a bucket under each poster listing off the desired items for the classrooms. Collect the items for several weeks before school starts.
- Ask your parish priest or church school director if your parish has a budget for the church school program. If so, propose getting a set of this book for your classroom as part of the budget.

Introduction to the Unit

Disclaimer

This unit is meant as a basic introduction for children to the topics in “Special Agents of Christ”.

Vocabulary

Before beginning this unit, make sure your children understand the terms below. Many of us take for granted that our children would know these words since they are integral parts of our faith, but it never hurts to make sure everyone is on the same page.

saint: Someone who strived to do God’s will above their own. A saint is not someone who was perfect and never made mistakes. Sometimes, saints made huge mistakes. The important thing to remember is they always asked for forgiveness and then tried with all their might to never make mistakes again. Their love of God was always the priority in their life.

prophet: Someone who lived in the Old Testament and speaks for God.

feast day: The day we remember or commemorate a prophet, saint, or event in the life of the church. When we celebrate our Name Days, we are also celebrating the feast day of our patron saint.

patron saint: Each of us has a saint whom we were named after – either when we were born or baptized/chrismated. This person is our patron saint. We celebrate our Name Day on the day we remember our patron saint.

Learning Styles

We all learn best in different ways. Some of us are better at auditory learning while others of us are better with visual cues. During the Divine Liturgy, God provides all of us with five different ways to learn about our faith – through our eyes as we look at the icons, through our nose as we smell the incense drifting to heaven, through our fingers as we repeatedly make the sign of the cross, through Holy Communion as we taste it entering our own body, and as we hear the hymns being sung. I’ve tried to vary the following lessons to include as many of our senses where possible to help our children learn about their faith. I have also tried to not only have the traditional style of learning with worksheets and projects but also have suggested activities that teach through living our faith – attending Liturgy, baking prosphora, making kollyva, donating canned good to a food pantry, supporting missionaries, and more. There are so many opportunities for extensions of these lessons and I encourage you to go where it leads you. This is a learning opportunity for YOU and YOUR CHILDREN.

May God bless you and guide you in your endeavors to teach others about Him and grow ever closer to Him yourself.

Operation 1: Daily Prayer

Prophet Daniel

Read about Daniel in:

Children's Bible Reader on pages 151–156

Orthodox Study Bible (Old & New Testament Version) on pages 1238–1262

Prayer

How many times a day do you pray with your family? During this unit, try to increase it by one more time each day. If you haven't developed a prayer rhythm yet, start by praying before your evening meal. If you already pray before every meal, try to increase it by praying before you go to sleep. Add it one more time somewhere during your day and try to keep it as part of a routine that will eventually become a natural rhythm to your life.

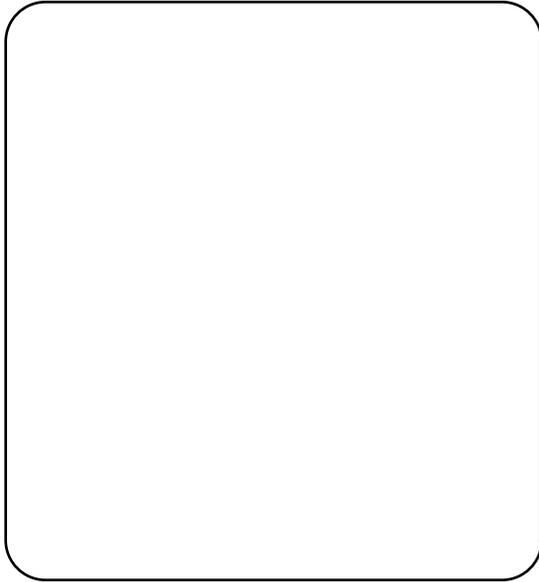


Activities

1. Classroom Icon Corner: Create an icon corner on the east wall of your classroom. Start your lessons with everyone saying a prayer or singing a hymn together. If you do not already have an icon(s) in your room, ask if anyone would like to donate one.
2. Family Altar: Create a family altar in your home. Icons of your patron saints, your Bible, candles, home censer, incense, and holy water can all be kept here. Gather together each evening before bed and say a prayer together in front of your family altar.
3. Prayer Rope: a) Learn how to use a prayer rope.
<http://www.orthodoxmom.com/2012/09/29/how-to-using-a-prayer-rope/>
b) Learn how to make a prayer rope. (This is an extremely hard task. Recommended for older children or children who are incredibly dedicated to hands-on projects.)
<http://www.wattfamily.org/prayerope.html>
4. For more ideas about activities you can do with children relating to prayer, visit:
<http://pinterest.com/orthodoxeduc/prayer/>

Special Agents of Christ: Operation #1 – Prophet Daniel

After learning about the Prophet Daniel, draw a scene from his story below:



Feast Day:

If you were asked to find the story about the Prophet Daniel, would you look in the Old Testament or the New Testament to find it?

Tell me about the Prophet Daniel.

What did you learn after reading his story?

