

## 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](http://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



# Getting Ready for Pascha *(Ages 4-6)*

## Overview

### During Great Lent We Get Ready for Pascha

## Objectives

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

- State that Great Lent is a time of getting ready for Pascha
- State that Great Lent is a time to try to be more like Jesus Christ

## Materials

- Construction paper (8 1/2 x 11), one sheet per child. Have enough sheets to offer a choice of colors. The colors should be light enough so that the children's drawings will show up well.
- Colored markers or crayons
- Tape or glue
- Pictures of a church, a Bible, someone praying, people showing kindness and helping others in various ways. These should be things that can be used to show how the children will get ready for Pascha. Sources for pictures include magazines, the internet, and computer clip art. An excellent Orthodox source is the Prayer Journal produced by International Orthodox Christian Charities, available at [IOCC.org](http://IOCC.org).
- Wall calendar showing the days of Great Lent and Holy Week. Have this large enough for children to see easily. You can make it yourself on a large piece of butcher paper or poster board, with a box for each day. Number the days of Great Lent (no labels), but number and label Lazarus Saturday, Palm Sunday, the days of Holy Week--Great and Holy Monday through Great and Holy Saturday--and Pascha. This should be mounted on the wall and remain there for all the weeks of the unit.
- Poster with the words of the opening prayer, *O Heavenly King*, in large letters. This also should be mounted on the wall and remain there throughout the unit.
- Cut-out picture of a dove and tape to attach it to the poster during the lesson. (Pictures and outlines of a dove can be found on the internet or in computer clip art.)
- Paper fan with which you can gently fan the children during the lesson. Keep it on hand for review in following lessons.
- Blank wall chart to record names of people children choose to pray for.

## Resources

### Optional Resources

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

## Procedure

### 1 Opening Prayer

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.

Help children understand these parts of the prayer. As you talk about the parts, point to the words in the mounted poster:

*Spirit of Truth:* This is the Holy Spirit, the Person we are addressing or "talking to" in this prayer. Tell children that we have never seen the Holy Spirit. But the Bible tells us that people have seen and felt the Spirit in some ways. One is as a wind blowing. (Have the children close their eyes, and gently fan them with the paper fan.) The Holy Spirit also came as a dove to Jesus' friends as a sign of God's love. (Tape the dove picture to the poster.)

*Come and abide in us:* Be with us and stay close to us.

*Cleanse us from every impurity:* Help us to do good things, and to make good choices in the things we do, so that we will be living the way Jesus wants us to. Ask children to give examples of good choices. (Suggestions: Being kind and not mean, saying things nicely using "please" and "thank you", helping someone when we can, etc.) Do simple role play:

Have one child pretend to carry and then accidentally drop a pile of books. Ask another child to think of and act out a good choice (helping to pick them up.)

Have one child sit in a chair, and pretend it's the only seat left on a crowded bus. Another child pretends to be a tired, old person and walks slowly by. Ask the child in the chair to think of and act out a good choice (offer the seat.)

Have one child ask another to borrow a pencil, and choose a good way of asking ("May I borrow your pencil" rather than "Hey, would ya gimme your pencil") Let several children take turns asking each other to borrow something, and role play helping clean up something spilled.

If time permits, have children think of other situations in which to make good choices, or offer some suggestions to them. Then remind them that this is what "cleanse us from every impurity" means.

### 2 Discussion Starter

Explain to the children that Great Lent is a time of getting ready--use these words rather than "preparing" with your young learners--for Pascha, the day when we celebrate Jesus being raised from the dead. (Remind them that many people call this day "Easter.") Look together at the icon of the Resurrection (in the Resources section) and ask children to notice how Jesus Christ is helping people. (He is pulling them out of the place of death. This is the first thing He did after He rose from the dead. He did it because He loved us so much that He wanted us to live with Him forever.)

This is why Pascha is so special--we thank Jesus Christ for saving us, and celebrate the fact that one day we will be able to live with Him forever. So Great Lent is a time when we get ready for that special day by trying to do good things, and doing what Jesus wants us to do. Some of the things we do to are as follows; let children add other ideas, and perhaps tell about some of their own Lenten experiences:

- **Go to church more often**
- **Help others and give to others in need (ask children to give examples of how we can do this)**
- **Pray more**
- **Read stories from the Bible**
- **Not eat meat, and eat fewer "treats" (Be sensitive to various family practices in the children's homes.) Suggest that children could save the money they would otherwise spend on treats, and ask their parents to use it for the poor**
- **Watch less television, play fewer video games, and spend less time on the computer. Use the time instead to pray more, and to help others**

### 3 Discussion Question

Ask: What things can you do to get ready for Pascha?

