

WEEK 21: THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

HIGH SCHOOL

GOALS

How do we learn to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind? How do we learn to love our neighbor as ourself?

LESSON

Materials Needed: Bible, Pascha Passports

Extended Learning Opportunity for Teachers:

The Gospel of Matthew: Torah for the Church by Fr. Lawrence Farley, pgs 287-298

The Explanation of the Holy Gospel According to Matthew by Blessed Theophylact, pgs 186-194

THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

VOCABULARY:

- Commandment: a divine rule

Read Matthew 22:34-40

But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law?"

Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'

On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

The Church provides us with tools to learn to love God and our neighbor, especially during Great Lent, through prayer, almsgiving, and fasting.

- **Prayer** directs us towards **God**.
- **Almsgiving** directs us towards our **neighbor**.
- **Fasting** directs us towards **ourselves**.

PRAYER -

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The Church provides us with times to pray to God throughout the day, called the Hours: 1st hour (6am), 3rd hour (9 am), 6th hour (12pm), 9th hour (3pm), and evening prayer (compline, vespers, individual or family prayers)

We also attend additional services throughout Lent - Compline, Presanctified Liturgy, Akathist to the Mother of God, Saturday of Souls Liturgies, Sunday Liturgies, Pan-Orthodox Vespers, and more! Holy Week alone is a journey of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, His arrest, Trial, Crucifixion, and Resurrection.

If time allows, you can read about the different services to the students from the Pascha Passports.

ALMSGIVING -

And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'

Almsgiving can be giving money to someone who needs it. This can be helping them pay their electric bill, buying them groceries, or helping them pay to fix their car so they can go to work.

Almsgiving can also be helping someone in some way, such as, helping grandma and grandpa cleaning a room in their home or doing yard work for them because they can't bend over easily anymore. Almsgiving can also be offering to babysit for free one weekend because the family needs a bit of help.

When we love our neighbor as ourself, we learn to recognize when others need help and offer that help to them.

FASTING -

And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'

We fast on **Wednesdays** (for the betrayal of Christ) and **Fridays** (death of Christ), during the **seasonal fasts** (Great Lent, Apostles Fast, Dormition Fast, and Nativity of Christ Fast), and some **specific days**, such as, the Beheading of St. John the Baptist.

During these fasting times, we refrain from eating certain foods to help teach us self control, but also because these foods tend to be more expensive than other foods. The money we save from not eating these foods enables us to give alms to those around us in need.

READING THE BIBLE -

The Bible provides us with instructions for how we should live as Christians. We can make a special attempt to read a little bit of the Bible every day during Lent.

WEEK 21: THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

MIDDLE SCHOOL

GOALS

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WEEK 21: THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

3RD & 4TH GRADE

GOALS

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1ST & 2ND GRADE

GOALS

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CLASS ROUTINE

Continue routine - move photo, light candle, venerate icon, prayer

THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

VOCABULARY:

- **Commandment:** a divine rule

Read or tell the story of Matthew 22:34-40

But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law?"

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On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

The Church provides us with ways to learn to love God and our neighbor, especially during Great Lent, through prayer, almsgiving, and fasting.

- **Prayer** directs us towards **God**. When do we say prayers?
- **Almsgiving** (helping others) directs us towards our **neighbor**. What are some ways we can help others? (Parents, grandparents, our neighbors, our friends, our siblings, etc)
- **Fasting** (not eating certain foods) directs us towards **ourselves**. We learn we can't have everything we want all the time because we tell ourselves not to eat meat during Lent.

Pass out one Pascha Passport to each child. Ask them to write their name in the provided spot. If the child knows their patron saint or their name day (feast day), they can write that in as well. (You may need to help some children.) They will take the passports home with them.

Show the Pascha Passports to the children and tell them how to use them. They will find a sticker on the table in the narthex every time they come to church and can ask their parents to help them find where they should put it. They can also mark off the days they say a prayer with their parents or by themselves, didn't eat meat, helped someone, or listened to a Bible story.

CHRIST IS RISEN!

If time allows, you can practice the response to "Christ is Risen!" in as many languages as you know.

Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

For additional languages: <https://www.oca.org/orthodoxy/paschal-greetings>

WEEK 21: THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

PRE-K & KINDERGARTEN

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CLASS ROUTINE

Continue routine - move photo, light candle, venerate icon, prayer

THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

Read or tell the story of Matthew 22:34-40

There were men who asked Jesus a question. They wanted to know what was the most important rule they needed to do.

Jesus told them that they should love God with all their heart, with all their soul, and with all their mind. This is the first and greatest rule. And the second rule we should do is: love our neighbor as ourself.

We show love to God when we pray to Him and when we go to church. When do you say prayers at home? We show love to the people around us when we help them. How can we help our mom or dad? Our grandma or grandpa? Our parents may tell us that we aren't going to eat meat during Lent. We do this because we are learning that we can't have everything we want whenever we want it.

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