

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the students should be able to

- accept spiritual advice from people who encourage us to grow in our love of Jesus Christ.
- know to look to the "elder" or spiritual guide in the Church when they need help.
- recognize that we are to help each other continue to follow Jesus Christ.

For the Catechist

In the Church there have been many gifted by God to exercise the ministry of wise advice. The Eastern Churches have revered this ministry under the title of *staretz*, which means elder or spiritual guide. The elder in the Byzantine tradition is a kind of spiritual guide, one filled with extraordinary wisdom inspired by the Holy Spirit. Usually a priest, monastic, or other elder is approached by those seeking consolation and spiritual guidance.

Of all the spiritual gifts studied in this unit, this ministry of wise advice is perhaps the least known and least appreciated in the Church of America. Perhaps we do not realize we need to grow in the Christian life; therefore, we do not seek to deepen our life in Christ. As we recognize the spiritual life as a process of growth, we eagerly welcome one who can guide our pilgrimage. This ministry of leading Christians from spiritual "milk" to "solid food" (1 Cor 3:2) is the service that spiritual guides offer to the Church.

The concept of spiritual guides might be new to most students. The concept might also be difficult to accept because our culture emphasizes the "I-am-always-right" attitude, and now the students are being told to listen to advice from someone else. This lesson emphasizes that we must learn to listen to people who share wisdom, and we must be willing to help others grow closer to Jesus Christ.

Materials Needed

Opening and Closing Prayers: Prayer page

Introduction: Paper, note cards and pens

The Message: New Testament, note cards, pens, markers

Application: Materials needed for the projects, pens and pencils, note cards

Icons and Pictures

Icon Packet II: The Good Samaritan

Teaching Pics: Saint John of the Ladder (GL8)

Connections

1. Opening Prayer (2 minutes)

Have the students gather before the icon and stand silently for a few seconds. Then make the sign of the cross.

- Pray "Heavenly King." (Prayer page)

2. Review (Healing) (2 minutes)

Ask the following:

- *Has anyone every prayed for someone to be healed? How can the Church help us pray? (Through the Mystery of Anointing)*
- *Why is the Gospel Book placed on the person's head? (The healing is from God)*
- *What else is used in this Mystery? (Blessed oil)*

3. Introduction (2 minutes)

Have the students make a list of places they have visited where there was a guide: battlefields, hiking areas, museums, vacation places. Ask: *What did the guide help you do? (Find your way)*

Ask the students to think of a time they needed help and they did not ask for it. After they share, tell them that sometimes people offer their help even though we do not say we need it. Ask: *Did that ever happen to you? Who offered you the help?*

Connect this activity to the idea that some people have the gift of being able to know when their help is needed and they even know the help they need to give. Turn to the lesson that begins with a story that shows Jesus helping a woman.

Alternate: Have the students divide into groups and have them create scenarios that show someone having a problem and another person noticing and offering help. Act out the scenarios for the group.

Notes for the lesson:

(Use this space to write helpful hints to use each year)

The Message

4. Jesus, Our Guide (6 minutes)

- a) Have the students read the first two paragraphs.
- b) Ask for three volunteers to read the parts in the Scripture: the narrator, Jesus, and the Samaritan woman. Read the Scripture aloud
- c) Let the students write the answer for the first question.
- d) Continue the reading—including the Scripture—silently. After the students write the answer to the second question, ask a few to read their answers aloud.

Supplementary Activity:

Write the question for this lesson on the board or on a poster board:

What do we learn from those who share wisdom? Write the following answers when they are read in the text:

1. We learn to make good choices.
2. We learn to be truthful.
3. We learn how to follow God's way.
4. We learn to listen to and accept guidance.

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Those Who Share Wisdom

What do we learn from those who share wisdom?



Jesus, Our Guide
Jesus is the Guide of all Christians. He led many people to God while He was on earth. Sometimes He told people what was in their hearts even before they told Him. He did not do this to put people down but to help them get closer to God.

In the Gospel of John we read about one time when Jesus surprised a woman by telling her details of her life. Read **John 4:4-19** to hear what happened.

What did Jesus know about the woman that surprised her?
He knew that she had five husbands.

The Samaritan woman shared her story with many people. Read **John 4:39-42** to hear how her news about Jesus affected other people. What did they start to do?
They started to believe in Jesus Christ.

