

Journey to Pascha

Introduction



During Great Lent we prepare ourselves for the Great Feast of Pascha. In this unit we will be studying the events that we celebrate during Holy Week and Pascha. Included in this unit are icons, activities, and both texts and explanations of services and prayers.

The unit covers many Bible stories, but sometimes the source from which you are reading or telling the story will not be an actual Bible. When you are using another source, have a Bible at hand (or, preferably, copy the story and put the copy in the open Bible) to show that it is a Bible story. Of course, every classroom should have Bibles.

Journey to Pascha

Each session will focus on a different theme that is part of our Journey to Pascha. We will begin with the story of Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead, and continue with our celebration of Jesus' joyful Entrance into Jerusalem. In the following sessions, we will learn about each day of Holy Week, what Jesus taught His disciples during this time, and what happened to Jesus as He was brought to trial, put to death and buried. Finally, we will celebrate the events that led to His Resurrection from the dead.

Special Notes

Role Plays: Several lessons include role plays, and some include words said by Jesus Christ. If you, the teacher, do not want a child to take the role of Christ, use a narrator to say the words of the Lord.

Gathering for Prayer: We suggest having a gathering place for the class to pray together. You might have a candle, flowers, and the appropriate icon for the lesson. Icons are provided in the Resource Section of each lesson. You can reproduce these and put them on backing and then display them on a small stand (like a plate stand.) Of course you can use your own icons, which is why in some lessons the Resource Section lists icons as "optional."

Preparing Your Lessons: Lessons in this unit include themes, objectives, resources attached to the lesson and step-by-step procedure, as well as a list of materials. In some lessons, the Materials section will give you special notes for lesson preparation. These enable you, as you prepare by reading through the lesson and getting materials ready, to be aware of any special preparations you'll need to make.

Timing Your Lessons: Because our church schools vary widely in the time they have for teaching, we have not timed the procedural steps of these lessons specifically. You are free to adapt, shorten or expand the material, or to spread it over more than one session.

Palm Cross Activity: A great activity, suitable for older students, making a palm cross.

Resources for Every Age

The following resources can be found within the lessons of this unit, or on the Department of Christian Education website (dce.oca.org)

- Liturgical texts and resources for Holy Week
- Biblical texts, charts and guides to using the Bible
- Icons, graphics and coloring pages for school and home use
- Short musical settings for hymns and verses
- Brief reviews of good books for home and classroom reading
- Activities and outreach projects for families and mixed generation groups
- Information on teaching skills, ideas for classroom use, human development patterns, writing projects, etc.

Highlights of individual lessons in this unit (upper levels) include:

- **Lazarus Saturday: Jesus raises His friend from the dead.**
Mary and Martha plead with the Lord to come quickly to heal their brother Lazarus. Jesus delays his return until Lazarus is dead four days. Martha confesses her belief in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus says: "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live..." Jesus has the power to raise the dead, and raises Lazarus. Jesus is the Resurrection and Life of all people.
- **Palm Sunday: Jesus Enters Jerusalem as a King!**
Jesus enters Jerusalem and is honored as a King. The children greet Jesus waving palms and branches, crying out "Hosanna!" The people shout their praises to Him: "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" In our celebration of the feast, the palms we hold are a sign of our allegiance to Christ.
- **Holy Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday: Parables of the Bridegroom, Last Judgment and the "End"**
God has made us stewards of His world, to serve and care for it. He calls us to bear fruit by using the talents He has given us. Christ will come to judge the world, and He will come at Midnight, at an hour when we least expect Him. He will come as a Bridegroom, to take us, the Church, as His Bride. God calls us to be prepared, for only those who are ready will enter His Kingdom. The Bridegroom Matins.
- **Holy Thursday: The Supper, Anointing, and Betrayal of Christ**
A woman anoints Christ's feet with oil, as a sign of love, as well as a preparation for His burial. Jesus' enemies seek to kill Him and Judas agrees to betray his Master. Jesus shows the disciples how they must serve others, by washing the feet of His own disciples, and shares a Passover meal with them. He blesses bread and a cup of wine, saying "Do this in remembrance of Me." Jesus teaches the disciples about love, and promises to send them a Comforter, the Holy Spirit, after He is gone. The Mystical Supper
- **Holy Friday: The Trial and Crucifixion of Christ.**
Jesus takes the disciples to a place to pray and tells them that one of them shall betray Him and the others will deny Him and run away. Jesus is arrested and brought before the chief priests and scribes who sentence Him to death for equating Himself with God. He is brought before Pilate, the Roman governor, and then to Herod, to be sentenced to death and killed. Jesus is put to death on a Cross, along with two thieves. Mary, Jesus' mother, and the women followers who served Him stand by the

Cross until the end. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus take Jesus' body down from the Cross, prepare it for burial and lay Him in a new tomb. The Death & Burial of Christ.

- **Holy Saturday & Pascha: Descent into Hades & Resurrection**

Jesus died in order to give us new life! Through His death on the Cross, Jesus defeated the power of death. Having died as a man, Jesus descended to Hades, the place of death, to destroy death and bring life to those in the tombs. Jesus' Life was more powerful than death. At the moment of His death, the earth shook, the tombs were opened and many bodies of the saints were raised. By His Resurrection from the dead, Jesus, who is the Christ-God, gives new life to all who believe in Him and do His will. Although we will die, we know that "death can no longer hold men captive," for when Christ comes again, all those in the tombs will be raised from the dead. Christ the Lord of all will come to judge the living and the dead, and grant life eternal in the world to come, to all who believe in Him as King and as God. "Christ is Risen! "

Journey to Pascha • Lesson 1

Lazarus Saturday *(Ages 13-17)*



Overview

Jesus and His Friends

Objectives

By the end of this Lesson, learners should be able to:

- Describe friendships of Jesus Christ with Mary, Martha, Lazarus and others
- Name some elements of friendship that are important to them
- List ways in which they can be true friends to others

Materials

- Bibles
- Bible Concordance for students to share; more than one if class is large
- Icon of the Raising of Lazarus (**Note: Keep this icon and those you will use in following lessons together, to review as part of the unit's final lesson**)
- Small notebook for each student, to serve as a journal, and an envelope into which the notebook will fit
- Blank wall chart (poster board or heavy paper about 2' by 3' for students to write on with markers (Plan to keep this chart posted, and added to if more space is needed, through the whole unit of lessons)
- Colored markers (various colors)
- Pencils and/or pens for each student
- Resource: *My Guide to Holy Week and the Feast of Palms* for your own background reading (not for use in class)
- Simple chart with the words of the Opening and Closing Prayer (Troparion), posted in the room for this session and the next
- For the "Our Friendships" activity, small inexpensive pads of paper for each student, or enough small pieces of paper so that each student can make copies of six words/phrases for every member of the class. You will need a cleared space on which these papers, once completed, can be laid out so they are visible to everyone
- A copy for each student of this brief list:

FRIENDSHIP IS...

