

# Jesus Is Sent to Lead Us to the Father

**Objective:** The students will be able to state one reason why we can say the world is "dark" and explain why we say Jesus is the Light that leads us to God.

## **For the Catechist**

Jesus came as light to a world darkened by sin. To help the children appreciate the sinfulness of the world, they have learned about Adam's and Eve's disobedience to God in Lesson 1. In the present lesson they learn about the sin of Cain when he killed his brother Abel. With the recognition of sin/darkness in the world, they are able to appreciate the need for Jesus to light the world.

As the closing for the lesson, the students enthrone the Bible at the icon corner. This may take up to 10 minutes, so allow time for it.

**Jesus as light.** Jesus used many comparisons to help us understand His role and mission. His mission was to lead us to union with the Father. One of the images He used was light.

"Whoever believes in me believes not only in me but also in the one who sent me, and whoever sees me sees the one who sent me. I came into the world as light, so that everyone who believes in me might not remain in darkness. And if anyone hears my words and does not observe them, I do not condemn him, for I did not come to condemn the world but to save the world. Whoever rejects me and does not accept my words has something to judge him: the word that I spoke, it will condemn him on the last day" (John 12:44-48).

Our worship uses candles to remind us of Jesus, the Light of the World. We see light when the Gospel is read. At Pascha, many parishes use a paschal candle as part of the services. We receive a candle at our baptism so that we may shine with the light of faith. Baptism will be covered in this year of the series. It is important for the students to begin thinking about the symbolism of light.

## **Lesson Plan Overview**

**Opening:** Trisagion ( Beginning) Prayers

**Introduction:** Story about living in darkness  
**Need:** a wallet

**Read Text Aloud:** Have students read text aloud. You may wish to read the Bible passage.

### **Activity Tracks:**

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

- *Basic:* Jesus is the Light

- *Group:* "Glory" Banner

- *Craft:* "Glory" Card

**Closing:** Enthroned the Bible. **Need:** Bible, cloth or stand for the "throne"

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

Packet I: Christ the Teacher

Packet II:

## **Teaching Pic:**

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**Light as a symbol.** From their immediate experience children are familiar with the electric light in their home. When the light is turned on, things unseen can now be seen. They are able to see where they are going. For Christians, Jesus is our Light. He doesn't light our way through a physical room, but rather His life and teachings show us the way to the Father. Our journey is a spiritual and moral one. When faced with moral decisions, we need to know what to do. Our confusion comes from a world darkened by evil and sin. Jesus' words help us make good choices. Jesus is light for us when we are confused.

**Good Samaritan.** The children are asked to reconstruct the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). This was presented in the Kindergarten text and should be familiar to the students.

### ***Background Reading***

*(Direct quotations from the sources noted.)*

#### **Cain and Abel**

"Genesis continues with further stories concerning Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Noah and the Flood, and the Tower of Babel. These accounts all have certain elements in common. Each tells of humanity's fall from intimate friendship with God through disobedience. Adam and Eve eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in order to be like God. Cain kills Abel out of envy. His sacrifice is rejected by God and Abel's is accepted. The world is destroyed by a flood, because 'the Lord saw how man's wickedness on earth was increasing, and how no desire that his heart conceived was ever anything but evil' (Gn 6:5-6). The tower of Babel is built out of the pride of the people. In their minds, they could accomplish anything they wanted without depending on their Creator; they could reach God on their own terms" (*LLI 26-27*).

#### **Jesus Is God's Self Revelation**

"As Christians we believe that the fullness of the revelation of God is in our Lord Jesus Christ, whom we confess as 'begotten of the Father before all ages, light of light, true God of true God, begotten not made, of one essence with the Father, through whom all things were made.' Thus Jesus Himself is the only adequate image of God. Whoever has seen Him has seen the Father (cf Jn 14:9), for 'He is the image of the invisible God' (Col 1:15).

"The Tradition has identified Christ with the One who revealed His name to Moses. The mysterious name 'Who-Am,' *YHWH* in Hebrew, was translated as  $\text{O } \Omega \text{ N}$  (*o oon*) in the Greek Bible, the Septuagint. The fourth Gospel uses this same word for Christ: 'No one has ever seen God. The only One [ $\text{O}\Omega\text{N}$ ], who is the same as God and is at the Father's side, he has made him known' (Jn 1:18, TEV). And, so we write this Name in the halo surrounding Christ's head in icons and proclaim in our services, 'Blessed is He-Who-Is [ $\text{O}\Omega\text{N}$ ], Christ our God...'" (*LLI 15-16*).