Give sufficient time for each child who wishes to respond. Responses will vary, some may involve getting new clothes, Easter baskets, or having a special meal with the family. You may suggest that the children think about ways they can carry out some of the things you have talked about already in this lesson. For example, they might choose a specific person they could help in some way, or a job they could do at home.

### 4 Preparing for Pascha

Have the children choose a sheet of construction paper, and fold it into fourths (with your help, if necessary.) On the construction paper have students show four ways they will get ready for Pascha – one in each quarter section. These can either be pictures you have provided, which you

help them paste or tape onto the paper, or something the child draws. Label the sections to help parents identify the things the children will do during Great Lent.

Have each child identify one person or group, other than immediate family members, for whom they will pray during Great Lent. On the chart you have provided, place each child's name and the person for whom they will pray. (Suggestions: your priest, choir director, their school principal, teacher, or nurses, firefighters, soldiers, police.) Invite children to explain why they selected this person or group; some may be more ready to do this than others, and only those who wish to need to say anything. The chart should remain posted in the classroom as a reminder. The children may offer suggestions of a title for the chart, or you may create one.

As an option, plan during the coming week to send home a letter to parents telling them who their child plans to pray for. Encourage the parents to remind the child and also take part in the prayers.)

## 5 Project Introduction: Holy Week Mural

Tell the children that, during some of your class time together, they will be doing a mural project that will show the events of Holy Week – the week that follows Great Lent and leads us to Pascha. Be sure they know that a "mural" is a large chart with pictures.

## 6 Wrap Up

As the children are cleaning up and preparing for the closing prayer, ask:

- *What is the first thing you will start doing to get ready for Pascha?* Time permitting, let those who wish to silently "mime" what they are going to do, while the others guess what it is. If time is shorter, just invite brief oral answers. Have the children take their labeled construction paper sheets home. Ask the children to tell you the other word many people use for "Pascha" (Easter.)
- Remind children that today you have talked about Great Lent. Point out the calendar, which shows us those weeks of Great Lent leading up to Pascha.

## 7 Closing Prayer

(Have children stand.) You may want to tell children that, when the priest prays this prayer during the Divine Liturgy, he raises his hands and offers the prayer to God while asking for a blessing from God. Children could also raise their hands for this prayer, thus offering and asking.

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

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

*(Go over words of this prayer as needed. For example, ask children what "trespasses" means.*

*When you feel sure they know it means the bad things that people do, ask what the prayer wants us to do about them. The answer, of course, is to forgive them--not keep them in our hearts and be mad at the person who did them. That's because we want to be like Jesus, and Jesus forgives us. So we should forgive others.)*

## 8 Teacher Tips

1. We have made these lessons flexible in terms of the time they will take. Especially with very young children, you may adapt, shorten, expand, or divide the material among sessions in any way that works well for you, the children, and your parish situation.
2. "Call-backs" are a good way to get the children's attention when you need to, especially when the children are excited, or have been moving around the room for an activity. Teach the children an answer to something you say, and use that to call their attention back to you. Examples: When you say "Jesus said" they answer "Follow me", or you say "God grant you" and they answer "Many Years." The words could be any combination you choose; teachers have used their city and state (teacher says "Detroit" and students answer "Michigan.") The point is to let children know that they are to answer and give their attention when they hear this particular word or phrase. Change the call-back after a few weeks.
3. We suggest creating a prayer corner in the classroom, where you can gather with the children for opening and closing prayers. Have an icon, candles, and flowers or a plant. The icon can be the one related to the lesson.