Complete honesty

Active concern for the other person's needs and desires

Shared beliefs and interests

Loyalty

Resources

Required Resources

[My Guide to Holy Week and the Feast of Palms \(PDF\)](#)

Optional Resources

[Icon of The Raising of Lazarus \(Image\)](#)

[Raising Lazarus from the Dead](#)

Procedure

1 Opening Prayer

(Have students stand for this and for all prayers in class.)

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Sing or say the Troparion for Lazarus Saturday, using the chart of the prayer that you have provided :

The Troparion (Tone 1)

By raising Lazarus from the dead before Thy passion,
Thou didst confirm the universal resurrection, O Christ God.
Like the children, with the palms of victory,
We cry out to Thee, O Vanquisher of Death,
Hosanna in the Highest!
Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord.

Ask students to tell what they know or remember about the events of the Raising of Lazarus and of Palm Sunday. You can go over the accounts of these events in John 11: 1-45 and Mark 11: 1-10.

Make sure students understand the following words in the Troparion:

Passion: the suffering of Jesus Christ that led to His death

Vanquisher: conqueror

Ask: *What "children" is the Troparion referring to?* (The children who greeted Jesus on the road to Jerusalem, as we remember on Palm Sunday, the day after Lazarus Saturday.)

Ask: *What does the Troparion mean when it says the raising of Lazarus "confirmed the universal resurrection"?* (Jesus will raise those who love and believe in Him, as He raised Lazarus. But that

coming raising will be to a life that lasts forever. This is the promise we constantly remember and thank God for in church.

Tell students that in this lesson and the following five lessons you will be talking about Lazarus Saturday, Palm Sunday, and the days of Holy Week and Pascha.

2 Scripture Activity

Look together at the icon of the raising of Lazarus, and identify Christ, Lazarus, Mary and Martha. *(In the icon, Martha's head is up and she is looking around; Mary's heqa is bowed. This reflects the difference between the more active Martha and the more contemplative Mary.)* Read together (or review, if you read it at the beginning of the class) the Lazarus Saturday Gospel: John 11:1-45. Divide students into groups of 3 or 4. Give groups Bibles, pens or pencils and paper, and ask them to go through the reading and write down sentences, phrases or words that indicate that Jesus shared a close friendship with Mary, Martha and Lazarus. Have the groups share the words/phrases they come up with. *(Suggested answers :)*

- *Verse 5 says Jesus loved them*
- *Martha feels free to "scold" Jesus, yet has faith in Him (verse 21)*
- *Mary "rises quickly" to go to Jesus when He asks for her (verse 31)*
- *Jesus weeps and is "deeply moved" at the tomb of Lazarus (verses 35 and 38)*

Next, have students look together at the Bible concordance. (You may need to explain how it is used--a concordance is a an alphabetical listing of key words and names, showing all the Biblical references to each of those words or names.) Ask each group to have one member come forward. Together, these students will share the following tasks:

- Open the concordance to "Martha"
- Look up in the Bible passages about Martha, listed in the concordance, that they did not look at before. (The other passages are Luke 10:38, 10:40 and 10:41, and John 12: 2.)
- Write the references (not the entire passages) on the chalkboard.

Then have the group members return to their groups, and have the groups find sentences, phrases or words in these passages that indicate Jesus' friendship with Mary, Martha and Lazarus. *(Suggested answers:)*

- *Martha receives Jesus into her house (Luke 10:38)*
- *Though Jesus reproves her, He does so with love (10:40, 41)*
- *Martha, Mary and Lazarus all have Jesus as their guest at supper (John 12: 2)*

3 Discussion Questions: Jesus' Other Friends

Have students, still in their groups, read together Matthew 9:9 and Luke 19: 1-10. As they are reading, put these questions on the chalkboard:

1. Do you think the two men in these passages were popular with other people?
2. How does Jesus show friendship to these two men?

Give the groups time to discuss the questions, and then have the whole class talk about their answers.

Suggested ideas to emphasize:

1. Both Matthew and Zacchaeus, tax collectors, were probably quite unpopular--nobody enjoys paying taxes, and Zacchaeus, in addition to collecting taxes, had the reputation of being a cheat.

2. Jesus invites Matthew to be one of His closest followers. He goes to Zacchaeus' home, and offers him forgiveness for his past sins.

Have the groups read John 15:15 together. Ask: *When He raised Lazarus from the dead, Jesus did something nobody else could do for His friend. At this wedding, what did He do that nobody else could do? (He changed water into wine.)* Emphasize that Jesus fulfilled His human friendship by attending the wedding, but in addition He showed His divine love, compassion and friendship by a miracle. Similarly, He fulfilled His human friendship by going to Lazarus' tomb, and then showed His divine love, compassion and friendship by raising him.

4 Activity: Our Friendships

For this activity, students will work on their own rather than in groups.

Give each student pieces or pads of paper and a pen or pencil.

Give each student a copy of the list *Friendship Is...*

Ask them to write on each piece of paper a quality (in a word or a short phrase) that they feel is necessary for true friendship, at least three and up to six qualities. They should make enough copies of each piece for every student to be able to have one. (Prepare a cleared space where students will be able to lay out all their papers once they have finished.)

Tell students they are free to use some, all or none of the qualities on the list you have passed out--the items on the list are just to help them think about qualities of friendship.

When everyone has finished their papers, have students lay them out on the cleared space.

Have students, one by one or a few at a time, walk around and pick up papers that have words/phrases that express their ideas about true friendship. Ask them to try not to pick up their own papers, though they may if they feel their own words or phrases best express their ideas.

Once everyone has chosen papers, have them go back to their seats. Ask a few volunteers to tell you what words/phrases they chose. As they say each word or phrase, ask others who chose the same or a similar word or phrase to raise their hands. Put on the board those that were chosen by several students.

5 Journal: The Qualities of Friendship

Ask students to consider the words you have put on the board, which are based on the class's choices, as well as what they know about Jesus' friendships. Give each student a journal notebook, an envelope, and a pen or pencil. Ask them to write their names on their envelopes, in which the journals will be kept. Tell them they'll be writing in the journals each week. Assure them that nobody will read what they write unless, in the coming weeks, they give permission.

Have students write in their journals, describing concrete ways they can demonstrate the qualities of true friendship.

