

## **Year 2: Using our Senses in Worship**

### **March: Great Lent Begins**

- What is the Triodion
- Sunday of Forgiveness: The Story of Adam and Eve's Sin
- The Great Canon of St. Andrew
- Sunday of the Victory of Orthodoxy (Restoration of Icons)
- Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas
- Sunday of the Adoration of the Most Holy Cross

### **Saints and Feasts This Month**

- The Saints of North America:  
St. Nicholas of Ochrid, Zicha, and South Canaan  
Commemorated on March 18

### **Memory Verse:**

“Blessed are those who suffer persecution for justice sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

**Monthly packets are also available online at:  
[www.saintalexio.org/youthministry.html](http://www.saintalexio.org/youthministry.html)**

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# Before the Great Fast...

- ❑ The four weeks before the Great Fast — the Sundays of Zacchaeus, the Publican and the Pharisee, the Prodigal Son, and the Last Judgment — help us prepare for a season of repentance and spiritual labor. **Read the Gospels for these four preparatory Sundays together as a family**, and ask younger children to color a copy of each icon, or draw one of their own. Discuss the desire to see God, humility, repentance, and mercy with your children throughout this preparatory time.
- ❑ **Enlist your children's help in planning Lenten menus** well before the fast begins, and give them the responsibility for preparing some of the family's meals. My seven-year-old daughter loves to flip through cookbooks and mark "yummy looking" recipes, and I've discovered that she doesn't complain when she chooses the recipe and helps in the preparation — even if it's a flop when cooked!
- ❑ **Hold a family meeting to re-assess your rule of prayer**, and agree on what you will strive for during the Great Fast. You may consider adding five minutes of group morning prayers if you've not done them before, or taking turns reading the Gospel of the day before dinner. Do something attainable, so you won't be frustrated and abandon your efforts.
- ❑ **Make a list of people you'll pray for every day** during the Great Fast (or update your prayer list if you already have one). Include both the living (relatives, godparents, friends, and "enemies") and the deceased. Make a second copy of the list of the deceased and give it to your priest; he will remember your loved ones at the memorial liturgies held on the second, third, and fourth Saturdays of the Great Fast.
- ❑ **Plan ahead to attend more services, more often.** Examine your commitments and drop or reschedule appointments and lessons **now**, so that you'll be free to attend services each night of the first week of the Great Fast, Wednesdays and Fridays for the remainder of the fast, and each night during Holy Week. Make plans to meet at the church if your will be coming from several locations (work, school, piano lesson), and consider carpooling with fellow parishioners who live nearby, especially if you have to "split up". ✠ NTK

## Adam and Eve Disobey God

God gave Adam and Eve a garden called Eden. Every kind of beautiful tree and plant grew in this garden and there was delicious fruit on the trees. There were rivers in Eden, cool and clear, and fish swam in these rivers. Birds flew in the sky, and animals lived in peace, for they had enough grass and fruit for food. Nobody was afraid.

Adam and Eve were very happy in their garden. Adam took care of it and Eve helped him. Everything that grew was good, and all the animals were obedient and kind. God often talked to Adam and Eve, and He was with them in the garden. They were free to do anything they wanted and could eat of everything that grew in their garden, except the fruit from one tree.

This tree stood in the middle of the Garden of Eden. It was called the tree of knowledge of good and evil. This was a special tree. God told Adam and Eve that they must never eat any fruit from this tree. This was the only thing that they must never do. As long as they obeyed God, they could live in Eden and be happy.

Now, when God made heaven, He also made angels -thousands and thousands of good spirits. The angels loved God, they were His obedient and good messengers and servants. But one of the angels became proud and wanted to be like God. Some angels listened to him and rose against God. The good angels fought them and made them leave heaven. The bad angel became the Spirit of Evil, and he always tried to undo the work of God.

The Spirit of Evil entered into the serpent, who was more cunning than any other beast. He came to Eve one day and said: "Is it true that you are not allowed to eat certain fruit in the garden?" Eve answered: "We can eat of any fruit except from this one tree: the tree of knowledge of good and evil." The serpent then said: "If you eat from this tree, you yourselves will become like God." Eve looked at the tree. The fruit looked so beautiful and so good to eat. She wanted to taste it very badly. She stretched out her hand and plucked a fruit. She ate of the fruit and then gave it to Adam, who also ate of it.