## Journey to Pascha • Lesson 2

# Jesus' Friends *(Ages 4-6)*



## Overview

### Jesus Visits Lazarus

## Objectives

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

- State that Mary, Martha and Lazarus were friends of Jesus
- Tell why Jesus went to visit Lazarus (to raise him from the dead, or bring him back to life)

## Materials

- Orthodox Study Bible – John 11:1-45
- Lazarus story, paraphrased for children (see "Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead" in Resource section)
- Large pieces of fabric for live re-creation of the icon and several rolls of toilet paper to wrap Lazarus in burial cloths
- Icon of the Raising of Lazarus
- Icon of the Resurrection (Jesus raising Adam and Eve from hell and eternal death)
- Mural project materials list
  - Roll of mural paper/paper on a roll--plan enough for five panels, and mark off five sections/panels
  - Crayons or markers
  - One or more black line drawings--see Resource section-- of the Raising of Lazarus (depending on the number of children in your class, cut the drawing/s into pieces so that each child can have one piece. They will color and put together the pieces for the mural.)
  - Scissors
  - Masking tape, thumb tacks, or other wall mounting

## Resources

### Required Resources

[The Raising of Lazarus \(John 11:1-45\) \(PDF\)](#)

### Optional Resources

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

[Raising Lazarus from the Dead](#)

## Procedure

### 1 Opening Prayer

(Have children 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 parts of this prayer as you did at the previous session. Ask the children, "Who are we talking to in this prayer?" (The Holy Spirit)

Review the chart showing people or groups children chose to pray for at the last session. Ask how they did at home, remembering to pray. If you chose the option of sending a letter home, remind them to invite their parents to pray with them. Then pray together for all the names on the chart. Tell the children that Jesus is always happy when we pray, especially when we pray for others.

Call children's attention to the wall calendar, and remind them that we are talking about Great Lent, the time of getting ready for Pascha.

### 2 Discussion Starter

Explain to the children that Lazarus Saturday comes a week before the feast of Pascha. Point out the day on the calendar. Say that "Lazarus" is the name of a man who was Jesus' good friend. Read or tell the story of the Raising of Lazarus. (See "Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead" in the Resource section.)

*Say: As you listen to the story I am going to read (or tell), see whether you can tell me what wonderful thing Jesus did for His friend Lazarus. Have the Bible open even if you are retelling the story or reading a shorter version of the Biblical text. Also have the icon of the raising of Lazarus prominently displayed.*

### 3 Discussion Questions

**Note:** Give sufficient time for children to respond--they may need "thinking time."

- What was the wonderful thing Jesus did for His friend Lazarus?  
*He raised Lazarus from the dead.*
- How were Mary, Martha and Lazarus related? Were they cousins, or brother and sisters, or a dad and mom with their daughter? *(These examples should help young children understand what "related" means if they are not sure. You can also mention people the*

*children are related to--parents, grandparents, siblings, cousins, etc.)*

*(Answer: They were a brother and his two sisters.)*

- Were Lazarus and Mary and Martha related to Jesus?  
*No, but they were all good friends.*
  - What are some things you do with your friends? *(Let children offer answers.)*
  - Do you think Jesus did any of these things with His friends? *(Yes. He ate, talked, walked around, and had good times with His friends. He often prayed with them. We know that He went to a wedding, and that He invited little children to come and talk with Him.)*
  - When Jesus arrived at the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, what had happened to Lazarus?  
*He had died and was buried.*
  - What did we say Jesus did for His good friend Lazarus?  
*He raised him from the dead.*
  - There were many people watching when Jesus raised Lazarus. Do you think they were happy when they saw what Jesus did? *Yes, they were happy. They saw that Jesus really loved Lazarus. We are happy too, because Jesus promises us that someday we can live with Him forever in heaven. By raising Lazarus, Jesus showed that He is God, and He can keep His promise. We are happy because we know He loves us so much that He wants us to have life in heaven.*
- Look together at the Resurrection icon, and review what is happening, repeating what you said in the previous lesson.

## 4 The Living Icon

Look together at the icon of the the Raising of Lazarus, and have children tell who is pictured in the icon. *(Jesus, Lazarus, Mary, Martha, neighbors and others watching.)* Have them also note the burial cloths in which Lazarus is wrapped. Using the pieces of fabric you have provided, children can dress and portray people in the icon, telling who they are and what their relationship is to Jesus. Have the class wrap one member, portraying Lazarus, in toilet paper, being careful of course not to obstruct the child's breathing, vision, or ability to take a few steps. You might want to put chairs around "Lazarus" to suggest the closed space of the tomb, but leaving a path for the child to exit.