Collect the journals, in the named envelopes, and put them away.

6 Wrap Up

Ask students to choose a word/phrase that describes Jesus' friendship with Mary, Martha, Lazarus, Matthew or Zacchaeus, and write it on the blank wall chart with a marker. Have the icon of the Raising of Lazarus prominently displayed near the chart.

7 Closing Prayer

(Have students stand. Refer to the chart you have provided to go over the words.)

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Troparion (*Tone 1*)

By raising Lazarus from the dead before Thy passion,
 Thou didst confirm the universal resurrection, O Christ God.
 Like the children, with the palms of victory,
 We cry out to Thee, O Vanquisher of Death,
 Hosanna in the Highest!
 Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord.

Journey to Pascha • Lesson 2

Palm Sunday *(Ages 13-17)*



Overview

Loyalty to Christ - Loyalty

Objectives

By the end of this Lesson, learners should be able to:

- Compare Peter's confession of faith and expression of loyalty to Jesus Christ (Matt. 16:13-20 and 26:30-35) with his later denial of Christ (Matt. 26: 69-75)
- Locate an Old Testament prophecy and explain how it is fulfilled by Jesus' Entry to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. (Zech. 9:9 and Matt. 21:1-11)
- List possible reasons why some who exalted Jesus on Palm Sunday deserted Him later in the week
- Describe their personal experiences of loyalty

Materials

- Icon of Jesus' Entry into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday)
- Bibles
- Journal notebooks in envelopes
- Pens/pencils
- Mounted wall chart with words of Troparion for Lazarus Saturday/Palm Sunday
- Mounted wall chart with students' words
- Markers in various colors
- My Guide to Holy Week and the Feast of Palms (for your information as a teacher--not for use in class)
- Simple props such as cloaks for the role play, if you wish to use them. Students can sit on the floor around the "fire" or you might use chairs/stools.

Resources

Required Resources

[My Guide to Holy Week and the Feast of Palms \(PDF\)](#)

[Entry into Jerusalem \(Image\)](#)

Optional Resources

[Icon of The Entry Into Jerusalem \(Image\)](#)

[Palm Sunday Icon](#)

[Palm Sunday: Entry Into Jerusalem](#)

Procedure

1 Opening Prayer

Have students stand. Use the wall chart you have provided to go over the words, and review meanings, if necessary, as you did in the previous session.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Troparion (Tone 1)

By raising Lazarus from the dead before Thy passion,
 Thou didst confirm the universal resurrection, O Christ God.
 Like the children, with the palms of victory,
 We cry out to Thee, O Vanquisher of Death,
 Hosanna in the Highest!
 Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord.

2 The Apostle Peter

Ask students to read the Bible passages that tell of Peter's confession of faith, his statement of loyalty to Jesus Christ, and his later denial. (These passages, in order, are Matthew 16:13-20 and Matthew 26: 30-35 and 69-75,) Write three headings on the chalkboard: **Faith, Loyalty, Denial.** Ask students to suggest one word that describes Peter in each episode. Put their words on the board under each heading.

3 Role Play

Divide the class into groups of three or four. (If you have a large class, divide the students into larger groups.) Ask each group to prepare a role play based on Mark 14: 66-72, which describes Peter's denial of Jesus. Use simple props if you wish to, and remind students that though a fire is not specifically mentioned here, it says Peter was warming himself, which means that he and the others were probably huddled around a fire built in the courtyard.

After the groups have presented their role plays, have the whole class look together at the following Bible passages:

- Mark 9: 2-8 (The Transfiguration)
- Luke 4: 38-41 (Jesus heals Peter's mother-in-law; the "Simon" here is Peter)
- Matthew 14: 22-33 (Jesus calms the storm)

Ask: *After seeing all these things, how could Peter fail to be loyal to Jesus in the courtyard that night?* (Let students give their own answers. Suggested ideas: Peter was afraid of getting in trouble, or his faith wavered, as it had when the boat began sinking.)

Remind students that after the Resurrection, Peter became a strong and fearless worker for Christ. Read Acts 2: 43-46 together--a description of what Peter and the other apostles were doing after the Holy Spirit came upon them at Pentecost.

Add a fourth column to those referring to Peter on the board, this one describing Peter as he appears in Acts. Have students give the column a title, and offer words. *(Title of the column could be "true faith" or "deeper faith" or something similar that reflects Peter's matured faith and matured courage.) Ask students to think about these words in the columns for a moment, and ask what they tell us. Suggest that they show us that Our Lord is One who gives us time to grow in faith, and is patient with us.*

4 Scripture Reflection and Icon

Have students locate and read the following Biblical reference: Zechariah 9:9. Then read together Matthew 21: 1-11 and ask them to explain how the verse in Zechariah is a prophecy of Matthew. *(The words in Zechariah should remind them of what happened on Palm Sunday, when Jesus came into Jerusalem humbly on a donkey. Here we see that this was already prophesied in the Old Testament, in the words of the prophet Zechariah.)*

Discuss the meaning of the word "prophecy" and ask students to offer their own definitions. *(Prophecy is a telling of God's will. Sometimes it involves telling what will happen in the future, but not always. On many occasions, the prophets simply told the people that God wanted them to change their ways, or told them how God wanted them to behave.)*

Discuss: Why did God send prophets, and give prophecies? *(Let students give their own answers, and help them understand that God wanted His people to be prepared for the Savior. So He let the prophets tell the people what the Savior would be like and what the Savior would do. Then when Jesus came, people would know He was the Savior because He fulfilled and did those things that the prophets had talked about.)*

Look together at the icon of the Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. Let students compare what it shows with the words of the Troparion (the Opening Prayer.) Similarities to notice: We see the children, the palms, the people excited and shouting "Hosanna!" just as in the Troparion.

5 Palm Sunday and Lazarus Saturday Review

As an easy review, have all the students stand together in the middle of the room. Tell them you are going to read some statements about Palm Sunday and Lazarus Saturday, and that you want them to decide whether each statement is true or false. Designate one side of the room as "TRUE" and the other as "FALSE" and ask students to walk to the TRUE side if they think the statement is true, or to the FALSE side if they think the statement is false. Make sure there is a clear space for them to walk in. Read each statement slowly, twice. Correct answers follow in parentheses.

