



Participant Workbook for Ages 8 - 12

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Champions of the Faith

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Session One: History & Our Hierarchs

Suggested Month: January 2018

Session Two: The Importance of Primary Documents & Archives

Suggested Month: February 2018

Session Four: UOL Essay Contest

Suggested Month: March 2018

Session Three: Oral History Project

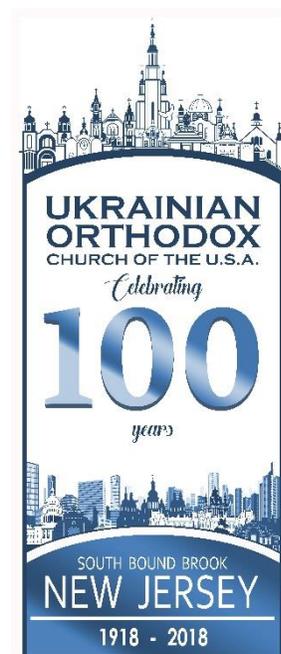
Suggested Month: April 2018

Session Five: Music in our Churches

Suggested Month: May 2018

Parish History Project

Ongoing project to be completed for display at the Metropolia Center in July 2018



Session One: Champions of the Faith



CHAMPIONS OF THE FAITH

This year's Office of Youth Ministry theme is "Champions of the Faith." During your sessions, we will learn more about the saints that we look to and the ways in which they have lived as champions of the Faith. So what does it mean to be a champion? Write your class definition of what it means to be a champion here.

SAINTS ARE CHAMPIONS

The world of sports is an easy place to make a connection to the idea of being a champion. That's not to say that saints and athletes are exactly the same, but there are some similarities in what it means to be a champion. They use hard work and self-discipline, and the abilities that God gave to them to achieve their goals. But, the word "champion" doesn't just apply to people who are working hard to win an event. It can also be used to describe someone who works hard for a cause that they feel strongly about. Can you think of any examples of people acting as champions for a cause?



The many saints of the church are champions of the Orthodox Faith. They use the abilities and talents that God gave them in order to carry out the teachings of the church. Throughout the year, we will look at specific ways in which each saint acted as a champion of the Faith through hard work, discipline, prayer, fasting, etc.

HOW DO YOU BECOME A SAINT?

Through God's grace, anyone can be a saint. The word saint can be translated as "holy" so calling someone a saint means that you are recognizing their choice to live a life as an icon of Christ; showing His image to the world as much as possible. The Greek translation of the word "saint" or "aghios" means

something like "set apart" or "separate from." Saints are set apart from the Devil and focus their life on Christ. In a way, we are all considered saints when we are baptized because by becoming a member of the Church, we renounce and separate from the Devil. What we do after our baptism also plays a role in being recognized as a saint. An athlete might make an amazing play at the beginning of a game or have a great rookie season, but if that is the highlight of their career, we don't usually recognize them as champions. What matters most is how you finish the race. Of course, there are many saints who began their lives by living in ways in which we wouldn't consider to be holy, but at some point they made the choice to separate from that way of life and dedicated themselves to following God's Will.

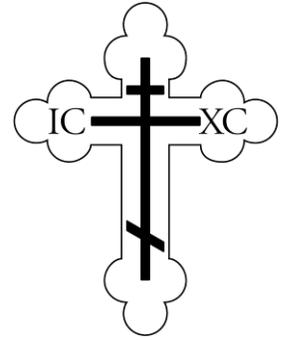
When it comes to officially recognizing a person as a saint, the Orthodox Church does not have one standardized procedure or list of requirements. Historically, people were recognized as saints first by the people who knew them and interacted with them in their community. Why do journalists seek out eyewitness stories when they are reporting on an event?

We trust the stories of eyewitnesses because they were actually there. People who were close to the saint and were able to see their discipline and hard work to glorify God, as well as any miracles that God performed through the work of the saint, told their stories to spread the word. In most cases, the people we recognize as saints were recognized by the people in their area of the world first and overtime, hymns and services might be written to remember the life of the saint, churches and monasteries might be named in their memory, etc. It is important to note that these actions do not "make" the person a saint, but it is our way of recognizing their holiness that came from God's grace. You will see that people with very different ways of life are recognized as saints and that there is not one specific formula for becoming a saint. We will keep a running list of qualities that might make someone a saint, so be listening!



THE FAITH

Since we are talking about Champions of the Faith, we must also talk a little bit about what the Faith is. While there is much to know about the Orthodox Faith, one guide that we can follow is the Nicene Creed which outlines the foundation of what all Orthodox Christians believe. Fill in the blanks to complete the Nicene Creed.



I believe in _____, the Father _____, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things _____ and invisible. And in _____ Lord, _____, the Only-begotten Son of _____, begotten of the _____ before all ages. Light of _____, true God of _____ God, begotten not _____, being of one essence with the _____, by Whom all things were made; Who for _____ and our _____, came down from heaven and was incarnate of the _____ and the Virgin Mary and became _____; and was crucified for _____ under Pontius Pilate and suffered and was _____, and on the _____ day He rose from the dead in accordance with the _____, And ascended into _____ and sits at the right hand of the _____; and He will come again with glory to judge the living and the _____; and His kingdom will have no _____. And in the Holy Spirit, the _____, the Giver of Life, Who Proceeds from the _____, who together with the _____ and the _____ is worshipped and glorified. Who spoke through the _____. In One, _____ Catholic and Apostolic Church. I look for the resurrection of the _____ and the life of the age to come. Amen.