Adam and Eve disobeyed God. Immediately everything became different for them. Everything changed. They became afraid. The animals in the garden also became afraid. Adam and Eve felt ashamed of themselves. They thought that it was because they had no clothes on, so out of leaves they made clothes for themselves. Then they heard the voice of God in the garden and they hid themselves. God called to Adam: "Where are you?" Adam replied: "I heard You, but I hid myself because I have no clothes." Then God asked, "Who told you that you should be ashamed to have no clothes? Did you eat fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil?" Adam answered: "The wife You gave me offered the fruit to me and I ate it." Eve said: "The serpent told me that it was good, so I ate of it."

Adam and Eve did not ask God's forgiveness. They did not say they were sorry, but they tried to pass their fault from one to another. Adam and Eve's life in the beautiful garden was over. They had to leave it and go out into the world and work. From that time on, an angel with a fiery sword guarded the entrance of the garden which was called Paradise.

Adam had to work very hard out in the world to make a living from the earth where weeds and thistles grew as well as crops. Because he had to work so hard, the sweat would often pour down his face. Eve came to know what it was to be unhappy, to be tired, and to be sick. The children of Adam and Eve and the children of their children and all the people that were born after them had to live this way.

But even as God closed the garden to Adam and Eve, He made them a promise. He promised that one day a Savior would be born who would conquer all evil and would again open the doors to "Paradise." We now know that this Savior was Jesus Christ."



Because they disobeyed Him, God sent Adam and Eve out of the beautiful Garden of Eden. *Genesis 3:22-24*

## What is "the Great Canon of St. Andrew" and what's so great about it?

This complex poem (actually a chanted hymn) was written in the early 700's, and it picked up the adjective "Great" for two reasons: it's extra-long (about 250 verses), and it's majestic.

The Great Canon was written by St. Andrew of Crete, a bishop who was initially a monk in Jerusalem. He was born in Damascus about 660, and joined the Monastery of St. Saba, outside Jerusalem, at age 15. His intelligence and holiness were evident, and he soon became secretary to the patriarch of Jerusalem. He was a representative at the Sixth Ecumenical Council, and then manager of ministries to the poor, elderly, and orphans in Constantinople, and by the end of his life was Bishop of Crete.

But what he was most known for was inventing a new form of hymn, a canon. It's composed of 9 sections, or "Canticles." Each canticle begins by referencing one of the songs in the Bible — for example, the song of Moses when the Hebrews crossed the Red Sea (Exodus 15:1-18), or the Song of the Virgin Mary when the angel announced the conception of Jesus (Luke 1:46-55). Each canticle starts with a verse based on the biblical canticle and then takes off from it, almost like a jazz riff, developing the overall theme of the canon. Some people think St. Andrew wrote it for himself, for his own private use. Throughout, he is challenging himself personally, comparing his life and behavior to that of the Bible's heroes and villains. It's pretty intimate.

When the Canon became known it spread through the churches of the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and Asia. The Canon is still offered as a worship service by most Eastern Orthodox Churches every year during Lent. In the first week of Lent one-fourth of the hymn is offered each night. In the fifth week, the whole Canon is chanted in its entirety — about four hours of singing!

Reading the Canon helps us see how Christians in the Holy Land, 1,300 years ago, understood the Scriptures. It's a way to time-travel, and actually join them in these ancient Christian devotions.

*From an interview with Frederica Mathewes-Green*

*by Kathryn Jean Lopez of the National Review, March 01, 2006 at*

*<http://old.nationalreview.com/interrogatory/mathewesgreen200603010810.asp>*

# Sunday of Orthodoxy

*1st Sunday of Lent*

It will soon be the first Sunday of Lent. We will go to Church and have a special service. That's because the first Sunday of Lent is called the Sunday of Orthodoxy. Long ago, the rulers of some countries did not allow Orthodox Christians to have icons in their Churches or homes. After many years, Orthodox Christians were given back their icons. This was a very happy time for Orthodox Christians!

We remember this special occasion on the first Sunday of Lent. Many times all the Orthodox Churches in the city or nearby towns celebrate this service together. On the Sunday of Orthodoxy, we thank God for giving us icons which teach us about our Faith. We thank God for giving us the True Faith. We are glad we are Orthodox. We are thankful we can receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ every Sunday. We thank God for His special gifts on this first Sunday of Lent.

# Sunday of St. Gregory of Palamas

*2nd Sunday of Lent*

St. Gregory of Palamas was a special man whom we remember on the second Sunday of Lent. He loved God very much and helped people understand that Jesus is the "Light of the World."

