

# Our Church Family Worships God

**Objective:** The students will appreciate the wonder of their bodies and be able to explain how we worship God with our whole body.

## **For the Catechist**

Children of six operate essentially at the sensory level. They learn best through sense experiences and through active participation in learning situations with concrete objects. Children grow in awareness as they hear and see and touch and taste and smell. The education to an awareness of the senses must undoubtedly assume great importance for children to begin to come to their own knowledge, appreciation or experience of the divine. Their senses, a gift from God, are vehicles through which God's presence is discovered in their everyday world. You must help them to experience their senses frilly and to reflect upon this experience.

**Sight** The sense of sight has the greatest impact on our awareness. Sight places us in contact with people and the world about us more than any other sense. Our culture is visually oriented. We want to see everything. "Let me see. Can I see?" These are so often the child's words for wanting to know something.

**Hearing.** Through the world of people and nature, the child learns to hear God's voice. God speaks to every person in many different ways—the silence of the night, the gentle whisper of the wind, the heavens on a clear day, the sounds of gentle rain. Through these beauties of nature, God speaks. Through the comforting and assuring voice of a friend, through the soft voice of a mother, through the strong voice of a father, through the voice of the priest and through the voice of the catechist, God speaks. Most fully, God speaks to us through His Son. "Let us be attentive." Let us pay attention and teach our children to be open to the sounds of God's world and His presence with us.

**Taste.** "Taste and see how good the Lord is" (Ps. 34:8). All of creation, our food and our drink, tell us how good our God is to us. In the lesson on the Eucharist (21), the children will learn more fully to taste and see how good the Lord is.

## **Lesson Plan Overview**

**Opening:** "To You, O Lord"

**Introduction:** Appreciation of our bodies and senses. **Need:** Blindfold and cloth or paper bag filled with sensory items.

**Read Text Aloud:** Ask questions noted on following pages as text is being read

### **Activity Tracks:**

Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

- *Basic 1:* I Worship God with My Whole Body
- *Basic 2:* Using Our Senses in Worship
- *Group:* "Happy to Be" Guessing Game
- *Craft:* Worship Windsock

**Closing:** "To You, O Lord"

## **Come Bless the Lord Icon:**

Packet I:

Packet II:

## **Teaching Pics**

Great Censing (DL11)

**Touch.** We use our sense of touch to kiss the Holy Cross. We also kiss the icons of Christ, the Mother of God, the angels and saints. This is our way of showing veneration to these persons represented. It also shows they are close to us, within our reach rather than distant and far off. In Christ we have been touched by God. In lesson 7 the child meets Christ in His ministry. Jesus expressed God's saving power through His sense of touch. Be aware of the power of your touch: a loving gesture reinforces your verbal encouragement and affirmation of the child and can be a confirmation of belief in God as a loving Father.

**Smell.** We need air to breathe—fresh, clean air. Through smell we learn to appreciate the air and learn the need for creating a good environment in which we live.

The lesson takes the child from a sensory experience of life in general to a sensory experience of the church. The senses that God provides for everyday living find their fulfillment in worship.

### ***Background Reading***

(Direct quotations from the sources noted.)

The life in Christ involves every aspect of our being, and so divine worship must involve and affect all the bodily senses to focus the whole person on God. This has given rise to liturgical arts (architecture, iconography, hymnography) which, in the Eastern Churches, have been so integrated into the liturgy that they have become inseparable. And so the liturgical services of the Eastern Churches involve the whole person—spirit, soul *and* body—through gesture, music, sight and sound" (*LLII* 11).

"Eastern liturgical worship is designed to facilitate our presence to the reality we are celebrating, recognizing that we are creatures of both body and spirit. It is filled with meaning through words and concepts, and it affects each of our bodily senses to open us completely to God's presence. The structure of the church and the color of the icons perceived by vision reinforce our faith that we are truly present to Christ and all His saints. In the Eucharist we partake of Christ's body and blood and able to sing, "Taste and see how good the Lord is" (Psalm 33/34:9). Incense reminds us through smell and sight that we are being offered to God as "a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God" (Phil 4:18) and that the bright cloud of the Holy Spirit is filling the temple of our worship. The sacred music of the Liturgy instills through our hearing its patterns of God's love in the depths of our being. We are creatures attuned to music which intrinsically affects us. The vestments of the ministers witness that we are all clothed in God's glory by baptism. Baptism itself physically impinges on all of our senses by the touch of hands, manifesting God's love; by the burial in water representing our death to sin; and by the manifold fragrance of chrism, giving us every needed gift of the Holy Spirit Every liturgical celebration encompasses us totally in the saving act of God by elevating and glorifying us in both soul and body" (*LLII* 11-12).

