



Taking Care of God's Creation (Bees, Sunflowers & Me)



Youth Spring Workshop
(5 short sessions)

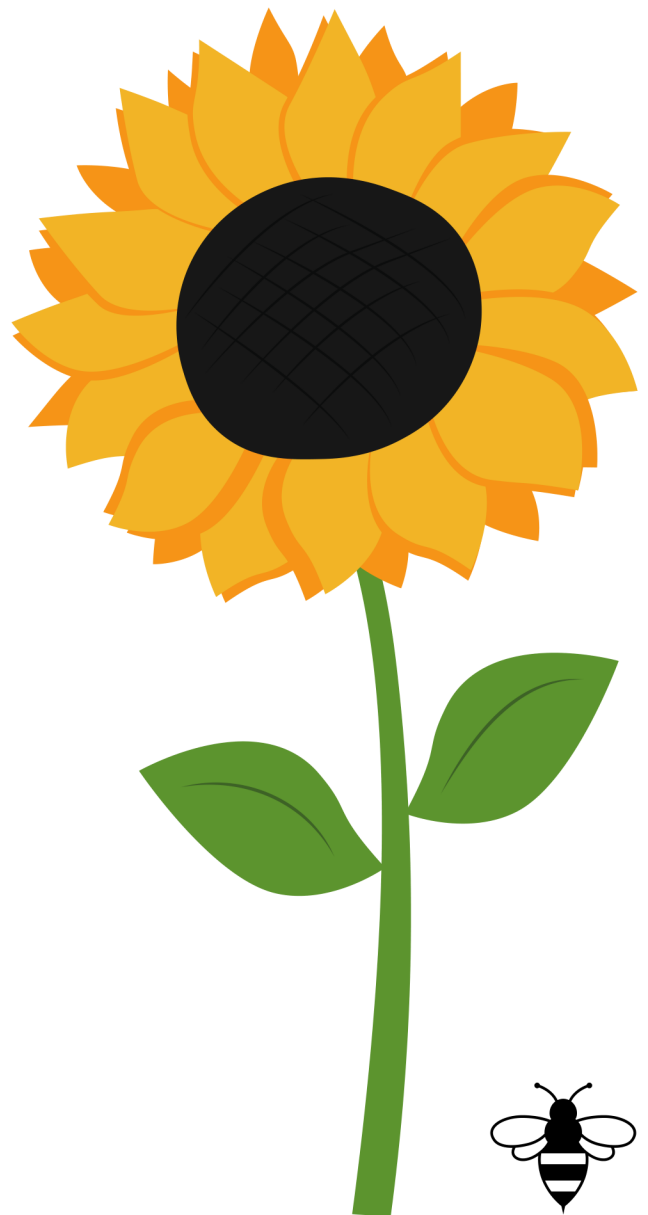
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St. Sophia Seminary Youth Ministry Certification Course



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Resource Design - Olena Lymar



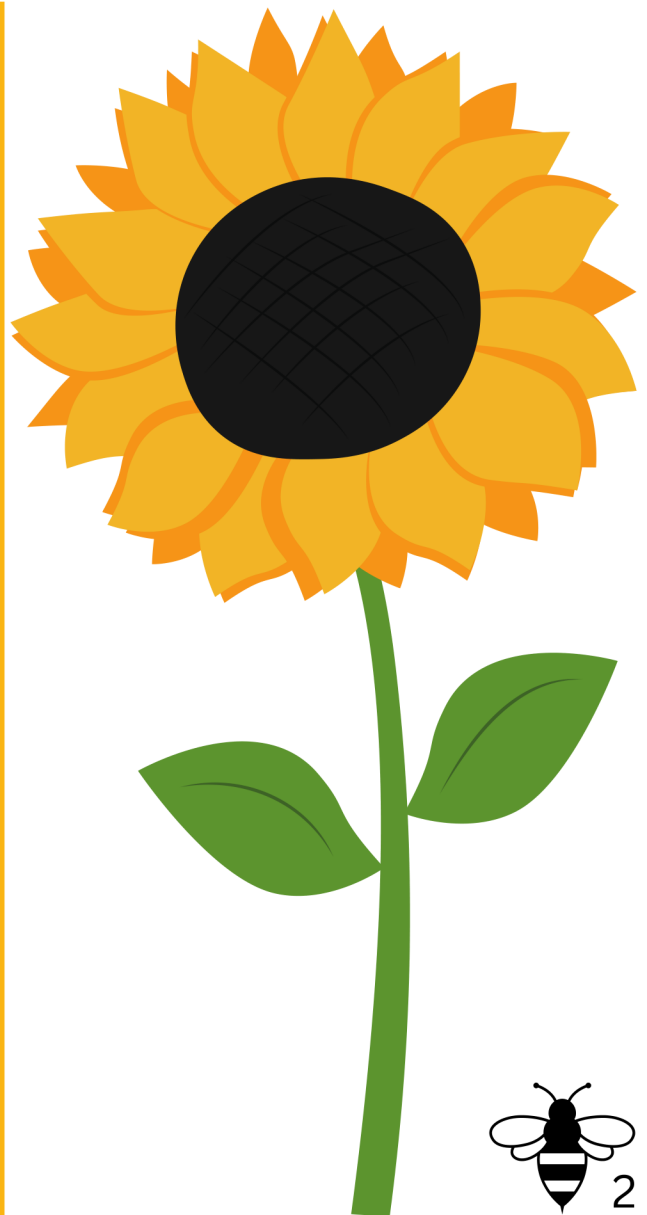


Topic & Plan

- Overview: Everything around us is God's creation. All His resources are at our disposal but we need to be good caretakers of God's creation and what He has entrusted to us.
- Plan: Plant sunflowers to attract pollinators and do other related activities to explore the topic. During the process youth will begin a deeper understanding of their connection to the world around them as seen through the eye of the church.

How to Plant Sunflowers:

- Place the sunflower seed in the ground.
- Gently push the sunflower seed into the soil.
- Cover the sunflower seed with soil.
- Press down firmly.
- Give them plenty of room to grow.
- Water sunflower seeds after planting





Objectives:

- Main Objective: Youth will develop an understanding that we, as caretakers of God's creation, can always discover ways of improving the ecology in our world (be it picking garbage in the streets, saving a lost baby bunny or planting something to improve pollinators' habitats around us, choosing to eat local food, choosing to grow own food, if possible, etc.).
- As Orthodox Christians, it is our responsibility to care for God's creation and that care is intrinsically tied to our daily faith.
- Practical implication of this lesson in life of youth. They should actively (not necessarily loudly) take care of the planet and that our Orthodox church fully supports this attitude and encourages us in being "priests of creation".

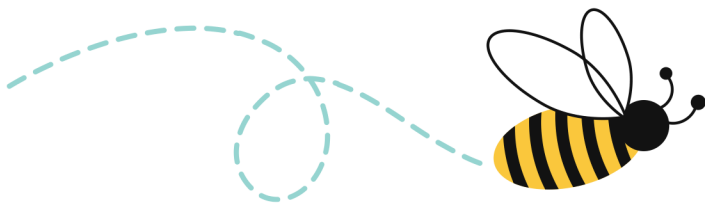
Leader Notes:

- This workshop is designed to be carried out in one session per meeting, but please feel free to adjust in response to the youth you have. If you find that they want more time to discuss a particular idea or Session, others may be shortened or abbreviated, as long as the main understandings above are addressed.
- This leader's guide includes many suggested topics and activity ideas. Again, feel free to modify based on your class and their maturity. Be sure to check with the Spiritual Father if any significant changes are made.
- **Modifications:**
 1. This resource is written for youth in grade school with some suggestions for middle/high school., but the maturity and academic abilities of 8 to 12 year olds can vary greatly, as can their familiarity with the topics being discussed. Although there are some specific ideas for modification listed throughout the curriculum, here are a few general suggestions:
- **Modifying for younger students/lower abilities:**
 1. Rephrase sections of the text, or ask a quick question as students read to be sure they are comprehending. This may also be useful if you find the students need more time working on a different section of the Session.
 2. Answer questions together. In most cases, the students are given a space to explain concepts and main ideas after reading or learning about a saint. If you feel students may need more explanation, ask them to answer together using the white boards or large paper, and have them all write down an answer the class is comfortable with.
- **Modifying for older students/higher abilities:**
 1. Have students read passages individually and paraphrase them in their own words to share with the class. You may also give a particular student "homework" to read and prepare an explanation of a passage in order to begin the class discussion the next day.
 2. Allow students to lead parts of the Session. This works best if the student knows which part they will lead the day before, and if you are able to give them some suggestions or guidance on how to lead the discussion. Some students may not be comfortable doing this, but positive reinforcement and encouragement may help them embrace the challenge by the end of the week.
- Sensitivity: Sensitivity and empathy are key to any learning environment. Encourage students to talk freely about experiences they have had. As facilitator of these discussions, it is important to remind the students that everyone deserves our respect as images of Christ, and that God is the only judge. Keep an eye on all of the students and be sure to address any unusual/unexpected conversations with the encampment Director and Spiritual Advisor in case further discussion is needed. If this is the first time being together for the majority of the group, it might be helpful to do a few "get-to-know-you" activities first. Be sure to include yourself in some of these activities so that the youth begin to develop a relationship with you as well as their peers
- The content of sessions and conveying that content is an important part of your ministry. However, the time spent together and relationships created and maintained are just as crucial. It is within this combination of worship, relationship, interaction, learning and living that our youth encounter Christ and deepen their relationship with Him and His church.