Have the children take places as depicted in the icon, and read the story of the raising of Lazarus from the text in the Resources section. At the appropriate point in the story, the children can call, "Lazarus, come out!" and the child portraying Lazarus can come forward and burst out of the toilet paper wrappings.

Since it's likely that several or all children will want the chance to "be" Lazarus in his wrappings, you can do the activity more than once if time permits. You could also suggest to parents, in a letter or email, that they do this role play activity at home. Describe the activity, and write out the story from the Resource section.

## 5 Holy Week Mural

Have children color and construct the Lazarus Saturday panel in this way: Glve each child a piece of the black line drawing of the Raising of Lazarus, and let them color it while looking at the icon to approximate the colors (the icon and the line drawing are not exactly the same). Then the children can put the pieces together in the correct pattern, and glue them to the "Lazarus Saturday" panel of the mural. (If you have a large number of children, they can do more than one icon for the panel.) Label the panel as "Lazarus Saturday."

**Note:** For this **and the following lessons**, if you don't wish to cut the line drawing(s), give each group of 2 or 3 children a line drawing, and have them color it together. Then arrange their finished drawings to create the panel.

## 6 Extra Activity

Begin practicing the singing of Paschal Troparion (*Christ is Risen*).

***Christ is risen from the dead,  
Trampling down death by death,  
And upon those in the tombs bestowing life.***

*Be sure students know that "bestowing" means "giving."*

*You might add motions to the singing: For the first line, children can raise their hands; for the second they can stomp and "trample" death; for the third they can hold their hands out like someone giving a gift. If time permits, children can suggest other motions or gestures for each line.*

## 7 Wrap Up

As the children are cleaning up and preparing for the closing prayer, remind them to continue praying for the person/s they chose.

An option, if you have time, is to begin a "prayer wall" in the classroom. Have a large chart to which children can add names of people to pray for. You could add a list, separate from that for people, of pets children want to pray for. Plan each week to pray for some or all of the people on the list, and for some or all of the pets.

## 8 Closing Prayer

(Have children stand.) In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

## Journey to Pascha • Lesson 3



# Jesus Comes to Jerusalem (Ages 4-

6)

## Overview

### Welcoming Jesus to Jerusalem -

## Objectives

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

- Tell how the people welcomed Jesus when He came to Jerusalem

## Materials

- Orthodox Study Bible – John 12: 1-18
- Palm Sunday story paraphrased for children (see Resource section)
- Icon of Palm Sunday/Entry into Jerusalem
- Black line drawing/s--see Resource section-- of Entry into Jerusalem/Palm Sunday icon, cut into enough pieces for children each to have one to color and assemble for Palm Sunday mural panel
- Mural project materials as for previous lesson
- Sheet of green construction paper (11 by 17) for each child
- Scotch tape
- Thumb tacks, or other wall mounting
- Stapler
- Scissors for children to share, using them with your help

## Resources

### Required Resources

[Palm Sunday \(PDF\)](#)

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

### Optional Resources

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

## Procedure

### 1 Opening Prayer

(Have children 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 the words of the prayer as you did in the first lesson.

## 2 Discussion Starter

Let the children tell what they know about Palm Sunday. Make sure they know that Palm Sunday celebrates the Entrance of Our Lord into Jerusalem, when grown-ups and children met Him waving palms. That is why we receive blessed palms in our churches on this Sunday--we are like those people, welcoming Jesus Christ as our Lord. Say that some churches are in countries where palms do not grow. When these churches celebrate Palm Sunday, they use what they have-- pussywillows, for example. (If your parish uses both palms and pussy willows, you can say, "We use both because we have both.")

As you read or tell the story of Palm Sunday, from the story in the Resource section, ask the children to listen for what the people call out to Jesus. Tell the story of Jesus entering Jerusalem and discuss how the people honored Him as a king. Have the Bible open even if you are telling the story from the Resource section.