We Are God's People Grade 3 Unit 3: Many Gifts, One Giver 107

Background Reading:

(Wisdom)

"Wisdom is not automatically achieved at a certain age. Proverbs will repeatedly teach that wisdom must be actively sought and 'acquired' at some cost. Similarly, education in wisdom is never over: one can always continue to 'increase' in wisdom. Wisdom is 'given' to the young and inexperienced; they are exhorted to 'listen' and to 'receive.' The proper verbs of wisdom are 'to know' and 'to understand' or 'to discern.' Thus, we can say that wisdom consists not only in factual knowledge, but also interior qualities and habits which permit one to use that knowledge well. At the same time, knowledge is inseparable from knowledge of good and evil, and so the wisdom education has a moral dimension. In fact, Proverbs 1 lists twelve nouns which sum up the characteristics of the wise person: wisdom, instruction, insight, wise dealing, righteousness, justice, equity, prudence, knowledge, discretion, learning, skill. Here we find the practical, the moral and the intellectual dimensions of the human person ordered and organized in harmony" (OTB 134).

5. Spiritual Guides

(4 minutes)

a) Have the students read this section aloud or silently.

b) Tell the students to underline in their reading the people who were identified as spiritual guides. Tell them to star the ones they ask for help. (Parents and priest)

6. Let's remember that...

(5 minutes)

Read these words and definitions aloud—a different student for each one. Ask: *How can a spiritual guide help us learn to grow in these gifts?* [Compare the guide to a coach to help them understand the relationship.]

Catechists: Your questions might be guiding the students in ways you are not aware. A young man considering entering the priesthood recently shared this story:

"I remember raising my hand when my religious instruction teacher asked if anyone is thinking about becoming a priest. I still wonder if that was the day I started thinking about becoming a priest."

Supplementary Activity:

Have the students make note cards for the words to be used to review this section.

Background Reading:

(Spiritual Guides)

"Since each person progresses differently in the spiritual life, the formation of a believer has historically been undertaken in a very personal way. For centuries the Eastern Churches have insisted that a person desiring to live the Christian life needs the help of a spiritual guide or elder. The elder is first of all a spiritual teacher who know the Tradition through personal experience. The elder is one who is grounded in the holy mysteries and in the teaching of the Scripture and the Fathers, not as an intellectual exercise but as the basis for his or her own spiritual life. Such a person's relationship with God has progressed to such a degree that he or she can help to guide others on their spiritual journey. The elder leads along a path which he himself has walked" (LLIII 49-50).

Spiritual Guides
There are people in the Church today who are given what is called the gift of discernment. The Holy Spirit leads them to know people's problems and gives them the help they need.

Those who have this gift—the ability to give wise advice—are called elders because they are 'old' in experience of God, if not in years. Although this gift may be specially given to some people, it is given for the whole Church, bringing honor to God Who has given this gift for us.

There are times in life when we definitely need guidance. Sometimes we are simply lost and do not know which way to go; we need to be shown the way. Other times we may be doing something wrong and we need to be corrected. If we are fortunate, someone will guide us along the right path. Often our spiritual guide and counselor is our priest or a monastic.

In the story about the Samaritan woman, we see Jesus as her spiritual guide. When He told her that her answer about her husbands was right because He knew the truth, she was surprised. But Jesus did not use His knowledge to criticize her—He used it for her good. Through this encounter, she and many other people came to believe in Jesus Christ and to know that He is "truly the savior of the world" (John 4:42).

We need to remember this Bible story when our parents want to help us even though we do not ask for help. They are trying to help us make the right choices and live in a way that leads us to Jesus Christ. Our parents are our first spiritual guides.

Let us remember that . . .
Discernment is a gift of the Holy Spirit. With this gift the Holy Spirit helps a person to sense the truth and needs and wants of people without being told about it. When a person has the gift of discernment, he or she is able to understand someone's spiritual condition and then helps that person grow in Christ.

Spiritual guides are people, often gifted with discernment, who are able to help people in their spiritual life. Spiritual guides are often called elders.

Gifts of the Holy Spirit—In the Old Testament we read that the Messiah would have certain qualities because He was filled with the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 11:2). When we remain close to the Holy Spirit whom we received at our Christening, we may be given these gifts as well.

Wisdom—the ability to judge everything in the light of the Gospel.
Understanding—the grasp of the mysteries of the faith which our minds cannot reason out.
Counsel—the ability to act wisely according to Christ's way.
Strength—the ability to live the Christian way in the face of hardships or temptations.
Knowledge—the ability to put everything together and see God's plan in all things.
Piety—the sense of love for God and all men.
Fear of God—the sense of awe for God's greatness and not wanting to desert His way.

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7. Blessed are they...