Worship & Living the Faith (Praxis)

- It is suggested to have the first two sessions following Sunday Divine Liturgy. Pray the Lord's prayer before the lesson. Prior to each session choose a prayer with which to start.
- There are prayers in the Book of Needs specific to planting, cooking, blessing bees/hives and more! (planting seeds, replanting seedlings, baking “medyvnyk”) with a prayer.
- Praxis: Youth should leave this workshop with a deeper understanding that any gardening work (as well as any other type of work) is supposed to start with a prayer. To reinforce this point, ask someone from your parish who gardens to come and speak with youth. Have them discuss how they regularly maintain their garden and about things they do before/during/after gardening work. Ask them to discuss the importance of prayer while gardening.





References

These references will be used throughout the sessions. Acquaint yourself with them and prepared for use.

- Scriptural References: Briefly discussed some Bible references related to being keepers of God creation
 1. Creation of Man Genesis 2:4-25
 2. Daniel and the den of lion Daniel 6 (you may choose to paraphrase the story)
 3. Jesus walks on water Matthew 14:22-33
- Liturgical references:
 1. Service of Blessing of Honey for the feast of 7 Holy Maccabee Martyrs (which is also a day when Rus-Ukraine is believed to be baptized in 988) was briefly discussed and also other services where food or plants are blessed (being God's gifts to us). Resource from Charlotte Rlggle <https://charlotteriggle.com/blessings-of-bees-and-flowers-and-fruit/>
 2. Lesser Blessing of Water - <https://www.goarch.org/-/the-order-for-the-lesser-sanctification-of-the-water#:~:text=Turn%20away%20Your%20face%20from,a%20guiding%20Spirit%20establish%20me.>
 3. St. Haralambros - [Blessing of honey in Bulgaria](https://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2011/02/saint-harlambros-celebrated-in-bulgaria.html)
<https://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2011/02/saint-harlambros-celebrated-in-bulgaria.html>
- Patristic References: St.. John Chrysostom below and also its implications to a life of a Christian:

"The bee is more honored than other animals not because she labors, but because she labors for others.

Patriarch Bartholomew: Priests of Creation
In the bread and wine of the Eucharist, as priests standing before the altar of the world, we offer the creation back to the Creator in relationship to Him and to each other. Indeed, in our liturgical life, we realize by anticipation, the final state of the cosmos in the Kingdom of Heaven. We celebrate the beauty of creation, and consecrate the life of the world, returning it to God with thanks. We share the world in joy as a living mystical communion with the Divine. Thus it is that we offer the fullness of creation at the Eucharist, and receive it back as a blessing, as the living presence of God.





References

These references will be used throughout the sessions. Acquaint yourself with them and prepared for use.

- Lessons from the Bees - St. Basil the Great

Listen, Christians, you to whom it is forbidden to “recompense evil for evil” and who are commanded “to overcome evil with good.” Take the bee for your model, which constructs its cells without injuring anyone and without interfering with the goods of others. It gathers openly pollen from the flowers, drawing in the basis for the honey scattered over them like dew, and injects it into the hollow of its cells. At first this honey is liquid; time thickens it and gives it its sweetness. The Book of Proverbs has given the bee the most honorable and the best praise by calling her wise and industrious. How much activity she exerts in gathering this precious nourishment, by which both kings and men of low degree are brought to health! How great is the art and cunning she displays in the construction of the storehouses which are destined to receive the honey? After having spread the pollen like a thin membrane, she distributes it in contiguous compartments which, weak though they are, by their number and by their mass, sustain the whole edifice. Each cell in fact holds to the one next to it, and is separated by one upon another. The bee takes care not to make one vast cavity, for fear it might break under the weight of the liquid, and allow it to escape. See how the discoveries of geometry are mere by-works to the wise bee!

- ~ Hexaemeron VIII.4, “The Creation of Fowl and Water Animals.” In Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Edition Vol. VIII, p. 97. Eds. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. Erdmans, 1989.



Icon of St. Basil - Archangel Icons

“For just as bees know how to extract honey from flowers, which to men are agreeable only for their fragrance and color, even so here also those who look for something more than pleasure and enjoyment in such writings may derive profit for their souls. Now, then, altogether after the manner of bees must we use these writings, for the bees do not visit all the flowers without discrimination, nor indeed do they seek to carry away entire those upon which they light, but rather, having taken so much as is adapted to their needs, they let the rest go. So we, if wise, shall take from heathen books whatever befits us and is allied to the truth, and shall pass over the rest. And just as in culling roses we avoid the thorns, from such writings as these we will gather everything useful, and guard against the noxious. So, from the very beginning, we must examine each of their teachings, to harmonize it with our ultimate purpose, according to the Doric proverb, ‘testing each stone by the measuring-line.’”



Insider Tip:

Click on the underline words and be directed to the article on the web!



Reference - Lives of Saints

- [St. Ambrose of Milan](#)
- [St. Charalampos - Paterikon for Kids](#) [St. Haralambos](#)
- [St. Abigail - Life of St. Abigail Video](#) and [Nine Deer and Me](#) by Melinda Johnson, [Additional Information](#)
- [St. Modomnonk - The Saint & Bees](#) by [Dessi Jackson](#)
- [St. Valentine](#)
- [St. Zosima and Savvatiy](#) -
- [ST. Christos the Gardener](#)

Who is the [Patron Saint of the Bees](#)? from Buzzaboutbees.net

[Saint Alexis](#) Man of God - On the day of the feast of this Saint is commemorated, March 30, beekeepers in Ukraine normally let the bees from their beehives out for the first time after winter, _

[HOLY FATHER MODOMNOC OF OSSORY, PATRON SAINT OF BEES](#) It can be speculated that perhaps the name of a traditional honey cake “medivnyk” is related to the name of this Saint

Additional References

[How Sweet it is to Be a Bee](#) by Fr. Ted Bobosh

[Pollinator Partnership](#) - <https://www.pollinator.org/>

[Pollination Video](#)

[Bee keeping in Ukraine](#) - <https://www.apimondia2013.com.ua/20-facts-on-beekeeping-in-ukraine/>





How can we educate our youth to access these resources themselves?

This is a wonderful opportunity to use technology for the spiritual advantage of our young people. With each reference used in the workshops, allow youth to use their phones/tablets to look-up and bookmark the scripture, saints and articles you use.

Discuss with them the importance of making sure a "source" found on the internet is credible. For references concerning the Orthodox Faith, they should check to see if the person(s) offering the information are from a canonical church. Take a moment to explain what that means!





Preparation

- Discuss with the appropriate individuals at your parish, how you may accomplish this project. Share your proposed area to plant the sunflowers. If you do not have an area in mind, ask where an appropriate place on the parish property may be? You may need to grow your sunflowers in large pots.
- Supplies - Purchase all needed supplies ahead of time, download videos and make copies. Supplies will include: baking needs as outlined in the Honey Cake recipe, planting needs - sunflower seeds, top soil, paper cups, trowels, watering cans or hose. Order book, The Saint and His Bees, if needed for younger children.
- Before starting the projects clarify where the cups with seedlings will be stored before being planted, when and where you will plant the seedlings
- Volunteer help: 1-2 adult volunteers to help with sessions 3, 4, and 5.
- Potentially you might have problems with starting seeds. This can be solved by planting many of them.
- Find a parishioner who is an avid gardener or bee keeper. Arrange for them to come and speak to the youth on your day of planting the seeds. If they are able, ask them to be present for sessions 3-5.





