

# 10—Divine Services: Traveling Together

## *Objectives*

By the end of this lesson students will be able to ...

- understand that our Church worship services help us experience our journey as one with all of creation.
- define worship as the public honor and reverence given to God by the Church with Christ as its Head.
- state that the Divine Liturgy is our most important act of worship because Christ's physical presence is with us in a mystical way.
- recognize that the Church has many other services for different times of the day or events in our lives.

## *For the Catechists*

"Why do you go to church?" is a question you might have been asked. Your answer should have been to join with each other to worship God as we travel on our journey to Him. That is the focus of this lesson. Help students realize that we are in church worshiping God and honoring His glory. In church we are surrounded by the angels and saints and all those who have gone before us. We are also thanking God for granting us eternal life. Regretfully, many people do not go to church because they have stopped recognizing God's honor and glory. They think they no longer need to worship God and give thanks for their salvation. Hopefully, this lesson will help the students realize they should never stop joining their church family in giving thanks and worship to the Lord.

Our Church gives us many beautiful services during which we worship God. Yet, most people are familiar with only the Divine Liturgy. The Grade 7 book included a section about Vespers, and this book introduces the students to many more services. Hopefully, the listing of the services and the details about many of them will make the students want to be in church more often. Help the students realize that God wants to be with us all the time, and the Church tries to help us be with Him.

Included in this lesson is a list of special services for specific moments of our life. When you look at that page, share your stories about any of the events listed. Encourage the students to share their family stories about times they encountered Christ. Encourage them to talk about the other people who were with them during these special moments. We need to help each other realize that God's presence is with us and with other people often, and we need to witness to that presence.

## *Materials Needed*

*Opening Prayer:* "The Lord's Prayer"

*Icon:* Christ Pantocrator (*Come Bless the Lord* icon packet #3).

*Closing Prayer:* "The Great Eucharistic Prayer"—in the student book

Pens, pencils, markers and white paper

## 1. Opening Prayer

- Chant or recite "The Lord's Prayer."

## 2. Introduction

Allow a few minutes to discuss why people go to church. Ask them why do they go to church. Then talk about all the different church services that they have attended.

## 3. Guided Reading

- Before the reading, review last week's objectives. Then summarize this week's objectives of the lesson on a wall pad or easel pad to use for review next week.
- Have students read text aloud and emphasize the importance of church services.
- Look at the chart about different events in our life and special services. Encourage students to share stories about any of the events.

## 4. Scriptural Reflection

- Help students find 1 Peter 2:9-10.
- Before reading aloud, have students make the sign of the cross. Remind them that reading Scripture is praying.
- Give the students 3 minutes to answer the questions and read the passage again.
- Ask the students to work in groups of 2 and share their answers aloud.
- Possible answers:
  - God loves me. I am part of His family.
  - To live the way Jesus taught us.
- Make a list of what they think God is asking of them as a member of His people.

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### ***Background Reading (Feast of Saints)***

"... Thus Christianity can never be just sitting home and reading the Bible by oneself. The Bible is God's special book, but it not His whole message. This is why the Liturgy is so important. It is a complete language in itself. It creates a whole new world for us. What happens in the Liturgy affects every part of our minds and bodies, and communicates the reality of God's presence to us. The prayers of the Liturgy are its soul, but the setting for these prayers is also important. Liturgy with prayer would be a series of meaningless actions. Liturgy without ritual would be a series of dry and uninteresting words. Together they are the language of God.

" The Liturgy must sometimes change to reflect our own situation. This is why our Liturgy has been translated into English [or other languages people use], because the words should be understandable. Its words are the soul of the actions, and without understanding them, we risk making the Liturgy an empty ritual. As St. Paul said, referring to the charism of speaking in various languages, "I would rather say five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue" (1 Cor. 14:19).