# *The Lesson Plan*

## **Opening**

*Let's review how to pray. When we begin to pray, we stop what we are doing, saying or thinking. We get very quiet. We relax, and put our hands in prayer position—palms open and facing upwards. Let's quietly look at the icon. [Remain quiet for at least 10 seconds.]*

*Let's say together "To You, O Lord."*

## **Introduction**

[Have ready a blindfold and several objects in a cloth or paper bag (examples: pine cone, pine branch, cinnamon stick, bay leaf, rock, rubber band, piece of velvet or fur, lollipop, sealed baggies with fragrant flowers, grass clippings).]

*God made us wonderful. He gave us wonderful bodies that can stretch and grow—let's all stand and stretch our wonderful bodies [spend a minute moving and stretching]. Let's sit now. He also gave us a wonderful world and our five senses so we could appreciate His creation. Who can tell me what our five senses are? (Sight, smell, taste, touch, hearing) Let's spend a few minutes appreciating our senses. I have a bag filled with wonderful things and a blindfold. When it's your turn, you will put on the blindfold and choose an item from the bag. Let your senses help you figure out what it is. [Have children take turns. When they guess the object, have them remove the blindfold and then discuss the distinctive look of the item.]*

*Today we will learn about a very special way in which we use our senses and bodies. Our lesson is about worshiping God and how we use our whole bodies to worship.*

*Before we begin, let me ask you a question. Have you known anyone who couldn't use their eyes because they were blind or their ears because they were deaf? What if someone was blind and they accidentally tripped over a toy. Should we make fun of them? No! We should never make fun of anyone! Everyone's body is different but wonderful. Everyone is made in God's image, and God loves everyone He created.*

*Now, let's talk about how we use our bodies in worship.*

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## Our Church Family Worships God

Once I was a baby.  
Everything was new.  
With my eyes I learned to see.  
My fingers touched everything.



With my ears I learned to hear.  
My nose smelled new food.  
With my tongue I learned to taste.

### **Reading of Text**

*As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type). See "Reading of Text" in Lesson 1 for use of the Vocabulary Visual Aid.*

#### **Once I was a baby.**

*How many of you have a little baby brother or sister? How many of you have ever played with a baby?*

*What is the youngster doing in the first picture? (Smelling the flowers) In the second? (Eating) Babies use their senses to find out about the world. Can you name the five senses? (sight, smell, hearing, taste, touch) How do you use your five senses? [Allow responses.]*

Everything was new.  
Everything was wonderful.  
I was wonderful!



Who made me wonderful?  
God made me wonderful.

My family brought me to church.  
My family thanked God for me.

#### **My family thanked God for me.**

*It is a special day for the baby in the photograph. What day is it? (Baptismal day)*

*Church is a wonderful place to use our five senses. Do you use your five senses in church? Let's name each sense and see if you can tell me how we use it in church. [Allow responses.]*

**Now I am older.**

Let's look at these pictures. Which sense are they telling us about? (Sight—seeing the church, touch—kissing the icon, taste—tasting Communion.)

**I thank God for my wonderful church.**

Let's read this page a second time. This time I'll read it aloud. When I mention one of our senses, touch the part of your body that uses that sense. For example, when I mention sight, touch your eyes.

**Let's review:** We are a wonderful creation of God, and we have senses that help us enjoy God's world. We have a wonderful church. Who can name one of our senses and how we use it in worship?

Now I am older.  
My eyes see my beautiful church.



My ears hear singing.  
My nose smells incense.  
My lips kiss the icons.



My tongue tastes Holy Communion.



