

The Mother of God Says "Yes"

Objective: The students will be able to tell the story of the Annunciation and to state that good things happen when people say "Yes" to God.

For the Catechist

In lesson 2 the children learned that Jesus said "Yes" to God. In lesson 3 they learned what that meant for Jesus and for our salvation. In this lesson they will learn how Mary is our example of saying "Yes" to God. They should be familiar with the story of the Annunciation from the Preschool and Kindergarten books as well as from studying the holy day during the school year. The concept of saints, also mentioned in this lesson, was introduced in all the previous texts of the series.

Mary's "Yes." Mary's "Yes" to God at the Annunciation opened the path of salvation for all humankind. God can grant the light of faith only to those who are humble enough to receive it. Because the Mother of God was open to Him in faith, humility, and self-surrender, God's plan was accomplished in her. We observe the Feast of the Annunciation every year on March 25.

Mary, the Mother of God. In the Byzantine churches, the Virgin Mary is often addressed as the *Theotokos* (Greek—"Birth-giver of God") or *Bohorodice* (Slavonic—"Mother of God"). The title for the Virgin Mary came from the Council of Ephesus in 431. The Fathers of the Council wanted to say that Jesus Christ is truly and fully human and truly and fully God. The birth of Jesus was the birth of God in human flesh and showed that Mary could truly be called the Mother of God.

Like Mary, children possess the qualities of humility and receptiveness. They are simple, trusting and receptive (open) to others. In this sense children can identify with the Mother of God. She was humble and trusted God in all that He said and asked. Like her, they too can say "Yes" to God. Mary is to be our model. Her "Yes" is to be echoed by all of us so that Jesus may come to live within

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: Reading from Scripture at icon corner.

Introduction: Being open and receptive to God with outstretched palms, "telephone" game **Need:** small gift for each child: icon card or piece of candy.

Read Text Aloud: Ask questions noted on the 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:* They Said "Yes"
- *Group:* "Word Guess" Review Game
- *Craft:* "They Said 'Yes'" Poster

Closing: "It is Truly Proper" and "To You, O Lord" [Prayers are printed out on worksheets in the lesson for you to copy and give to the students so they may say the words with you.]

Come Bless the Lord Icon Packets:

Packet I: The Annunciation to the Mother of God
Packet II:

Teaching Pic:

F1 Feasts of the Theotokos

us, too. The text uses the phrasing of "saying Yes" to God in several lessons. It is a simple and yet strong word of affirmation and commitment. Remind the students of the Mother of God whenever the term "saying Yes" is used in the text.

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted.)

The Annunciation

"Another ancient feast combining the incarnational and redemptive themes of Christmas and Pascha dates from possibly the third century in the East. This is the feast of *the Annunciation* of our Lord (March 25). It commemorates the visit of the archangel Gabriel to Mary announcing, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High shall overshadow you... You shall conceive and bear a son and give Him the name Jesus' (Luke 1:35, 31). The mystery of the Lord's conception and His death bear a close connection. Both are manifestations of His love for us, His *kenosis* 'self-emptying') for our sake, by which His life and love can fill us. March 25 is important in marking the beginning of spring with new life in nature, in dating our Lord's conception in the flesh at nine months before the feast of His birth, and in being the traditional date of His crucifixion or resurrection with His 'humbling Himself even to death' (Phil 2:8) for our salvation (Cf. Hippolytus of Rome, *The Commentary on Daniel*, IV, 23)" (LLII 44).

Mary, the Theotokos, the Mother of God

"The greatest of all saints is, of course, Mary the Theotokos, the Mother of God. In every Divine Liturgy, the unbloody sacrifice is offered first 'for our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary.' Her position is unique in salvation. As the one who by her own free will bore the Son of God in her womb, she is the first to be saved through the incarnation ('becoming flesh') of the Word of God. This is especially venerated in the feast of her falling asleep (*Dormition*) on August 15, which also celebrates her being taken into heaven (in Latin, *Assumptio*) as the first of all the human race to participate fully in the resurrection of our Lord. Other events of her life have a saving value for us as models of Christian life and because of her supreme role in the salvation worked through Jesus Christ" (LLII 50-51).