THE CHAMPIONSHIP PRIZE

Usually, being named the champion comes with some sort of prize. In sports, the champion earns a medal or trophy, perhaps a parade, and often money. The saying “to the victor belongs the spoils” has been applied to politics, war, and many other areas. If you win, you get all of the advantages and benefits that you want. The Orthodox Faith offers a very clear prize for the champions- eternal life with God.

We don’t know exactly what our lives in heaven will look like, but we know that it will be with God forever. It’s hard to imagine an infinite amount of time, but our lives here on earth will be just a little blip in time compared to eternity. An amazing thing about this prize is that everyone who wants to win it, can. There isn’t a first place prize, second place, and so on. Instead, we all have the opportunity to be champions- God allowed us to be born and gave us the abilities that we need to meet the challenge. It’s our choice to accept the challenge.

One way that athletes motivate themselves is to look to other champions who have achieved success in their sport. They learn from their success and from their mistakes, and they gain the inspiration to know that the challenges they are facing can be overcome. We will focus on Champions of the Orthodox Faith throughout our sessions to learn more about what they have done to work towards the prize of eternal life.

Session Two: Training to be a Champion

Prayer and Fasting- the Tools of the Champions:

The church teaches us that nothing is possible without God, but *with* God all things are possible. God has given these Champions of the faith tools, or equipment to help them be successful in their journey. We're going to try an activity to help us understand how we are supposed to use one of these tools.

Fasting Helps Us to Become Champions:

Did your team remove rocks from the bucket to make more room for the balloons and to make the bucket lighter? Could you have still moved a lot of balloons without removing the rocks? Fasting works a little like this. The Church doesn't make rules about fasting from meat or dairy because eating those things is necessarily bad for us. In fact, there are times when no fasting is required, such as the week after Pascha and the time between the Nativity and Theophany. On the other hand, just like the rocks in the bucket, we can become "weighed down" by our food. We focus on how hungry we are, or eat even when we aren't hungry. We get distracted by how good the meal smells and forget to pray before eating, or take pictures of every meal and worry about which filter to choose or how many likes it will get on Insta-chat-book. The Church knows that these things happen, so it has built in times of the year where we empty our buckets and focus on only the good things that will help us to become Champions.



Prayer Helps Us to Become Champions:

Orthodox Christians are taught to pray without ceasing or stopping. Our services like Divine Liturgy and Vespers have a specific order and words for prayer. We can also find specific prayers to be said at different times, to ask for specific things. But most prayers are written by adults and use pretty complex words. What do we do when we don't know the right words? Take a look at the story below to hear an important message about how we should approach the tool of prayer.

Prayer - the Heart of the Monastic Life

The most important thing about prayer is not the words we use. The prayers we recite were written by the holy fathers. They help us to "talk to God". But if we don't love God and desire to come closer to Him, our prayers would be incomplete. Here's a good story based on an old legend.

A missionary bishop was traveling through a savage northern country. One day he made a day's stop at a small island. At first he thought that no one lived there, but as he walked through the dense forest, he met three very old men. They were hermits. For many years they had lived on the island alone, finding a little food in the woods and on the lakeshore and spending all their time in prayer. They were very happy to see the bishop and asked for his blessing.

"How do you pray, fathers?" he asked. One of the old men answered shyly. "We do not know any prayers. We cannot read or write, so we cannot learn any. We just repeat a prayer we made up ourselves. And this is the prayer they said: "Three of You, three of us, Lord, have mercy on us." They asked the bishop to teach them a real prayer. The Bishop was glad to help them. He stayed for a whole day on the island, teaching the three old men the Lord's Prayer. They tried as hard as they could to remember every word.

Next morning the bishop gave them his blessing and, wishing them well, continued his journey. When the boat was some distance from the island, he suddenly heard voices calling him. He turned back, and there were the three hermits, running on the surface of the water, as if it were land. "Father, Father!" they called. "Help us! We have again forgotten the words you taught us. We try and try but our words get all mixed up."

The bishop stood up on the deck. He bowed low to the three old men. "God's blessing is with you, fathers," he said. "Go in peace and do not worry about the words of the prayer. God, who made you walk on water as on dry land, hears your prayers in your own words."



(Prayer - the Heart of the Monastic Life

Reprinted from Little Falcons - "Monks and Nuns"; Vol. 9, No. 3, 2002, edited by Fr. Thomas Kazich)

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Praying through our actions:

What we say and think is only part of how we will be judged. We also need to use our actions to show glory to God. Saint Olympia is an example of a saint who is a champion of the faith because she prayed and fasted, and also took care of others. Saint Olympia was orphaned and her husband who was wealthy, died soon after they were married. Saint Olympia felt that God wanted her to give her life to Him. She gave away her wealth, fasted strictly, and dedicated her time to the church. As a deaconess she spent her time caring for women and children who were poor or sick. She became a very close friend of Saint John Chrysostom who told everyone about her holiness.

Can you think of other ways that you might pray without ceasing through your actions and behavior?

What other tools might a Champion of the faith utilize?