Operation 2: Prayers in Times of Trouble

Joseph the All-Comely

Read about Joseph in:

Children's Bible Reader on pages 50-73

Orthodox Study Bible (Old & New Testament Version) on pages 48-64



Helping put cans away at the food pantry



IOCC Prayer Journal



Assembling IOCC School Kits

Activities

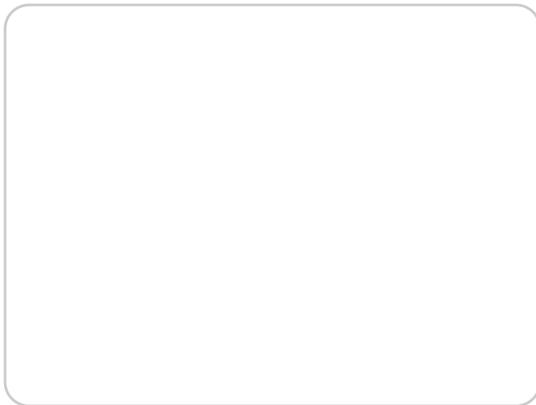
1. Personal Prayer Books: Print out a variety of prayers (from "Special Agents of Christ" or any other prayer book) and let the children pick out the ones they think they might need for times of trouble in their lives. Provide materials to bind the prayers for them to take home.
2. IOCC Emergency Kits: Organize a parish, class, or family giving program. IOCC has a list of items needed for emergency kits. <http://www.iocc.org/giftsofheart.aspx>
3. IOCC Prayer Journal: <https://www.iocc.org/news/prayerjournal.aspx>
4. Food Pantry: Collect donations for a local food pantry or start a food pantry at your own parish

Special Agents of Christ: Operation #2 – Joseph the All-Comely

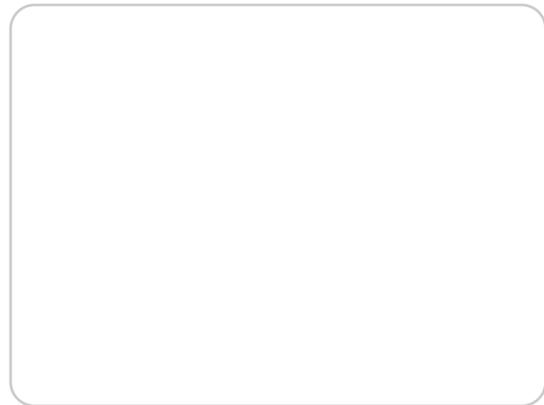
A storyboard is a sequence of drawings representing shots planned for a movie or television show. Sometimes a few words are placed in the drawings as well to help show the intent of the story.

Directions: Create a storyboard below using a story from Joseph’s life. For example, draw a storyboard about his brothers selling him into slavery or Joseph interpreting dreams for the Pharaoh. In the box next to “Title”, write the title of your storyboard. For example, “Joseph and His Brothers” or “Joseph and Pharaoh”. Write a brief explanation of each shot under the picture.

Storyboard about Joseph	Setting	Old Testament	Bible	Genesis
	Feast Day	March 31	Title	



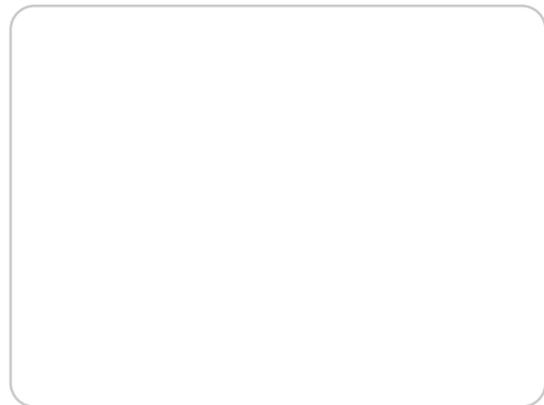
Shot 1:



Shot 2:



Shot 3:



Shot 4:

Operation 3: Prayers of Thanks

Saint Paul

To learn more about Saint Paul, read:

Children's Bible Reader on pages 273–293

Orthodox Wiki: http://orthodoxwiki.org/Apostle_Paul

Activities

1. Learn about missionaries: A missionary is someone who shares their faith with people outside of their community. The English word “missionary” comes from Latin and the equivalent of the Greek-derived word, “apostle”.

We have modern day apostles helping people less fortunate than themselves while also sharing their Orthodox Christian faith with them. Learn more about these missionaries on the OCMC website:

<http://www.ocmc.org/>

2. Support Missionaries: Collect coins in a jar over many weeks and make a donation to support a missionary, a missionary family, or OCMC to help make their work possible.

<http://www.ocmc.org/donate/index.aspx>

Special Agents of Christ: Operation #3 – Saint Paul

Directions: Write a newspaper article about Saint Paul.

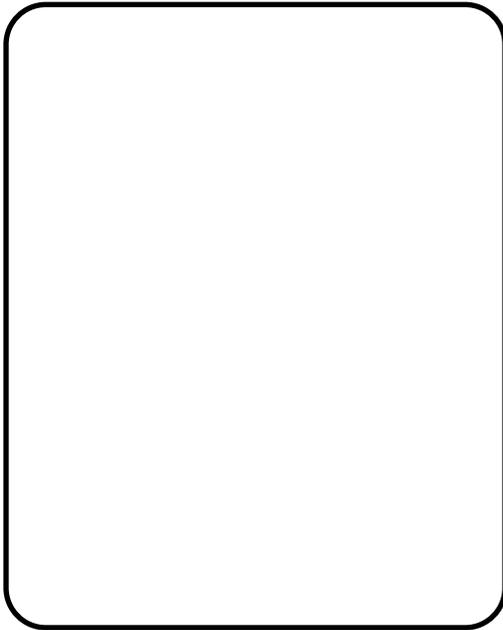
EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT!