"The Church's celebration of the importance of the Theotokos stresses, not the historical events of her life, but the theological meaning of the one who bore God in her womb" (LLII 51).

"The special honor continually given to the Virgin Mary in our worship is not simply a matter of pious devotion. In honoring her as **Theotokos** (Mother of God), the Church confirms two basic aspects of Christian faith: that Jesus is truly the Son of God and that He dwells in our midst as true Man. Only if these two concepts are true can we call her Theotokos.

"Because we believe in the true incarnation of the Son of God become man in Jesus, we give His Mother the honor we do. One of the most prominent examples of this reverence is the fact that we always place the icon of the Theotokos containing Christ in her womb high on the rear wall of the church building. This image, placed between ceiling and floor, recalls that Mary bridges the gap between God and us by carrying the Son of God in her womb" (DC 10-11).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

[Gather the children at the icon corner. Have Bible marked at John 12:46.] *Last week we enthroned the Bible in our icon corner because it is precious to us. It contains the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Today we'll read another passage from the Bible.*

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

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

"I came into the world as light, so that everyone who believes in me might not remain in darkness" (John 12:46).

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

Introduction

So far this year, we learned that God made us and loves us. We learned about Adam and Eve and their disobedience to God, and we learned how they were put out of Paradise. We call that the Fall. We learned that Jesus is the new Adam. We also say that Jesus brought . . . something . . . into the darkness which was the sin in the world. What did He bring? (Light) Jesus couldn't come into the world without the help of a human person. Do you know who? Let's find out.

[Divide the class into two groups. Have them stand opposite of each other. Ask one group to hold their hands in an open-palm fashion. Ask the other group to close their hands tightly. Go to the first group and give them some gift, such as a piece of candy, holy card, etc. After presenting the gifts to the first group with the open hands, discuss the gesture. Allow responses to:] *Was there any difficulty in accepting the gift? Why? Why not?* [Approach the children in the second group, who have their hands closed, and try to present the gift. Again ask for responses.] *Why is it difficult for you to accept the gift? In what position should our hands be in order to be able to receive a gift from another? (Open)* [Give second group a second chance; this time they have their palms open. Instruct the children to sit in a large circle. Tell them that you are going to whisper something very important into the ear of the first child. They in turn will whisper the same message to the person next to them. Each person must listen carefully. When the message returns to you, discuss whether it changed. Say to the first child:] *"God loves you very much. You are His beloved child."*

Was the first message the same as the final message? Is there a difference between hearing and listening? Is it possible to hear something without listening to it?

Last week we learned that Jesus was sent by God to lead us back to the God. Jesus became human to help us reunite with God. In order for Jesus to become human, He had to be born. A very important woman had to say "Yes" to God in order for Jesus to be born. Do you know who that is? (Mary) God worked through Mary's life for all of us. God wants to work with each of us as well. Good things happen when people say "Yes" to God. Like Mary, we need to be open to God and listen to God. Mary is an example to us. She was open to God. She is the Mother of God—that is one title for her. Another title is "Theotokos" or "Birth-giver of God." Say her two titles with me: Mother of God, Theotokos. Let's read about her.


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The Mother of God Says "Yes"

God sent Jesus, His Son, to live with us. God wanted Mary to be Jesus' mother. God sent the Angel Gabriel to ask Mary. This is how it happened.

The angel said, "Hail, Full of Grace, the Lord is with you. You shall bear a son. His name shall be Jesus."

At that point, Mary could have said "No." Every human person can say "No" to God. Every person can make choices.



14 ©2014 Platteau Inc. Grade 2 Task 1: God Plans to Give Us "Yes"

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).