(6 minutes)

This story is about a person with the gift of discernment. It helps us understand how we are to help each other in our journey to God's Kingdom.

This story helps us understand "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God."

Have the students read the story. For the dialogue, ask two different students to read the parts.

Ask: *How would you have felt if you were told someone else knew why you were there? What would be your answer? Did this ever happen to you—someone knew what you were thinking?*

[Use this final example to help students realize how much God knows our every action—and God gives a hint of that knowledge to people who have the gift of discernment.]

Supplemental Activity:

Have the students work in groups and create skits to act out for the class. They can choose one of the following stories:

- Jesus and the Samaritan Woman
- Catherine Doherty and the young man
- Catherine Doherty and the "hippies"

After the skits, discuss how in each story the person grew closer to Jesus Christ.

Blessed are they . . .

Mrs. Catherine Doherty was a spiritual guide, gifted by the Holy Spirit to give wise advice in the Church. Several thousand people came each year to Madonna House, the center she directed in Canada, hoping to learn more about God's plan for them.

One day a young man about twenty years old came in and asked for the person in charge. He was introduced to Mrs. Doherty and said, "I'm a Satan-worshiper from Toronto."

"What are you doing here then?" she asked.

The boy answered, "I don't know."

"I do," she said. "You want to learn about Jesus Christ." The boy stayed for ten days and went away a different person than when he came.

Another time, Mrs. Doherty was walking through the park in Toronto, Canada, when several young people wearing "hippie" clothing saw her. They noticed the cross she wore around her neck.

"Hey, man," they said. "Do you know J.C.?"

Mrs. Doherty, who was over seventy years old, turned and answered, "Do I know J.C.? Man, I know J.C. like you'll never know J.C."

And so she sat and "rapped" with them for several hours about the Lord. They asked her to come back, and the next day she spoke to an even larger group who came to meet someone who really knows "J.C."

From the Beatitudes
Blessed are the clean of heart,
for they will see God.

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Background Reading

(Our Family and Friends as Guides)

"Even if it is impossible to find a spiritual father or mother, almost everybody can still benefit to some extent from the Tradition by allowing themselves to be accountable to those closest to them. This goes especially for spouses in their relationship with each other and for children to their parents. Even friendships between peers can be useful for spiritual guidance and the correction of faults. 'Two are better than one . . . if one falls, the other will lift up his companion' (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10). It is almost always true that when we fail in charity toward someone it is a sure sign of a spiritual problems, however well we think we may be doing in the spiritual life, our irritability, tendency to gossip and negativity will always give us away. Who better than our spouse or parent or best friend to gently show us these failures? We should try to welcome these corrections with humility, evaluate them soberly and in peace, putting aside every tendency to resentment" (LLIII 51).

Application

8. Heroes of Eastern Christianity

(15 minutes)

For this lesson the student book has two stories, and the teacher's manual has a more detailed story about Catherine Doherty who was introduced in the section "Blessed are they . . ." Photocopy the additional story if you need it.

The information from these pages will be used for the "Action Plan" page. Also, the details can be used to create a presentation to be shown at the end of the class or during a final project that is part of Lesson 22.

First, have the students read one story. If there are enough students, have all the stories read by someone or by groups. The following are suggestions on ways to present the information:

1. Have the students present a summary of the details while another student displays the icon of the saint.
2. Have the students complete a biographical sketch of the saint and read that to the students.
3. Act out a short skit that shows one aspect of the saint's life.
4. Write a newspaper article that reports one story about the saint.
5. Write a television newscast story complete with details about the scenes and dialogue.
6. Have the students keep a journal of saints. After they have read the information, let them write answers for the following in the journal (one student can write all the answers or it can be passed around the group for responses):

- For what do you think this saint would want to be remembered?
- What would you ask him or her if you had the chance? What do you think would be the answer?
- If you could join this saint for a few years, what part of his or her life would you pick? Why did you make that choice?

