

Go Forth, Make Disciples of All Nations!

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Name: _____

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Lesson 1: What is a missionary?

"The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field." Matthew 9:37- 38

In this verse from the bible we hear Christ telling his disciples about a harvest. You probably already know that the harvest is what a farmer is able to pick and use from his farm. If your family grows a garden, you probably harvest or pick the fruits and vegetables from it to eat. You might even share them with family and friends. Below, list some things you might need to have or use in order to harvest a good crop from your garden.



In the verse we read, Christ isn't talking about finding the fruits and vegetables that are ready to be harvested. He's talking about finding the people who are ready to learn about Christ and participate in the church. In your list of things that you might need to harvest a good crop, you probably talked about things like seeds, water and sunlight that help the plants to grow. These are just as important as tools like shovels, rakes, or machines that are used to actually harvest the crops. Christ tells us that he has done the work of "growing the plants" already. Every person in this world was created so that they are ready to receive Christ's message. We just have to go into the world and find the people who are ready to follow, but haven't been told about Christ and the Orthodox faith yet. The people who do this great work are called **missionaries**.

Missionaries: _____

Now that you know what a missionary does, make a list of things that a missionary might have or use to teach people who do not know about Christ. What might they do when working as missionaries?

Let's look at the Bible verse again: "*The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field.*" Matthew 9:37- 38

Who or what is being harvested? _____

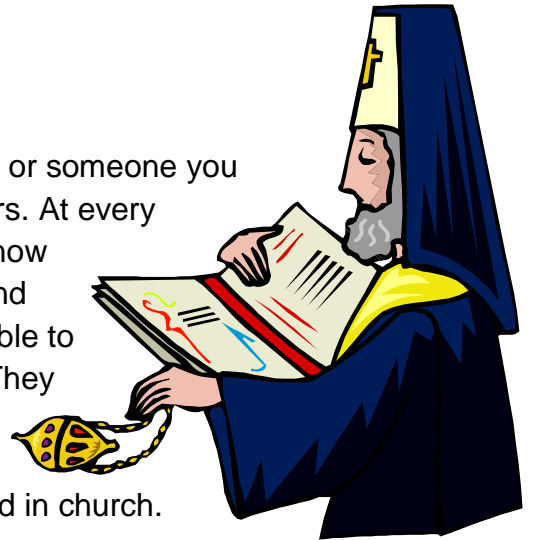
What does Christ mean when He says that the harvest is plentiful? _____

Who are the workers that Christ is talking about and what field are they working in?

In the next lesson, we'll learn how the disciples knew they were supposed to go into the world to teach about Christ and the church.

Lesson 2: Sharing the Good News

Think about a time when something exciting happened to you or someone you know. When we hear good news, we like to share it with others. At every Divine Liturgy we hear the good news about Christ. Do you know when? The word _____ means good news and the priest reads a passage from it every Sunday. Open the Bible to the New Testament and find the titles of the first four books. They are: _____, _____, _____, and _____.



These books make up the “Good News” or Gospel that is used in church.

The Gospel tells us about a time when the people received some really good news about Christ. Read about it in **Matthew 28: 1-10**.

What good news did the women receive and who told them?

Were they supposed to share this news?

Imagine how excited the women must have been! They came in sadness to take care of Jesus’ body, but found that He rose from the dead. But how did the disciples know that they were to tell the whole world about Christ? Continue reading, **Matthew 28:16-20**.

In this passage, the disciples get a clear message from Christ. They are to “Go therefore and make _____ of all the nations.”

Christ tells them to do this in two very specific ways. They are to _____ the people in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. They are also supposed to teach the people to observe or follow all of God’s commandments. Just like soldiers marching into battle, the disciples are given instructions on how to carry out Christ’s mission. They are given instructions on how to be missionaries!

What do we do when we learn of good news?

How did the disciples know that they were supposed to share the good news about Christ and the church?

Lesson Three: The Gift of the Holy Spirit



In the last lesson we learned how the disciples knew they were to tell the whole world about Christ and what his instructions were for carrying out this mission. Next we'll look at how the disciples began their mission work.

After Jesus told his disciples to "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations" (Matthew 28:19), He told them to go to Jerusalem and wait. One more thing had to happen before they could begin their mission. Read what happened in **Acts 2:1-8**.

The disciples were finally ready to fulfill their mission. They were filled with the Holy Spirit and able to be understood by people who spoke any language around the world. How do you think the people around them felt at first?