## 3 Review Questions

Ask:

- **Where was Jesus going when He traveled on Palm Sunday?**  
*To Jerusalem*
- **What kind of animal was He riding on?**  
*A donkey*
- **How did the people honor Him as a king?**  
*Waving palm branches*
- **What did the children and people shout out?**  
*"Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord" and "Hosanna"*
- **How do we greet presidents or other important people today?**  
*Clapping, cheering, standing, etc. (Let the children demonstrate)*
- **One important person who might visit us is the bishop. How do we greet him?**  
*Singing, kissing his hand, standing*

## 4 Hosanna in the Highest!

Look together at the icon of the Entrance into Jerusalem/Palm Sunday and discuss who is in the icon and what each person is doing. Point out the children who are shown in the trees, having climbed up to get a better view since they might not be able to see over the crowd of adults. The icon also shows them cutting branches to wave in greeting.

Sing or say the words:

***Hosanna in the Highest! Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord.***

(Tell the children that "Hosanna" means "Save Us!")

## 5 Extra / Optional Activity

Practice singing the Paschal Troparion (*Christ is Risen*). If time is short, make this practice very brief.

***Christ is risen from the dead,  
Trampling down death by death,  
And upon those in the tombs bestowing life.***

Add motions, as you did for the previous lesson.

## 6 Projects: Paper Palms and Holy Week Mural

Have each child make a paper palm. Help them cut into the short side of a piece of green construction paper about 6 inches down, to make half-inch wide strips. These will be the palm fronds. Then have them roll up the paper lengthwise, and tape the uncut part together so they can hold it. The cut part, the fronds, will be on top.

Have a procession with one child holding the icon of the feast. The others will form two lines, waving their palms and saying or singing "Hosanna" while the icon-holder processes down the center. If time permits, let each child have a turn processing with the icon.

If you are doing this lesson well before Palm Sunday, ask your priest whether it would be all right for the children to stand at the front of the church, with palms and/or willows, while the Gospel is being read on Palm Sunday. If he agrees, let parents know that this will be taking place, and talk to the children about it--they should be attentive and hold their palms high. Remind them that palms are a sign of victory, or winning, because Jesus had a victory over death, and now so do we.

For the Holy Week mural, give each child pieces of the line drawing, and let them color the pieces approximately as they are in the icon. Then they can assemble the pieces and attach them to the

mural for the "Palm Sunday" panel, which you can label.

Point out Palm Sunday on the wall calendar.

## 7 Closing Prayer

(Have children stand.) In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord.

Remind students to pray for the person they chose to pray for at the initial class session. Pray together for the people on your prayer chart or prayer wall.

## Journey to Pascha • Lesson 4



# Jesus Has Supper with Friends

(Ages 4-6)

## Overview

### The Last Supper

## Objectives

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

- State that the disciples were at the Last Supper with Jesus
- Explain the difference between Holy Communion and the blessed bread we receive after Holy Communion

## Materials

- Orthodox Study Bible – Matthew 26: 26-30
- Icon of the Last Supper/Mystical Supper
- The Last Supper story paraphrased for children (see Resource section)
- Black line drawing/s of the Last Supper Icon (see Resource section). Depending on the number of children in your class, have drawing/s cut into pieces so that each child will have a piece to color and then put back together for the mural panel
- Antidoron (blessed bread) to share with students at end of class--arrange with your priest to get this before or after a Liturgy
- Crayons
- Mural project materials as in previous lessons

## Resources

### Required Resources

[The Last Supper \(PDF\)](#)

[Last Supper Icon \(Image\)](#)

### Optional Resources

[The Last Supper line drawing \(PDF\)](#)

## Procedure

### 1 Opening Prayer

(Have children 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.

Continue to review the meanings of parts of this prayer as in previous lessons.

## 2 Discussion Starter

Tell or read the story of the Last Supper from the Resource section. Say: *While I am reading/telling the story of the Last Supper, see if there are words in the story that you hear in church. In the story you will hear the supper called a "holiday supper" because it took place on a special feast day of the Jewish people. Jesus and His disciples were taking part in that feast day.* Have the Bible open even if you are retelling the story or reading a shorter version of the Biblical text.

**Note:** Make sure the children know that the "disciples"--the word used in the story--are the men who traveled with Jesus, learned from Him, loved and obeyed Him as their Master and Teacher, and tried to be like Him. *(Note: Ask the children what "obey" means. Establish that it means to do what someone tells you to do. Ask, "Why would someone obey another person?" Establish that we obey someone who is wise, who cares for us, and who knows what is best for us. Then ask, "Do you think this is the way the disciples felt toward Jesus?" Of course, it is the way they felt.)*

After the story, ask students whether they heard any words they also hear in church. "Take, eat" and "Drink of it, all of you" are the important words here.