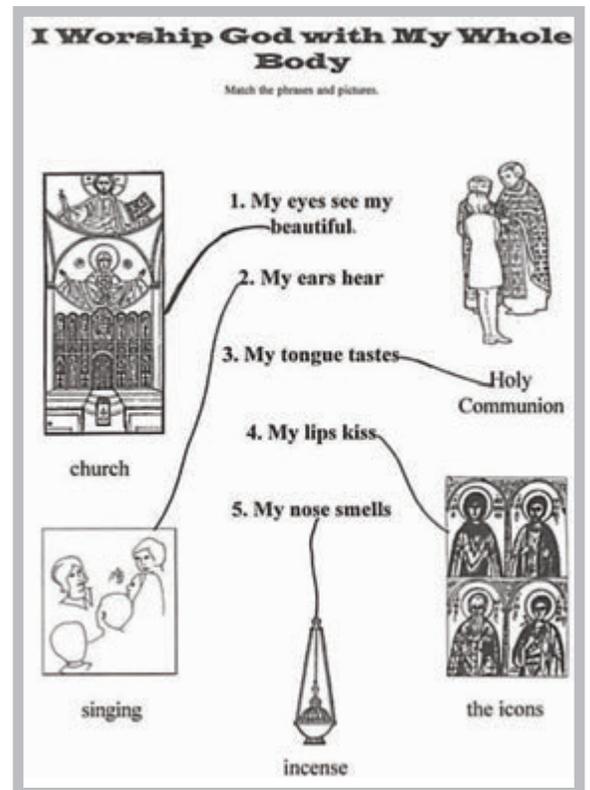
I thank God for making me wonderful.  
I thank God for my wonderful church.

**Activity Tracks**

**Basic 1:** "I Worship God with My Whole Body"

To help you remember today's lesson, let's do the worksheet. Who can read the title? Who can read the words under the five pictures? I'll read the phrase after each number, and you draw a line to the picture that completes the sentence.

**I Worship God with My Whole Body**  
Match the phrases and pictures.



1. My eyes see my beautiful.
2. My ears hear
3. My tongue tastes
4. My lips kiss
5. My nose smells

church

singing

incense

Holy Communion

the icons

**Basic 2:** Using Our Senses in Worship

Today we learned that God has given us our bodies, especially our senses, to appreciate the wonderful world He created and to help us worship. Let's use this worksheet to help us remember the lesson. You can look back to the reading if you need help finding the answers.

**Group:** "Happy to Be" Guessing Game

Today we learned that God has given us our bodies, especially our senses, to appreciate the wonderful world He created. I want you to think about something you are happy doing—don't say it aloud. Here is something I enjoy doing. [Pantomime an activity: gardening, jogging, cooking, taking care of a baby, fixing a car] What do you think I'm happy to be doing? [Allow guesses.] When I'm \_\_\_\_\_ (activity), I use my sense of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ what others? [Allow responses.] Now it's your turn. One at a time you can pantomime something you're happy to be doing, and we'll guess and talk about what senses we use.

**Craft:** Worship Wind Sock

**Materials:** "Worship Wind Sock" worksheets copied onto heavier paper, hole punch, markers, yarn or string, stapler, scissors, parent to help

[Ahead of time cut the wind socks and staple them in a circle. Punch two holes at the top to receive string for it to hang, and punch five holes evenly spaced along the bottom. You may also want to have five pieces of string tied on each hole ready to receive the hanging pieces.] Today we learned that we use our five senses in worship. To help us remember that we'll make worship wind socks. Each piece has a sense and the way we use it. You can color these; then we'll hang them all on the wind sock.

Using Our Senses in Worship

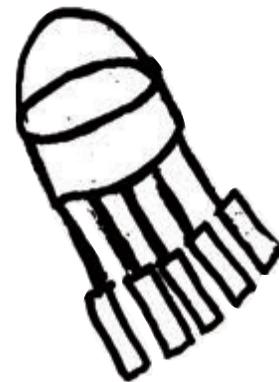
Fill in the missing letters. Draw a line from the words to the matching pictures



in e n s e      Holy C o m m u n i o n      i c o n

Circle the word that completes the sentence.

- My nose \_\_\_\_\_ incense.      sees      smells
- My lips \_\_\_\_\_ icons.      kiss      see
- My ears \_\_\_\_\_ singing.      taste      hear
- My eyes \_\_\_\_\_ my beautiful church.      hear      see
- My tongue \_\_\_\_\_ Holy Communion.      hears      tastes



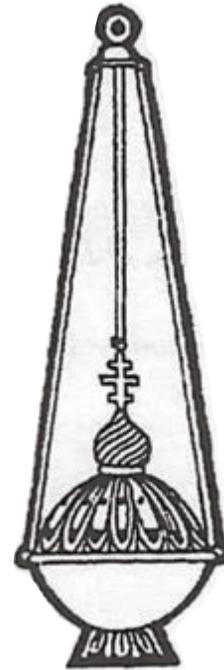
## ***Closing***

*Let's review how to pray. When we begin to pray, we stop what we are doing, saying or thinking. We get very quiet. We relax and put our hands in prayer position—palms open and facing upwards—and quietly look at the icon. Can you do what I do as we gather before our icon? [Go to the icon corner and have children follow your lead. Remain quiet for at least 10 seconds.] When we say "To You, O Lord," we are offering ourselves back to God for all God has given us, especially our bodies and our senses. Let's say together "To You, O Lord."*