Listen to what Peter told the people that day: **Acts 2:14-39**.

On that great day of Pentecost, three-thousand people listened to God's word and were baptized and gathered together as the Church. This was the birthday of the Church, for together they would begin a new life. These new Christians changed the way they lived. They gathered together to learn about God and his son Jesus Christ, who came to give us new life. They sang hymns of praise and thanks to God for their new life in the Holy Spirit. They remembered how Jesus took bread and wine and shared it with his disciples, so they did the same. They showed their love for each other and helped people who were sick or hungry or had no clothes. This is how the first Christians lived and how the Church began. From this day forward, the disciples traveled to places near and far, teaching them about Christ and baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit!

What was the last thing the disciples needed before starting their mission?

How did the gift of the Holy Spirit allow the disciples to speak to everyone in Jerusalem?

In the next lesson we'll learn about the first missionaries of our Church.

Lesson Four: The First Missionaries

After receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the disciples began to follow Christ's command to "Go forth and make disciples of all nations." Some traveled to far places to teach people about Christ and baptize them, while others ministered to those in Jerusalem. Remember, Christ prepared the crops for the disciples to harvest. Everyone was created ready to understand their message, but you'll see that it was not always an easy job for the disciples.

- **Jerusalem – Map it!**



We already learned that on the day of Pentecost, the disciples taught the people in Jerusalem and baptized over three thousand of them. Some of the disciples stayed in Jerusalem for a while in order to minister to the other people there. In addition to teaching the people about Christ, the disciples also healed people with the help of the Holy Spirit. Read an example in **Acts 3:1-10**.



How did Peter and John help this man?

Was the man surprised? _____

What do you think happened when people saw this miracle? Many people were amazed and crowded around Peter and John. Peter was afraid that the people would think that the man was healed by magic, so he spoke to them saying that it was this man's faith in "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers" (**Acts 3:13**) that saved him. You read earlier that being a missionary was not always an easy thing to do. As Peter was speaking, the leaders of the temple became angry and had Peter and John arrested for trying to "trick" the people. Luckily, many people believed what they saw and heard and eventually, Peter and John were released. Read **Acts 4:4** and write down how many people became followers of Christ after that event:

With so many people wanting to become followers of Christ, the disciples were unable to teach and baptize new people and still take care of all of the people who were already baptized. It was decided that the twelve disciples would choose to ordain seven deacons to help them. **Acts 6:3** tells us what qualifications a man had to have in order to be chosen. He had to be full of the _____ and _____ . These deacons helped to take care of the people

who were already baptized, or helped the disciples who traveled to teach others. Who do our deacons help today?

- **Antioch-Map It!**



With the help of deacons, the disciples were able to travel farther away from Jerusalem. The people that they taught and baptized also became missionaries and traveled to other countries. Eventually, news of Christ and the church reached a city called Antioch. When the disciples heard that the people in Antioch wanted to learn more about Christ, they sent Barnabas to teach them. When he arrived he was very happy to see that the people there were excited and he even went to get his friend Saul (Paul) from Tarsus to help. Antioch was an important city at the time because it was the third largest city in the Roman empire and a major trade city. People from all over the world came to Antioch to trade goods like spices, animals and cloth. They also traded ideas, including the knowledge of Christ. Antioch was the first place to call the followers of Christ, Christians. We still use that name today!

- **Rome**



Paul and Barnabas were joined by several other new disciples in Antioch. They taught the people about Christ and the kingdom of heaven and baptized many people. Eventually, God sent these disciples a message saying, “Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” (**Acts 13:2**) They left Antioch to be missionaries in new lands. Paul traveled throughout Syria, Turkey, Greece, and other countries. He also wrote many letters or **epistles** to people, teaching them about Christ. We read from these epistles at every Divine Liturgy.

One of the places that Paul wrote to was Rome. Rome was a scary place for Christians at that time. The Roman Empire was in control of much of the land and places we have learned about so far. People in Rome were strictly forbidden to be Christians, but many did so in secret. Paul sent them many letters encouraging them to be strong in their faith and he later spent two years there, preaching and baptizing.

In order to let other people know that they were Christians, people in Rome used the fish as a symbol. The letters in fish stood for JESUS CHRIST SON OF GOD SAVIOR. Copy the symbol of the fish here:

These disciples and many others traveled to lots of other places. They became the example of missionary work that we still follow today.