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SESSION 1 - CARETAKERS & BEES

Items Needed

- Device and internet to watch [Be the Bee #108 | Why Christians Care for the Environment](https://youtu.be/gBfPJ1ikxbM) <https://youtu.be/gBfPJ1ikxbM>
- Video - [Why are bees important?](https://youtu.be/f9zUsEIn8lg) <https://youtu.be/f9zUsEIn8lg>
- Handout of St. Modomnoc. You may also familiarize yourself with additional information provided in the resource section.
- Scripture handout
- Any snacks for the day

Begin the Session

- Begin with prayer
- Introduction: [Welcome! In the next few session together, we are going to discover ways we can be better caretakers of God's creation. More specifically we will look at nature and the importance of pollination. You might be thinking, what does the church have to do with nature an science? Well - this is what we hope to work on together. Let begin by reading something from scripture Creation of Man Genesis 2:4-25. Read together. What did you notice in this section? Let's look at verses 19 -20. Why are these important? Allow time for discussion. Adam and Eve were at peace with all of creation. God calls everything "good". He charges Adam & eve to care for the garden. We inherit this responsibility from them. Let look a little further by watching this video.](#)
- Watch the Be the Bee Video. [Ask the youth what they learned from the video. Was there anything they didn't understand?](#) Continue with the following: [Did you know that the honey bees are currently at risk in the world?](#) Allow time for answers. [Let's watch this next video to learn more.](#) Play video, Why are bees important?
- When the video is over continue, [Bees and other pollinators are vital to humans' well-being, the two videos we watch give us ways we can protect nature in general and bees in particular. What are some other ideas?](#) . After some discussion, explain the project the youth will be involved in the coming weeks. Take some time to allow the youth to brainstorm ways your parish could be more "bee friendly".
- Read the handout about St. Modomnoc. Supplement the discussion with anything from the resource materials. [How was St. Modomnoc as caretaker of creation?](#) Ask if the youth have any questions or comments. Lastly mention the tradition to have the honey blessed on August 14 (the Day of 7 Maccabees Martyrs).
- Wrap up the session with any last questions and in prayer. Make sure that families have the future dates for each of the workshop days.



Note for Professional Development: All youth should be encouraged to participate in discussions. However, some youth may have a harder time with public speaking and sharing. Provide some coloring pages for youth to give as their contribution to the discussion or to keep hand busy while discussing. Some pages are provided in the packet.



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SESSION 2 - WHY BEES NOT FLYS

Items Needed

- Handout of St. Abigail and Quote from St. Paisios
- Video of St. Abigail <https://youtu.be/wFZX2hROUb0>
- Bee Craft - see attachment.
- Bee Hive Activity for Teens - see attachments
- You may also familiarize yourself with additional information provided in the resource section.
- If you have access, share the excerpt from the Disney + “Welcome to Earth” Series (Episode 3: Mind of the Swarm, from min. 8 to min. 11:40) where they discuss bees.
- Copies of the Pollinator Pledge and note for families
- Example of Who we can "BE" poster
- Any snacks for the day

Begin the Session

- Begin with prayer
- Greet the group and ask them what they remember from the first session. After a short review, pass out the St. Abigail handouts. Read together taking turns or using the "bump" reading game. [When completed, ask the youth what they learned from St. Abigail.](#) Watch the video if you have time. Leave time for discussion. [St. Abigail was known for healing with honey, as were other saints like St. Haralambos. Does God provide for us, through nature, the means to care for ourselves?](#)
- If possible, watch the clip from "Welcome to Earth". Take time to discuss when complete.
- Continue, ["St. John Chrysostom tells us “The bee is more honored than other animals not because she labours, but because she labours for others”.](#) Now lets [read the words of St. Paisios.](#) Read together or asking a participant to read. [What do you think St. Paisios means by these words? Lets list ways we can "be" better people and Christians.](#)
- Move onto the activity. Younger youth will make bees out of paper rolls.
- Teens will make a poster to place in the parish hall. "Who we CAN Bee"
- Remember to finish your session in prayer.
- Professional Development: While working on your projects - ask youth what they remember from the day, what was their favorite thing to do or learn? What would they like to discuss more?



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SESSION 3 - PLANTING SEEDS

Items Needed & Preparation

- If you were able to secure a parishioner who gardens and is willing to work with the youth - wonderful! Ask them about praying while gardening and to speak to the youth about it. If you were unable to find someone, share the first few minutes of the Video, [My Garden Grows y Theology](https://youtu.be/M6EtYWUbmNU) from the Orthodox Gardener. <https://youtu.be/M6EtYWUbmNU>
- Sunflower seeds (these were chosen to also reflect support for Ukraine.)
- starting potts, potting soil, gloves, water
- Handout of St. Phocas - [Video about St. Phocas from Hidden Saints](https://youtu.be/CmgZGBoMmaE) <https://youtu.be/CmgZGBoMmaE>

Begin the Session

- Begin in Prayer
- Begin with a short review of the prior weeks. Ask the youth what they remember.
- Review the handout of St. Phocas the Gardener. Watch the video Hidden Saints if you have time. Ask the youth to share, from what they have learned in the past few weeks, how they believe we should be caretaker's of God's creation. What connections have they made between God, their faith, creation and themselves?
- When ready, have your guest and volunteer begin with the planting project. If your guest gardener is prepared to speak about prayer and gardening, have them do that first. If they are not prepared, show the short video from the Orthodox Gardener.
- Begin your planting!
- Have the youth help clean up and move your pots to the growing area.
- Complete the session in prayer.





SESSION 4 - GROWING A GARDEN

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Items Needed & Preparation

- You will need to prep the planting area prior to the youth attending. Depending on the youth participating you may determine how much or little they can help in preparing the area (weeding, turning the soil, etc)
- Have your gardening parishioner return to guide the youth if they are able
- Handout of Alexis - Man of God
- Tools for planting - shovels, trowels, gloves, water
- Sunflower seedlings

Begin the Session

- Begin in Prayer
- Begin with a short review of the prior weeks. Ask the youth what they remember.
- Review the handout of St. Alexis. Ask for any questions or comments.
- When ready, have your guest and volunteer begin with the planting project. Have your youth divide up into jobs depending on the work that needs to be accomplished.
- As you are working, briefly discuss:
[Do you think we are like the saints we have learned about by bringing beauty to those who will see our garden? As we have been working in the garden, have you felt closer to God and His creation? Where else can we find God in the world around us?](#)
- Complete the session in prayer.





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SESSION 5 - HONEY & ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

Items Needed & Preparation

- Familiarize yourself with the Medyvnyk(Honey Cake) Recipe and purchase needed items for baking
- Arrange with the parish to ensure the kitchen is available
- If possible, make mini cakes so each youth may take one home and one large cake to be shared with the parish.
- Speak with your parish priest to arrange holding the Akathist Glory to God for All Things on this day

Begin the Session

- Begin in Prayer
- Begin with a short review of the prior weeks. Ask the youth what they remember about the saints we learned about? What is something they have in common? After a few minutes, follow with, [These are all great answers. The saints we have talked about in our sessions lived what St. Paisios and St. John Chrysostom told us about bees.](#) Review here if they forgot. [They tried to do good and be kind. They went out of their way to do things for others. One of the reasons we are making the Medyvnyk is to share and care for our parish family! In 1 Peter 2:5 we are told to “like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” Just as our Spiritual Fathers are the caretakers of our souls and spiritual lives - we, with their guidance, are to be the caretakers of one another. Everything we have is a gift from God. Because of our new covenant with God - the promise of salvation given to us on Pascha, we must minister to the whole world and all of its components; man, beast and all of creation. Priests are not only caretakers of our souls but are the ones who offer gifts to God and who lead us in offering gifts to God. In order for us to be priests of creation we must offer the whole of creation and ourselves back to God as a well taken care of treasure. When we endeavor to better ourselves and the world around us we must remember that all we do is for God’s glory and not our own. In our journey as the royal Priesthood, we must guide our paths with God’s will and not our own, concerning the care of creation. When we can accomplish these goals, we are blessing the world’s fruitfulness and offering it back to God - just as priests offer our thanks and gifts\(the Eucharist/communion\) to God. This is a lot to think about. What are your thoughts?](#)
- Now begin your baking time. Ensure that everyone has clean hands while baking.
- While the cakes are baking, youth can have time to check on the sunflowers, do weeding, water, etc. You may also choose to select additional material from the provided resources to learn more about bees, gardening and the faith.
- Discuss with the youth, that in the coming weeks they will be asked to check on the sunflowers and help take care of them.
- Complete the day praying the Akathist.