The priest will read a story from the Gospel on Sunday about Jesus healing a sick man. This man could not walk. All he could do was lay on a mat all day. Four of his friends carried him on his mat to a place where Jesus was speaking to a group of people. There was such a large crowd that they could not get close to Jesus. The man's friends took apart the roof where Jesus was. They lowered the sick man into the room right in front of Jesus!

Jesus was so glad to see how much faith they had. Jesus told the sick man that his sins were forgiven. He told the sick man to stand up, pick up his mat and go home. How could this man get up and walk home? Jesus can do anything! Jesus healed the man and the man walked!

We are happy that we know Jesus and that He forgives our sins, too.



• DIVINE  
LIGHT •





**St Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church**  
**McKinney (Dallas area) Texas**

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## St John Maximovitch on The Exaltation of the Precious Cross

Before the time of Christ, the cross was an instrument of punishment; it evoked fear and aversion. But after Christ's death on the Cross it became the instrument of our salvation. Through the Cross, Christ destroyed the devil; from the Cross He descended into hades and, having liberated those languishing there, led them into the Kingdom of Heaven. The sign of the Cross is terrifying to demons and, as the sign of Christ, it is honored by Christians.

"O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance. Grant victory unto Orthodox Christians over their adversaries, and by the virtue of Thy Cross, preserve Thy community."

The beginning of this prayer is taken from the twenty-seventh Psalm. In the Old Testament the word "people" designated only those who confessed the true faith, people faithful to God. "Inheritance" referred to everything which properly belonged to God, God's property, which in the New Testament is the Church of Christ. In praying for the salvation of God's people (the Christians), both from eternal torments and from earthly calamities, we beseech the Lord to bless, to send down grace, His good gifts upon the whole Church as well, and inwardly strengthen her.

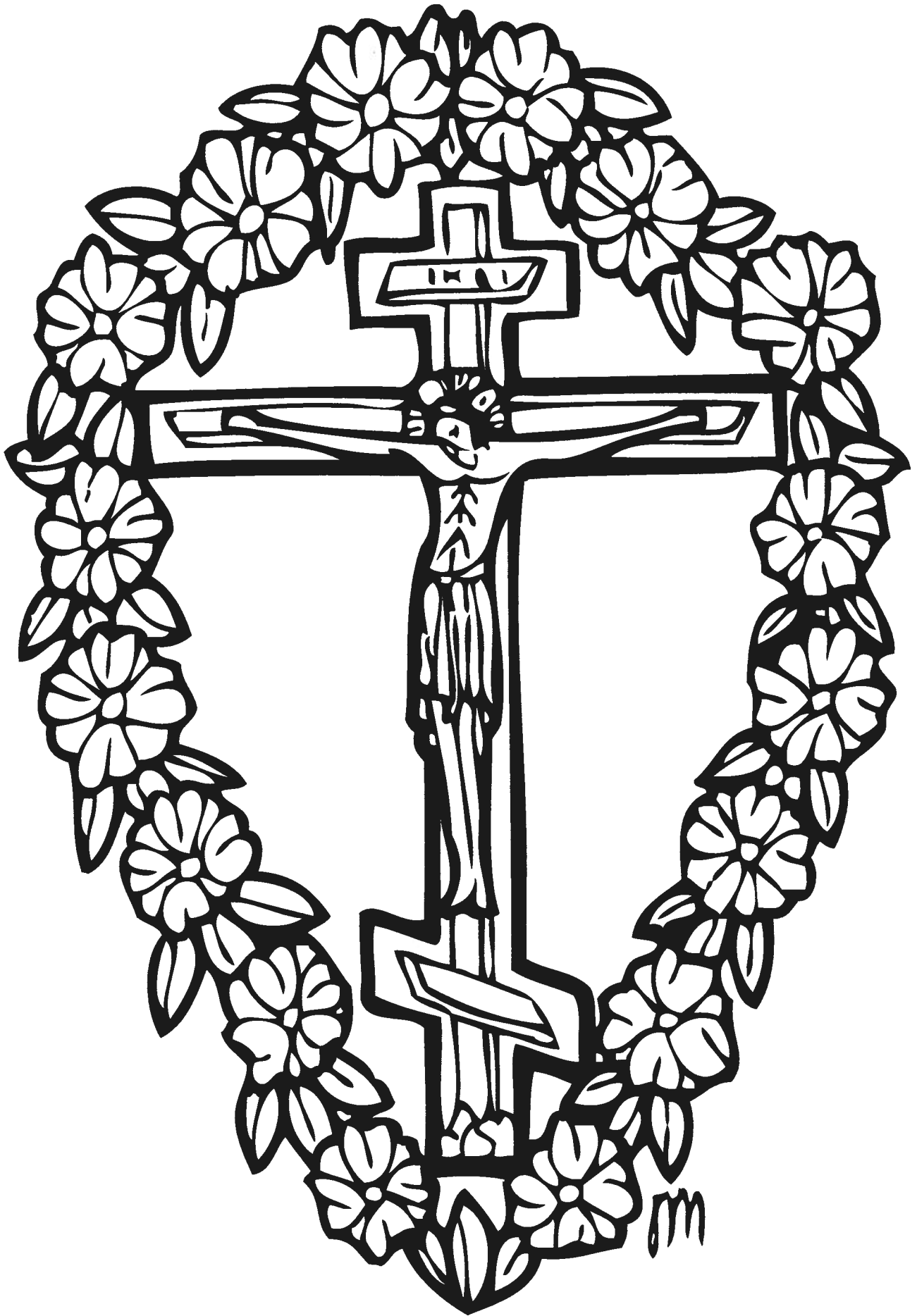
The petition for granting "victory to kings" (Grant victory to Orthodox Christians over their adversaries) (ie: to the bearers of Supreme authority), has its basis in Psalm 143, verse 10, and recalls the victories of King David achieved by God's power, and likewise the victories granted Emperor Constantine through the Cross of the Lord.