In what ways did the disciples act as missionaries to other countries?

Who did the disciples choose to help them in their work?

Why was it especially important for missionaries to contact and visit places like Rome?

Timeline- The disciples began their mission work in approximately 35 AD.



Now that we have studied the examples of the first missionaries, the next few lessons will teach us about mission work throughout history and current missionaries.

Lesson Five: Saint Nino (Nina) the Enlightener of Georgia

Map it!-Georgia



Listen to the story about the life of St. Nino, a missionary in the country of Georgia.

Why did the Theotokos give Saint Nino a cross of vines?

Why was Saint Nino's decision to be a missionary in Georgia a dangerous one?

Describe some of the miracles that God performed through Saint Nino.

Troparion for Saint Nino (Nina) (Tone 3) celebrated on January 27th

As minister of the word of God in apostolic preaching, you equaled Andrew the first-called and the rest of the Apostles. Enlightener of Georgia and instruments of the Holy Spirit, holy Nina, equal to the Apostles, entreat Christ God that our souls may be saved.

Why do you think Saint Nino is called Equal to the Apostles?

Timeline-Saint Nino was a missionary approximately three hundred years after Paul and the other disciples.



Next, we'll learn about some missionaries who completed their work a little later in history.

Lesson Six: Saints Cyril and Methodius

Map it!- Moravia



Saints Cyril and Methodius are especially remembered by countries in eastern Europe, listen to their story to find out why.

How did Saints Cyril and Methodius help to spread the good news of Christ throughout the Slavic lands?



Why were people upset when Saints Cyril and Methodius created the written language to teach the people?

What countries today might benefit from the work of Saints Cyril and Methodius?

Troparion for Saints Cyril and Methodius (Tone 4) celebrated on May 21st
O Cyril and Methodius, inspired by God, by your life you became equal to the Apostles. As Teachers of the Slavs, intercede with the Master of All, that he may strengthen all Orthodox people in the true faith, granting peace to the world and great mercy to our souls.

Timeline- Saints Cyril and Methodius completed their missionary work in the Slavic lands

during the 800s AD.



In the next few lessons, we will study missionaries who worked in the last three hundred years.

Lesson Seven: Cosmos of Aitolia

Map it!- Albania



Saint Cosmos did not start his life wanting to be a missionary. He originally became a monk at a famous place in Greece call Mount Athos. Listen to his story to find out how his life led him to mission work.

How did Saint Cosmos travel as a missionary?

In what ways did Saint Cosmos help the people in Albania and Greece to understand the message of Christ?

What challenges did Saint Cosmos face in Albania?

Now you'll hear the story of Drita, a young girl from Albania. Think about how the work of Saint Cosmos allowed Drita to know about Orthodoxy and become a Christian.

Troparion for Saint Cosmos (*Tone 4*) celebrated on September 6th

With odes let us acclaim the renowned Cosmos, who gloriously excelled among the choirs of the martyrs, priests, and ascetics, and let us gather; for he dispenses healing to them that have recourse to him with faith, since, as an equal of the Apostles, he has boldness before Christ.

Timeline- Saint Cosmos performed his missionary work in the 1700s AD.



Lesson Eight: Bishop Nicholas of Japan

Map it!-Japan



Bishop Nicholas, like Saint Cosmos, started as an Orthodox monk before becoming a missionary. Listen to his story to find out more about his journey from Russia to Japan.



How long did Bishop Nicholas serve the people of Japan? _____

How did Bishop Nicholas become a missionary in Japan?

What obstacles did Bishop Nicholas have to overcome during his time in Japan?

Troparion for Bishop Nicholas of Japan (Tone 4) celebrated on February 16th

O holy Saint Nicholas, the Enlightener of Japan, you share the dignity and the throne of the Apostles: you are a wise and faithful servant of Christ, a temple chosen by the Divine Spirit, a vessel overflowing with the love of Christ. O hierarch equal to the Apostles, pray to the life-creating Trinity for all your flock and for the whole world.

Timeline- Bishop Nicholas served the people of Japan from 1861 AD to 1912 AD.



In the next lesson you will learn about how Orthodoxy arrived in America.



Lesson Nine: Saint Herman of Alaska and Saint Raphael of Brooklyn

Map it!- Alaska and New York



These three saints are very special to us because they helped to spread the good news of Christ in our country.

Why did Saint Herman come to America?