Every Person can make choices.

Who can retell what happened at the Annunciation? [Help students reconstruct story.] What could Mary have responded? (No)

Every person can make choices. What are some choices that you make? [Allow responses.] We are free to say "Yes" or "No" to God. What does God want us to say? (Yes)



God has a plan for every person's life. God wants to work with every person so good things happen.

Do you know the rest of the story of Mary and the angel?

Mary said "Yes" to God. A wonderful thing happened then. Mary carried Jesus in her womb. We call Mary "Theotokos" or "Birth-giver of God." Because of Mary, the Son of God came to live with us.

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God wants to work with every person so good things happen.

God has a plan for my life and for your life. How do you think we can stay in touch with God so we know we're working with Him? [Allow responses.] (Through prayer) What are some good things God might help you do? [Allow responses.]

Do you know the rest of the story of Mary and the angel? [Allow responses; continue reading.]

Because of Mary, the Son of God came to live with us. *We call Mary "Theotokos." What does that mean? (Birth-giver of God) Mary brought God's best gift to us, His Son Jesus. We also call Mary the "Mother of God."*

Many of these people have become Saints.

God can do wonderful works when people say "Yes." What is the name we give to people who have said "Yes"? (Saints)

Good things happen when people say "Yes" to God.


What are some good things saints have done? (Healed people, brought people to God.) Do you know the names of any Saints or any of their stories? [Allow responses.]

Let's review: We learned the story of the Annunciation. Who can tell me the details? What are some things that Saints have done? What kinds of things happen when people say "Yes" to God?

Mary is our example. She said "Yes" to God. Mary brought Jesus into the world.

God can do wonderful works when people say "Yes" to Him. Many people have said "Yes" to God. Many of these people have become Saints.

Saints reflected the light of Jesus. Saints healed people. Saints helped many people come to God. Good things happen when people say "Yes" to God.



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Activity Tracks





Basic: They Said "Yes"

You'll need to think to do our worksheet today. We learned that the Saints said "Yes" and God was able to do wonderful things because of them. In each box we have a Saint and below a description of that person. We need to guess which Saint is shown and write the name below the description. [Have students take turns reading the descriptions and guessing the Saint.]

They Said "Yes"

The saints said "Yes" to God and were able to help do God's work. Below each icon is a description of the saint's life. See if you can tell who the saint is. Then write in the correct name under each icon.

Here are the names you will need:

 <p>In icons I am usually shown battling a dragon. The dragon represents the Evil One. I God defending the faith and so I am called a martyr. Who am I? St. George</p>	 <p>When the Angel Gabriel came to me, I was surprised. After he spoke, I wanted to do God's will. I said "Yes" to God. Who am I? The Mother of God</p>
<p>St. Nicholas</p> <p>Saints Peter and Paul</p> <p>The Mother of God</p> <p>St. George</p>	 <p>I am called the wonder-worker because of the miracles God performed through me. I was a bishop in Myra. Who am I? St. Nicholas</p>
	 <p>We are remembered as the two "leaders of the apostles." One of us carries the "keys of the kingdom" and the other the Scriptures. Who are we? Saints Peter and Paul</p>

Group: "Word Guess" Review Game

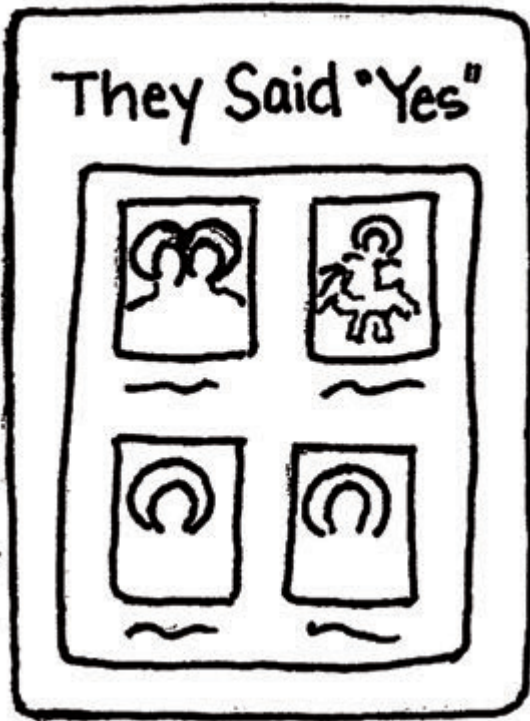
Materials: chalkboard or large pieces of paper and markers