We suggest that you do not stress the words "body" and "blood" with these young children. Mrs. Sophie Koulomzin in her book *Our Church and Our Children* suggests that the "best approach is to tell the children...the story of the Last Supper, telling them that this was the way Holy Communion was given for the very first time, that Jesus Christ Himself gave it to His disciples, using the very same words we hear in church now... The children's attention can be focused on the icon of the Last Supper [or a picture of it] which is often seen above the Royal Doors." She adds, "One can say that this is the food Jesus gave to His disciples when He had supper with them for the last time, and that every time we eat this holy food, it is like Jesus Himself giving it to us" (Koulomzin, p. 43). This idea that Our Lord is One who feeds us because He loves us is a good one to emphasize.

Look together at the icon of the Last Supper, and note the food and drink on the table. Relate Jesus' act of sharing food and drink with His friends, the disciples, to the bread and wine He shares with us at Holy Communion.

**Note:** The term "Mystical Supper" is sometimes used. The term may be one that some children have heard. If not, there's no need to introduce it, but if they have heard it, you can explain that it is another name for the Last Supper and Holy Communion.

### 3 Discussion Questions

Ask, "How do we hold our hands when we go to receive Holy Communion?" (*Right hand over the left, crossed on our chests - over our hearts.*) Have children practice this.

Ask, "How should we return to our places after receiving Holy Communion?" (*Walking slowly and quietly.*)

Ask, "Why do you think we want to be quiet and careful when we receive Holy Communion?" (Let the children give answers; the general idea is that we are receiving a special gift from Jesus Himself, and so we are respectful and quiet. We keep our arms folded so that we will not spill any Holy Communion bread or wine.)

### 4 Blessed Bread

Show and explain what antidoron/blessed bread is. Say that it is bread that the priest blesses with prayers, and then we receive it after Holy Communion time. Tell the students they will each receive a piece at the end of the class. (**Note:** *Antidoron means "in place of the gifts." It is blessed but not consecrated, as the Holy Communion bread is. We receive this blessed bread, and in some churches also diluted wine, after Holy Communion.*) Practice again with the children the correct way of going to receive Holy Communion and returning to their places.

### 5 Holy Week Mural

For the "Holy Thursday" panel of the Holy Week mural, have children each color pieces of the line drawing of the Last Supper, approximating the colors in the icon. They can then reassemble the pieces and glue them to the panel of the mural which you can label "Holy Thursday."

### 6 Wrap Up

As the children are cleaning up and preparing for closing prayer, talk about the following:

- Ask: When do we remember the Last Supper at church on Sunday, in the Liturgy?  
*When we receive Holy Communion.*
- Look together at the icon of the Last Supper. Ask children to find Jesus, His friend John (close to Him and leaning on Him) and to point out, again, the food and drink on the table. Ask children to tell you what things on the table we still have today when we receive Holy Communion (cup, spoon, bread, wine)
- Practice once more the proper way of going to and returning from receiving Holy Communion
- Point out Holy Thursday on the wall calendar

## 7 Closing Prayer

(Have children stand.) In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

When you finish the prayer, distribute antidoron.

Pray together for the people on your classroom lists (also pets if you have listed them) and remind children to pray with their families at home.

## Journey to Pascha • Lesson 5

# Jesus Serves His Friends

*(Ages 4-6)*

## Overview

### Jesus Shows Us How to Love Others

## Objectives

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

- Explain how Jesus showed love for His disciples in a special way (by washing their feet)
- State that Jesus wanted His disciples to serve others
- Name ways we can serve others

## Materials

- Orthodox Study Bible – Matthew 26: 26-30
- Last Supper story paraphrased for children (see Resource section)
- Icon of the Last Supper/Mystical Supper
- Paper and crayons or markers for drawing
- Scissors for children to share
- Scotch tape
- Mural project materials as from previous lessons

## Resources

### Required Resources

[The Last Supper](#) (PDF)

[Last Supper Icon](#) (Image)

### Optional Resources

[The Last Supper line drawing](#) (PDF)

## Procedure

### 1 Opening Prayer

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 parts of the prayer as you have in previous lessons.