*God bless you; have a good week!*



**icons**



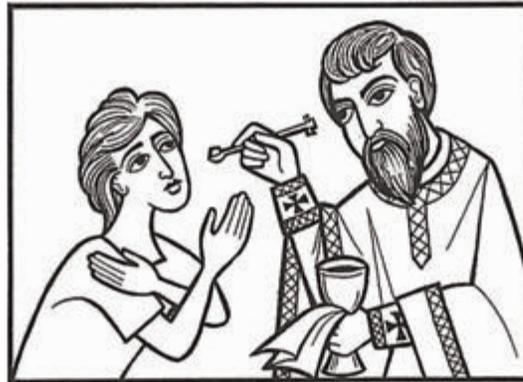
**incense**



**Holy  
Communion**

# Using our Senses in Worship

A. Fill in the missing letters. Draw a line from the words to the matching pictures.



in\_\_en\_\_e

H\_\_oly  
C\_\_mmuni\_\_n

i\_\_on

B. Circle the words that completes the sentence.

1. My nose \_\_\_\_\_ incense.

sees      smells

2. My lips \_\_\_\_\_ icons.

kiss      see

3. My ears \_\_\_\_\_ singing.

taste      hear

4. My eyes \_\_\_\_\_ my beautiful church.

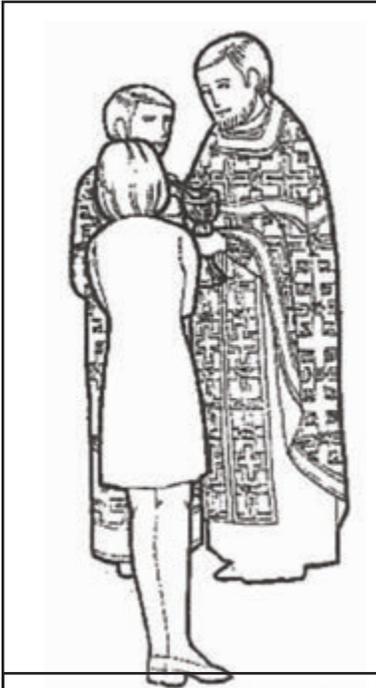
hear      see

5. My tongue \_\_\_\_\_ Holy Communion.

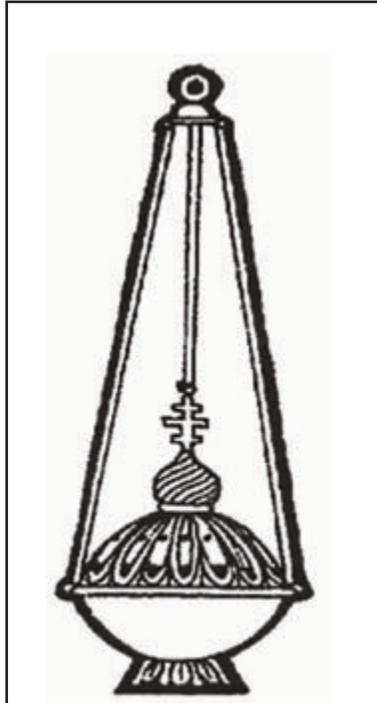
hears      tastes

# Worship Windsock

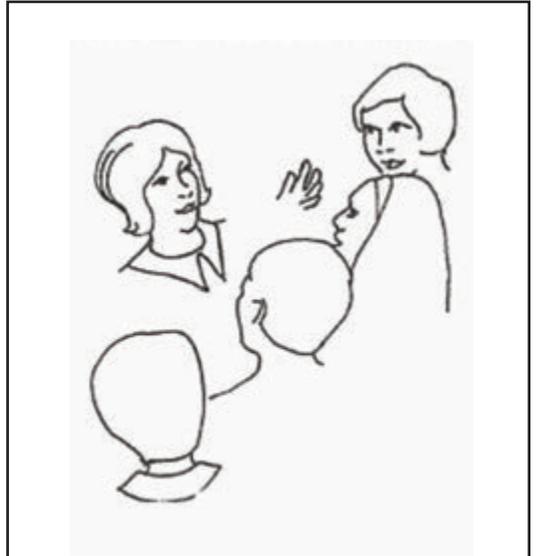
I use my whole body in worship



**My tongue  
tastes Holy  
Communion**



**My nose  
smells  
incense**



**My ears hear  
singing**



**My lips kiss  
icons**



**My eyes see  
my beautiful  
church**