Session Three: Families of Saints- Working Together to Become Champions

In the Orthodox Church, we often recognize each saint individually on the day that they died on Earth, and returned to God. But did you know that some saints actually lived in the same family? Today's session will focus on a few well known saints, and some that may not be as familiar, who lived in a family with other saints. Can you think of saints who had other saints in their family?



Let's take a look at a family with two well-known saints. Saints Constantine and Helen each played an important role in spreading Christianity throughout the Roman Empire and the world. St. Helen was the daughter of an innkeeper who married a very accomplished soldier of the Roman army, Constantius Chlorus, in the third century. They had a child named Constantine in the year 274. She was separated from her husband when the Emperor Diocletian forced him to leave Helen to govern another part of the empire, creating a great challenge for Helen. She lived in poor conditions with her son, but when he became an adult, many things changed. Constantine became the Emperor of the land and gave his mother a position of great power. But one thing didn't change. Helen was a Christian, even though it was not legal in those days and she had committed her life to Christ. St. Helen likely influenced her son Constantine to issue a rule called the Edict of Milan (313) that protected Christians in the Empire. Instead of using her power as Empress to gain land or riches, St. Helen began a journey to the Holy Land at the age of seventy-seven. Over time, many of the Holy places where Jesus had taught His disciples and performed miracles had been damaged or replaced with idols from the pagans. St. Helen used her power to find, repair, and protect these sites. One of the most memorable discoveries was the Holy Cross on which Jesus had been crucified.

Saint Constantine dedicated much of his rule to the protection of the Christians. In addition to passing laws that allowed Christians to live freely in the Empire, he made the Feasts of the Church into holidays celebrated by all, built churches, and punished people who treated Christians badly. He also took care of the poor in his Empire by building places where they could find food and shelter. Constantine didn't just rule from the palace, he himself helped to build churches and collected the relics of the saints to protect them. While on the way to a battle against people who did not like Christianity, Constantine decided that he too should be baptized a Christian. Because of his efforts, St. Constantine is called Equal to the Apostles.

In what ways were Saints Constantine and Helen Champions of the Orthodox Faith? What "training" tools or talents did they use/possess?

In the next part of this session, you will work with a partner or in a small group to create a family tree after reading the lives of the saints. Your family tree should include:

- _____ as many family members as possible based on the information in the handout
- _____ the icons provided by your leader
- _____ one or two bullet points about how each saint in the family was a Champion of the Faith

Once your work is complete, you will have a chance to view the trees for each family of saints. As you read about them, please write down one or two main ideas that you see for each family here:

Saints Zachariah , Elizabeth , and John the Baptist

Saints Theodota , Cosmas , and Damian

**Saints Macrina the Elder, Basil the Elder, Emmelia,
Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, Naucratius, Peter of
Sebaste, Macrina, and Theosebia**

Saints Olga, Vladimir, Boris and Gleb

Session Four: Missionary Saints- Champions Who Spread the Word



As you learned in the first session, to be a champion of a cause means to be someone who spreads the word about the issue and encourages others to get involved. People who go out into the world to teach about the faith and convince people to become Christians are called missionaries.

After He had risen from the dead, Jesus returned to His friends one last time. First, He appeared to Mary Magdalene and the Myrrh-bearing women who had been brave enough to go to Jesus's tomb to take care of His body. The women were shocked to find an angel at the tomb who told them that Jesus was not there, and were even more surprised when He appeared to them on the road as they were returning home to tell the disciples what they had seen. Jesus then appeared to the Apostles and gave them their last instructions. Read Matthew 28: 16-20 and fill in the blanks:

Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. When they saw Him, they worshipped Him, but some doubted. And Jesus came and spoke to them saying, "All authority has been given to Me in _____ and on earth. "Go therefore and make _____ of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you _____, even to the end of the age. Amen."