## 2 Discussion Starter

Ask the children to retell what they can of the story of the Last Supper that you read last week. If they have difficulty, retell the story for them, asking them to "chime in" as details come back to them while they listen. Review the meaning of the word "disciples" as meaning the men who traveled with Jesus, learned from Him, loved and obeyed Him as their Master and Teacher, and tried to be like Him.

## 3 Discussion Questions

- Ask the children what do we do in church that reminds us of the Last Supper? (*We receive Holy Communion.*)
- Ask them whether, when they went to Holy Communion, they saw other people crossing their hands over their hearts as they went up.
- Ask whether they themselves did remember to do this and to return to their seats quietly? (*Be encouraging, and try to remind the children of what a great gift we receive in Holy Communion--Jesus Himself is with us in a special way, and He gives us the special food we receive in church.*)

## 4 The Last Supper

Look together at the icon of the Last Supper and review what it shows. (Jesus having supper with His friends the disciples; food and drink are on the table.)

Go back to the 5th paragraph of the Last Supper story in the Resource section. (The paragraph begins, "You remember...") Read the paragraph, and ask: Why did people have to wash their feet when they visited someone's home? (*They walked on dusty roads barefoot or in sandals, and their feet would be dusty and dirty.*) Note: Make sure the children know what sandals are. You can compare them to flip flops or the kinds of open summer shoes children often wear.

Ask: Why do you think people wear those kinds of shoes all the time? (*Because the country where they lived was dry and warm almost every day.*)

Who usually washed a guest's feet? (*A servant.*)

At the Last Supper, who washed the feet of His friends? (*Jesus did.*)

What did Jesus tell His friends when He did this? (*He said He wanted them to love others and serve them, just as He did.*)

Do you think Jesus' friends were surprised when Jesus did this? (*Yes! He was their Master, their Lord, their Teacher. Yet He washed their feet like a servant. He was really showing them and us that we should love others by serving them.*) Reivew the meaning of the word "disciples" as being the men who traveled with Jesus, learned from Him, loved and obeyed Him and tried to be like Him.

What are some ways we can serve others? (*As you discuss this, look together at the icon of the Last Supper. Let the children offer ideas about ways of serving, and feel free to suggest some of your own. One, of course, would be to share or cook a meal.*)

## 5 Holy Week Mural

- Have each child draw and color small pictures of a large bowl (perhaps with water in it) and a towel. The towels can be colorful, with stripes or fringe, if the children wish. Cut the pictures out. Arrange them on the fourth panel with a title like "Jesus Washes His Friends' Feet" or "Jesus Serves Others." The children can help you think of a title. (**Note:** The previous panel is the Holy Thursday panel. Today's panel depicts an event that is not directly part of the meal at the table, though it is an integral part of Holy Thursday.)
- Review with the children the reason why you had a bowl and towel for this panel (Jesus' washing of the disciples' feet.)

## 6 Extra Activity

Practice singing the Paschal Troparion (*Christ is Risen*).

***Christ is risen from the dead,  
Trampling down death by death,  
And upon those in the tombs bestowing life.***

## 7 Wrap Up

As students are cleaning up and preparing for the closing prayer, ask:

- **What did Jesus do at the Last Supper that shows us how to serve others?**  
*He washed the feet of His friends, the disciples.*
- Point out Holy Thursday, the day of the Last Supper and also the day when Jesus washed His disciiples' feet, on the wall calendar, as you did last week.

## 8 Closing Prayer

(Have children stand)

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

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Pray for those on your classroom lists and remind the children to pray at home with their families.

## Journey to Pascha • Lesson 6

# Christ is Risen! (Ages 4-6)



## Overview

### The Cross and The Resurrection

## Objectives

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

- State that Jesus Christ died, and rose from the dead
- State that because Jesus Christ rose from the dead, we will be able to live with Him and the people we love in heaven
- Recite the Pascha greeting " Christ is risen" and the response, " Indeed He is risen" (or with slightly different words, as practiced in your parish)

## Materials

- Orthodox Study Bible - John 19:38-42; John 20:1-10; Mark 15:42-47; Mark 16:1-8
- The Resurrection story paraphrased for children (see Resource section)
- Icon of the Resurrection (Christ's Descent into Hades)
- Black line drawing/s of the Resurrection Icon
- Mural project materials as in previous lessons
- Photos of cave tombs, like that in which Christ was buried (available on line)

## Resources

### Required Resources

[Christ is Risen \(PDF\)](#)

### Optional Resources

[Descent Into Hades Icon: Line Drawing](#)

[Descent Into Hades: Line Drawing](#)

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

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

## Procedure

### 1 Opening Prayer

(Have children 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 parts of this prayer as you have in previous lessons.