This appearance of the Cross made emperors who had formerly persecuted Christians into defenders of the Church from her external enemies, into "external bishops," to use the expression of the holy Emperor Constantine. The Church, inwardly strong by God's grace and protected outwardly, is, for Orthodox Christians, "the city of God." Heavenly Jerusalem has its beginning. Various calamities have shaken the world, entire peoples have disappeared, cities and states have perished, but the Church, in spite of persecutions and even internal conflicts, stands invincible; for the gates of hell shall not prevail against her (Matt. 16:18).

Today, when world leaders try in vain to establish order on earth, the only dependable instrument of peace is that about which the Church sings:

"The Cross is the guardian of the whole world; the Cross is the beauty of the Church, the Cross is the might of kings; the Cross is the confirmation of the faithful, the Cross is the glory of angels and the wounding of demons." (Exapostilarion of the Exaltation of the Cross)

(from a sermon on the Exaltation of the Cross by St John of Shanghai and San Francisco)



## Lent for Little Ones

by Lillian Silver

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I teach a first grade faith formation class. Lenten group activities are very hard to find, so I created some for my class. I kept them quite simple so that all the children could manage them without too much trouble. My aim was to do an activity each week during Lent, here are the first four:

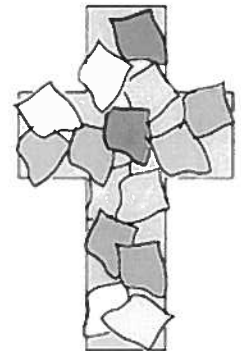
### Week One:

#### A Lenten Cross

The first week, the children cut out crosses from the cardboard from cereal boxes and large tissue boxes. They made the crosses whatever shape or size they wanted, though you could draw a pattern on the cardboard first, or have the crosses cut out ready for them.

Next, they cut out small pictures from magazines and glued them on the crosses. They choose whatever pictures they wanted and as many as they wanted.

This cross created a theme for prayer and thankfulness for all the good things we have in our lives. Their crosses filled with everyday images also encouraged them to relate Jesus to their everyday lives. They loved the crosses. Some took them home. Others left them to be displayed on the bulletin board.



### Week Two:

#### What is Lent

Another activity for the poster is to ask the children draw and color a picture about the word LENT and what it means to them.

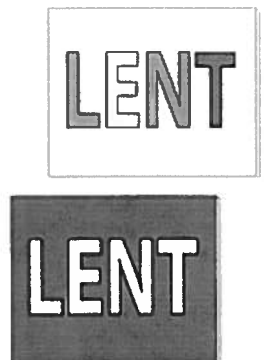
This is an extended activity of the same theme as Week One. It helps the children see how Lent has a place in their lives.

### Week Three:

#### Our Ideas About Lent

Divide class into four groups. Give each group a piece of cardboard or poster board about the size of a 1/4 of a poster board. Have the word LENT in block form already on the cardboard.