We'll review the lesson today with a game. I'll divide you into teams. Each team needs to think of a word from the lesson, and it should be an important word, not "it" or "with" but "Annunciation" or "saints." One person from the team will come to the board and place blocks for each letter the word contains. The other teams will take turns guessing a letter, one letter per turn. If the letter is placed, they get a point and it's the next team's turn. If after the letter is placed, the team who suggested it wants to guess the word, they can. If correct, they get 2 points. If wrong, they lose 2 points. When the word is guessed, the next team can put up their word.

Craft: "They Said 'Yes'" Poster

Materials: "Saints Poster" 1/2 worksheet (enlarged 1.26% to fit 11" x 17" paper), and "Saints Poster" 2/2 worksheet (the second worksheet does not need enlarging), crayons, glue sticks, scissors

We have a craft that will become a poster. On this poster are descriptions of people who said "Yes" to God and with whom He worked in the world. They are the Saints. I have a poster page for each of you, and a sheet on which we have their icon drawings. The title is "They Said 'Yes.'" First, color the icons; then cut out each one. I'll help you match the icon with the name, and we'll glue them on. [Icons, top row: Mother of God, St. George; bottom row: Saints Peter and Paul, St. Nicholas.]



Closing: [Have prayer papers ready. Gather at the icon corner.] *Today we learned how important it is to be open to God so that we can work with Him. You may have learned a prayer posture in the earlier grades. Did you learn to pray with your hands outstretched and your palms up? It is an ancient form of Christian prayer. We show God that we are giving ourselves to Him, and we are ready to receive what He will tell or give us. Let's try it. Let's say together "To You, O Lord." That is how we will close our prayer today. Before we do "To You," we'll say a prayer that I'm sure you'll recognize. [Say first few words of "It is truly proper"] Where have you heard that before? (Divine Liturgy) Do you know to whom that prayer is addressed? It is addressed to the Mother of God who said "Yes" at the Annunciation. I've printed out the words for you. After we say the prayer, put down your pieces of paper, and we'll finish with our "Yes" which is "To You, O Lord."* [For "It is truly proper," use the translation for your jurisdiction.]

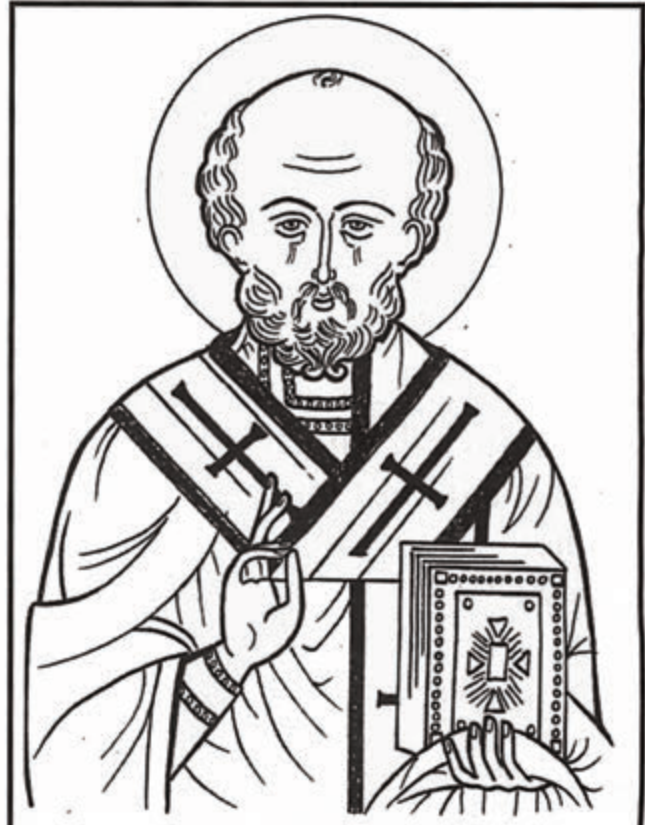
They Said "Yes"