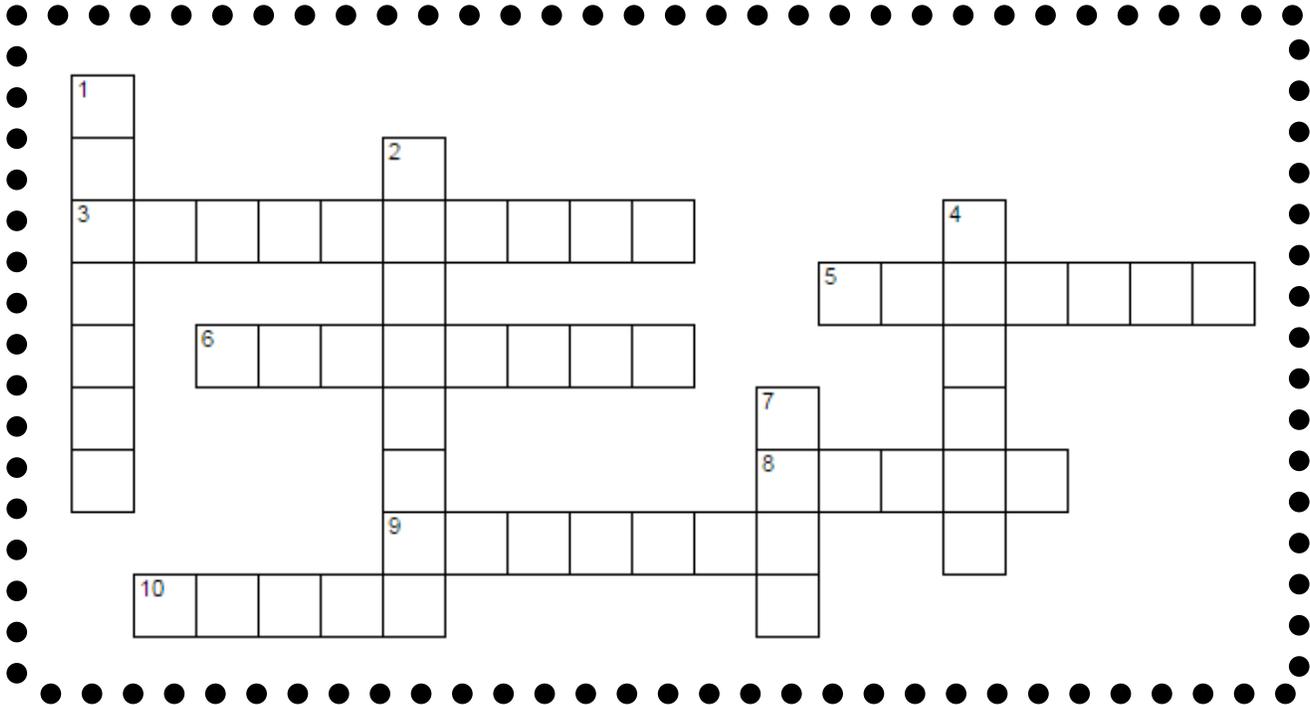
Have you ever been frustrated when you try to talk to someone about something that is important to you, because they aren't interested or don't know anything about it?

What obstacles can you imagine a missionary facing when they follow God's calling to go out and make disciples of a new nation?

Next, you and your classmates will take turns reading from the lives of five missionary saints- Saint Nicholas Enlightener of Japan, Saint Nino of Georgia, Saints Cyril and Methodius, and Saint Cosmos of Aitolia. Listen to stories because you will use details from the story to complete an activity on the next page.



Champions Who Spread the Word of God



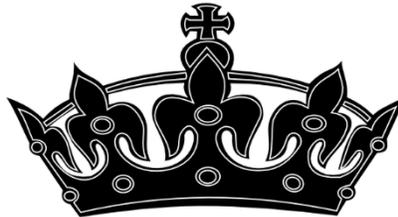
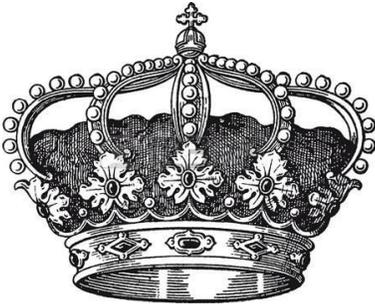
ACROSS

- 3 St. Nicholas was elevated to bishop then _____ because of his success as a missionary in Japan
kingdom where St. Nino traveled to see the robe of Christ
- 6 Sts. Cyril and Methodius created a new _____ to help write down the Slavic languages
- 8 the Theotokos gave St. Nino a cross made of these as a sign that her vision was real, not a dream
- 9 country that Cosmos of Aitolia traveled to as a missionary
- 10 When Cosmos of Aitolia came to a new town, he asked the people in the village to plant a _____ in the center of town
so he could stand next to it on a bench while he preached

DOWN

- 1 leaders in Eastern Europe were not happy that missionaries like Sts. Cyril and Methodius helped the help by teaching them
_____ and writing because they would lose power over people
- 2 learned to speak Japanese and English to be able to teach others
- 4 St. Cosmos traveled by ship, foot and _____ as he traveled Albania and neighboring countries
- 7 name of St. Nicholas when he was a young boy in the seminary

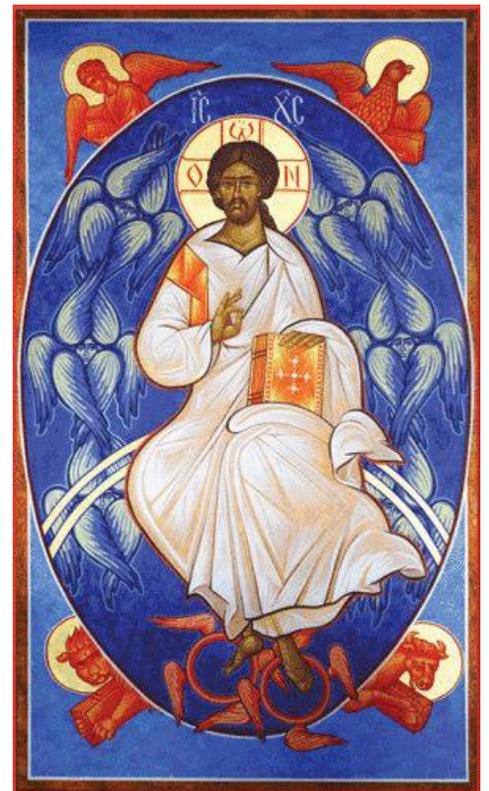
Session Five: Royalty and Warriors- Champions Who Use Power for Good



How did it feel to be the king or the queen in the warm up activity? How did it feel to be on the other side of the crown? Power here on earth is a gift from God that we are given so that we can use it to do more good in the world. In today's session we will learn about some saints who used the power that they were given to be better champions of the faith. As you read this next section, underline the word power anytime you hear it being read:

To begin, we need to look at the one true King and the source of all power-Jesus Christ. In his gospel, John describes the arrest, trial, and judgement of Jesus. The Jewish priests and leaders were more and more upset that people were following Jesus instead of them. They had been very powerful, but now people believed in the power of God instead of the power of men. Pontius Pilate, the Roman ruler of that area, had even more power than the priests. He was the only one with the power to put a criminal to death. When the priests brought Jesus to Pilate, they wanted him to use his power to kill Jesus. Pilate asked Jesus questions to see what He had done to deserve to be put to death. In this passage, Jesus explains to Pilate that not only is He a king, but any power that Pilate has, was given to him by God so that God's plan to show Jesus as God and man would take place.

John 18: 36 "Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.' Pilate therefore said to Him, 'Are You a king then?' Jesus answered, 'You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice.'"





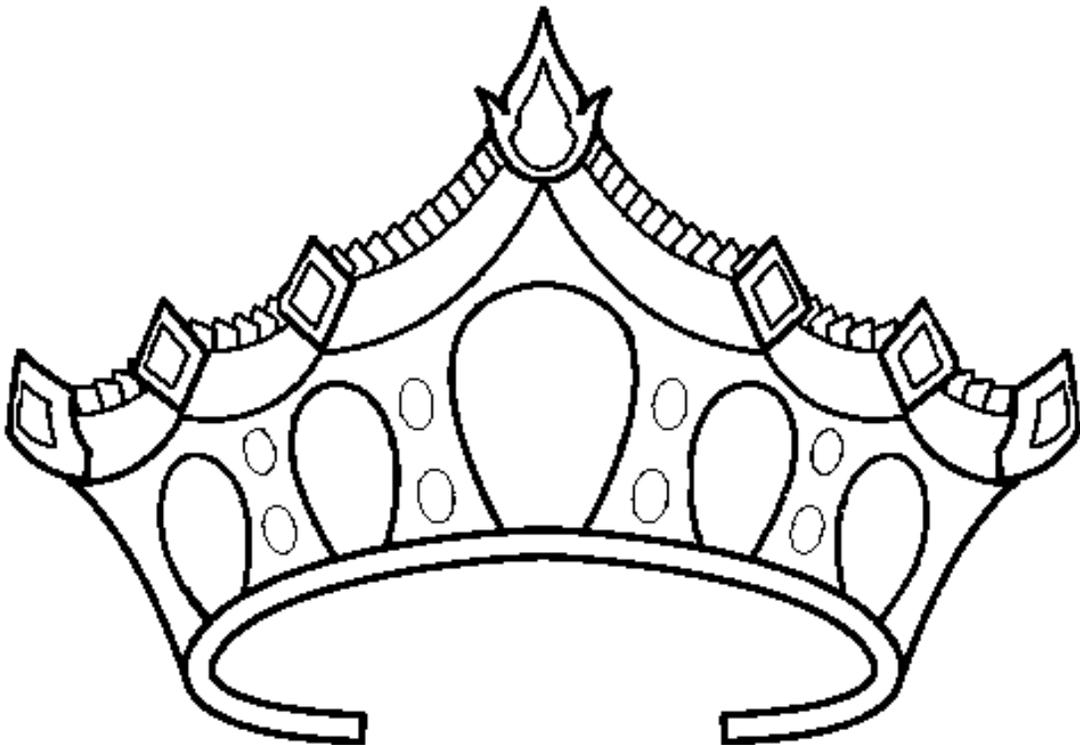
The Crown of Champions

Read the two stories below, then fill in the jewels of the crowns with details about how the Empress and the Princess used the power that God gave to them to be champions of the faith. What “training” tools did they use?