Pass out magazines. (This is where your collection of old National Geographics and Catholic family and children's magazines comes in handy.) Ask the children to cut out pictures about creation, religion and life then use them to decorate their poster of Lent.



One group may fill in the block letters with the pictures. The other group may put the letters on the outside of the block letters.

The children have to cooperate to do this activity. They need to discuss the choice of pictures and how they are going to be put on the poster. They gain an understanding of all the things that are part of Lent, and an understanding of each other.

#### **Week Four:**

#### **A Lenten Prayer**



Pass out a small tissue box to each child. Ask them to cut out the smoothest panel from the box.

Show the children how the panel is a drab grey. Suggest to the children to glue on that side a pretty piece of colored paper. The other side of the panel (the outside of the box) is already pretty.

On the papered side ask the child to write a simple prayer: "We receive our love from God up above. I love to pray to God each day." When they have completed the card, pass them around and ask them to share their prayers with each other.

This activity shows the children how prayer changes our life. It makes it beautiful because with prayer we are following God and doing God's will.

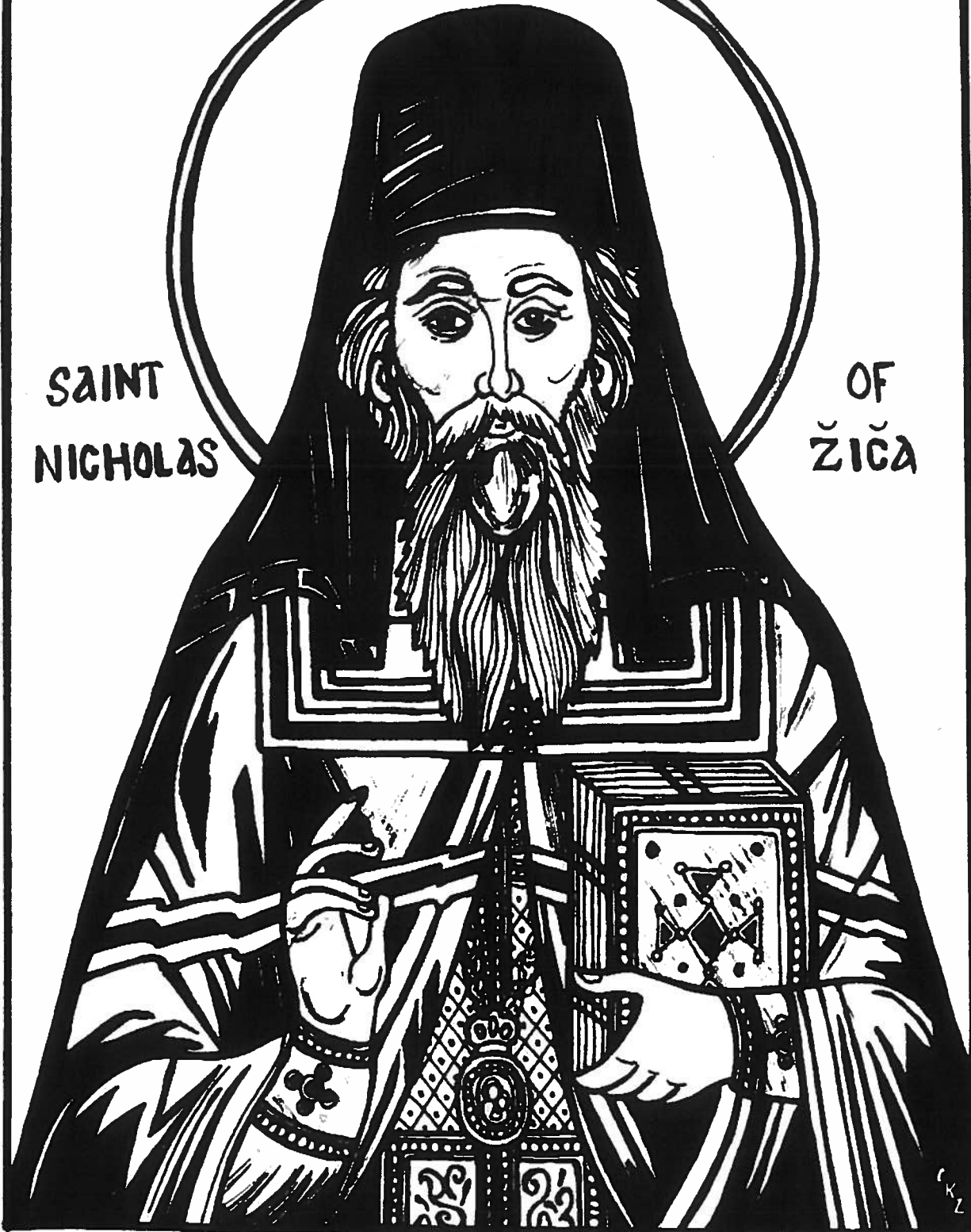
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# **St. Nicholas of Ochrid & Zicha**