1. On Palm Sunday we remember Jesus riding into Bethlehem. (False; He rode into Jerusalem)
2. Big crowds welcomed Jesus as He rode into the city. (True)
3. The crowds shouted "Hosanna!" (True)
4. The people spread palms in the road for Jesus to ride over like a king (False; they waved palms and branches and spread their garments in the road)
5. On His way to entering the city, Jesus had told the disciples He would be crucified and would rise on the third day (True)
6. The day before Palm Sunday is called Mary and Martha Saturday (False; it is called Lazarus Saturday, when we remember Jesus raising Lazarus--the brother of Mary and Martha--from the dead)
7. Mary, Martha and Lazarus lived in the town of Bethany. (True)
8. When Jesus came to Lazarus's tomb, Lazarus had already been dead for three days. (False; he had been dead for four days)
9. Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead by saying, "Where are you, Lazarus?" (False, Jesus said, "Lazarus, come out!")

If students don't do well with statements about Lazarus Saturday, review the event with them.

6 Discussion

Say: We know that some people who in the crowds who welcomed Jesus on Palm Sunday were shouting, "Crucify him!" a few days later. Why do you think some people turned against Him? (Let students give their own ideas. Then read together three passages that give some reasons:

Matthew 27:20 (This is one example of Jesus' enemies constantly trying to stir up the people against Him, and sometimes succeeding)

Luke 4: 16-30 (Here Jesus greatly angers the people by telling them the truth--that God loves and cares for all people, not just the people of Israel)

Acts 1: 6 (Many people had hoped Jesus would be a conqueror who would release them from hated Roman rule. He was not that kind of king, and some were deeply angry and disappointed)

7 Journaling: Loyalty

Distribute the journals in envelopes, and pens/pencils. Ask students to write about their own experiences of loyalty--when they tried to be loyal in difficult circumstances, or when someone they know of was loyal, to them or to another person. When students have finished, have them put their journals in their envelopes. Collect them and put them away.

8 Wrap Up

On the wall chart have each student write a word or phrase that represents something personally meaningful about Palm Sunday and the ideas discussed in this lesson.

9 Closing Prayer

(Have students stand. Use the chart you have made to go over the words as needed.)

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Troparion (*Tone 1*)

By raising Lazarus from the dead before Thy passion,
Thou didst confirm the universal resurrection, O Christ God.
Like the children, with the palms of victory,
We cry out to Thee, O Vanquisher of Death,
Hosanna in the Highest!
Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord.

Journey to Pascha • Lesson 3



Holy Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday *(Ages 13-17)*

Overview

The Bridegroom Services - Choosing the Right Path

Objectives

By the end of this Lesson, learners should be able to:

- Describe the common themes of preparedness and judgment as they are presented in the Holy Week services of Great and Holy Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday
- Give brief summaries of parables included in the services of Great and Holy Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday
- Name some ways we can practice the themes of Great and Holy Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday in our lives

Materials

- Icon of the Wise and Foolish Maidens
- Mounted wall chart with students' words from previous sessions
- Mounted wall chart with the words of the Closing Prayer ("Behold, the Bridegroom")
- Mounted wall chart with the words of the Opening Prayer "O Heavenly King" (even though students may know this prayer well, making a chart of the words will help you as you study the prayer a little more closely with the class. Keep this chart for use in the next session)
- Bibles
- Journal notebooks in envelopes
- 8" x 11" posterboard or card stock for each group of 3-4 students
- Colored markers (both thin and thick)
- Copies of *My Guide to Holy Week and the Feast of Palms* (in the Resource Section) for each student

Resources

Required Resources

[My Guide to Holy Week and the Feast of Palms \(PDF\)](#)

[Icon of the Wise and Foolish Maidens\(Link\)](#)

Procedure

1 Opening Prayer

(Have students stand.)

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth,
 Who art everywhere 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.

Ask students to consider the many things this prayer, addressed to the Holy Spirit, tells us about the Spirit. Let them pick out the words (*king, comforter, Spirit of truth, treasury of blessings, and giver of life*) which are all applied to the Spirit here. In addition, the prayer tells us that the Spirit is everywhere, and we ask that the Spirit *abide*, or stay, in us, to cleanse us and save us. These are the gifts that the Holy Spirit brings to us.

Read together John 15:26 and 16:13 to see how Jesus, in His great love for us, sent us the Spirit to do and provide these things for us. (The word "Counselor" in verse 26 is another name for the Spirit.)

2 Discussion Starter

Have the icon of the Wise and Foolish Maidens prominently displayed. Distribute copies of *My Guide to Holy Week and the Feast of Palms*, and read together about the Bridegroom Services. The information is under the heading "Some Basic Characteristics of the Great and Holy Week of the Lord's Passion" in the single column numbered at the bottom *Holy Week--2*. After reading through the whole column with the class, comment on the first two numbered parts:

Part 1. Read the parable of the Wise and Foolish Maidens together in Matthew 25: 1-13, and then give students some historical background: The wedding custom in Christ's time was for the bridegroom to come in the evening to his bride's home and take her to his own home, where festivities would follow. The bridegroom would be accompanied, in the dark evening hours, by maidens with oil lamps to light the way. They had to be ready when he came. It was all right for them to sleep a little while waiting, so long as they were prepared when he came, which might be earlier or later.

In the parable, five maidens have been wise and provided themselves with plenty of oil. Five have been careless, or lazy, or not really interested in their job of accompanying the bridegroom. They must be responsible for themselves; the five wise maidens may not have enough oil to share. The five foolish maidens must take their chances, and sadly for them, the bridegroom comes when they are away, trying to buy oil. The point is that we must prepare for Christ's coming; each of us is responsible for herself or himself.

The bridegroom's words "I do not know you" may seem harsh, but Christ is telling us that when He comes, those who love Him will be ready, just as any of us would be ready as we anticipate the arrival of someone we love. Those who don't bother to be ready are showing that they don't really love him and don't want to be with Him. They don't know Him. If we do not know Him, He cannot know us.

Read together the Troparion sung at Matins (Morning Service) on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy Week, which begins "Behold, the Bridegroom comes at midnight" and have students note the way the Troparion reflects the Bible parable. (*The Troparion refers to the wise ones watching for the bridegroom with their lamps prepared, while others are "heedless" or unprepared and not watching. Those who allow themselves to be "weighed down with sleep" rather than alert will be "shut out" as the foolish maidens were.*) Look together at the icon of the Wise and Foolish Maidens to see how it, too, reflects the parable.