# The Lesson Plan

## Opening

[Gather the children at the icon corner.] *In our first lesson this year we learned that God is Trinity. When we say the Trisagion or "Holy God," we honor the fact that God is Trinity. Let's say our Beginning or Trisagion Prayers to open class today.*

## Introduction

[Place wallet on the table.] *I want to start our class today with a story. Once a family adopted a young boy, Joey. They were told that he could do bad things. He had lived with many foster families before the adoption. He didn't know much about God. He had seen a lot of bad things happen. His world was dark. Let's pause a minute. What are some bad things that people do in the world? [Allow responses.] When we think about those things, the world does seem dark and hopeless.*

*Joey was nasty to his new mother and father and the other children. Then one day he found his mother's purse open when she wasn't around. He saw the wallet and knew it was full of money because she had been paid the day before. It was easy. He had stolen before. He took the money out of the wallet and hid it in his jacket. Later his mother was crying when she thought she had lost her money. His two sisters were crying. His dad was upset but quiet. He looked in Joey's eyes. Joey looked down and left the room.*

*After a while he brought the money back and threw it on the table. His mother yelled, "Joey! Why did you take the money?" Joey didn't answer. He didn't know what he was feeling.*

*"Joey," his dad began, "when you took the money, you hurt this family. You're part of this family now. We work together. We're united." Joey didn't know what to say. Finally he said, "So, are you sending me back?"*

*Nobody spoke. Then his mother said "No, Joey." She continued, "You will learn that in this family we don't do certain things like stealing. I know that soon you will understand that there is another way to live. You will see the light soon."*

*Joey's father gently led Joey to the icon of Jesus. The family joined them. The father spoke quietly. "Jesus taught us that God loves us and will provide for us. We don't have to steal. We don't have to be nasty to other people. Jesus is our Light. He will light our way." He started to light the candle and then stopped. "Joey," he said gently, "would you light the candle?"*

*Do you think that Joey lit the candle? [Allow responses to the story.]*

*Jesus came so that we don't have to live in darkness. Jesus is our Light. Let's read the lesson.*

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## Jesus Is Sent to Lead Us to the Father

Jesus was sent to lead us to God. We call Jesus the Light of the World. Let's think about light. Why do we need light?

Sometimes we don't know what to do. It feels as if we are lost. We don't know who to turn to. We call out for help to Jesus. Jesus is the Light of the world.

God sent Jesus to live with us. God sent Jesus to lead us to the Father.



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### 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).

#### Why do we need light?

[Allow responses.] *Sometimes it is dark. We don't want to get lost.*

#### We call out for help to Jesus. Jesus is the Light of the World.

*When do we call out for help to Jesus? (When we don't know what to do) What is Jesus called? (The Light of the World)*

#### God sent Jesus to lead us to God.

*Jesus is like a light leading us to God. Why can we say that? His words in the Gospels tell us how to live in the light of God and not in darkness.*

God sent Jesus because the world had grown dark with sin. Here is a story from the Bible. The story tells about sin in the world. Here is the story.



Cain and Abel were the first children of Adam and Eve. They grew up to be very different from one another. Cain was a tiller of the soil. Abel was a keeper of the flocks. Cain was jealous of his brother.

One day Cain said, "Let us go into the field." When they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother and killed him.

Then the Lord asked Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" He answered, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?"

Then the Lord said, "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the soil! Therefore you shall be banned from the soil! You shall wander the earth" (Genesis 4:2-12).

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#### God sent Jesus because the world had grown dark with sin.

*Why did God send Jesus? (Because the world had grown dark with sin.)*

#### Here is a story from the Bible. The story tells about sin in the world.

[(Genesis 4:2-12). Read the story pausing to ask:]  
*What might be another word for the job tiller of the soil? (Gardener or farmer) What about a keeper of the flocks? (Shepherd) What did Cain say to Abel? ("Let us go into the field.") What happened then? (Cain killed Abel.) Is this what God wants us to do? (No) What did God ask Cain? ("Where is your brother?") Was God angry with Cain? (Yes) How do you know? (He told Cain he wouldn't till the soil any more. Cain would wander the earth.)*

**We may not see Jesus, but we have His words in the Gospel.**

*What does the Gospel Book look like? [Allow responses.] Father reads from it at every Divine Liturgy. We listen to the stories of the Gospel. We learn how to love God. We learn how to live as God wants. Do you know the story of the Good Samaritan? See if you can tell me the story. [Help the students reconstruct the story.] What was Jesus teaching us? (To help all people in need) Listen to the Gospel each week and try to learn how God wants us to live.*

**His teachings are light for our way.**

*What did Jesus teach? (Jesus taught us to love God. Jesus taught us to love, forgive, and care for one another.)*

*Let's review: We can say this world is "dark." Why is it "dark"? (People do many bad things: kill, steal, lie.) Why do we call Jesus the Light? (His teachings are "light" for our way. His words teach us how to live as God wants.)*

It is wrong to kill and steal and lie. In this world there are many people who don't live as Jesus taught. There are people who do very bad things.