## **St. Nicholas of South Canaan**

**Commemoration Date: March 18th**

Nicholai Velimirovich was born into a large peasant family on December 23, 1880 in Lelich, Serbia. He began his education in the village and later went to the capital city of Belgrade where he attended St. Sava Theological Seminary. He graduated in 1902.

Nicholai went on to study further at the Theological Faculty in Bern, Switzerland. In 1909 he received one of many degrees he would earn over his years of study. Nicholai returned to Serbia and was tonsured a monk. He was 29 years old. Within a short period of time, he was ordained to the priesthood and eventually elevated to the rank of Archimandrite. He became a teacher at St. Sava Seminary, the same school from which he graduated.

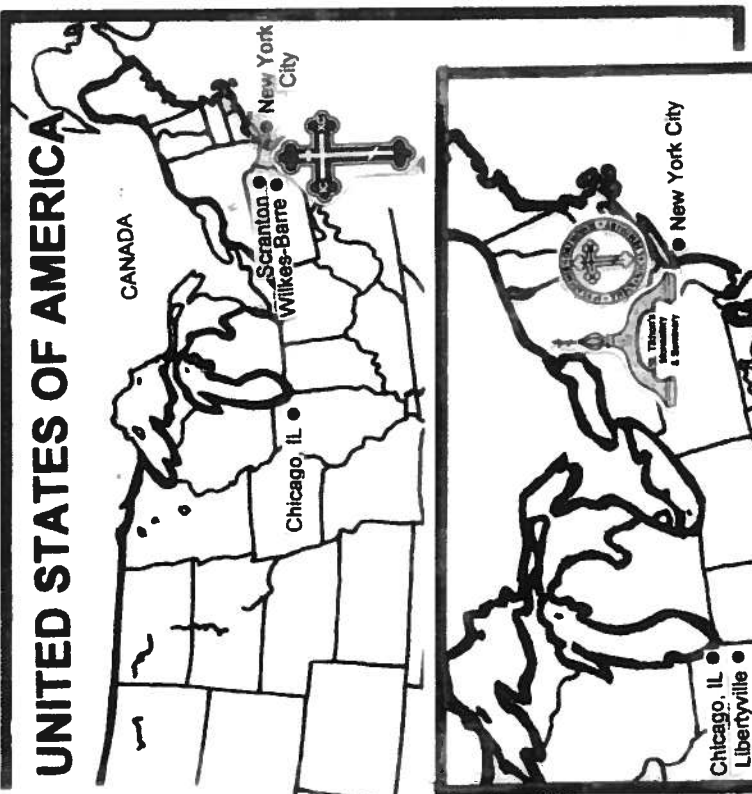
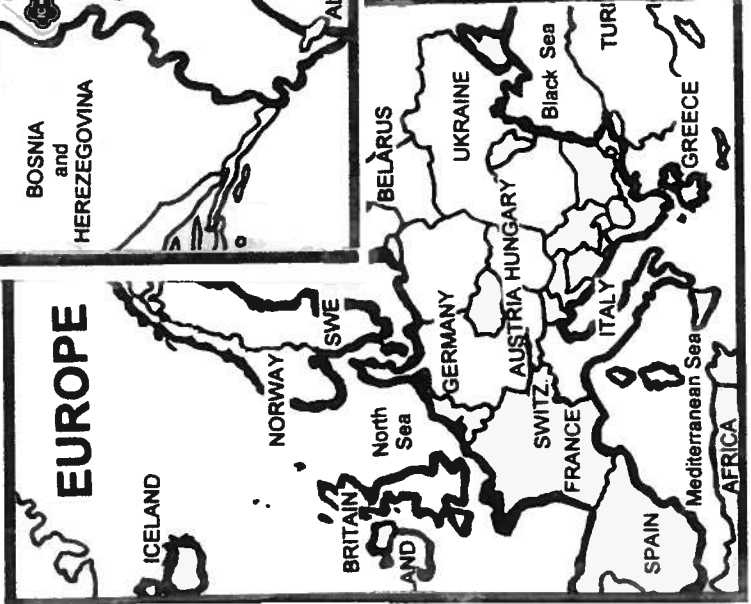
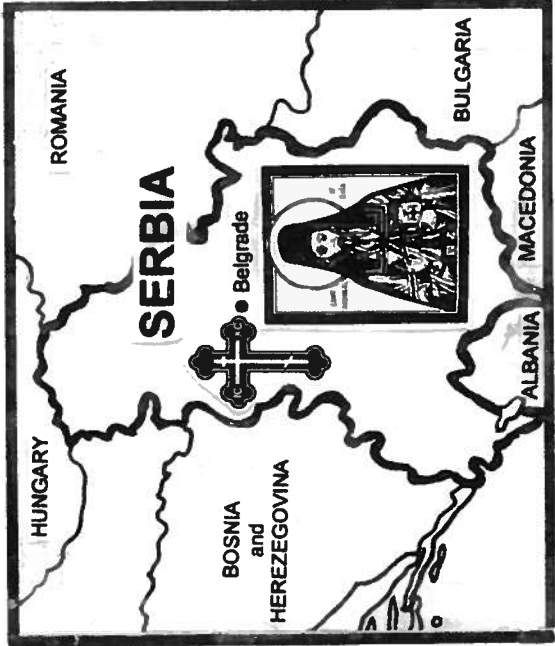
At the age of thirty-nine, in the Church of Serbia, Archimandrite Nicholas was consecrated Bishop of Zicha. In 1921 and 1922 he came to the United States and served as a missionary bishop. He created and took care of the Serbian Orthodox Diocese in the United States and Canada. He returned to Serbia where he was the bishop for two dioceses, Ochrid and Zicha.