" .... We pray well that God's mystery is ineffable, that is, unable to be expressed in words. No amount of prayer can convey the whole communication that God is giving us in the Liturgy. We must be aware of all the different ways God is speaking to us: through prayers, through our actions, through sights and sounds, through others, and in the depths of our own hearts, and much of this can never be expressed in words" (*Journey* TM 176).

## 5. From the Teaching of the Church Fathers

- Ask one student to read the words from St. Leontius.
- Have the students answer the questions; then discuss their answers. Suggestions:  
Through wood we make crosses and icons, and stone becomes statues and icons.  
We honor God by becoming one with Him and each other in church. The crosses remind us of our salvation, and we bow in reverence to the cross.  
Icons, holy water, chotki

## 6. Liturgical Study

- Read the paragraphs aloud.
- Make a list of all the rituals mentioned on this page.
- Ask the students to choose 2 of them on which to focus at the next Liturgy they attend. Ask them to consciously think about God's presence as they focus.

## 7. Closing Prayers

The Great Eucharistic Prayer that the priest prays before the people sing the hymn "Holy, Holy, Holy." Use the Divine Liturgy books from your church.

## Supplemental Activities:

Review—At the end of the lesson, ask the students what they remember by using one of the following suggestions:

1. Make a poster listing all the rituals mentioned on the "Liturgical Study" page. Place the poster on a bulletin board in the church.
2. Make a poster of all the services mentioned in this lesson. Online find more information about them and add that to the poster.
3. Write a letter that invites people to your church. Include details about why you think they should come to your church.
4. Create a handout about the different rituals in our church. Consider asking your priest to keep it in the back of the church for visitors to read.

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## ***Background Reading (The Church, the Body of Christ)***

"Another dimension of liturgical piety is rooted in our understanding of liturgy as an action of the community. Any act of liturgical worship, no matter how small, is a gathering of the Body with Christ its Head. As such it stands as a witness against the strong trend toward individualism and privacy which diminishes the communal dimension of human life. God, however, has created and called us from all the nations and races of the earth to be one people: 'Once you were no people, but now you are God's people' (1 Pt 2:10). Our Lord prayed that we be a people whose unity reflects the oneness of God: '... one, even as we [the Father and Jesus] are one' (Jn 17:11). It in this context that St. Augustine is reputed to have said, 'A solitary Christian is not a Christian.' Liturgical piety acknowledges that every liturgical assembly is an affirmation and strengthening of the Church as one Body in Christ: 'Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in their midst' (Mt. 18:20)" (LLII 98-99).

## Unit 2 Review

### Lesson 6:

- 1) Identify some of the elements of Church Tradition. (*Scripture, liturgical services, prayer and worship, the Creed and Councils, writing of Church Fathers, experiences of Saints, and the message of icons*)
- 2) Who guided the writing of Scripture? (*The Holy Spirit*)

### Lesson 7:

- 3) What is prayer? (*A conversation with God*)
- 4) What is the Jesus Prayer? Describe how to pray it. (*A prayer that helps us focus being in the presence of God. We say while breathing in, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God," and while breathing out, "Have mercy on me a sinner."*)

### Lesson 8:

- 5) What does fasting do for us? (*Keeps us focused on God; helps us grow in our relationship with God; strengthens us.*)
- 6) How many fasts do we celebrate during the liturgical year? What are they? (*Four—the Great Fast before the Resurrection and the Fasts before the Nativity of Our Lord, the Dormition of the Theotokos in August, and Saints Peter and Paul in June.*)

### Lesson 9:

- 7) Why do we celebrate Feast Days and Holy Days? (*They help us recall and understand God's blessing for us in Christ. We commemorate events in the earthly life of Christ.*)
- 8) What is the greatest Christian celebration? (*Pascha, The Resurrection of Christ.*)

### Lesson 10:

- 9) What does the word "worship" mean? (*Originally, it meant bowing down to the ground. We worship when we give public honor and reverence to God.*)
- 10) What is the most important Church service? (*The Divine Liturgy*)

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