When we think of all the bad in the world, we can say the world is dark.

Jesus taught us the right way to live. Jesus came to bring light into the darkness. We may not see Jesus, but we have His words in the Gospel.

Jesus taught us to love God. Jesus taught us to love, forgive, and care for one another. His teachings are light for our way.

At the Gospel reading, we see light around the Gospel. We say "Glory to You, O Lord!" When you say this, think about how good it is to live as Jesus taught. It is glorious to live in the light of Jesus. That is why we say "Glory!" to Jesus.

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**Activity Tracks**

**Basic: "Jesus Is the Light"**

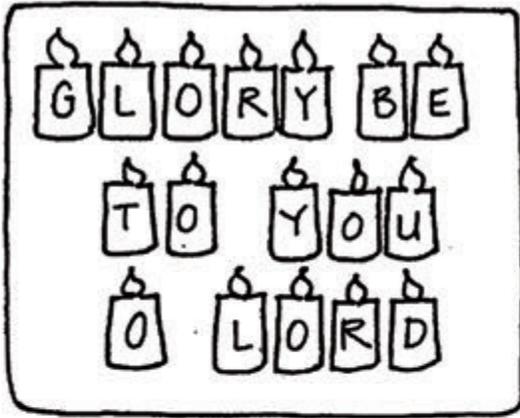
*Today we learned about the phrase "Jesus is the Light of the World." It is wonderful that we have Jesus to light our way; that is why we say "Glory" to Jesus. What do you see at the top of the page? (Gospel Book) Jesus' words are light for our lives. How can you show that? (Put candles or lights around the Gospel Book.) Try to find words in the puzzle below that tell us what Jesus taught.*

**Jesus Is the Light**

A. The Gospel teaches us how to live in the light. Use a crayon color that reminds you of light and draw eyes coming from the Gospel.

B. Jesus brought light into the darkness. In the puzzle below, circle the words that describe how Jesus taught us to live.

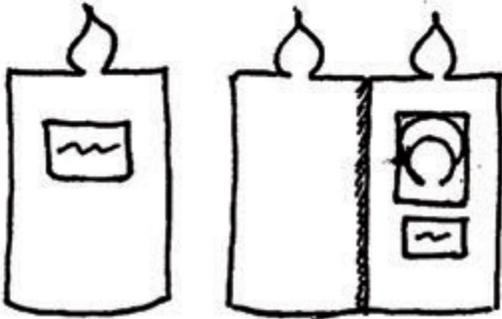
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careforoneanotherokut



**Group:** "Glory" Banner

*Materials:* Candle-pattern activity sheet copied onto heavier paper, construction paper, yellow tissue paper, scissors, markers, glue, shelf paper

[Ahead of time, cut out the patterns.] *In the Divine Liturgy what do we see that reminds us that Jesus is the Light of the World? (Candles) Jesus brought light to the world. Jesus is the glorious light of the world. That is why we use the Christian greeting: "Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!" And that is why we say before and after the Gospel, "Glory be to You, O Lord." Today we'll make a banner for our classroom. On each candle we'll print a letter of "Glory be to You, O Lord." We'll cut out yellow tissue paper, crumple it for the flames and paste it on. Then we'll glue them to the shelf paper to make our banner. [Pass out candles patterns; demonstrate how to trace the candle. When students are finished, help them write a letter of the phrase, and glue candles to the shelf paper.]*



**Craft:** "Glory" Card

*Materials:* Construction paper, "candle card" activity sheet copied onto heavier paper, "candle card words" activity sheet, markers, glue