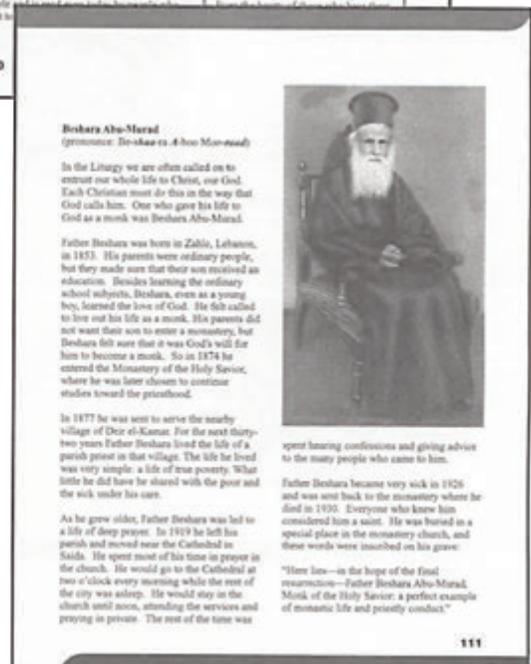
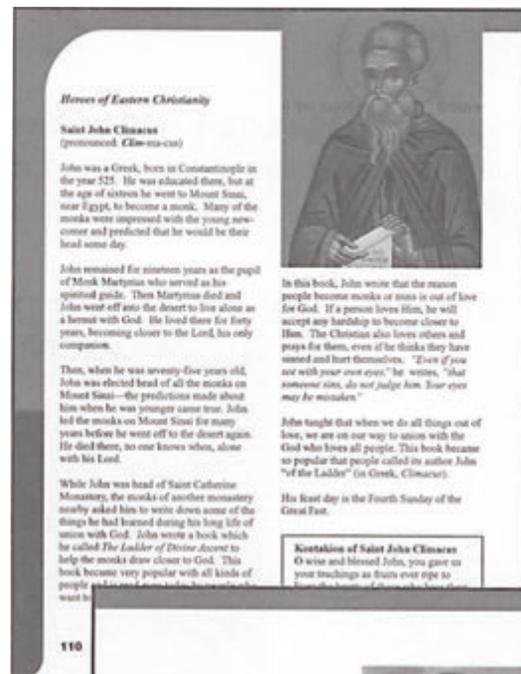
[See page 222 for a worksheet that can be used for the journal.]

Optional Activities

Have the students read all the saints' information. Have them work in groups and write a script for a "Who Am I?" program. Present the program at the end of this lesson or the end of the unit.

or

List four facts about one saint and write them on a note card. Write the name of the saint on the other side. Complete cards for all the saints in this lesson. Collect these cards to be used as review for future lessons.



9. Action Plan

(10 minutes)

For this lesson, the students are completing their project for the final presentation in Lesson 22. Encourage them to write the information that they will say in their own words.

10. Summary

(5 minutes)

Divide the students into groups and have them write a prayer thanking their priest, parents, other family members, and friends who—with the help of the Holy Spirit—are helping them make the right choices. Tell them they are praying for their spiritual guides. Let each group read their prayer aloud

11. Closing Prayer

(2 minutes)

Pray "Heavenly King."
(Prayer page)

Supplementary Activity:

Write these prayers on construction paper and display them around the room.

Action Plan

Heroes of Eastern Christianity

Read one story about those who share wisdom, and complete the outline on this page. As you write the details about this courageous Christian, think about his or her choices that show us how to live our life for Jesus Christ.

_____, Elder

A. He or she lived in the _____ century.

B. Three important facts about his or her life:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

C. What in his or her life helped this person to become a good spiritual guide? _____

D. This elder is best known for _____

Now work on the final project that will be presented in Lesson 22. Today you are going to complete the write-up that you will say for your presentation. Include good details that show how courageous these Christian heroes really were.

Write a brief summary of what you plan to say as you show your project.

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Heroes of Eastern Christianity

(Part 2)

Catherine Doherty

Not all spiritual guides are priests or monastics. God also gives this gift to laypeople in the Church whom He calls to do a special work for Him. Catherine Doherty is one of these spiritual guides.

Catherine was born in 1900 in Russia, in a society very different from that of today. Her father was connected with the Diplomatic Service and her family travelled in Turkey, Greece, Egypt, China, Japan, and all throughout Europe. She gained a wide picture of the world in general and learned to speak many languages.

Russian society changed greatly after World War I when the Communists gained control of the government. Nearly 18 million Russians fled the country. Together with her husband, Baron Boris de Hueck, Catherine went first to Finland, then Norway, England, and finally to Canada.

Both she and her husband participated in World War I. Catherine was a volunteer Red Cross nurse on the front lines. Her husband was severely shell-shocked and gassed and eventually died in Canada.

In 1930 Catherine felt called to serve the Church in a ministry of charity. She established Friendship House, a place where the poor could come and have their needs served. The beginning of this Apostolate was in Canada in the slums of Ontario. It spread to Ottawa; and Hamilton, then at the invitation of Cardinal Hayes to Harlem, New York from which seven additional missions grew. At the invitation of Bishop William Smith of Pembroke, Ontario, Catherine came to Combermere, Ontario, Canada in 1947 and founded Madonna House. There are eleven missions that have grown out of Madonna House.