Theodora the Empress

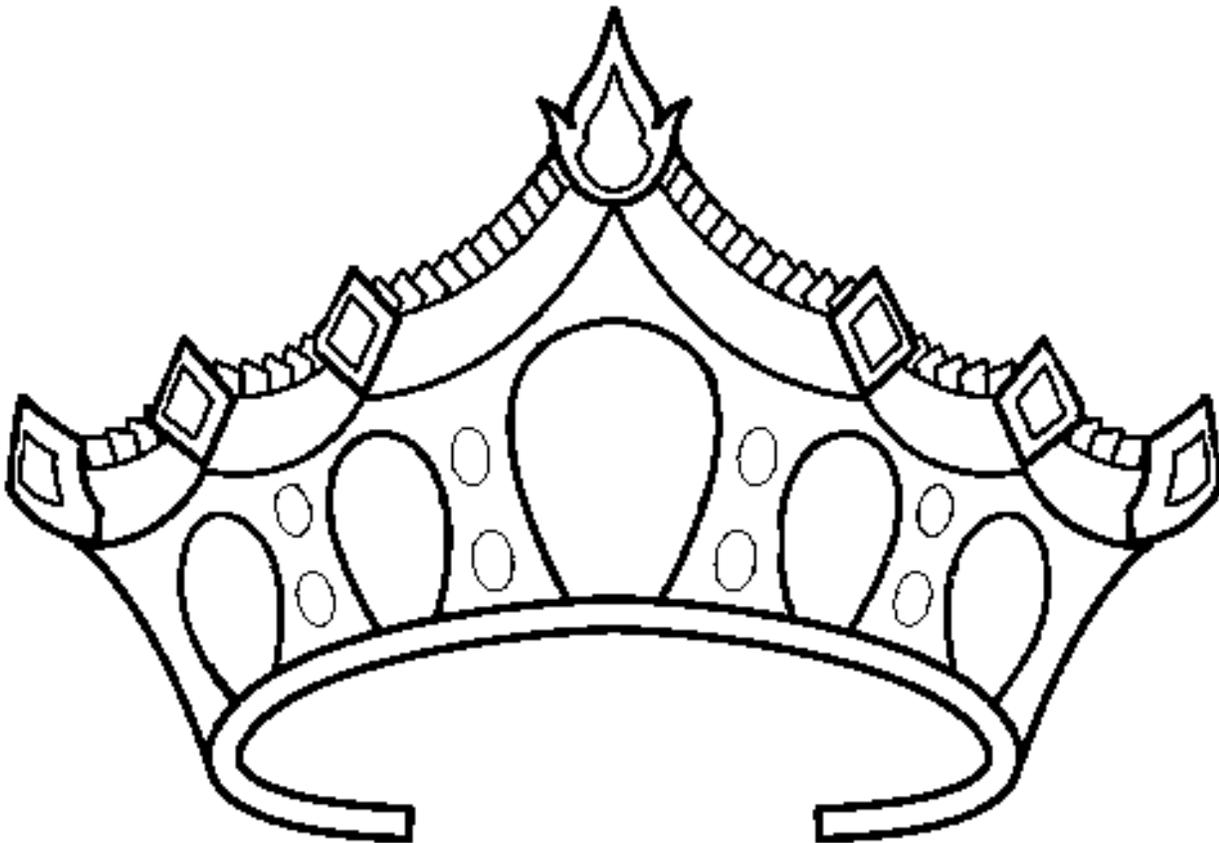
Theodora’s parents were Christians and they raised her to love God. She was known as a very smart woman, which came in handy when she married Theophilus, the Emperor. Theophilus was an iconoclast- someone was against the use of icons and tried to destroy them. When Theophilus died, their son Michael was still too young to be emperor so his mother ruled instead. Wise Theodora brought the bishops and leaders of the church together for a Council to solve the controversy about icons. They decided to bring icons back into the church and we remember that important decision on the First Sunday of Lent each year by bringing icons into our churches. Unfortunately, when he was old enough to take over, Michael did not agree with his mother about God and the Faith. He was not able to change the Council’s decision, but he sent Theodora to a monastery and forced her to

live the rest of her life there. Theodora did not mind- she finished her life surrounded by holy books so that she could learn even more about God.



Princess Ileana of Romania

We may think of princesses as characters in fairy tales from a long time ago, but in the last century, a Romanian princess lived her life as a champion of the Faith. Princess Ileana was born in Bucharest in 1909. While she was a young woman, the country went through World War One and World War Two, and was eventually taken over by a Communist government. During the wars, Princess Ileana set up several hospitals to help take care of wounded soldiers. After the wars, she and her children had to leave the country and travel throughout Europe and even to Argentina. They ended up in the United States and lived there until her children became adults. Then Princess Ileana traveled to France where she joined a monastery and became an Orthodox nun, taking the name Mother Alexandra. Her last move was to Ellwood City, Pennsylvania, which is less than an hour away from our camp. Mother Alexandra started a women's monastery in Ellwood City which is still there today. In addition to leading other women into the life of a monastic, she gave lectures and wrote letters and short books to teach others about the faith. Perhaps one day she will also be remembered as a saint.



Warriors Fight for the Faith

Many saints were soldiers in the army of the country that they lived in. While some lived in lands where the ruler agreed with Christianity, many did not, especially in the years right after Jesus ascended to heaven. Read about the Saints George and Demetrius who were soldiers who used their power for good against evil rulers who used their power for bad.

Saint Demetrius of Thessalonica

Saint Demetrius lived during the third century in Thessalonica. His parents were wealthy and important people so Demetrius was able to have a job in the government. He was a strong soldier and good leader, so he gained a reputation. The emperor Maximian trusted Demetrius and made him head of an area of land with one main job- kill any Christians. Maximian did not know that secretly, Demetrius's parents were Christians and had raised him to be one too.

Instead of getting rid of the Christians in his part of the empire, Demetrius taught many people about the Church and brought many pagans to Christianity. When Maximian found out what was happening, he became extremely angry and threw Demetrius in jail. To distract himself, Maximian had a pagan festival. One of the events was the chance to fight a giant man named Lyaeus who was a pagan. The emperor Maximian offered a reward to anyone who could beat Lyaeus. A young man named Nestor knew that Demetrius was a Christian and he came and asked for a blessing from Demetrius before he went to the fight. Nestor beat Lyaeus, killing him with one strike, which made Maximian incredibly mad. In his anger, he ordered Demetrius to be killed. Even after he was martyred, miracles of healing and protection occurred at the site where Demetrius is buried. Sweet scented myrrh began to flow there, so he is known as "Myrrh-gusher."