## 2 Discussion Starter

In order to teach about the Resurrection in this section, you first need to say something about Jesus' death. To approach the delicate subject of Christ's death and burial with these young children, we suggest that you *not go into detail about the crucifixion*, but emphasize the joy of the Resurrection and the love Christ showed for us by facing and overcoming death, as well as His promise of everlasting life for us. Here is a way of presenting these concepts:

*Say: Jesus died on the cross. He was buried in a tomb, just like any person. (Explain that a tomb is a place where a dead person is buried. Today we see graves where people are buried.) But Jesus Christ was not just any person. He was God's own son, and God loved Him very much. Jesus did not stay dead in the tomb. He rose from the dead. He is alive forever with His Father.*

*Jesus died and then rose from the dead so that we could have life forever with Him and with the people we love. (At this point, read the story of the Resurrection, entitled "Christ is Risen", in the Resource section. Note that the word "Easter" is used in the story; be sure children know that this is the same as Pascha)*

*Say: The story tells us why, on the Feast of Pascha and for many days after Pascha, we tell each other the good news. We say, "Christ is Risen!" and when someone greets us that way, we answer, "Indeed He is Risen!" (Note: Teach this response as it is said in your parish, for example "Truly He is Risen!" or some variation.)*

*Have the children stand and offer each other the greeting and response. Then ask children to think of ways they would greet others if they could not say any words. Encourage them to create gestures and movements that show happiness and liveliness. Give them plenty of room to move, stretch, and dance.*

## 3 Discussion Questions

**Note:** Give sufficient time for responses from children who wish to offer answers. Ask:

- Where else have you heard the words "Christ is risen"?  
*The song they have been practicing – the Paschal Troparion*
- Where was Jesus put after He died?  
*In a tomb*
- When the women went to the tomb on the third day after Jesus' death, what did they find?  
*An empty tomb*
- If you have pictures of cave tombs, show them now. This is the way people were buried in Jesus' time. Ask the children: Why was Jesus' tomb empty? *Because Jesus had risen from the dead*

## 4 Activity

- Discuss with the children how they will celebrate Pascha at home. Talk about the special night of Pascha when we come to church very late, while it is dark, to show that Jesus Christ is stronger than darkness
- Ask students to again review what they did/are doing to prepare for Pascha, such things as *reading the Bible; praying more; helping others*
- Have children practice the Paschal greeting  
*Christ is risen. Indeed He is risen*
- Tell the children that you would like to exchange this greeting and response with them at Pascha and in the days and weeks after Pascha
- Indicate Pascha on the wall calendar, and say that this is the day we wait for and get ready for all during Great Lent

## 5 Holy Week Mural

Give the children each a piece of the black line drawing/s of the Resurrection, which they can color while looking at the icon to approximate the colors. They can reassemble the pieces and put them on the "Pascha--Christ is Risen!" panel of the mural.

Plan to display the mural in the classroom, or in a hall near the classroom, or in some other place where parishioners can see it. If you keep it in the classroom, invite parents and parishioners to come and see it, and let the children tell the adults about what is on it.

## 6 Extra Activity

Practice singing the Paschal Troparion (*Christ is Risen*). Encourage the children (and parents when you see them) to come to the Paschal services so that the children can sing the hymn in church.

***Christ is risen from the dead,  
Trampling down death by death,***

***And upon those in the tombs bestowing life.***

## 7 Wrap Up

As the children are cleaning up and preparing for closing prayer, ask the following:

- **What is the most important feast day we have?**

*Pascha*

Point out Great and Holy Pascha on the wall calendar once again.

## 8 Closing Prayer

*(Have children stand)* In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

Pray for the people on your classroom lists, and pets too if you have them. End the unit by having students share the Paschal greeting and response.