In 1943 Catherine married an American newspaperman, Edward J. Doherty, who was quite celebrated in his field of work. Mr.

Doherty gave up his distinguished career and joined the workers in Madonna House in Combermere.

Pope Pius XII suggested that Mr. and Mrs. Doherty consider becoming Lay Apostles with vows. After considerable discussion among the members and staff of the ten missions, three decided to follow the pope's suggestion and took the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

Catherine wrote: "Once the staff had taken these promises it was obvious that Eddie and I should do likewise." Mr. Doherty agreed, It is such a little thing to give to God, Catherine. I am sure you will agree to it because He has given us such great things: His Son.' And so it was that he and I took a vow of chastity, obedience and poverty to our spiritual directors."

"This lasted for quite a while, but in the heart of Eddie Doherty the desire to become a priest was constant, and the Holy See suggested he become a priest of the Byzantine Catholic Church. Father Edward Doherty was ordained by Archbishop Joseph Raya in Haifa on August 15, 1969.

At Madonna House, Catherine soon found everyone was turning to her for guidance, including priests, monks, and nuns. Every year thousands of people came to Madonna House to visit and to learn from Catherine who spoke to them every evening

In 1977, Catherine wrote about her ministry: *"With the grace of God and His blessing I began the Apostolate in 1930. The Apostolate is now forty-seven years old. Before God, very little; but before man, quite a long time."*

Catherine was blessed with ministry so that people can grow to know God more deeply. It is impossible to count the number of people who have been touched by her words.

O Heavenly King

O heavenly King, Consoler,
Spirit of truth, present in all
places and filling all things:
the Treasury of blessings and
the Giver of life! Come, O
Good One, and dwell in us.
Cleanse us of all stain and save
our souls.

The Melkite Greek Catholic Church

O Heavenly King

O heavenly King, Consoler,
Spirit of truth, present in all
places and filling all things:
the Treasury of blessings and
the Giver of life! Come, O
Good One, and dwell in us.
Cleanse us of all stain and save
our souls.

The Melkite Greek Catholic Church

O Heavenly King

O heavenly King, Consoler,
Spirit of truth, who art in all
places and fillest all things:
Treasury of goodness and
Giver of life! Come, and take
up Thine abode among us and
cleanse us of every stain and
save our souls, O Good One.

The Romanian Greek Catholic
Diocese of Canton

O Heavenly King

O heavenly King, Consoler,
Spirit of truth, who art in all
places and fillest all things:
Treasury of goodness and
Giver of life! Come, and take
up Thine abode among us and
cleanse us of every stain and
save our souls, O Good One.

The Romanian Greek Catholic
Diocese of Canton

O Heavenly King

O heavenly King, Comforter,
Spirit of truth, You are
everywhere present and fill all
things: Treasury of blessings
and Giver of life! Come and
dwell within us. Cleanse us of
all stain and save our souls, O
gracious Lord.

The Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic
Metropolitan Province

O Heavenly King

O heavenly King, Comforter,
Spirit of truth, You are
everywhere present and fill all
things: Treasury of blessings
and Giver of life! Come and
dwell within us. Cleanse us of
all stain and save our souls, O
gracious Lord.

The Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic
Metropolitan Province

O Heavenly King

O Heavenly King
Heavenly King, Comforter,
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Treasury of blessings and
Giver of life! Come and dwell
within us. Cleanse us of all
stain and save our souls, O
gracious Lord.

The Ukrainian Catholic Diocese of
Saint Josaphat

O Heavenly King

O Heavenly King
Heavenly King, Comforter,
Spirit of truth, You are present
everywhere and fill all things:
Treasury of blessings and
Giver of life! Come and dwell
within us. Cleanse us of all
stain and save our souls, O
gracious Lord.

The Ukrainian Catholic Diocese of
Saint Josaphat

O Heavenly King

O Heavenly King
Heavenly King, Advocate,
Spirit of truth, who are
everywhere present and fill all
things: Treasury of blessings,
Bestower of life! Come and
dwell within us. Cleanse us of
all that defiles us and, O good
One, save our souls.

The Ukrainian Catholic Synod

O Heavenly King

O Heavenly King
Heavenly King, Advocate,
Spirit of truth, who are
everywhere present and fill all
things: Treasury of blessings,
Bestower of life! Come and
dwell within us. Cleanse us of
all that defiles us and, O good
One, save our souls.

The Ukrainian Catholic Synod