Saint George

Saint George also grew up with Christian parents who taught the faith to their son. George followed in his father's footsteps and became a soldier in the Roman army. He was a strong and smart soldier and he quickly rose to high levels. He was chosen to be a soldier assigned to guard the emperor Diocletian, who hated Christians.

One day, Diocletian gave an order for his soldiers to clear all Christians out of his land. George told Diocletian that he would not follow the order and defended Christianity in front of the emperor. The evil Diocletian had George tortured and killed, but because others saw his great faith, many people became Christians.



Many royal families and military groups use symbols like a coat of arms to show what is most important to them. Now that you have read the stories of several royals and rulers who used their earthly power to glorify God, design a coat of arms that might show how a champion of the faith can use their power for good. Be sure to include both words and images.



Session Six:

Clergy and Monastics- Champions in the Church

After completing the warm up activity, answer these questions as honestly as possible.

- What was the most challenging part about being the person who was blindfolded?

- What was the most challenging part about being the guide?

Monastics (monks and nuns), priests, deacons, and hierarchs (bishops) are like our guides when living an Orthodox life. If you think about the comparison we used in an earlier session to talk about champions, we are the athletes running the race and trying to get to the prize of eternal life in heaven and they are our coaches. They can't run the race or play the game for us, but they can offer guidance and advice. A coach usually has more experience than the players- they've learned what works well and they've made mistakes that they can teach you about during practice. And when you're in the middle of the game, the coach has a different point of view. They can see what's going on in front, behind, and on the sides of you and your teammates and can guide you around obstacles you can't see coming.

Today we are going to look at some examples of how we can use the advice of these "coaches" to guide us as we try to become champions of the Faith. What are some qualities of a good coach?



Leading by Example:

These leaders of the church, and especially hierarchs like bishops, are not only responsible for giving guidance, they are responsible for what happens when we follow it. Maybe one of the most well-known saints was Saint John Chrysostom who wrote many letters and books and gave many speeches to help people who were trying to live a Christian life. Not only did he share his guidance, he lived the example of his words. As you listen to words of the life of St. John, underline sections where

you think he would meet our list of qualifications for a “good coach.”

Saint John Chrysostom was born in 347 in Antioch. John was raised a Christian, though not baptized until he was eighteen by Melitius, patriarch of Antioch. He wanted to live as a hermit but Patriarch Melitius refused to give his blessing for this so he served as an acolyte and then a reader. After three years of John’s urgings, Melitius finally relented and allowed him to go and live as a hermit. He went to a cave, denied himself proper sleep, read the Scriptures constantly, and spent two years without lying down. His austerities [strictness] ruined his health and his kidneys were damaged by the cold. Sick, he returned to Antioch and Melitius sent him to a doctor. He served as a deacon for six years and in 386 was ordained a priest by Flavian, Melitius’s successor. He preached in the common language of the street and his sermons touched everyone who heard them. His sermons began to draw crowds. God gave him a spiritual gift to touch people’s hearts and he was so eloquent that he would gain the name “Chrysostom,” that is “golden mouth.”

In 387 the people of Antioch held a tax revolt during which they destroyed the imperial statues. This was a capital offense punishable by death. For days the imperial soldiers executed many citizens. Bishop Flavian went to Constantinople to plead for mercy and John preached a sermon series “On the Statues,” calling people to repentance and hope in God’s eternal kingdom. The city listened to him with renewed attention.

In 397 he was transferred to Constantinople to be the new patriarch. The new patriarch had been easy going and lax but John was not. He insisted on holiness from his clergy. He did not give or attend lavish [fancy] social parties. He sold some of the new furniture in the patriarchal residence to build a hospital. He preached against luxury and greed...

Saint John’s final words were “Glory to God for All Things!”

(excerpted from [A Daily Calendar of Saints](#) by Fr. Lawrence Farley)

Session Seven: Saints of North America- Champions Close to Home

When we talk about saints in the Orthodox Church, we often talk about people who lived hundreds of years ago. It might be hard to imagine living a life just like them because the world is different in many ways and unless you check a map, you may not recognize the names of ancient lands and kingdoms. The saints we will learn about today lived in cities that you are probably familiar with and some of them were alive when your parents or grandparents were born.

Traveling through North America

Find the folder with the icon of each saint on the outside cover. At each stop, read the life of the saint then fill in the box on the right with an example of how the saint was a champion of the Faith. Make sure that you also label the place or places in North America where the saint lived his life.

Saint of North America	What did he do to be a Champion of the Faith?
 <p data-bbox="147 1167 431 1226">St. John of San Francisco & Shanghai</p>	
 <p data-bbox="147 1541 448 1602">St. Innocent, Apostle to America</p>	



**St. Tikhon, Enlightener
of American**



**St. Juvenaly, First
Martyr of Alaska**



St. John of Chicago



**St. Barnabas the
Confessor of Indiana**

 <p data-bbox="142 554 422 583">St. Nicholas of Ochrid</p>	
 <p data-bbox="142 968 422 1039">St. Alexander of New York</p>	

Orthodox Saints in America

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After reading about the saints of North America, answer these questions. Try to include at least two examples for each question.

- What was similar in the lives of these saints and the saints from other sessions?

- What differences did you find between these saints and saints in other sessions?

- If you could visit the relics of one saint this list, who would you choose and why?