The Apostle Times

Acts 9 - 28

New Testament

Headline



Story about Saint Paul from the Bible

Operation 4: Prayers for Family, Friends, and Enemies

Saints Faith, Hope, and Charity (Love)

To learn more about these saints, read:

Wikipedia – http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sophia_the_Martyr

Antiochian Archdiocese Website – http://www.antiochian.org/saint_sophia

OCA Website –

<http://oca.org/saints/lives/2013/09/17/102638-martyr-sophia-and-her-three-daughters-at-rome>

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Website: http://www.goarch.org/chapel/saints_view?contentid=208

Activity

Talk about why it is important to pray for not only our family and friends but also our enemies.

“But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.” Matthew 5:44–48

Special Agents of Christ: Operation #4 – Saints Faith, Hope, and Charity (Love)

We remember Saints Faith, Hope, and Charity (Love) on: _____

Write a prayer for your family:

Write a prayer for your friends:

Write a prayer for your enemies:

Operation 5: Prayers for the Dead

Saint Lazarus

To learn more about him, read:

Children's Bible Reader on pages 227–230

Orthodox Study Bible: John 11 through 12:1–11

Activities

1. Learn about kollyva: Kollyva is an offering made by the family in remembrance of someone who has passed away. It is brought to church and blessed by the priest and then given to everyone after Liturgy. It is made from boiled wheat and usually has nuts, seeds, and spices. It is also sweetened with raisins, pomegranate seeds, and sugar.
2. Send home instructions on how and when to make kollyva:
<http://www.holytransfiguration.info/kollyva/>
3. Make Lazarakia: Lazarakia is a small sweet bread in the shape of Lazarus.
Learn more here: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lazarakia>
Get the recipe here: <http://orthodoxkitchen.com/recipes/lazarakia/>

Special Agents of Christ: Operation #5 – Saint Lazarus

Directions: Answer the following questions after reading pages 39 – 40 of “Special Agents of Christ”.

1. When is Saint Lazarus' feast day? (When do we remember him?) _____

2. Did Lazarus live during the Old Testament or New Testament? _____

3. Who were Lazarus' sisters? a.) Susanna and Rachel b.) Mary and Martha c.) Elizabeth and Martha

4. (Look in your Bible) Where can you find the story of Lazarus in the Bible?

 a.) Matthew b.) Mark c.) John d.) Acts

5. What happened to Lazarus?

Operation 6: Security Check: Preparation for Confession

Saint Moses the Black

To learn more about him, read:

Orthodox Wiki – http://orthodoxwiki.org/Moses_the_Black

Activities:

1. Confession: We all make mistakes. We all have bad days. It is vitally important to turn to God and not only ask for forgiveness but also to seek healing. Ask your parish priest if he could talk to your class/ children about confession. What is it? How does it work? What do I say? Why is it important?
2. Confession II: Provide an opportunity to go to Confession. Schedule a time with your parish priest for your class or family to take turns going one at a time.

Special Agents of Christ: Operation #6 – Saint Moses the Black

Feast Day: _____

Tell me about Saint Moses the Black.

What did you learn after reading his story?

Operation 7: Praying with the Angels and Saints

Patron Saints

Our patron saint is the saint whom we were named after at either our baptism or when we were chrismated. We celebrate our Name Day on the feast day of our patron saint. If your name is Nicholas then you celebrate your Name Day on December 6th. On your Name Day, try to attend Liturgy and then celebrate by reading about your saint and sharing a slice of cake with each of your friends and family who come over to celebrate with you.

Angels

There are nine orders of angels:

Seraphim: means flaming

Cherubim: means Great understanding

Thrones

Dominions

Virtues

Powers

Principalities

Archangels

Angels

Operation 8: Pray Like a King

Saint David

To learn more about Saint David, read:

Children's Bible Reader on pages 124–135

Activity

Learn the Psalms: Have each child pick one of the Psalms from “Special Agents of Christ” or their Bible and memorize it. They can recite it for the class, their family, or parish.



Memorizing psalms and what they mean

Special Agents of Christ: Operation #8 – Saint David

Feast Day: _____

What is a psalm? a.) song or hymn b.) letter

Who wrote the Psalms in the Bible? _____

Write the psalm you like the most from pages 62–67.

Why do you like this Psalm?

Drill #1: The Five Training Targets

Our Five Senses

During the Divine Liturgy, we are being taught about our faith through our five senses. We taste Holy Communion. We see the icons surrounding us. We hear the priest reading the Gospel to us. We touch our forehead, shoulders, and chest every time we make the sign of the cross. We smell the incense drifting through the air as it carries our prayers to Heaven.