The verse which begins "Thy Bridal Chamber I see adorned, O my Savior" comes in the services as we finish the first three days of Holy Week and enter Holy Thursday. It's another reminder not to be lazy about preparing for Christ's coming and our readiness to enter His Kingdom. Read together Matthew 22: 11-14 to see the source of the "wedding garment" reference. (*Once again, the final words here may seem harsh to students. But it is truly a matter of our eternal salvation to be ready to meet Christ and enter His Kingdom. We cannot be casual, not bothering to "wear the wedding garment" that is appropriate for the King's marriage feast "Many are called but few are chosen" reminds us that though we are His people, our actions must still show our readiness and willingness to be with Him. We cannot be complacent.*)

Part 2. The "bridegroom" theme continues here. We don't know when the bridegroom (Jesus Christ) will come, so like the maidens we must be ready, and must show that we *want* to be with Him by having sufficient oil to get up and accompany Him. Read together the passages from John and Matthew. Here Jesus speaks to His apostles openly about the approaching end of His life, and the judgment to come. This is the event for which we must be ready.

Collect the copies of *My Guide to Holy Week and the Feast of Palms* to be used at the next session.

3 Oral Summaries and Poster

Divide the class into groups of 3 or 4. Assign a parable to each group, or if you have a large class have several groups work on each parable. If the class is small, one or two people can be assigned each parable.

Have each group read and then prepare an oral summary of its assigned parable. These are all read during the first days of Holy Week:

The Publican and the Pharisee (Luke 18: 10-14) *A warning not to judge others or think they are less than we are; in fact we should be like children before God*

The Fig Tree (Matthew 21: 18-22) *We must not be "fruitless" like this fig tree, and when God calls us to do something we must be ready and able to do it*

The Talents (Matthew 25: 14-30) *We are called to use the many gifts and talents God has given us, not waste them or, out of laziness or fear, simply "bury" them. We should even be willing to take a few risks with them, if that means we can do more of God's work)*

Each group can make a mini-poster that includes the name of the parable and a short summary. Then they can add a phrase or sentence that embodies the main theme of the parable, and a graphic of their choosing. The mini-posters should be displayed for the discussion segment of class. (*Suggestions of the theme of each parable are in italics after its title above, but students should come up with their own*)

4 Presentation

Have groups present and describe their mini-posters on the parables.

5 Discussion Review Questions

- What common themes do we find in the parables of the Wise and Foolish Maidens, the Publican and the Pharisee, the Fig Tree and the Talents? (*Answers could include the need to be prepared, the importance of humility and not looking down on others, the requirement that we "bear fruit" in our lives*)
- Why do you think these themes are presented to us during the first three days of Holy Week? (*Let students give their ideas. Suggested ideas to emphasize: As we prepare for Pascha, we need to be aware that preparation for the Kingdom really is important. It's easy to forget this, but in the "slowed-down" time of Lent we have time to think about it and do something about it. Then, in Holy Week, when we share Christ's urgent message that time is short, the Church reminds us forcefully.*)

6 Journaling: Holy Week Themes in Our Lives

Distribute the journals in envelopes. Ask students to write about ways they can "live out" the themes of Holy Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday in their lives.

When students have finished and put their journals in envelopes, collect them and put them away.

7 Wrap Up

Invite students to put meaningful words from today's lesson on the wall chart.

8 Closing Prayer

(Have students stand.) Briefly review the parable of the Wise and Foolish Maidens by looking at the words of the Troparion, which is the Closing Prayer, on the chart you have prepared. Have the icon prominently displayed. Say or sing the prayer together.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Behold! The Bridegroom comes at midnight,
And blessed is the servant whom He shall find watching;
And again, unworthy is the servant whom He shall find heedless.
Beware, therefore, O my soul, do not be weighed down with sleep,
Lest you be given up to death, and lest you be shut out of the Kingdom.
But rouse yourself, crying: "Holy! Holy! Holy! Art Thou, O our God,
Through the Theotokos, have mercy on us!"

Journey to Pascha • Lesson 4

Holy Thursday

 (Ages 13-17)

Overview

The Mystical Supper - Confrontation with Enemies

Objectives

By the end of this Lesson, learners should be able to:

- Describe and discuss the themes of Great and Holy Thursday
- List some religious and political groups of Jesus' time
- Contrast the thoughts and actions of the sinful woman and Judas as they related to Christ in the last days before His Crucifixion

Materials

- Bible Dictionary (more than one if possible)
- Wall chart with students' words from previous sessions
- Bible Encyclopedia (more than one if possible)
- Bibles
- Colored markers
- Journal notebooks in envelopes
- Wall chart with the words of the hymn "Of Thy Mystical Supper", which is the Closing Prayer
- Paper and pencils
- Wall chart with the words of the Holy Week hymn in the "Scripture Reflection" section of the lesson (# 5 in the Procedure)
- Copies of *My Guide to Holy Week and the Feast of Palms* for each student
- Icon of the Last Supper/Mystical Supper

Resources

Required Resources

[The Mystical Supper icon](#)

[My Guide to Holy Week and the Feast of Palms \(PDF\)](#)

Procedure

1 Opening Prayer

(Have students stand.) Briefly review the meaning of the prayer, using information from the previous session.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

O Heavenly King, the comforter, the Spirit of truth,
 Who art everywhere 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. Amen.

2 Reading and Icon

Distribute copies of *My Guide to Holy Week and the Feast of Palms*, and read together about Great and Holy Thursday in the single column marked *Holy Week--4* at the bottom. Discuss the text by posing questions, which may (or may not) be easy for your students to answer. In any case they are a good review. Have the icon of the Last Supper prominently displayed as you go through this section.

Ask: When do we take part in the "Mystical Supper" described in the hymn? (*When we take Holy Communion. The Mystical Supper is another name for the Eucharist, or Holy Communion, and also for the Last Supper that Jesus shared with His apostles. That Last Supper is what we remember on this day, Great and Holy Thursday. Look together at the icon and notice the closeness of Jesus and His apostles, sitting together and eating together as loving friends and families do*)

Ask: What do you think it means to say that we will not "speak of Thy Mystery to Thine enemies"? (*Those who opposed Jesus Christ and wanted to condemn Him refused to believe that He was God's Son. They also refused to understand that He offered Himself to suffering and death as God. He was not some average man seeking to gain glory. Because of their refusal, it would do no good to speak to such people, His enemies, about the mystery of His death and resurrection. In fact, they might twist our words to use them against Him in some way we never intended. However, we are called to pray that they will see the truth and come to Jesus Christ*)

Ask: What does "neither like Judas will I give Thee a kiss" mean? (*Read together the scene in the Garden of Gethsemane and the betrayal of Jesus Christ to His enemies with Judas's kiss in Matthew 26: 36-56*)

Ask: Who is the "thief" referred to in the hymn? (*Read together Luke 23: 32-43 for the description of the "wise thief", and remind students that this is how he is referred to in the Church's hymns*)

Ask: Why do we want to be like the thief? (*Because the thief understood who Jesus was, and wanted to be with Him. The thief's suffering on the cross didn't make him angry or bitter against God*)

(Collect the copies of *My Guide to Holy Week and the Feast of Palms* to use at the next session.)