[Ahead of time, make sample.] *In the Divine Liturgy what do we see that reminds us that Jesus is the Light of the World? (Candles) Jesus brought light to the world. Jesus is the glorious light of the world. That is why we use the Christian greeting "Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!" Here is a card to remind us that Jesus is the Light of the World. What is this the shape of? (Candle) What does it say on the outside? "Jesus is the Light of the World." And what do you think it says on the inside? "Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!" We also see an icon of Jesus Christ. Trace the pattern onto yellow construction paper, and then cut it out. You can cut out the words for the front of the card, and paste that on. Now paste the words and icon for the inside. You may color the icon if you wish before you paste it in. [Pass out candle patterns, yellow construction paper, scissors, glue and markers.]*

**Closing:** [Have John 12:44-48 marked in your Bible. Gather students around the icon corner.] *Today we learned about Jesus who is the Light of the World. If you had a choice, would you live in the light or the darkness? It is glorious and wonderful to live in the light. Jesus' words are light for our way. Jesus' words are a part of the Bible. They are in the Gospels. This year we will be learning about Jesus and the light he brought to the world. We will learn from the Bible. When Father gets ready to read the Gospel, we say [Use the translation for your jurisdiction.] "Glory be to You, O Lord, Glory be to You." Today we'll end our class by placing or enthroning the Bible here at the icon corner. I'll begin by reading a verse from St. John's Gospel. I'll say, "a reading from the Gospel according to St. John." We'll say together, "Glory be to You, O Lord, Glory be to You." After I read, we'll repeat that. Then I will place the Bible here. Each of us will come forward with reverence and kiss the Bible as we sing the hymn from church. [Use melody and wording that children are most familiar with from your Divine Liturgy.] "Blessed be the Name of the Lord." Let's practice that hymn . Let's begin now.*

*A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. John.*

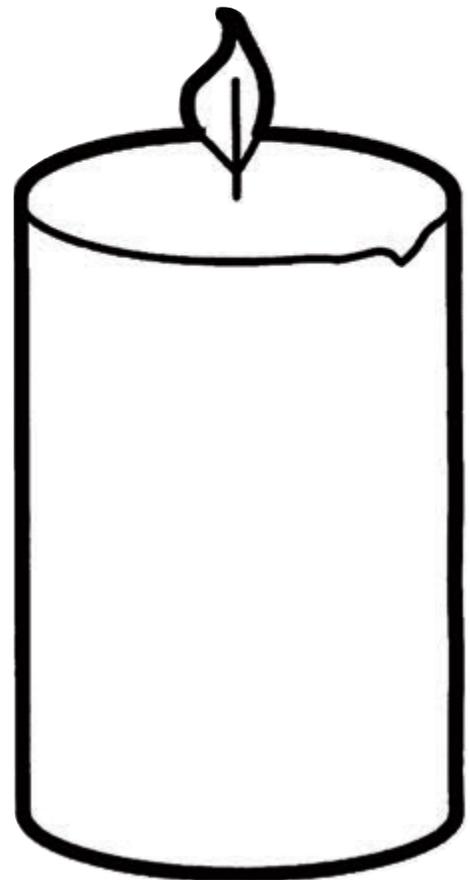
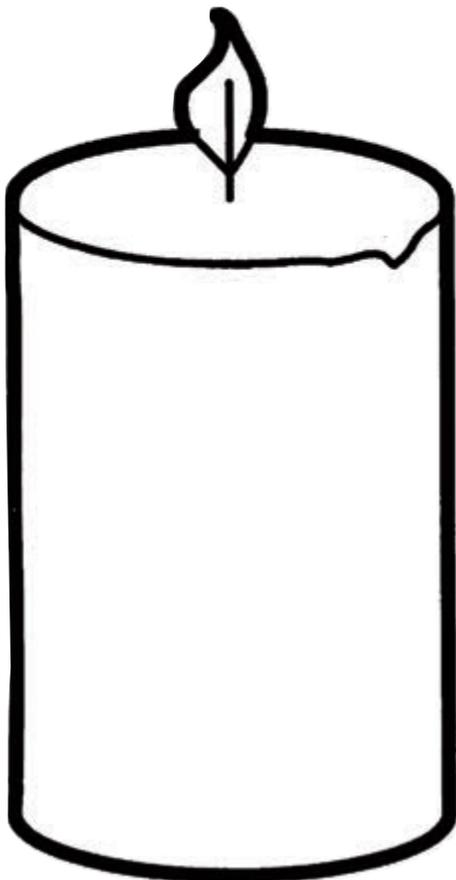
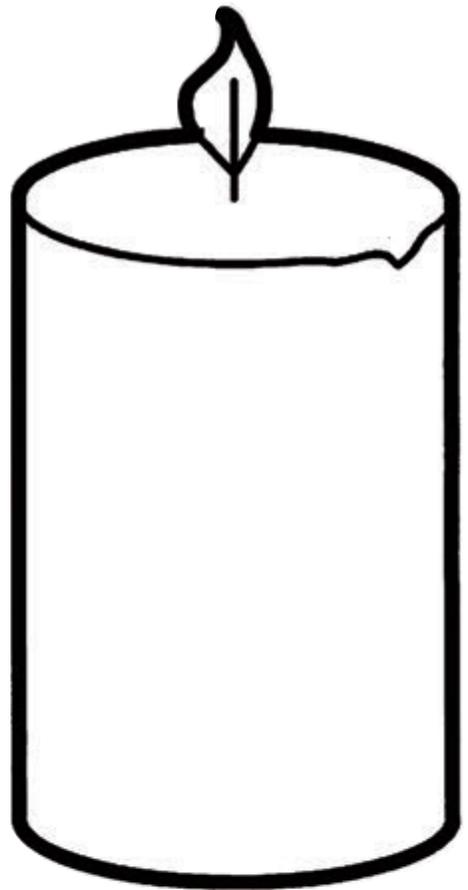
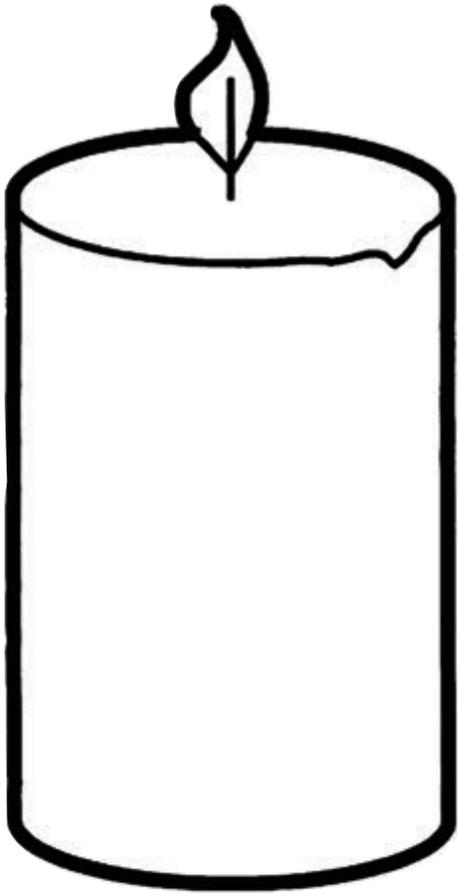
*Glory be to You, O Lord, glory be to You.*

