

# 18—We Share Our Blessings

## *Objectives*

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

- define hospitality as an attitude that welcomes others into our homes and lives.
- realize that Jesus calls us to be hospitable to all people at all times.
- recognize that God has given us an abundance to share with other people.
- state that they will be held accountable for how they used their abundance.

## *For the Catechists*

"The path of our journey to God is love, for He is love. And the love we have for God is expressed in the way we love one another." This quotation taken from the original teacher manual states the goal of this lesson—to show hospitality to everyone because that is the way we show our love. St. Basil the Great tells us, "Christians should offer their brethren simple and unpretentious hospitality."

Help the students discover what hospitality means to them. The lesson asks them questions about their attitude: "Do you take time to listen and pay attention to others .. ?"

Give them time to think about those questions. Ask them to offer suggestions on how they can share more. Help them realize that they too at their age could be serving the angels. Sometimes we forget the youth might think only adults need to worry about hospitality. Take time to read and discuss the prayer from St. Teresa of Avila.

In the Liturgy section, the focus is on our being called to the Divine Liturgy, the Heavenly Banquet. Quotations from the Liturgy should be emphasized so that the youth can listen for those words when they next attend the Liturgy. Help the students realize that the Liturgy calls them to become one with God. Students might be able to stay focused more during the Divine Liturgy if they start recognizing the words and the reason for the prayers.

This lesson includes information about Catherine Doherty, the founder of the Madonna House. Encourage the students to learn more about this courageous woman who served the Church in a ministry of charity. Encourage them to learn about other examples: Blessed Mother Teresa, Blessed Josaphata Hordashevskya, St. Therese of Lisieux.

## *Materials Needed*

*Opening Prayer:* "Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal ...

*Icon:* The Holy Trinity (*Come Bless the Lord* icon packet #18).

*Closing Prayer:* "This New Commandment"—on last page of Lesson 14 in this teacher manual.

Pens, pencils, markers and white paper

## 1. Opening Prayer

Chant or recite "Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal...."

[Find this prayer in the Divine Liturgy books in your church. This prayer is before the reading of the Epistle]

## 2. Introduction

Ask the students to discuss what happens when someone comes to their house to visit. How does their family show hospitality? What happens when someone needs their help. How do they respond? How do they think Jesus would respond?

## 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 hospitality.
- Complete the Leaders of Our Church section. Check your church papers to find the correct spelling for the names.
- Read the information about Catherine Doherty and encourage them to find out more about her life.
- For the prayer "Christ Has No Body," ask the students to be quiet as they listen to you read it or have everyone read it together. Discuss how they use this prayer to make them think about how Jesus needs them to help His people.

## 4. Scriptural Reflection

- Read 1 Kings 17:7-16
- Before reading aloud, have students make the sign of the cross. Remind them that reading Scripture is praying.
- Look at the icon of St. Elias the Prophet. Share some of the facts from the back of the icon.
- 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
- Possible answers:
  - They were hospitable people. St. Elias asked them.
  - She did not starve.
  - [Varied answers.]

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### ***Background Reading (Hospitality)***

"The traditional way sharing is exercised in the domestic church is in hospitality, the willingness to share all we are and all we have with others. Hospitality is a principal exercise of the priesthood of the domestic church. By taking the small section of the world under their control and sharing it with others, the Christian family sanctifies it and makes of it an offering to God.

"Christians exercise their domestic priesthood to the fullest when their home is open to others in the spirit of Christ. The Christian community should be especially welcoming as was the case in the early Church where people put what they had "at the service of the saints" (1 Cor 16:15). The domestic church then, should be a place where guests are the rule rather than the exception" (GDC 36).

**5. From the Teaching of the Church Fathers**

- Ask one student to read the words from The Martyrdom of Polycarp.
- Possible answers:  
He offered them food—a sign of his hospitality.  
[Varied answers.]

**6. Liturgical Study**

- Read the paragraphs aloud.
- Ask the students to explain how the Divine Liturgy could be compared to Christ's banquet of love.

**7. Closing Prayers**

Sing or pray "This New Commandment." Words are on the last page of Lesson 14 in this teacher manual.

**Supplemental Activities:**

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

1. For their Faith Books, ask the students to write words that remind people that they should be hospitable always.
2. Make a list of ways to be hospitable—at home, in school, in church. Ask the priest to publish the ideas in the bulletin.
3. Write an introduction for Catherine Doherty, Blessed Mother Teresa, Blessed Josaphata Hordashevskia, St. Therese of Lisieux. Tell the students to research facts about their lives.
4. Develop a creative way to present "Christ Has No Body."
5. Make a poster identifying all the ways the Divine Liturgy can be compared to a banquet.

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***Background Reading (Love One Another)***

"We make the attending of liturgy into an obligation because the consequences of refusing the invitation are so drastic. To refuse means spiritual starvation, as Luke puts it, 'Not one of those invited shall taste a morsel of my dinner' (Lk. 14:24). The Eucharist, though, remains an invitation—the consequences do not take away our freedom. Many times in daily life we are faced with similar decisions, and might refuse an opportunity, or gift, or invitation, or friendship that we know would be good for us, out of pride or spite. This was Adam's choice: God invited him to the joy of paradise, but he refused, preferring to become like God in his own way (Gen 3:5). The risk of freedom is the danger of making a very bad choice" (*Journey* TM 251)