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Additional Session Ideas

Harvesting Sunflowers

- Ask the youth if they would like to raise money for Ukrainian refugees by selling the sunflowers at the end of the summer. They could also use the sunflowers to create flower arrangements to be placed in front of the Mother of God on Dormition.
- If you don't have enough sunflowers to harvest, arrange to visit a local flower farm and cut flowers for blessing on Dormition.

Movie Night

- Watch the movie, Bee Movie. Utilize this as a fun family night. Perhaps learn about another saint or utilize one of the provided quotes from the Church Fathers to set the tone for the evening.

Visit an Apiary

- Perhaps you have a parishioner who keeps bees and would be willing to show your youth their hives. If this is not an option, research local apiaries and arrange a visit for your youth. Pair this with a discussion on one of the saints in the resources.

National Honey Bee Day

- Interestingly, National Honey Bee Day in the United States, is August 19th (in 2023), in the middle of the Dormition Fast. Discuss with your group how they can commemorate Honey Bee Day. World Bee Day is May 20th.

First day of Dormition

- Encourage youth to attend a blessing service of honey on this day. Ask families to bring their own honey or gift honey to each family.

Caretakers of God's Creation

- You may utilize any of the sessions created for this theme. They are available on our [website](https://www.uoc youth.org/caretakersofgodscreation)

<https://www.uoc youth.org/caretakersofgodscreation>





Taking it Home

- Purchase a three-ring binder for each participant. They can decorate this and keep all of their hand-outs in them. This can then be sent home after the last session. Be sure to include the Honey Cake recipe.
- The children can encourage their parents to do the Pollinator Pledge on their property. They can show the parents the crafts they created and they are encouraged to water newly-planted sunflowers with their parents when they come to church. Provide copies for home.
- Send home information on how to start a pollinator garden at home. It could be as easy as planting one known pollinator plant.
- Have the youth cut and distribute the Honey Cake to the parish family. Perhaps all the families could contribute an item to coffee hour on this day.
- Ask families to take turns checking on the sunflower garden. Set up a schedule for this and distribute.
- You may choose to share the different references and resources with the families to utilize at home.
- Send a short summary home to families after each session with some photos from the day.

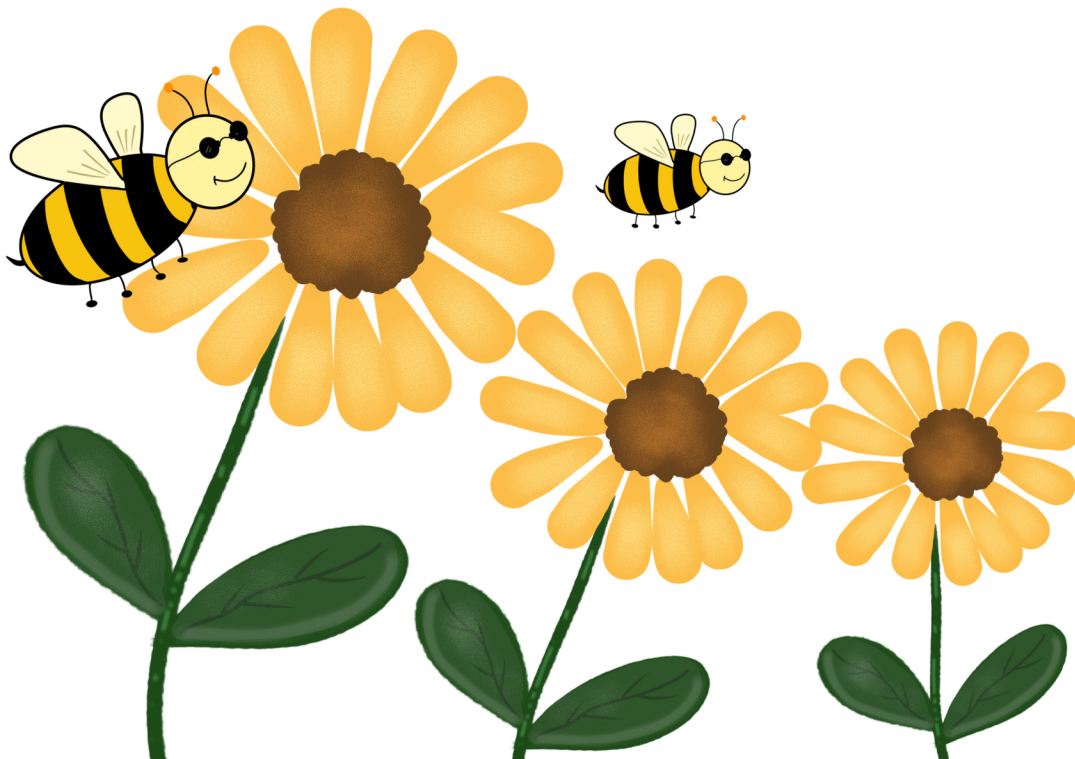




Handouts and Resources

Taking Care of God's Creation

(Bees, Sunflowers & Me)





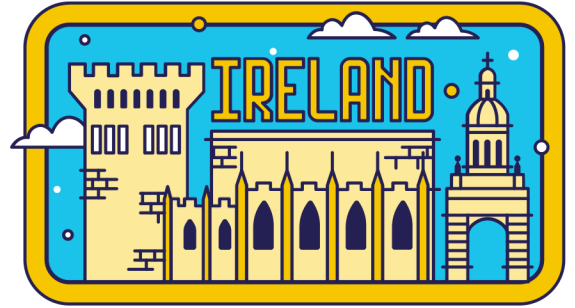
Genesis 2:4-25

- 4 This is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens,
- 5 before any plant of the field was in the earth and before any herb of the field had grown. For the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to till the ground;
- 6 but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.
- 7 And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.
- 8 The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. 9 And out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- 10 Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads.
- 11 The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which skirts the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold.
- 12 And the gold of that land is good. Bdellium and the onyx stone are there.
- 13 The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one which goes around the whole land of Cush.
- 14 The name of the third river is Hiddekel; it is the one which goes toward the east of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates.
- 15 Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat;
- 17 "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."
- 18 And the Lord God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."
- 19 Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name.
- 20 So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.
- 21 And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place.
- 22 Then the rib which the Lord God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.
- 23 And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man."
- 24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.
- 25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.



ST. Modomnoc of Ossury

St. Modomnoc lived in Ireland and was a bishop in the 6th Century! He belonged to a family of royal lineage, the O'Neils. He left Ireland to train for the priesthood with St. David of Wales.



While in the monastery in Wales, St. Modomnoc was assigned to care for the bees. Some say that he cared for the bees very lovingly and gently. He planted bee friendly flowers around the hives. When the bees would swarm, he was able to gather them and create a new hive. He talked to the bees and they would buzz around him - never stinging him.

St. Modomnoc returned to Ireland to begin his priestly ministry. Before leaving the monastery he said goodbye to St. David and his fellow monks. He then went to say goodbye to his bees.

He left to the shore where a boat was waiting. When they were about three miles from shore, they saw a little black cloud on the Welsh shore. It was steadily coming toward the boat.

To the amazement of St. Modomnoc and the crew, it was a swarm of bees. All of the bees from the monastery! St. Modomnoc scolded the bees for leaving the monastery. He asked the crew to return to Wales so he could return the bees.

Upon arrival, St. David and the monks were surprised to see him. The bees returned to their hives. St. David advised Modomnoc to wait a day and do not say goodbye before he left.

The saint did as instructed, and once again, about three miles from shore, the bees followed him. The boat returned again. This time, St. David gifted the bees to Modomnoc so he could return home.

He raised a church in Bremore and the bees had a new home. It became known as the Church of the Bees.

Holy St. Modomnoc - Pray to God for us!



Block print of St. Modomnoc





Pollinator Pledge

I Pledge to become a Pollinator Protector by:



Choosing to create pollinator habitats by adding native plants to the garden.

A pollinator habitat is where pollinators live, eat, sleep and raise their young. Native plants and native pollinators have evolved together over millions of years, and they need each other. Even a small window box or balcony garden makes a difference!