Activity

1. Worksheet: Each student completes the following worksheet or the activity can be done as a group on a chalkboard.



Five Senses of Orthodoxy Worksheet

Directions: During the Divine Liturgy we use all five our of senses to help us learn and experience our faith. List as many examples as you can think of for the following senses.

Taste

Smell

Touch

Hear

See

Five Senses of Orthodoxy Worksheet – EXAMPLES FOR TEACHER/PARENT

Directions: During the Divine Liturgy we use all five our of senses to help us learn and experience our faith. List as many examples as you can think of for the following senses.

Taste	Holy Communion	Kollyva
	Andithoron (Blessed Bread)	Artoclasia
Smell	Incense	Flowers
	Candles burning	Prosphora baking for Liturgy
Touch	Sign of the cross	Kneeling
	Kissing icons	Prostrations
Hear	Gospel being read	Chanters
	Choir	Priest and Deacon
See	Icons	Candles
	Vestments	Crosses

Drill #2: Agent Attire

Vestments

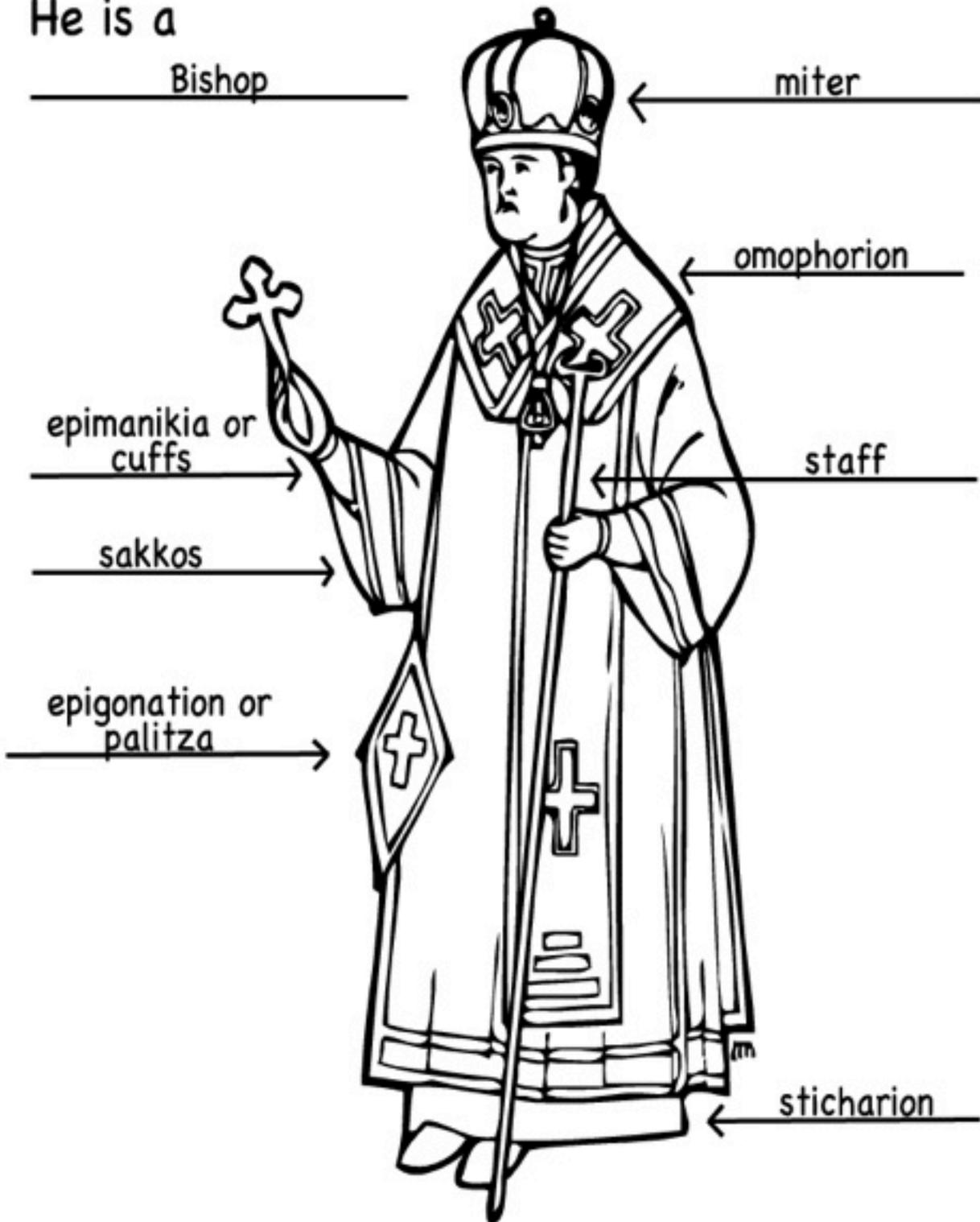
Our deacons, priests, and bishops wear vestments during church services. These special clothes are not something you would see everyone wearing to a ball game, the grocery store, or school. These clothes have a special meaning to them.