During World War II, Bishop Nicholas was arrested in the Monastery of Zicha. For the next three years, he was held captive in two different monasteries. After World War II, Bishop Nicholas traveled throughout Serbia and England and finally returned to the United States in 1946.

While he was in the United States, he taught at St. Sava's Serbian Orthodox Seminary in Libertyville, Illinois, St. Vladimir's Seminar in Crestwood, New York and St. Tikhon's Seminary in South Canaan, Pennsylvania. He began as a professor at St. Tikhon's and eventually became the rector. On many fall evenings while at St. Tikhon's, he could be heard playing his flute, which made him cry and think of his life in Serbia.

On March 18, 1956, at the age of seventy-six, Bishop Nicholas fell asleep in the Lord at St. Tikhon's Monastery. Ten days later his body was buried at St. Sava's Serbian Monastery in Libertyville, Illinois. In 1991, his body was taken back to Yugoslavia where he lay in state in many cities and towns. He was buried in his native village of Lelich in Serbia next to his parents. The Serbian Orthodox Church canonized him on May 19, 2003.

# St. Nicholas of Zichas' Travels



# Math Puzzle

## St. Nicholas of Zhicha

Here are some math problems to solve.  
After you are finished, write the words on the numbered spaces below.  
You will see the names of two books St. Nicholas wrote.

$12 - 7 = \underline{\quad} \text{ Life}$

$8 - 6 = \underline{\quad} \text{ from}$

$9 - 6 = \underline{\quad} \text{ Ochrid}$

$7 + 3 = \underline{\quad} \text{ Treasury}$

$10 + 2 = \underline{\quad} \text{ Serbian}$

$3 + 3 = \underline{\quad} \text{ of}$

$5 + 2 = \underline{\quad} \text{ St.}$

$5 + 6 = \underline{\quad} \text{ of}$

$10 - 9 = \underline{\quad} \text{ Prologue}$

$4 + 4 = \underline{\quad} \text{ Sava}$

$11 - 2 = \underline{\quad} \text{ A}$

$9 + 4 = \underline{\quad} \text{ Spirituality}$

$5 - 1 = \underline{\quad} \text{ The}$

$1 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \quad 2 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \quad 3 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$

and

$4 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \quad 5 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \quad 6 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \quad 7 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \quad 8 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}},$

$9 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \quad 10 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \quad 11 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \quad 12 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$

$13 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$

## Missing Blanks Activity

### St. Nicholas of Zicha and South Canaan

After reading the story of St. Nicholas, fill in the missing blanks with the correct words to complete the sentences. Here is your challenge: try not to look back at the story and see how well you do.

