

As Church, We Serve

Objective: The students will be able to state that Jesus came to serve us. We imitate Jesus by serving one another.

For the Catechist

In lesson 13 the children learned that we show our love to each other by being kind and helpful. Now they will learn that another way to show our love is by serving each other.

Jesus said, "I am among you as the one who serves" (Lk 22:27). We look to Jesus as our perfect example of how to serve other people. He shows us that the natural flow from love is service. This service extends toward all of God's people—poor, elderly, disabled, suffering, and minorities. The children in Grade 3 are ready to think about ways to give service to others.

This lesson also identifies our church members who serve the community: the priest, deacon, sisters, cantor, catechists, altar servers, custodians, and other volunteers. These members give glory to God as they serve the parish family.

The children are ready to follow the example of service shown to them by their family, catechist, and other parishioners. They are becoming aware of their responsibility to serve all people because we are all sons and daughters of God.

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: The Creed

Introduction: Discussion about helping even when not asked

Read Text Aloud: Have students volunteer to read the text. Use questions in the teacher manual to discuss the lesson with the students.

Activity Tracks:

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

- *Basic:* We Serve All People

- *Group:* People Who Serve in Our Church

- *Craft:* Our Family Circle

Closing: The Creed

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord: The Holy Trinity

Teaching Pics:

Divine Liturgy: (DL7, DL9, DL11)

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

Service to the Church

"All of these roles, from bishop to candle-bearer are functions of service to the Church. They build up the Body of Christ by enabling it to worship with order, dignity, and beauty so that this Body, the Church, may eagerly fulfill its priestly service in union with Christ. The co-ministering of all these roles in one divine service becomes an icon of the entire Church, where each of us fulfills the task to which the Lord calls us and thus come together as one Body in Him" (*LW 65*).

Sacramental Orders

"The orders of **bishop, priest, and deacon** are considered sacramental orders because they call for a permanent commitment to a particular kind of ministry or service in the Church that requires a special enabling by the gift of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands" (*LW 64*).

Other Ministries in the Church

"There are other ministries necessary for the proper celebration of the Liturgy but not requiring the same degree of commitment. These lesser orders are given by the laying on of the hands of the bishop outside the altar (sanctuary). The *minor orders* of **acolyte or candle bearer, lector, cantor and subdeacon** are still given today for specific roles in worship. In the early Church, other ministries such as **catechist** or **teacher** were blessed in the same way.

"Each of these roles are regularly fulfilled today by members of the parish. The office of cantor is of particular importance, for the music of the Church is perhaps the most significant aspect of a beautiful celebration of the Divine Services. The cantor can lift the hearts of the faithful 'to welcome the King of all,' and should lead them to proclaim in song their faith, their hope, and their love of the God of salvation" (*LW 64*).

Altar Servers

"The server contributes to the solemnity of processions and symbolizes the Light of Christ, the 'real light which gives light to every man coming into the world.' (John 1:9) The role of server is very important. Without servers the clergy are not free to fulfill their ministry of prayer properly and must do several jobs at once. Unfortunately, the ministry of server is often considered as intended for children. This seems to have arisen when monasteries began taking in boys for schooling and introduced them to the service of the Church in this way. Today many parishes employ adults or at least teenagers for this role" (*LW 65*).

Discerning Your Call—Other Ministries

"Within either life-style, all are called to various forms of "ministry", ways in which we serve the community of the Church and the world. The Church is "made up of" interdependent ministries. We all serve one another, thus building up the Body of Christ. Some are "gifts", charisms given by the Spirit to a person for the good of others. They include time, talents and treasures entrusted to us by God to be used in service to others (*LLIII 25*).

"On the local level, the community also calls people to specific ministries within the community, some of which require the "setting aside" by the bishop: cantors, readers, servers, catechists, and others. In these capacities they build up their community by their union with Christ the servant of all" (*LLIII 26*).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Today we are going to continue saying the Creed. Did you say the Creed during the Divine Liturgy this week? Let's begin with the sign of the cross. [Use the prayer worksheet according to your jurisdiction.]