Learn more about vestments from the Orthodox Wiki website: <http://orthodoxwiki.org/Vestments>

Activities

1. "Build Your Own: Bishop, Priest, & Deacon" from Orthodox Christian Education Commission
<http://www.orthodoxed.org/> (Download their catalog from the right, side bar of the home page)
This activity is for use with elementary school age children. Although it would still benefit the visual learners in middle school, most of them would think it was too childish for them. The activity will help them learn the parts of a deacon, priest, and bishop's vestments.
2. Talk from your parish priest about vestments: Ask your parish priest if he could show your kids the different parts of his vestments and explain to them the meaning behind them.
3. Worksheets:
 - a. Symbolism: Pass out one worksheet at a time. Talk about the different parts of a bishop, priest, and deacon's vestments. If you listened to a talk from your priest, ask your students/children if they remember some of the symbolism of each part of the vestments. If not, use the definitions from Orthodox Wiki to explain the different symbolisms of each garment or reference pages 76–78 of "Special Agents of Christ".
 - b. Fill in the Blank: Write the correct name of each part of a bishop, priest, and deacon's vestments.
 - c. Color the Vestments: Color in the vestments on the worksheets with the appropriate color reflecting the current feast day or season. (Reference page 78 of "Special Agents of Christ")

He is a



Worksheet 1 - Do You Know the Parts of His Vestments?

He is a



Word Bank:
sakkos
staff
miter
sticharion
omophorion
epimanikia (cuffs)
epigonation