St. Peter and St. Paul

St. George

The Mother of God

St. Nicholas



It is Truly Right - jurisdictional usages**ROMANIC GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH**

It is truly fitting that we bless thee, Bearer of God, who art forever blessed and most innocent and the Mother of our God. Thou who art more honored than the cherubim and more glorious beyond comparison than the seraphim: who, undefiled, gavest birth to God the Word. Thee, the true Mother of God, do we praise.

It is truly fitting that we bless thee, Bearer of God, who art forever blessed and most innocent and the Mother of our God. Thou who art more honored than the cherubim and more glorious beyond comparison than the seraphim: who, undefiled, gavest birth to God the Word. Thee, the true Mother of God, do we praise.

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MELKITE GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH

It is truly right to call you blessed, O Theotokos. You are ever-blessed and all-blameless and the Mother of our God. Higher in honor than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim, you gave birth to God the Word in virginity. You are truly Mother of God: you do we exalt.

It is truly right to call you blessed, O Theotokos. You are ever-blessed and all-blameless and the Mother of our God. Higher in honor than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim, you gave birth to God the Word in virginity. You are truly Mother of God: you do we exalt.

It is truly right to call you blessed, O Theotokos. You are ever-blessed and all-blameless and the Mother of our God. Higher in honor than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim, you gave birth to God the Word in virginity. You are truly Mother of God: you do we exalt.

RUTHENIAN METROPOLIA

It is truly proper to glorify you who have borne God, the ever-blessed, immaculate, and the Mother of our God. More honorable than the cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the seraphim, who, a Virgin, gave birth to God the Word; you, truly the Mother of God, we magnify.

It is truly proper to glorify you who have borne God, the ever-blessed, immaculate, and the Mother of our God. More honorable than the cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the seraphim, who, a Virgin, gave birth to God the Word; you, truly the Mother of God, we magnify.

It is truly proper to glorify you who have borne God, the ever-blessed, immaculate, and the Mother of our God. More honorable than the cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the seraphim, who, a Virgin, gave birth to God the Word; you, truly the Mother of God, we magnify.

UKRAINIAN METROPOLIA

It is truly right to bless you, O God-bearing One, as the ever-blessed and immaculate Mother of our God. More honorable than the cherubim and by far more glorious than the seraphim: ever a virgin, you gave birth to God the Word. O true Mother of God, we magnify you.

It is truly right to bless you, O God-bearing One, as the ever-blessed and immaculate Mother of our God. More honorable than the cherubim and by far more glorious than the seraphim: ever a virgin, you gave birth to God the Word. O true Mother of God, we magnify you.

It is truly right to bless you, O God-bearing One, as the ever-blessed and immaculate Mother of our God. More honorable than the cherubim and by far more glorious than the seraphim: ever a virgin, you gave birth to God the Word. O true Mother of God, we magnify you.

**THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ST.
JOSAPHAT**

It is truly right to bless you as the
Theotokos, as the ever-blessed and
immaculate Mother of our God.
More honorable than the cherubim
and by far more glorious than the
seraphim: without corruption you
gave birth to God the Word. O true
Mother of God, we magnify you.

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