Choosing to put in at least 3 flowering plants to bloom in each season.


Pollinators are looking for pollen and nectar as food sources from early spring to late fall. Let's make our gardens bloom throughout each growing season.



Choosing to garden in a pesticide-free way as much as possible.

Pesticides can impact pollinators sub-lethally, by impacting motor skills and cognitive function, and even lethally. Pesticides are not needed in a garden setting, especially in gardens which contain native plants that are adapted to the region.



 **Choosing to reduce carbon output where possible.** Climate change is impacting pollinators by shifting the growing and blooming seasons of plants that pollinators depend on, leading to mismatches between when pollinators are active and when food is available. Climate change is even shifting the geographical range of some pollinator species.



Choosing to "leave the leaves" in my garden over the winter.

Leaving seed heads, berries and leaves in the fall and waiting until late spring to cut back plants will help protect habitats that pollinators need over the winter. Leaf blowers harm insect habitat.



Choosing to actively promote protection for pollinators and their habitats.

Let's all spread the word by talking with others, putting up a pollinator-friendly garden sign, mentoring new gardeners and volunteering to plant pollinator gardens at schools, community gardens or senior residences. Share your experiences on social media or with friends and family. Check out the resources at Pollinator.org. Find your own ways to spread the pollinator love!

Name(s)
Date

Pollinator Pledge modified from Bee City Canada





St Abigail at Ballyvorney

St. Abigail is also known as Gobnait or Deborah. She was born in Ireland, County Clair at the end of the 5th Century. Later in her life, she ran away to the Aran Islands to escape from someone trying to hurt her. An angel came to her and told her that the island was not the place God intended for her. She was to walk until she found a place with nine white deer. She saw groups of deer in various places but never nine. She would follow the deer until she found what she sought, nine white deer in Ballyvourney.

St. Abban of Kilaban, her spiritual father, gave her land donated by the O'Herlihy family to be used for a women's monastery. St. Abban made Abigail the abbess.

St. Abigail was known as a great healer and bee keeper. She often used the honey of the bees in her healing. Gobnait means "honeybee".

One day while on a hill, she saw coming across the valley toward the monastery an invading chieftan. St. Abigail sent the bees to attack the army. They were so confused and afraid that they quickly left, taking nothing with them.

Churches are dedicated to her across Ireland and Scotland.



Stained glass window in Honan Chapel, County Cork of St. Abigail.

It is said that her beehive has been kept by the O'Heirly family as a sacred relic.





St. Paisios - Be the Bee, not the Fly

Some people tell me that they are scandalized because they see many things wrong in the Church. I tell them that if you ask a fly, “Are there any flowers in this area?” it will say, “I don’t know about flowers, but over there in that heap of rubbish you can find all the filth you want.” And it will go on to list all the unclean things it has been to.

Now, if you ask a honeybee, “Have you seen any unclean things in this area?” it will reply, “Unclean things? No, I have not seen any; the place here is full of the most fragrant flowers.” And it will go on to name all the flowers of the garden or the meadow.

You see, the fly only knows where the unclean things are, while the honeybee knows where the beautiful iris or hyacinth is.

As I have come to understand, some people resemble the honeybee and some resemble the fly. Those who resemble the fly seek to find evil in every circumstance and are preoccupied with it; they see no good anywhere. But those who resemble the honeybee only see the good in everything they see. The stupid person thinks stupidly and takes everything in the wrong way, whereas the person who has good thoughts, no matter what he sees, no matter what you tell him, maintains a positive and good thought.

+ St. Paisios of Mt. Athos, “Good and Evil Thoughts,” Spiritual Counsels III: Spiritual Struggle





Who we CAN "Bee"!

"Be the Bee, Not the Fly." St. Paisios Teen Project for Session Two

Materials:

- Poster Board
- Sharpies
- Copies of honey comb tiles (you will need at least ten tiles to make a honey comb)
- Glue sticks or modge podge
- Paper Icons, bee graphics or stickers, left over crafting items

Make it!

1. Begin by explaining to the teens that they will be creating an inspirational poster for the parish - What we CAN Bee! Based on what they learned in today's session.
2. Using the items provided they will make a honeycomb with messages in each cell. Show them the example from this packet.
3. Somewhere on the the poster, they should include the quote from St. Paisios. They can also include the quote from St. John Chrysostom.
4. Let them work while adult volunteers work with younger youth on the bee tube craft.
5. Check in with the teens periodically, give guidance as needed.
6. Help them choose a place to hang and share.
7. Encourage them to snap a photo on their phone & share.
8. Snap a photo of the finished product and make copies for them for the next session to take home.





Who we CAN "Bee"!

"Be the Bee, Not the Fly." St. Paisios

**Be
Kind!**

**Be
Patient!**

**Be
a good
friend!**



**Be
Christ!**



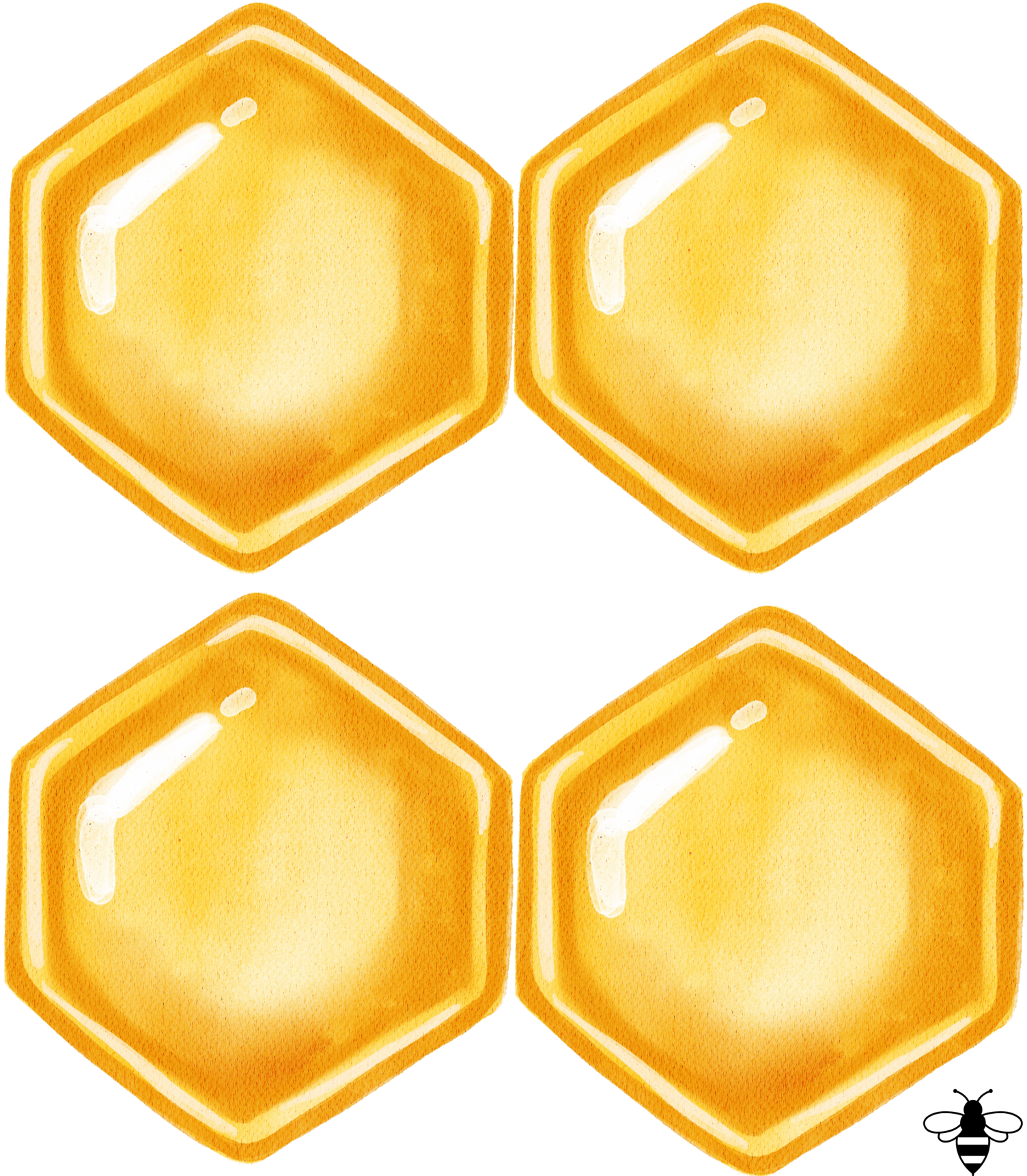
example for Teen Project





Who we CAN "Bee"!