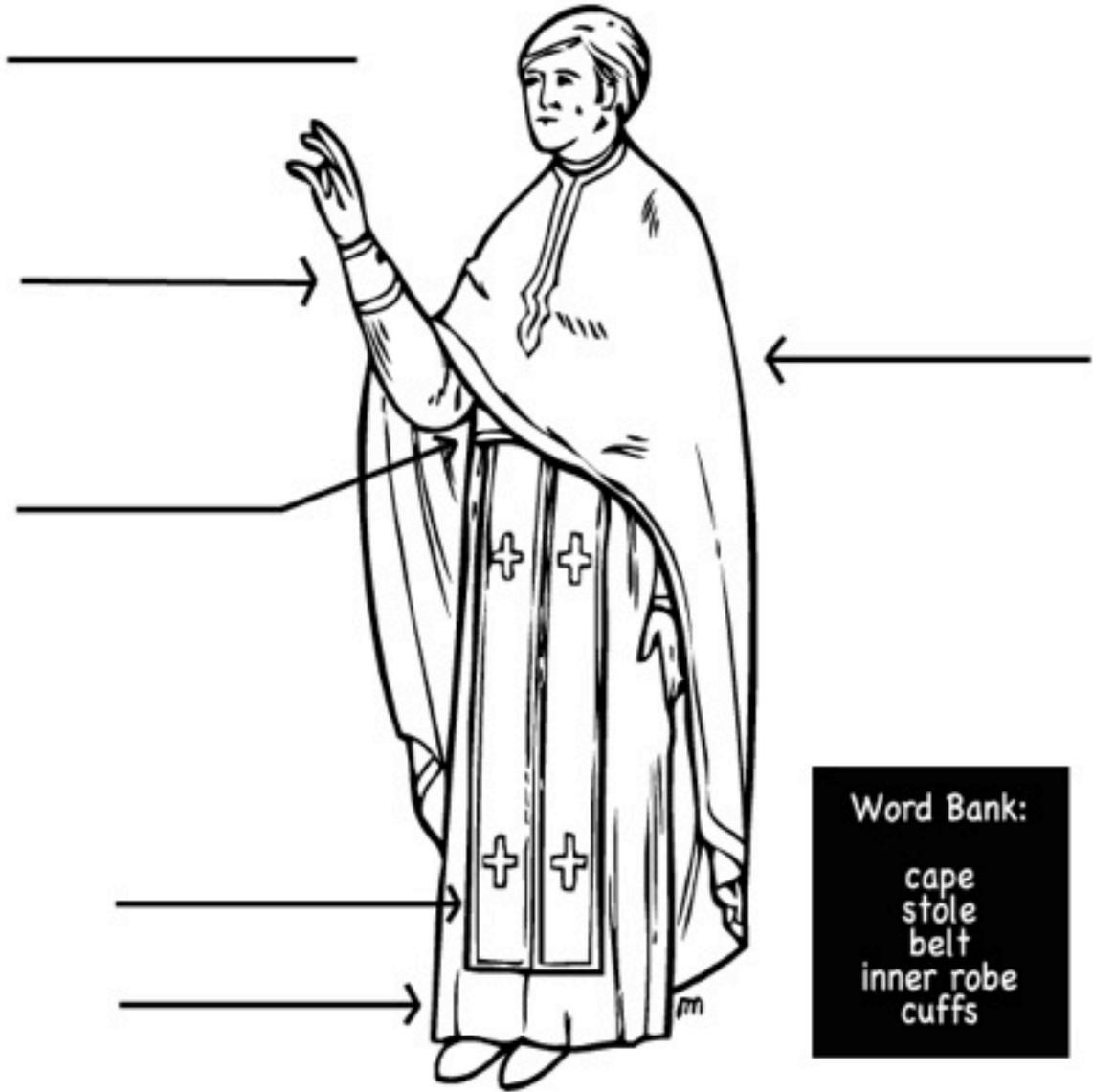
He is a

Priest



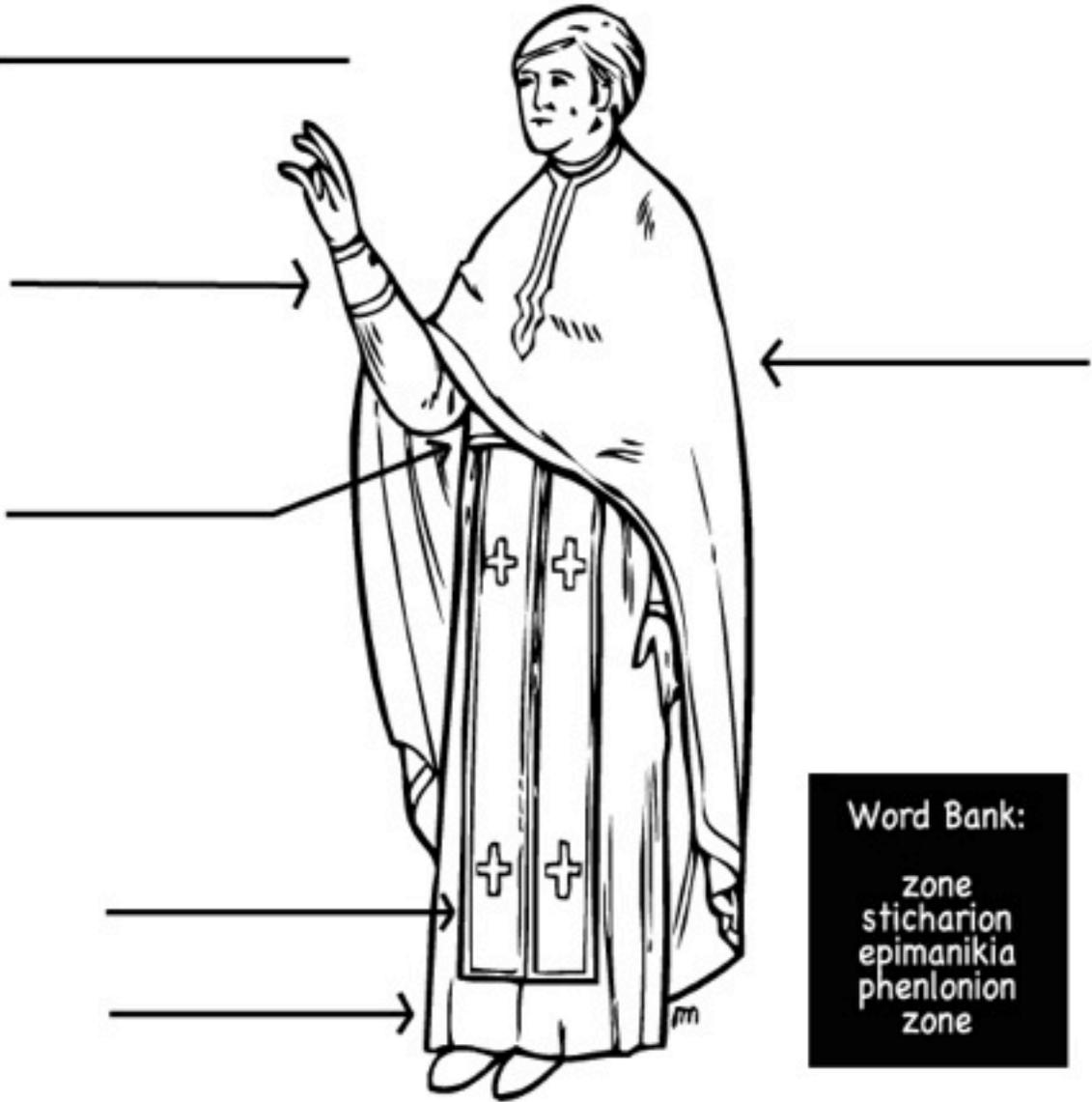
Worksheet 2 - Do You Know the Parts of His Vestments?