3 Discussion Starter

Divide students into groups of 3 or 4, and give each group pens/pencils and paper. Put on the chalkboard the names **Pharisees, Sadducees, Zealots** and **Sanhedrin**.

Using Biblical references and aids (e.g. Bible with notes, Bible dictionary, Bible encyclopedia) the groups of students can create a description of each of these four groups we read about in the Bible, and also a reason why each might have opposed or disagreed with Jesus.

Answers should include at least this basic information, though students may offer other reasons or ways of describing the groups and their reasons:

Pharisees: *Learned Jews who kept the Old Testament law very seriously, often to its most minute points. (A reason for their opposition: Jesus sometimes challenged them if He saw that their adherence to law was getting in the way of compassion.)*

Sadducees: *Jewish leaders who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead, or in angels. (A reason for their opposition: They did not believe in the Resurrection that Jesus preached about, nor in the angels He referred to.)*

Zealots: *Jews who wanted to overthrow Palestine's Roman rulers. (A reason for their opposition: They were disappointed that Jesus was not going to lead their fight.)*

Sanhedrin: *The highest Jewish political and religious court, including both Pharisees and Sadducees. (A reason for their opposition: Jesus threatened their authority.)*

Discuss the student groups' findings together.

4 Discussion

Say to students: *Jesus had many encounters with people who opposed or accused Him. Let's look at three of these.*

Read together Mark 2: 23-27, Luke 5: 27-32 and then Mark 15: 1-3.

Ask students: *What is different in Jesus' actions in these encounters? (In the first two, Jesus answers His opposers. In the third, He is silent.)*

Discuss this question:

Why do you think Jesus answered in the first two encounters, but was silent in the third? (Let students give answers. These are not easy questions, but it seems that Jesus always answered as a way of teaching, as in the first encounter, or as a way of encouraging compassion, as in the second encounter. With Pilate and with the crowd, there was no teaching He could do--the crowd

wanted to destroy Him, and Pilate was "amazed" that He did not defend Himself, but did nothing to help. Yet even here Jesus was teaching by fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy about the Messiah. Read this together: Isaiah 53:7.)

Ask: *Do you think there are times in our own lives when it is best to answer with silence?* (Let students give answers. There are really no right or wrong answers here; it is more something to think about, and students may want to talk about their own experiences or their observations of others.)

5 Scripture Reflection

Have students stand, and clear an imaginary line running across the room, so that they can stand on the line. Explain that you are going to read some statements about attitudes toward money. Students should stand on the line (the continuum) at a place that represents their personal opinion of each statement. If they strongly agree, they should go to one end of the room (point to that end.) If they strongly disagree, they should go to the other end (point to that end.) If they have an opinion somewhere in between, they should go to a place on the line that best represents that opinion.

Read each of the statements slowly, twice, and point each time to one end of the room, saying "Strongly agree" and then to the other end, saying "Strongly disagree." Give students a few seconds each time to think and then find their place on the continuum.

1. Money is the root of all evil.
2. Having money is OK; it depends on what you do with it.
3. Those who have more money must give away more money.
4. The best use of my money is for my personal security.
5. Money can't buy happiness.
6. A Christian should never be concerned with money.
7. Blessed is the person who helps the poor.

When you've completed the exercise, talk about any issues it raised for students. Look together at I Timothy 6: 10. Ask: *Does Paul tell Timothy that money is the root of all evil?* (No, he says that the love of money is the root of all evil. To pursue money can lead us astray. This is why Christ told some people to give up their pursuit of money--it was spiritually dangerous for them. Yet He did not always say this--some people use their money for good, and they control it. They follow the commandment to help the poor and never be either stingy with money or deceitful in making it.)

Read together Matthew 26: 6-16, and then the words of the Holy Week hymn based on it, using the chart you have provided:

The sinful woman brought oil of myrrh; the disciple Judas came to an agreement with the transgressors.

She rejoiced to pour out what is very precious; he made haste to sell the One who is above all price.

She acknowledged Christ as Lord; He cut himself off from the Master.

She was set free, but Judas became the slave of the enemy.

Ask students: *How would you describe the woman's attitude toward money; how would you describe Judas's attitude?* (Let students give answers. Suggested ideas to emphasize:

The woman was generous enough to do something purely out of love for Jesus. He appreciated her gift, and reminded the indignant disciples that we can always help the poor, but that doesn't keep us from also doing a "beautiful thing" for God. This is one reason why, as Orthodox Christians, we make our churches beautiful but also must help those in need. One does not cancel out the other.

Judas was greedy enough to sell and betray Christ to His enemies. He would never have understood the woman's gift, and the money he received for his betrayal would not have been given to the poor--it was for himself.

6 Journaling: Christlike Service

Put this Bible reference on the chalkboard: John 13: 1-15. Ask students to read it, and then write in their journals about ways we can follow Jesus' example of humble service at the Last Supper.

When students have finished, collect the journals in their envelopes and put them away.

7 Wrap Up

Invite students to write meaningful words from today's lesson on the wall chart.

8 Closing Prayer

(Have students stand.) Have the icon of the Last Supper prominently displayed.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Of Thy Mystical Supper, O Son of God,
Accept me today as a communicant
For I will not speak of Thy Mystery to Thine enemies,
Neither like Judas will I give Thee a kiss
But like the thief will I confess Thee:
Remember me, O lord in Thy Kingdom.

Journey to Pascha • Lesson 5

Holy Friday

(Ages 13-17)

Overview

The Crucifixion - The hour has come: Where do we stand?

Objectives

By the end of this Lesson, learners should be able to:

- Briefly describe the events of Great and Holy Friday
- Consider psalms which prophesy the events of Great and Holy Friday
- Contrast Joseph of Arimathea with the disciples who abandoned Christ

Materials

- Icon of Jesus on the Cross
- Mounted wall chart with students' words from previous sessions
- Journal notebooks in envelopes
- Bibles
- Mounted wall chart with the words of "O Heavenly King" from previous session
- Mounted wall chart with the words "The Noble Joseph" (Closing Prayer)
- Recording of "The Noble Joseph" (sung on Holy Friday) to play during class if you wish to
- Copies of *My Guide to Holy Week and the Feast of Palms* for each student
- For the poster in #4 of the Procedure, have the following for each group of 3-5 students: a piece of poster board (2' by 3') and a black line drawing of the icon of the Crucifixion (from the Resource Section.) Give each group, or have everyone share: scissors, ruler, glue, tape, crayons, thin and thick markers in various colors, and a few sheets of construction paper in varied colors
- **Note:** For review at the next session, have the icons of the Raising of Lazarus, the Entry into Jerusalem, the Wise and Foolish Maidens, and the Last Supper.