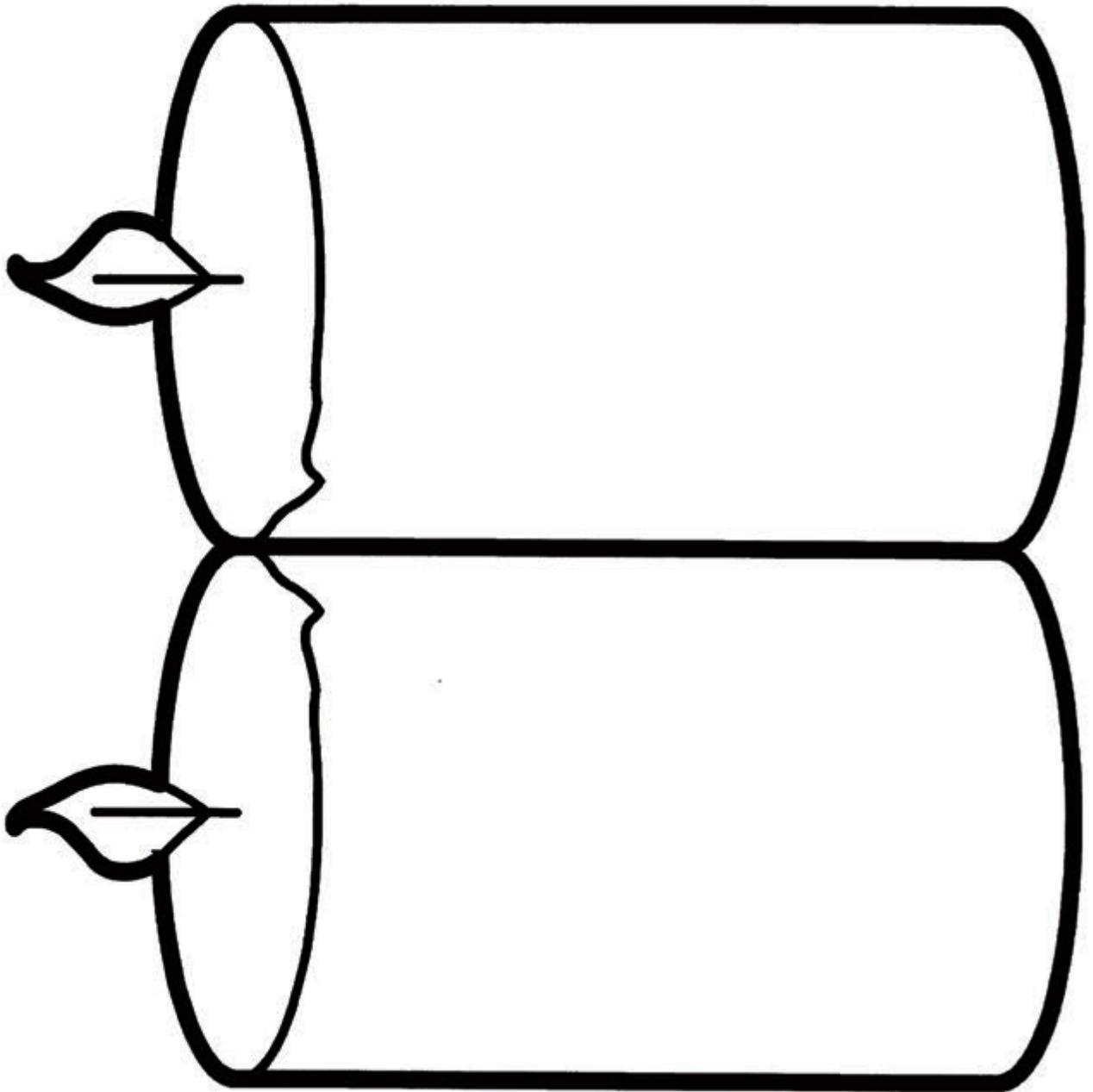
*The Lord said, "Whoever believes in me believes not only in me but also in the one who sent me, and whoever sees me sees the one who sent me. I came into the world as light, so that everyone who believes in me might not remain in darkness. And if anyone hears my words and does not observe them, I do not condemn him, for I did not come to condemn the world but to save the world. Whoever rejects me and does not accept my words has something to judge him: the word that I spoke, it will condemn him on the last day" (John 12:44-48).*