Honeycomb tiles/cells for project

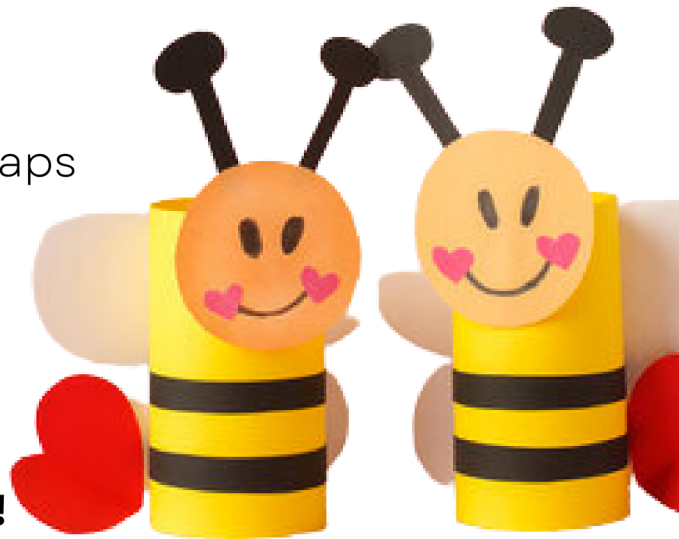




Bee Craft for Children

Materials:

- Toilet Paper Rolls
- Recycled Construction Paper scraps (yellow, black and white)
- Scissors
- Glue or scotch tape
- Markers or Pencil Crayons

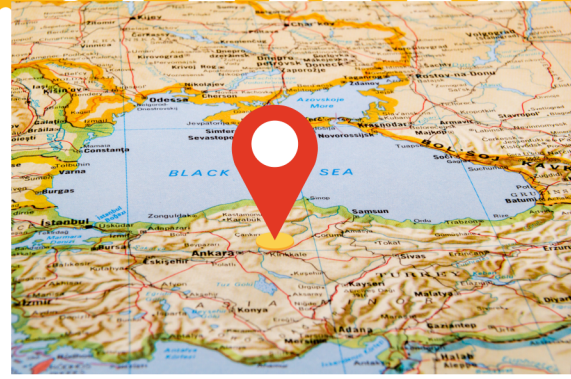


Make it!

1. Begin by cutting a piece of yellow paper the same width as your paper towel roll. Wrap paper roll in paper and secure with glue or tape.
2. Cut 2 small strips of black paper for stripes. You can make them as thick or as thin as you want. Adhere to the lower half of your bee using glue or tape.
3. Make your wings! Using the white paper, cut out a wing shape and glue them to the back of your paper roll.
4. Cut a small round shape for the face. Before you glue it on, be sure to draw your bees face first.
5. Cut out 2 small antennas in black and glue or tape them to the back of the face shape.
6. Glue or tape your bees face to the front, top of the paper roll and you're done.
7. Have the youth write on their bee - A way to "Bee" like Christ.
8. Use the same techniques to make more pollinator friends!

*Try adding googly eyes or pipe cleaners antennas. Add decorative stickers, sequins, or gems on the wings. While working, mention to the youth that reusing items for projects is also being a good caretaker of creation.





St Phocas the Gardener

St. Phocas lived in Sinope, which is now in the country of Turkey. He lived humbly and cared for a garden on his property. With what he grew, he would share with the those in need in this community. With what he could sell, he used the proceeds to pay for housing for homeless individuals. All those in the community knew of his dedication to Christ and his prayerful way of life. Many people became Christians because of his teaching and living in Christ.

The local governor was made aware of Phocas because of his influence on the community. He gave orders to have the saint killed.

By accident, St. Phocas met the those sent to kill him. He did not tell them his name. He simply fed them and gave them a place to stay for the night.

That night, he went into his garden and prepared a place for his burial. He arranged that his belongings should be distributed to those in need.

The next morning, he told his guests who he was. They did not want to hurt such a kind and holy man. However, St. Phocas submitted himself for martyrdom.

He was buried in the grave he created in his garden. Soon after, miracles happened for those who prayed at his grave.

When they were able, the Christians built a church over St. Phocas' grave and his relics were placed inside. After receiving some of his relics, St. John Chrysostom preached about the saint. Even later, Emperor Phocas built a beautiful church in honor of the saint in Constantinople. Holy Martyr Phocas - pray to God for us!





Venerable St Alexis - "Man of God"

St. Alexis lived in Rome at the end of the 4th century. His parents were very pious (devoted) Christians.

By the age of six, he was reading and learning science! But most importantly, he wanted to read and study the Bible.



When he was a young man, St. Alexis left his home and went to Edessa. He spent his time in prayer and fasting and lived in an entryway to the Church of the Mother of God. Any money or food he had, after buying some bread and water, he gave to the poor and elderly. After 17 years, by means of the Holy Spirit, he returned to Rome.

He lived in this childhood home, at the mercy of his parents, in a small cell. His parents did not know who he was! They did not recognize him. They only saw a very thin man, devoted to God. They fed him and housed him for another 17 years.

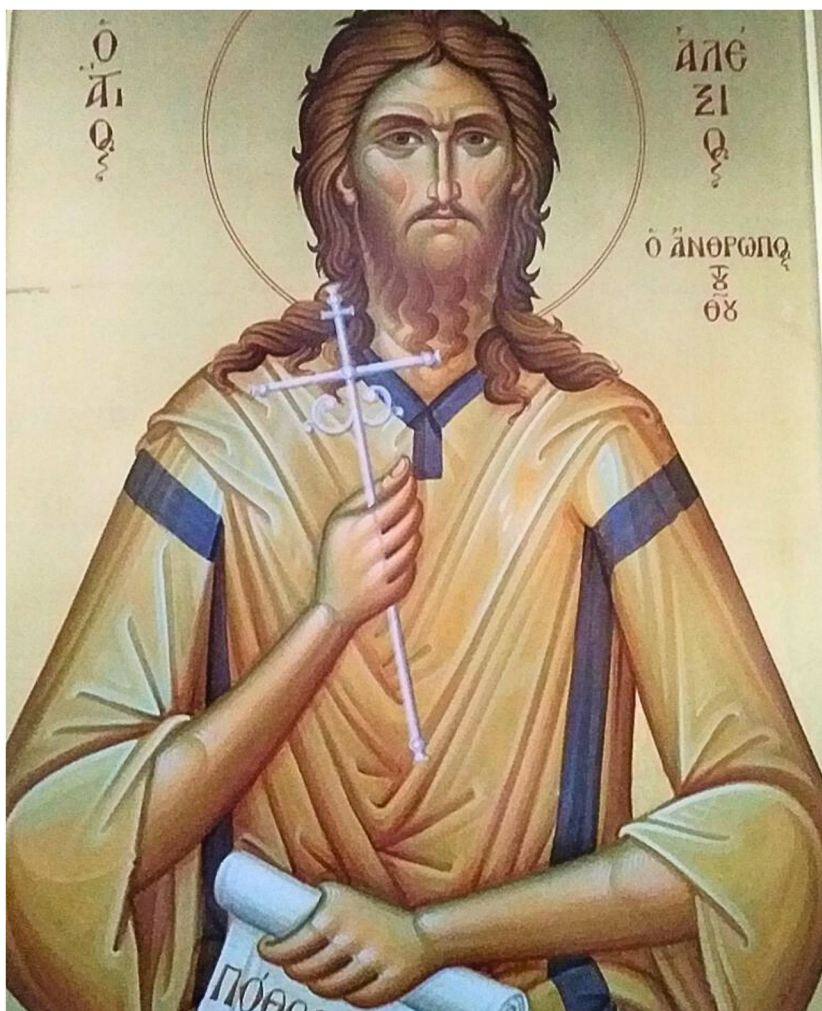
On the day of the saint's death, Archbishop Innocent heard a voice during the Divine Liturgy. The voice urged them to find the "Man of God" and have him pray for the city. After much searching, they were told he could be found in the house of Euphemianus.

When they arrived, the saint was already dead. They found a paper in his hands. On it, he had written an apology to his parents and wife for the pain he had caused by disappearing from them. His parents and wife immediately venerated the saint.