He is a



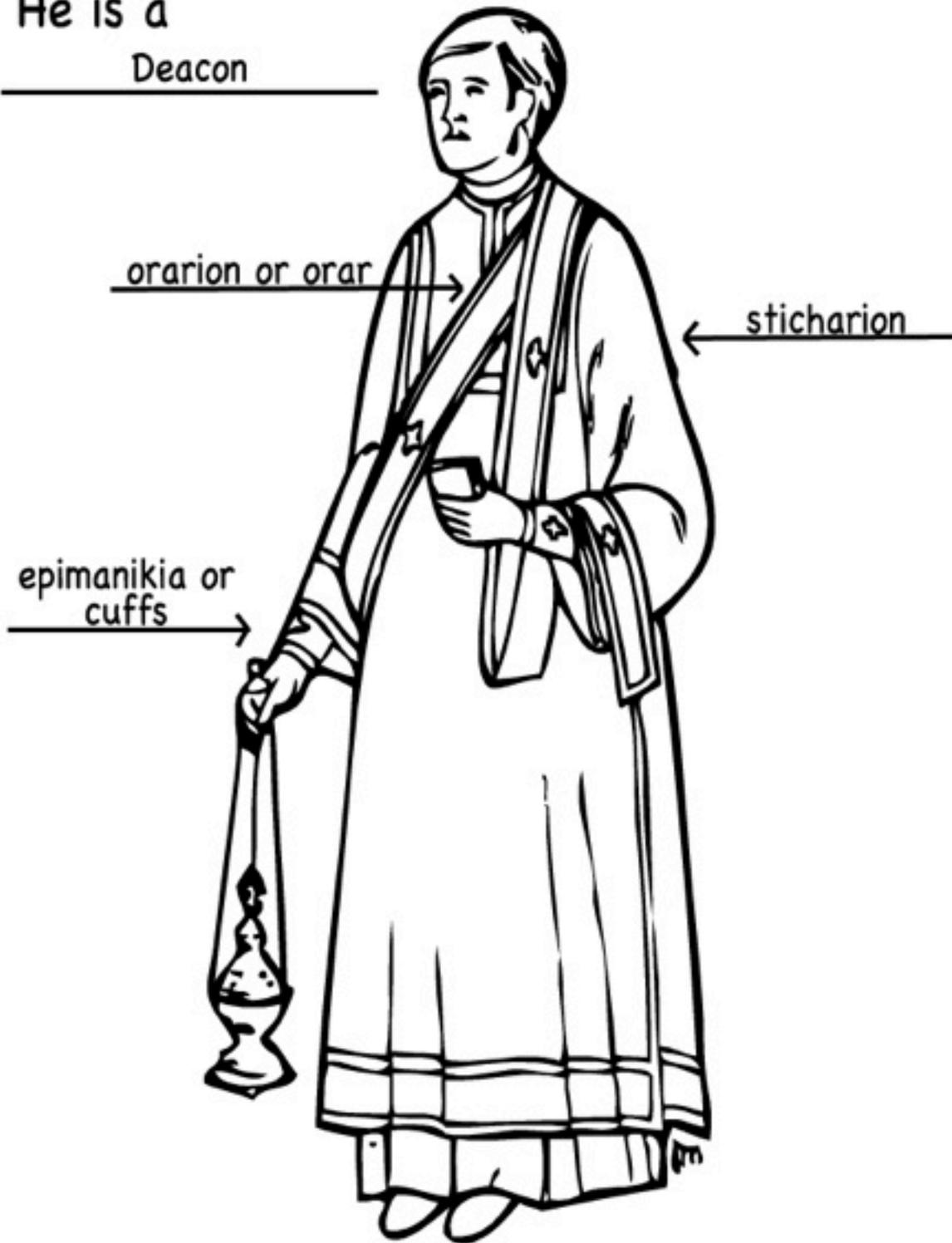
Worksheet 3 - Do You Know the Parts of His Vestments?

He is a



He is a

Deacon



Worksheet 4 - Do You Know the Parts of His Vestments?

He is a



He is a
Bishop



He is a
Priest



He is a
Deacon



Worksheet 5 - Who is a bishop, priest, and deacon?

He is a



He is a



He is a



Drill #3: Sore Feet for the Kingdom

The Liturgy

Attending the Divine Liturgy is a phenomenal way to learn about our faith! As we listen, watch, smell, taste, and touch everything around us, we are learning about Orthodoxy.

Activities

1. Learn a Hymn: The National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians has put out a wonderful resource for learning some hymns, such as: The Trisagion Hymn, Save Us O Son of God, One is Holy, the Communion Hymn, Through the Prayers of the Theotokos, Christ is Risen, We Have Seen the Light, Blessed Be the Name of the Lord, Hymn of Praise, Receive Me Today O Son of God, O Lord Save Your People, and May Your Good Spirit Lead Me. It comes with an audio teaching CD and several hymn booklets to go along with it. Each booklet will have the words and notes for singing along to the cd along with teaching suggestions and background information about the hymn.
<http://www.orthodoxmarketplace.com/liturgical-music/sheet-music/hymns-of-the-orthodox-church-audio-cd-booklets.html>
2. Create a Personalized Liturgy Book: You could take it on as a parish project, a class project, or a family project. Use photos of your parish priest and explain the Liturgy for children in a printed book to have during the service. (Make sure you get permission from your priest before going camera crazy during Liturgy.) Here's an example someone else made –
<http://a-days-journey.blogspot.com/2011/06/personalized-liturgy-book-for-children.html>
3. Attend a Weekday Liturgy!
4. Liturgy Timeline: Put the pictures and labels in the correct order on the timeline. This activity is geared towards both visual-spatial and logical-sequential learners. You'll need – scissors, crayons/markers/colored pencils, sentence strips, glue, and the following worksheets. (Alternative activity: Color the pictures, cut the pictures and labels out, and then mix them up. Do the children remember the correct order? Place them in the correct order then attach to the timeline afterwards.)
5. Make Prosfora: Make it as a class in your church's kitchen or gather together in a home and bake several loaves for the upcoming Sunday. If you've never made prosfora before, ask someone in your parish if they could teach you, your class, or your family.