Resources

Required Resources

[My Guide to Holy Week and the Feast of Palms \(PDF\)](#)

Optional Resources

[Icon of The Crucifixion of the Lord \(Image\)](#)

Procedure

1 Opening Prayer

(Have students stand.)

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

O Heavenly King, the comforter, the Spirit of truth,
 Who art everywhere 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.

Review words and meanings in the prayer as needed, using information in previous sessions and the chart you have provided.

2 Discussion Starter

Distribute copies of *My Guide to Holy Week and the Feast of Palms* to students. Read together about Great and Holy Friday in the columns marked "Holy Week--4" and "Holy Week--5" at the bottom.

Read Genesis 1: 6-10 together, and note with students the way in which the hymn describes this poetically: "He (Christ) who hung the earth upon the waters." The same poetic kind of description is in the third line: "He (Christ) who wraps the heavens in clouds." These magnificent acts of creation are contrasted with the brutal way Christ is mistreated by the people He himself created: "He who freed Adam in the Jordan (at His baptism) is slapped on the face."

Review the meaning of the word "passion" which here refers to Christ's suffering leading to His death on the cross.

Collect the copies of *My Guide* to use at the next session.

3 Scripture Reflection

Read together Mark 14:32-15:15, and look together at the icon of the Crucifixion. Ask students to identify the followers of Jesus who were with Him at the Cross, then to name some people or groups who had been with Him but abandoned Him.

(Possible answers: Usually, as in the icon provided with this lesson, Mary and a few other women, plus John the beloved disciple, are shown at the foot of the cross. Those who had been with Jesus and abandoned Him were the other disciples, who in fact deserted Him at His most terrible hour. As noted in a previous lesson, some of the people who greeted Him joyfully as He entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday became part of the mob demanding His crucifixion. Even people who had received help or healing from Him hid themselves from the authorities, rather than speaking up for Him, when He was arrested.)

4 Discussion and Activity

Divide the class into three groups of 3 to 5 students, or six groups if the class is large.

Put these psalm references on the chalkboard:

Psalm 2, verses 1 to 2 (up to word "anointed")

Psalm 22, verses 16-18

Psalm 109, verses 1 to 5

Give each group a black line drawing of the Icon of the Crucifixion and a piece of poster board. Also give each group, or have everyone share, the following: scissors, glue, ruler, crayons, markers, and construction paper.

Ask each group to make a poster by coloring the icon and putting it on the poster board, and then choosing words of one or more of the psalms. They can write the words around the icon in any style or pattern they choose, and add borders or decoration they wish.

Look together at the finished posters and talk about how the verses are prophecies of what will happen to Christ, and what He will do. Ask groups to tell why they chose the words they did.

Plan to display the finished posters where parents and parishioners can see them.

5 Journaling: The Cross

Distribute journals in their envelopes. Ask students to reflect in their journals on this question: (You may want to put it on the chalkboard):

What does "Take up your cross and follow Christ" mean to you?

When students have finished, collect the journals in their envelopes and put them away.

6 The Noble Joseph

Read together about Joseph of Arimathea in Luke 27: 57-61. Then read the Closing Prayer together--the hymn about Joseph. Ask students: *Why do you think the Church refers to Joseph of Arimathea as "the noble Joseph?"* (Let students give their own answers. A point to emphasize is that most of the twelve disciples abandoned Jesus. Yet Joseph, the only person explicitly called a "disciple" who is not one of the twelve, respects and loves Jesus enough to give His body a decent

burial. This took courage, since the Romans and his own people were no friends of Jesus. Love that demands courage, as Joseph's did, can be called noble.)

7 Wrap Up

Ask students to put meaningful words from the lesson on the wall chart.

8 Closing Prayer

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The noble Joseph,
When he had taken down Thy most pure Body from the tree,
Wrapped it in fine linen,
And anointed it with spices,
And placed it in a new tomb.

If you have a CD or tape of "The Noble Joseph" you could play it, and have students practice singing it.

Journey to Pascha • Lesson 6



Holy Saturday & Pascha *(Ages 13-17)*

Overview

Christ Is Risen! - Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life of all.

Objectives

By the end of this Lesson, learners should be able to:

- Explain how four Old Testament readings prefigure the Passion and Resurrection of Christ
- Describe some of the elements of the services of Great and Holy Saturday and Pascha
- Name some ways in which icons of the events of Holy Week and Pascha depict those events

Materials

- Bibles
- Paper, pens, pencils, colored markers
- Wall chart with the words of the Closing Prayer ("Do Not Lament Me...")
- Wall chart with students' words from previous lessons
- Icons to review: Raising of Lazarus, Entry into Jerusalem, Wise and Foolish Maidens, Last Supper
- Icon of the Resurrection (Christ's descent into Hades)
- For the "Hot Potato" review game in # 6 of the Procedure: 14 small pieces of paper with the 14 words and phrases listed there. Put **only** the words/phrases on the papers, not the definitions. Fold the papers up, and have them in a small basket or other container. Also have a clean raw potato, a stopwatch or something to time ten seconds, and paper/pencil ready at hand to keep score.
- Paschal music you can play during class, if you want it
- Journal notebooks in envelopes

Resources

Required Resources

[My Guide to Holy Week and the Feast of Palms \(PDF\)](#)

Optional Resources

[Descent Into Hades: The Holy Resurrection](#)

[Descent Into Hades: The Holy Resurrection](#)

[Icon of The Resurrection of Christ \(Image\)](#)

Procedure

1 Opening Prayer

(Have students stand.)

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

We have been freed from suffering by Your suffering, O Christ,

We have been delivered from corruption by Your resurrection,

O Lord, glory to You! Amen. *(From the Vespers of Great and Holy Saturday)*

Be sure students understand the meaning of "corruption": the rot and decay brought on by death. Now, through Christ's Resurrection, we will rise to eternal life, no longer corrupt but whole and perfectly healthy.