*Glory be to You, O Lord, glory be to You.*

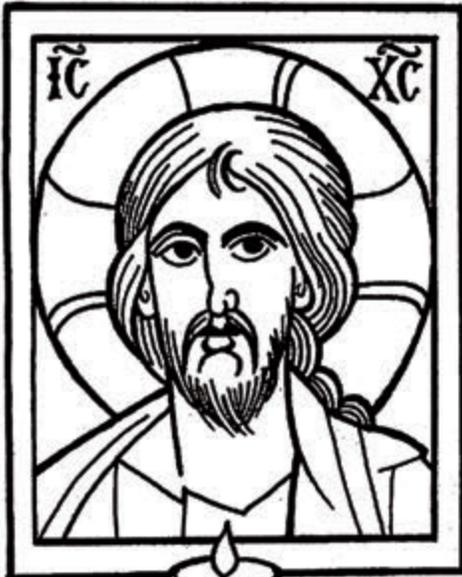
*[All kiss the Bible as they sing:]*

*Blessed be the name of the Lord, now and forever.*



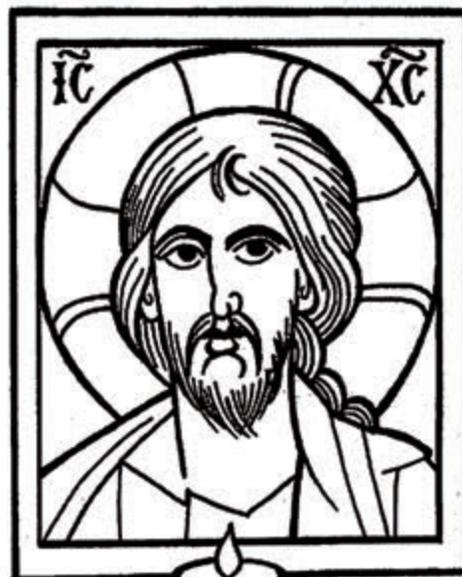


**Jesus is the  
Light of the World**



**Glory to Jesus Christ!  
Glory Forever!**

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