1. On \_\_\_\_\_ 23, 1980, \_\_\_\_\_ Velimirorich was born into a large \_\_\_\_\_ family that lived in \_\_\_\_\_ .  
a.) Serbia      b.) Nicholai      c.) December      d.) peasant
2. In 1902, he graduated \_\_\_\_\_ St. \_\_\_\_\_ Theological \_\_\_\_\_ .  
a.) Sava      b.) Seminary      c.) from
3. In 1909, \_\_\_\_\_ was tonsured a \_\_\_\_\_ at the age of 29 and was \_\_\_\_\_ the name \_\_\_\_\_ .  
a.) Nicholai      b.) he      c.) given      d.) monk
4. Within a \_\_\_\_\_ period of time, he was ordained to the \_\_\_\_\_ and became a \_\_\_\_\_ at St. Sava Seminary where he was once a \_\_\_\_\_ .  
a.) student      b.) priesthood      c.) short      d.) teacher
5. In 1921 and 1922, he served as a missionary \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ . He \_\_\_\_\_ the Serbian Orthodox in both the United States and \_\_\_\_\_ .  
a.) helped      b.) bishop      c.) America      d.) Canada
6. He taught at the Serbian Orthodox Seminary in Libertyville, \_\_\_\_\_ ; St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, \_\_\_\_\_ ; and St. Tikhon's Seminary, South Canaan, \_\_\_\_\_ .  
a.) New York      b.) Illinois      c.) Pennsylvania
7. On many \_\_\_\_\_ evenings, at the Seminary, he would play his \_\_\_\_\_ . Many times, he would \_\_\_\_\_ while playing his flute, because he would think of his life in \_\_\_\_\_ .  
a.) cry      b.) flute      c.) fall      d.) Serbia
8. The \_\_\_\_\_ of St. \_\_\_\_\_ was held on \_\_\_\_\_ 19, 2003, by the \_\_\_\_\_ Orthodox Church.  
a.) May      b.) Nicholai      c.) canonization      d.) Serbian

# The Beatitudes.



## The Eighth Beatitude

Blessed are those who suffer  
persecution for justice sake,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

### What is Persecution?

Persecution is when a Christian is harassed in a way that will injure, grieve, or cause them pain; because of their belief in Christ.

In this beatitude Jesus tells us that a special blessing of belonging to the kingdom of heaven will be blessed upon those Christians who suffer persecution for being righteous and their belief in God. When we live the right way, the way that Jesus taught us to live, we separate ourselves from the world.

Christians profess that they do not belong to the world, they belong to God.





In many countries today it is a crime to be a Christian. If a person is caught with a Bible or in a meeting talking about Jesus they might go to jail or be killed. The first Christian to be killed because of his witnessing about Jesus was Stephen. You can read about his story in Acts 6:8 - 8:3. In America people are not killed because of their belief in Jesus, but many Christians are persecuted verbally, by the tongue.

Why is believing in God and living a Godly life so offensive to so many? Unbelievers that do not know Jesus enjoy sinning, sinning gives them pleasure. They think that to sin is to enjoy life. The reason why ungodly men persecute Godly men is because of the spirit that God has placed within each human. When the unbeliever sins, the Holy Spirit is convicting the spirit of that sinner and this causes the sinner to know that he is doing wrong and that his actions are against the laws of God.

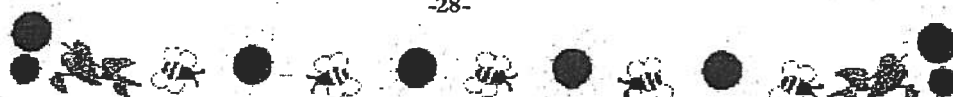




The unbelieving sinner feels guilty and does not like that feeling, so he lashes out at the believers of God, blaming them for making him feel bad. That is why the things of God and the beliefs of God are constantly being made fun of and ridiculed. Unbelievers constantly try to destroy anything that has to do with God in an attempt to do away with the source of their feeling bad. Blaming someone else for their troubles has always been an easy way out for people. The sinner is an enemy of God and he is trying to fight back against God. But since the sinner can not get at God, he goes after those that follow God.

*"Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will give us later."*

Romans 8:18





# Beatitude 8



## JOURNALING:



To suffer persecution for justice sake  
means: \_\_\_\_\_

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Romans 12: 14-16

Bless those who persecute you;  
bless and do not curse.

Rejoice with those who rejoice;  
mourn with those who mourn.

Live in harmony with one another.



Prayer

Lord, help me to live in harmony with others. Give  
me strength to endure whatever comes with a happy  
and thankful heart. Amen