2 Prophecies in the Old Testament

Put the following Old Testament citations on the chalkboard:

Isaiah 53: 12

Jonah 1: 17

Jeremiah 31: 31-33

2 Kings 4: 32-37

Divide students into groups of 3 or 4. Ask each group to read all four passages and then write down a key word or phrase for each one. Have the groups take turns reading one of their key words/phrases aloud, and having the rest of the class guess which passage it refers to. This should be easy, and is a way of becoming familiar with these Old Testament prophecies of the work and resurrection of Christ. The groups may choose different words and phrases, but they should have some reference to these central points:

***Isaiah** describes how the Savior will accomplish His saving work by suffering and taking on the sins of others; **Jeremiah** speaks about a "new covenant (or pledge), which God will fulfill through Christ; **Jonah** prefigures (meaning foretells, describes or represents beforehand) Christ's 3 days in the tomb; **2 Kings** shows God's love as He gives a prophet the power to raise a boy from the dead, a foretelling of Christ's raising of Lazarus and all humanity from the dead.*

Make the point that the Orthodox Church always understands the Old Testament as preparing us for the coming of Christ. These prophecies are examples of that.

3 Reflection on a Hymn

Read with students the text of the Closing Prayer for this lesson, which is the Ninth Ode of the Nocturn Canon of Pascha. (For now, just read the text--at the end of the lesson you will use it as a prayer.)

Have students, again in their groups of 3 or 4, rewrite the Ode, keeping the meaning but using words they think would be clear to someone who was not familiar with the Scriptures.

Main points are that Jesus was truly born and grew in His mother's womb, but was conceived through the power of the Holy Spirit rather than sexual relations. Though His suffering and death are terrible for His Mother to witness, He will rise from the dead, and will resume His eternal place of heavenly glory with His Father. Those who honor His Mother will receive His divine blessing, because in honoring, or magnifying, His Mother, they show that they believe in Him and love Him.

Let students come up with their own ideas and wording, but make sure they understand these main points as being truths of Christianity.

4 Discussion and Icon Reflection

Distribute copies of *My Guide to Holy Week and the Feast of Palms*. Read together about the Three Day Pascha and Great and Holy Saturday--Matins in the column marked "Holy Week-6" at the bottom.

Look together at the icon, and ask students to describe how it reflects the words you have read. (*The icon shows Jesus raising Adam--and Eve--from the power of death in Hades or hell, pulling His creatures up with His own hands. Adam and Eve stand for the whole human race.*)

Next read together *Great and Holy Saturday--Vespers and Liturgy* in the columns marked "Holy Week-7" and "Holy Week-8" at the bottom. Emphasize important points with these questions:

How could you summarize what the 15 Old Testament readings at the Vesperal Liturgy tell us? (See Column 7 #2. They tell us of God's power and His desire to save people and bring them into the light, even from the time of Adam, Abraham, and all the people of the Old Testament.)

During the Vesperal Liturgy, why are the colors of vestments and cloths changed from dark to white? (See Column 7 #4. We sing the verse "Arise, O God" and at this point Christ's work of raising the dead in Hades has begun.)

At the Liturgy of Holy Pascha a famous sermon by Saint John Chrysostom is read. What does this sermon say has happened to death as a result of Christ's Resurrection? (See the last paragraph of Column 8. Death is overthrown, or defeated.) What do the angels do? (They rejoice.)

5 Journaling: The Resurrection

Put this line from the Paschal stikhera on the chalkboard:

Let us forgive all by the Resurrection.

Ask students to write in their journals about what this line means to them.

(If you have a recording of Paschal music, play it softly as students are writing.)

When students have finished, give everyone a few moments to leaf through their journals and share anything they want to with the rest of the class. The journals are now theirs to keep and take home.

6 Wrap Up and Review

As a review of the unit, have a game of "Hot Potato." Divide the class into 2 teams. Tell them:

In the basket are 14 words or phrases taken from the lessons you have studied together.

- The teams will each get 7 chances to identify the words or phrases correctly. (Example: the phrase "palm branches" would correctly be identified as what the people waved on Palm Sunday as Jesus entered Jerusalem.)
- You (teacher) will throw the potato to someone on the first team. That person will choose a paper from the basket with a word or phrase. Then the person has 10 seconds to identify the word/phrase correctly--you will keep time. Others on the team can help the person answering.
- If the person answers within ten seconds, he or she throws the potato to someone on the other team, and that person chooses and tries to answer. Each time a team member answers within ten seconds, the team gets a point. If they still haven't answered and still have the potato when ten seconds are up, their team gets no points. Then they throw it to someone on the other team. The winning team, of course, is the one with most points. You can keep score.
- Teams should treat the potato as if it is hot, and try to get rid of it as quickly as possible!

The 14 words/phrases are as follows (students' definitions should be close to these):

1. **Fig Tree** (It bore no fruit, and reminds us we must produce good "fruit" for God)
2. **Foolish Maidens** (They failed to provide enough oil; were shut out of wedding banquet)
3. **Come Out!** (Jesus' command to Lazarus as He raised Lazarus from the dead)
4. **Mystical Supper** (Another name for Holy Communion or the Last Supper Jesus shared with His disciples)

5. **Pontius Pilate** (Roman governor who reluctantly but spinelessly authorized Jesus' crucifixion)
6. **Foot Washing** (Jesus' example of humble service to His disciples)
7. **Bridegroom Matins** (Services of the first 3 days of Holy Week. The "Bridegroom" is Jesus Christ)
8. **Martha**: Sister of Lazarus and Mary, good friend of Jesus
9. **Noble Joseph**: Joseph of Arimathea, who courageously gave Jesus' body a decent burial)
10. **Hosanna**: The greeting people shouted to Jesus as He entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday)
11. **Pharisees**: Learned Jews who opposed Jesus
12. **Judas's kiss**: Judas betrayed Jesus to His enemies with a kiss to identify Him
13. **Bethany**: The home of Lazarus, Mary and Martha
14. **Hades**: The place of death, which Christ conquered for us by His Resurrection

As a further review, look together at the icons of the Raising of Lazarus, the Entry into Jerusalem, the Wise and Foolish Maidens, and the Last Supper. Ask students to give a few details about each. Ask them also to put the events depicted in correct chronological order. (The titles are listed in order.) Of course students will know that the Crucifixion and the Resurrection came after these.

Have students put meaningful words from the lesson on the wall chart. Invite students to share with the rest of the class any words they put up, and why those words were meaningful to them.

Give students their journals, which are now theirs to keep. Take a few moments for them to page through the journals, and share with the class, if they wish to, any thoughts or ideas they wrote during your class meetings.

7 Closing Prayer

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Do not lament me, O Mother, seeing me in the tomb,
The Son conceived in the womb without seed.
For I shall arise and be glorified with eternal glory as God.
I shall exalt all who magnify you in faith and love.

Tell the class that over the weeks following Pascha you will greet them with "Christ is Risen" and you want them to respond with "Truly (or Indeed) He is Risen"!