Introduction

Before we start class today, I need help. [Ask students to help with some of these jobs: organize the books, give out pencils, put a new icon on the table, give out paper.] Thank you.

I always appreciate help with anything I have to do. I am always happy when someone offers to help even if I don't ask. Do any of you help at home? What are some of your jobs? Now do any of you help even if you don't have that job? [Encourage the students to talk about helping their parents, other relatives, and neighbors.] Do any of you help here at the church? What do you do? [Possible answers: altar server, picnic worker, festival worker] When you are helping in this way, you are serving other people because you are reaching out to help. Many times you provide a service for someone without being asked. You see or know someone needs help so you serve them. Were you helpers providing a service today? (Yes) What was that service? (We helped you; we gave out what we need for today.)

Last week we read the story about the Good Samaritan. In that story we read how someone served another person. Let's see who can tell us that story. [Help students tell the story.]

In the Gospel we read that Jesus said He came to serve us. We should follow Jesus' example on how to serve other people. He helped everyone. We are to help everyone also—not just our family and friends. Why do you think we should serve everyone? (God wants us to serve.)

Today we are going to learn about serving each other and our church. Let's turn to our lesson.

As Church, We Serve

In the Bible stories we read about the many ways Jesus served everyone He met. We hear how Jesus helped to cure sick people and gave food to people who were hungry. He also listened to the people and answered their questions about God.

One day Jesus heard His disciples talking about who was to be first in God's kingdom. Jesus wanted them to know that they must serve people on earth first before they enter God's kingdom. He said to them,



Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all. For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.

(Mark 10:43-45)

Jesus wants us to look to Him to learn how to serve God and each other. He cared for the sick and the poor. He welcomed children. He even cared for people no one else wanted as their friend. He served God even if it meant others did not like Him. Jesus wants us to learn how to serve each other as He served us. One way we can serve each other is by helping at our church.

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).

As Church, We Serve.

Let's think of some ways we serve each other. (Serve food, service the car) Serve means to offer something to someone. Many times we serve people by helping. We offer them our help so they can get done faster. Jesus served us in a special way. Let's read.

... to give his life as a ransom for many.

Did Jesus come to be served? (No) He came to serve. Who is our perfect example to follow to learn how to serve? (Jesus) Whom should we serve? (Each other; and we should help at our church)



We have many people who serve in our church. The priest and deacon serve the Divine Liturgy. They help us become and stay united to God.

Nuns, sisters, monks, and brothers serve the Church in many ways. They serve in hospitals, parishes, and schools. They teach us, take care of the sick, and serve the Church family in many ways. Also, they pray for us.



Our church cantor serves God by singing praises during the Divine Liturgy and other services. The cantor serves us by leading as we sing our prayers to God. In some churches, the cantor has organized a choir. The cantor and choir members lead us in singing our praise to God.

Catechists are the men and women who teach the religious education classes for the children and the adults of our parish. They read and study to learn how to grow closer to God. They serve the Church by helping other people learn how to grow closer to God.

Also, they pray for us.

How does the priest help us grow closer to God? (Leading us in worship, administering the Mysteries) Who are some other people who serve us in the Church and pray for us? (Deacons, sister, monks, and cantors)

We know Jesus helped everyone, and we must do the same.

Who are some of the other people who serve our church? (The altar servers, the cantor, the custodian, the volunteers) Why are they willing to serve the church? (They love God and they love God's house, the church.) Let's think of some other ways we can serve each other. (We can feed the poor, visit the sick, give shelter.)

Let's review: *Did Jesus come to be served? (No) Why did He come? (To serve) Jesus served us by suffering and dying so we can have eternal life. What do we call Jesus because He gave us eternal life? (Our Savior) What did He save us from? (Eternal death) We thank Jesus for serving us. We ask Jesus to help us learn how to serve as He did. How do we imitate Jesus? (By serving one another)*

Activity Tracks

Basic: We Serve All People
[This worksheet is in the student text.]

Complete the sentences and find the hidden word. When we are done with the activity, let's see if we can name the people who serve in our church. Let's think of ways we can serve in our church.

Our church has altar servers who assist the priest during the Divine Liturgy and liturgical services. They help the priest by taking care of the censer and carrying candles. The priest needs altar servers because there are many things that need to be done during the Liturgy.