His body was buried in the city. A fragrant myrrh began to flow from the holy relics, bestowing healing upon the sick.

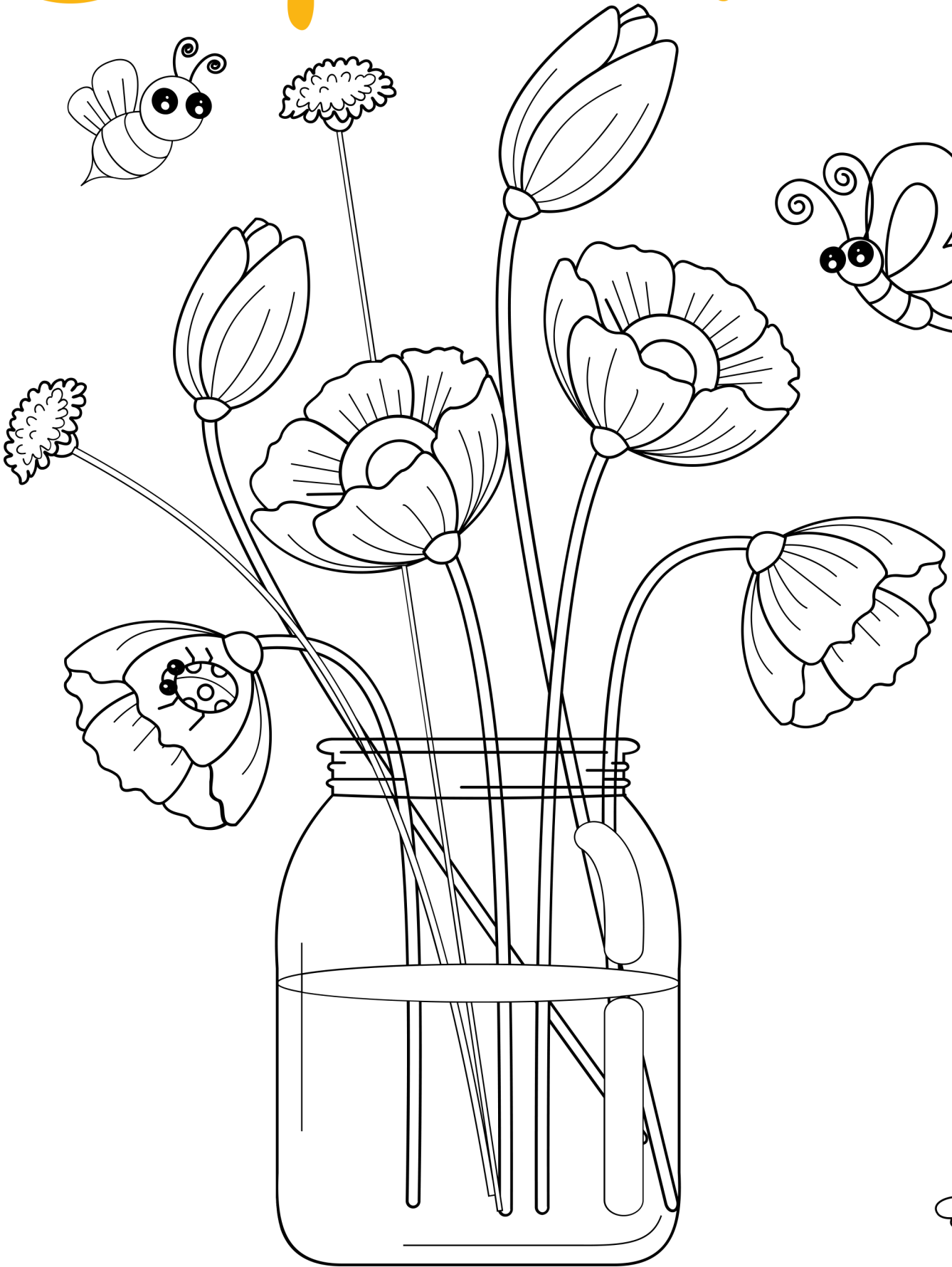
In Ukraine, he became the patron of bees because the date of his birth coincided with the start of spring. It was customary to let the bees out for the first time on this day. The hives would be taken out of their winter housing. The beekeepers pray to St. Alexis to keep the bees safe.

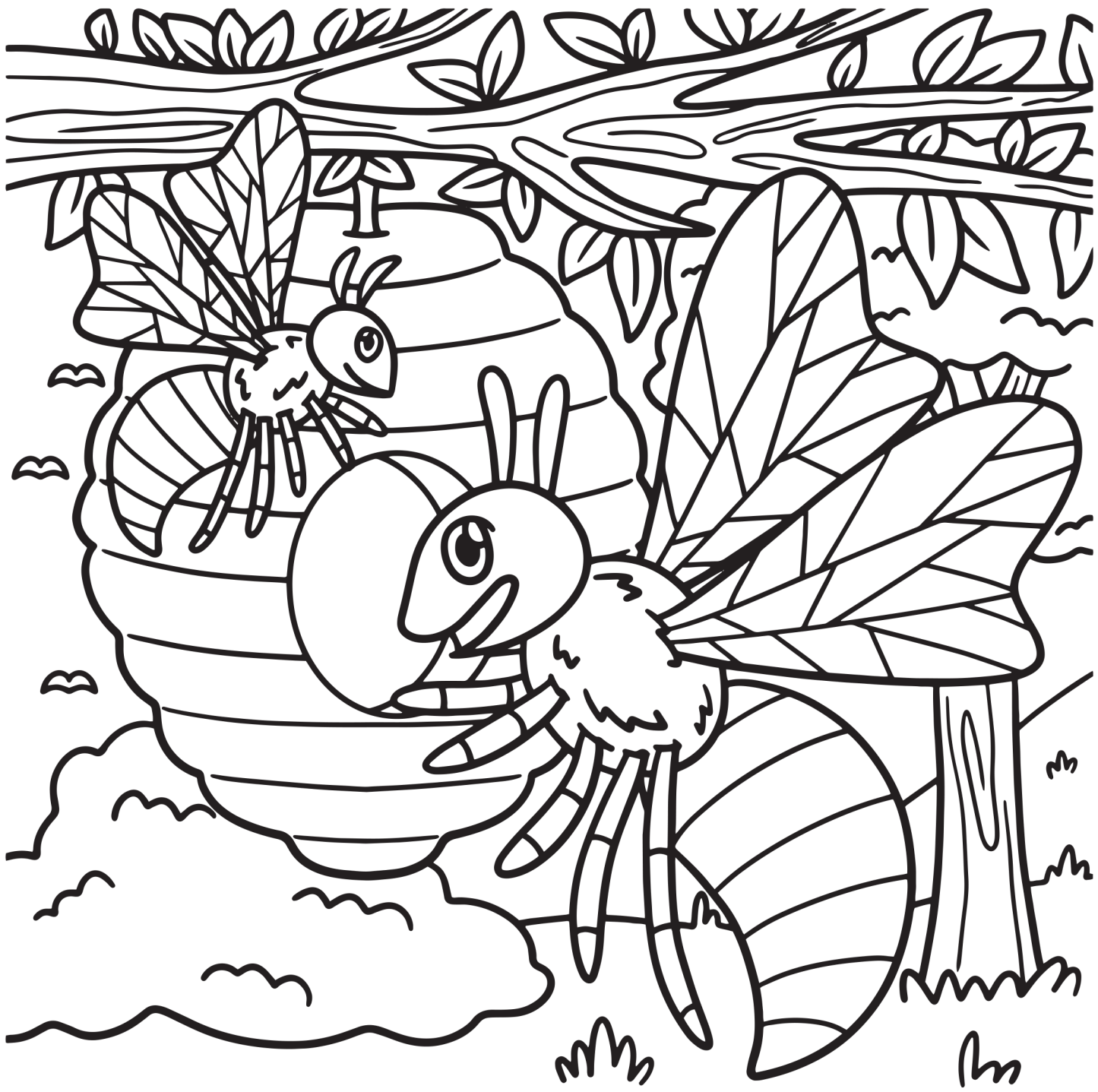
Holy Venerable Alexis - Pray to God for us!