Mixing dough with kids



Kneading dough



Prosforo

Additional Reading

“Heaven on Earth: The Divine Liturgy” Published by the GOA Department of Religious Education

<http://www.orthodoxmarketplace.com/archdiocese-departments/religious-education/zines/heaven-on-earth-the-divine-liturgy.html>

“Heaven on Earth: The Divine Liturgy Teacher Guide” Published by the GOA Department of Religious Education

<http://www.orthodoxmarketplace.com/archdiocese-departments/religious-education/zines/heaven-on-earth-the-divine-liturgy-teachers-guide.html>

“Altar Servers Guide”: from Saint Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church of Toronto, Ontario

<http://www.livingorthodoxy.com/Altar%20Server%20Manual%20-%20Revised%20Edition.pdf>



Liturgy Timeline Activity

Parts of the Liturgy

*This is meant only as a basic introduction to the Liturgy for children.

Suggestion: Read and talk about the different parts of the Liturgy as your children have their worksheets (on the following pages) in front of them. This way you will be addressing both your auditory and visual learners and maximizing their retention of the material.

1. **The Beginning of the Liturgy:** We know we're moving out of Orthros (Matins) and into the Divine Liturgy when we hear our priest sing, "Blessed is the kingdom of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages."
2. **Litany of Peace:** We will hear references to the Theotokos in the litanies or hymns. A litany is a series of petitions or formal requests.
3. **Antiphons:** Hymns or verses from Psalms or other parts of the Bible are sung
4. **The Small Entrance:** You will see the altar boys lead a procession and your priest will follow carrying the Gospel book.
5. **Trisagion Hymn:** You will hear the Trisagion hymn being sung, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty..."
6. **Epistle Reading:** A reader will read from the Bible. They read epistles or letters from the apostles.
7. **Gospel Reading:** The priest will read from the Gospel. The Gospel includes Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John from the Bible.
8. **Sermon:** Traditionally the sermon is given after the Gospel reading. Your priest will elaborate on the Gospel reading and explain how it applies to us today.
9. **The Great Entrance:** The altar boys will lead a procession and the priest will follow carrying the Holy Gifts.
10. **Litany of the Supplication:** The priest will lead with more petitions and we respond with, "Lord have mercy." "Grant this, O Lord." and "To You, O Lord."
11. **The Creed:** We all say the Creed, "I believe in one God, Father Almighty..."
12. **The Anaphora:** The anaphora is the most important part of the Divine Liturgy. It is the offering of the gifts (bread and wine) and their consecration. The people kneel and the priest asks God to send down his Holy Spirit and change the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ.
13. **The Lord's Prayer:** We all recite the Lord's Prayer, "Our Father, who art in heaven..."
14. **Holy Communion:** We respectfully approach the chalice and receive Holy Communion.
15. **Litany of Thanksgiving:** We listen for the saints who are remembered for the day and we also hear the closing prayers of the Liturgy.

Divine Liturgy Timeline Activity

Directions: First, color and then cut out the pictures and labels. Then place them in the correct order along the timeline.

PARTS OF THE DIVINE LITURGY	VISUALS OF THE DIVINE LITURGY
Litany of Peace	
Antiphons	
Small Entrance	

PARTS OF THE DIVINE LITURGY

VISUALS OF THE DIVINE LITURGY

Trisagion Hymn



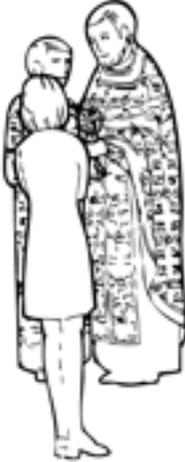
Epistle Reading



Gospel Reading



PARTS OF THE DIVINE LITURGY	VISUALS OF THE DIVINE LITURGY
<p>Sermon</p>	
<p>Great Entrance</p>	
<p>Litany of the Supplication</p>	<p>"Lord have mercy." "Grant this, O Lord." "To You, O Lord."</p>
<p>The Creed</p>	<p>"I believe in one God..."</p>

PARTS OF THE DIVINE LITURGY	VISUALS OF THE DIVINE LITURGY
<p>The Anaphora</p>	
<p>Lord's Prayer</p>	<p>"Our Father who art in heaven..."</p>
<p>Holy Communion</p>	

PARTS OF THE DIVINE LITURGY

VISUALS OF THE DIVINE LITURGY

Litany of Thanksgiving



Drill #4: Don't Let Anyone Look Down On You Because You're Young

Prophet Samuel

To learn more about the Prophet Samuel, read:

Children's Bible Reader on pages 120–125

Activity

Ways of Helping God: What are some ways you can do something for God even though you are not a grown up yet? Make a list on a piece of paper or the chalkboard. Here are some examples:

- Listening to your parents as they teach you right from wrong
- Recycle items in your home or church
- Be kind to others, even those who are not kind to you
- Help clean up after Fellowship Hour on Sundays by cleaning off tables, washing tables, and pushing chairs in
- Visiting someone who is too old to leave their home anymore
- Make prosphora with mom or dad

Challenge yourself to complete at least one of your ideas this week!