Each church has many other people who serve the church family. The custodians make sure the church is clean. Other people wash and iron the covers used on the Holy Table. These people serve God by making sure God's house is beautiful.

Many other jobs are done by volunteers of the church. Some people make special foods to serve to the people. These people serve the church family by helping us enjoy the foods of the season. Our church needs many volunteers to help every week.

Our Church also serves people who are not members. We collect food and clothing to send to other countries where people do not have many things. We serve people by helping at local food drives and soup kitchens. We know Jesus helped everyone, and we must do the same.

Jesus came to serve us.
We look to Jesus to learn how to serve each other and the Church.

Words to Remember:
Christian Service: Giving of ourselves out of love to help others. We imitate Jesus by serving one another.

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We Serve All People

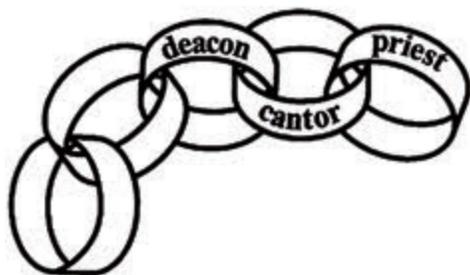
Complete the following sentences with the words from the bottom of the page. Use the letters from the boxes to find the hidden word.

1. PRIESTS serve the Divine Liturgy.
2. The DEACON helps the priest serve the Divine Liturgy.
3. ALTARSERVERSERS assist the priest during the Divine Liturgy and liturgical services.
4. VOLUNTEERS help around the church every week by doing special jobs.
5. SISTERS serve the Church and pray for us.
6. The CANTOR leads us as we sing our prayers to God.
7. We need EVERENERONE to serve God and each other.

cantor volunteers everyone sisters
priests deacon altar servers

The hidden word
S E R V I C E

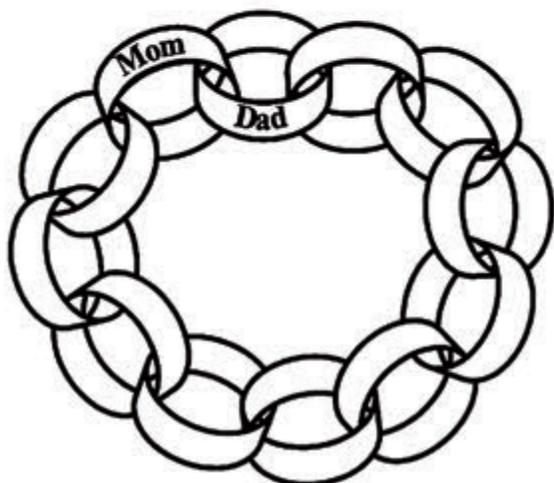
Group: People Who Serve in Our Church



Materials: Construction paper cut into 6" by 2" strips, stapler or glue, markers

Today we learned about the many people who serve in our church. We are going to make a circle of links that identify all the people who help in our church. First on the strips of paper, let's write the names of the people who serve in our church. [If you don't know the name of the person, list the service. Have the students add a link with their name.] We are going to write their names on each paper strip. Now let's glue the ends of the strips after we link each one together. Now we have a chain of people who serve in our church. The chain is ready for more links to be added as we continue to have more people serve in our church. [Display the chain in the room.]

Craft: Our Family Circle



Materials: Construction paper cut into 6" by 2" strips (4 or more per student), stapler or tape, markers

Today we learned about the many people who serve in our church. We also can serve in many ways in our family. On the strips of paper, write your family members' names. Don't forget to include yourselves. On the other side of the paper, write one way that family member serves each other. Can you think of some ways you serve your family? (Washing dishes, cleaning, setting the table) Now let's glue the ends of the strips after we link each one together. Now we have a chain of your family members. Let's link this chain to make a circle. This is your family circle of love. How do we show our love for each other? (By serving each other)

Closing

We are going to say the Creed during our closing prayer. Remember to say the Creed during the Divine Liturgy every time you are there. Let's begin with the sign of the cross. [Use their prayer books.]