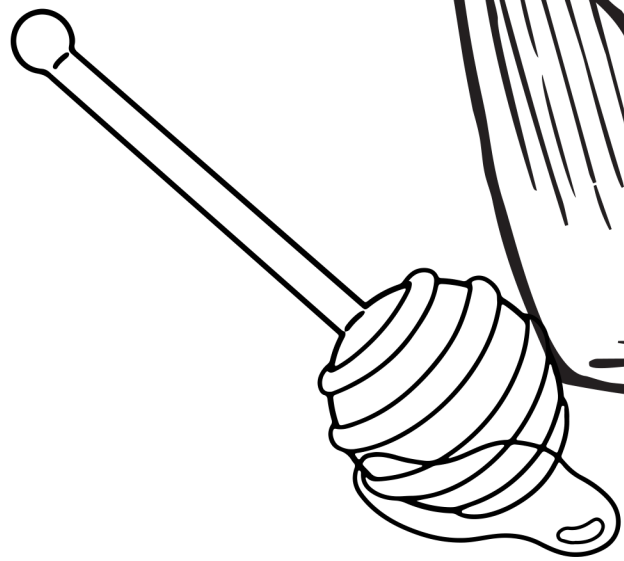
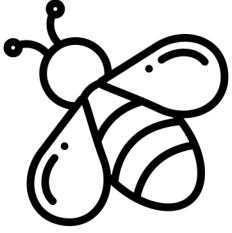
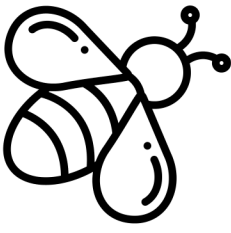
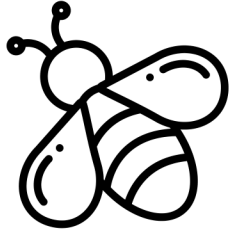


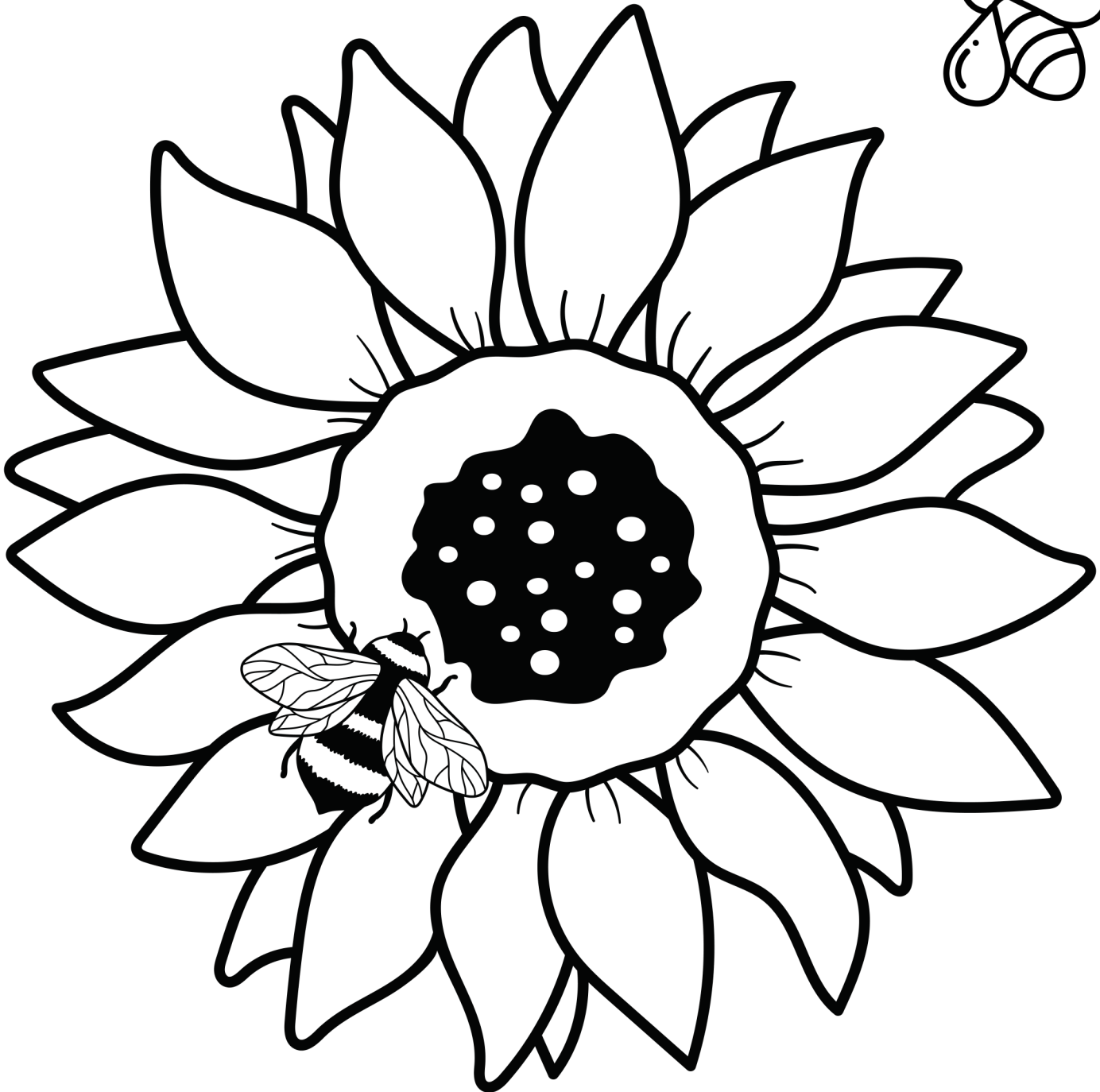
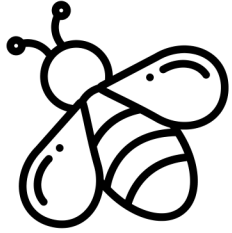
Icon of St. Alexis by Peloponnisios - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=70670732>

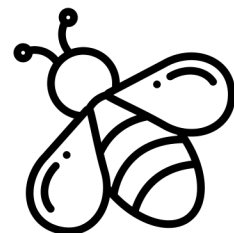














Insider Tip:

Click on the underline words and be directed to the article on the web!



MEDIVNYK (UKRAINIAN HONEY CAKE)

Prep Time: 15 minutes | Total Time: 2 hours

Honey Cake:

- 1/2 cup butter, room temperature
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 4 eggs
- 1 cup (250 mL) honey
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 3 tbsp cornstarch
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp ground cloves
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) strong black coffee, cooled

Honey Cream Cheese Glaze:

- 1 package (8 oz/226 g) cream cheese, softened
- 1/4 cup (50 mL) honey
- 1/4 cup icing sugar
- 1-3 tbsp (15-45 mL) heavy cream



Step-by-step continued on next page





MEDIVNYK (UKRAINIAN HONEY CAKE)

Instructions

Step 1

Preheat the oven to 325°F (170°C).

Grease a 10-inch (25-cm) Bundt pan with butter or cooking spray.

Step 2

Place the butter in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Beat the butter to soften it and then add the brown sugar. Beat them together until light and creamy. Beat in the eggs 1 at a time, until fully incorporated. Add the honey and mix well.

Step 3

In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, cornstarch, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, salt and cloves until combined.

Step 4

Combine the sour cream and coffee in a liquid measuring cup.

Step 5

Beat one-third of the dry ingredients into the butter mixture, followed by one-third of the liquid mixture. Repeat twice, ending with the last of the liquid mixture.

Step 6

Pour the batter into the prepared Bundt pan. Tap the pan gently on the counter to release any air bubbles and then place it in the oven.

Step 7

Bake for 55 to 65 minutes, until a cake tester comes out clean. As with all Bundt cakes, check in the middle of the cake and also by the inner tube for doneness.

Step 8

Let cool in the pan for 10 minutes and then invert onto a wire rack to cool completely. Wrap in plastic wrap to keep moist.

Step 9

To make the glaze, combine the cream cheese, honey and icing sugar in a medium-sized bowl. Using a hand mixer or stand mixer, beat the mixture until creamy and smooth. Add the cream, 1 tablespoon at a time, until the glaze reaches your desired consistency. Adjust the sweetness by adding more icing sugar if needed and balancing the consistency with a bit more cream.

Step 10

Pour the glaze over the cake and let set for a few minutes. Slice and serve.

Step 11

This cake will last for 2 to 3 days in the fridge, or wrap the unfrosted cake tightly in plastic wrap, then in aluminum foil and freeze for up to 3 months.

Makes: 12–16 slices

FOR RECIPE DETAILS [CLICK HERE](#)