How did Saint Herman show an example of Christ to the people in Alaska?

What groups of people was Saint Raphael concerned about?

How did Saint Raphael try to reach these groups?

Troparion for Saint Herman of Alaska (*Tone 4*) celebrated December 26th

O blessed Father Herman of Alaska, North star of Christ's holy Church, the light of your holy life and great deeds guides those who follow the Orthodox way. Together we lift high the Holy Cross you planted firmly in America. Let all behold and glorify Jesus Christ, singing his holy Resurrection.

Troparion for Saint Raphael of Brooklyn (*Tone 3*) February 27th

Rejoice, O Father Raphael, Adornment of the holy Church! Thou art Champion of the True Faith, Seeker of the lost, Consolation of the oppressed, Father to orphans, friend of the poor, Peacemaker and Good Shepherd, Joy of all the Orthodox, Son of Antioch, Boast of America; Intercede with Christ God for us and for all who honor you.



Timeline- Saint Herman arrived in Alaska in 1794 AD. Saint Raphael came to New York in 1895 AD.

Lesson Ten: Following in Their Footsteps

God commanded his disciples to “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations.” These instructions were not just for the people we have learned about so far. There are many other saints who have devoted their lives to mission work and many others choose to become missionaries today. Here some examples of Orthodox missionaries in the world today.

- **India:** The people speak a different language, Bengali, and many of the people are very poor. Most people do not yet know Jesus Christ. In Kolkata, 10 priests and one nun are working to tell people about Jesus Christ and teach people about the Church. They go to villages to tell people about Jesus Christ. Many people want to hear more and join our Church. Also, these priests help others by giving food, clothes, medicines, and shelter to the poor who need it. Sister Nectaria, a nun from Greece, helps the priests and runs an orphanage for young girls who do not have parents.



Map it!- India

- **Tanzania:** Katie is an Orthodox Christian. She goes to Church in Texas. When she finished high school she went on a short term mission trip. She noticed that in other places of the world people do not know about Jesus Christ. There are very few churches. There are very few priests. There are many people who want to know about Jesus Christ and the Orthodox Church. People have to walk for hours to get to Church. When Katie got home she read more about missions. She read that there were not enough people to teach. There were not enough Bibles. There were very few priests and deacons. Many people did not read. Many were sick. Many wanted to learn about the Orthodox Church. She read that Jesus needs us to help Him bring people into the Church by going to places where people do not know Him and teaching them that He loves them. Katie went to college to become a nurse. She went on another Mission Team. In her heart she wanted to teach people about Jesus Christ. Katie also wanted to use her skills as a nurse to help people. Katie is now preparing to go to Tanzania to help the people there learn more about Jesus Christ and to help the Orthodox Church in Tanzania in other ways. Because she is a nurse she will be able to help take care of sick people. **Map it!- Tanzania**



Orthodox mission teams are currently working on almost every continent in the world. They are working to harvest the crop that God has prepared for them. How can we act as missionaries in our own lives?

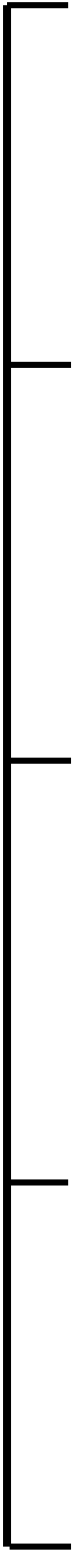
An easy way to remember Christ's instructions for becoming a missionary is with the initials BLT. **B**elieve in Him, **L**earn about His message, and **T**ell or **T**each others.

Finally, let's come up with some ways that you can go home from camp and "make disciples of all the nations!" You are never too young to share your knowledge about Christ with others around you.

Think back to your list of tools that the disciples might have used to talk to the people who did not know about Christ. List a few tools that you might use. They can be the same or new ideas.

Choose one item from your list that you would like to try to do this year. Remember to pray to God or your patron saint to help you with your task.

Timeline



Map it!



Acknowledgments & References

The following resources were consulted in the creation of this curriculum and may be useful for further study:

- **Teach All Nations:** Proclaiming the Gospel around the World. Department of Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Ministry, Orthodox Church in America, PO Box 675 Syosset, NY 11791, <http://yya.oca.org>
- **OCMC Orthodox Mission Sunday Lesson Plans:** Orthodox Christian Mission Center, www.ocmc.org