In the last session of this program, you will learn about present day champions of the faith who are working in North America and around the world to live a godly life and to bring others to the faith. Many of these people pray to these North American saints who laid the ground work here.

Session Eight: Patron Saints- Our Champions in Heaven



Did you ever want to ask your parents or a leader for something you weren't sure they would agree to or be happy about? Did you ever try to convince a friend or a sibling to go and ask for you? In the Orthodox Church, patron saints act as a helper or connection between God. Praying to your saint doesn't guarantee that what you want will magically happen, but they can bring our thoughts, feelings, wants, and gratitude to God for us. We each have a patron saint that we can pray to and many organizations choose a patron saint to watch over their activities. In 2015 the youth of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA selected two patron saints- Saint Julian and Saint Christina of Tyre. After reading one of the stories below, find someone who read about the other saint and share what you learned. Be sure to talk about how each saint was a Champion of the faith.

Saint Julian



The Holy Martyr Julian of Tarsus was born in the Asia Minor province of Cilicia. His mother was a Christian, but his father was a pagan. His father died when Julian was young and his mother had him baptized. Julian was arrested as a young man because the Emperor Diocletian had made it illegal to be a

Saint Christina



The Martyr Christina lived during the Third Century. She was born into a rich family, and her father was governor of Tyre. She was a beautiful young woman and many people wanted to marry her. Christina's father, however, wanted his daughter to become a pagan priestess. He locked her away in a room full of

Christian. The rulers tried to get Julian to turn away from God by torturing him and offering him rewards, but he would not agree.

Julian's torture continued for a year and his mother followed where he went. She finally convinced the ruler to let her visit Julian in prison. She told him that she could change Julian's mind.

Instead, when Julian was questioned again, his mother also stood up and said that she was a Christian too. The governor was enraged and had Julian executed.

- **In what ways did Julian's parents affect his faith?**

pagan idols and statues. Christina could see the stars in the sky and knew there had to be a Creator that planned and made everything in the world.

After a lot of prayer and fasting, an angel visited Christina to tell her that she was right in believing in God. When her father came to visit and saw that Christina had destroyed all of the idols, he became very angry and sent her to be tortured until she agreed to give up on God. An angel came each night to give her strength and heal her. Her father and the other torturers were even angrier that Christina would not give in. They threw her in a furnace and when they returned five days later, Christina had not been hurt. St. Christina was eventually martyred, but many people began to believe God because they saw her faith.

- **In what ways did Christina's parents affect her faith?**

My Patron Saint:

For the next activity, you will be researching a specific saint. Please choose at least four research questions from the class list and try to answer them on the space below.

***In what ways was this saint a champion of the faith?**

Session Nine: Can We Become Champions of the Faith?

Our goal in learning more about the lives of the saints was to see that with God's grace, anything can be done. Many of the saints faced very difficult challenges, but they were rewarded with the prize of eternal life in heaven. Sometimes, it can be easy to feel discouraged. How could I ever give up everything I have, or live in a desert cave, or be harmed because I am a Christian? One thing that is important to notice about the saints that we learned about this year is that there is not just one correct way to be a saint. Some saints lived in caves while others lived in palaces. Some wrote and spoke about the faith in public while others quietly lived a life of caring for others in secret. Some saints were Christians all of their lives and others converted as adults. As we said at the beginning- it's important to run the best race or play the best game that you can, but how you finish is what matters the most. So how will you run the race when you get home? What can we do now to make sure that we finish strong?

Are you familiar with any of these Orthodox organizations? Many of them have ways to get involved no matter your age or where you live.

International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) is an Orthodox organization that gives aid to people who are in need around the world. One of their programs helps people in poor countries learn how to farm in better ways so that they can grow more food for



themselves.



FOCUS North America (Fellowship of Orthodox Christians United to Serve) is an organization that helps people in our country. One of their programs provides back packs full of food for children whose families do not have enough food to eat.

Orthodox Christian Mission Center sends teams of missionaries to other countries to teach about Christianity. Some missionaries take short term trips for a few weeks, while others live away from home for months or years.



A Gallery of Saints:

To help us remember the Champions that we studied, our last activity will be to design a "Gallery of Saints." You can choose a saint that we studied, your patron saint or a saint that you already know a lot about, and design a champion poster to hang in the gallery. The information that you should include is listed below, but you should be creative about how you display the information. Use the area on the back of this sheet to plan out your poster.

Your poster should include:

___ an icon of the saint if possible, or a sketch of something related to the saint (for example, a cross made of vines could represent Saint Nino)

___ a brief summary of the life of the saint, including what makes them a Champion of the Faith

___ a sentence or two that explains why you chose to present the saint

Praxis Session One: Parish Patron Saints

What did I learn about the organizations of my parish and their patron saints?

My notes:



St. Matrona Sisterhood of STS. Peter & Paul in Carnegie, PA

Saint Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Society was founded in 1990 by the faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA as a religious and charitable organization.

As an integral ministry of the Church, the Society's philanthropic mission focuses on providing humanitarian assistance to the needy and supporting church-related projects in Ukraine. Since its founding, the Society has raised over 1.3 million dollars towards the support of religious, educational and humanitarian projects.

Saint Andrew's Society Mission supports:

- the Christian spiritual rebirth of the Ukrainian people and reverse the consequences of Soviet militant atheism;
- the efforts of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in re-establishing the universal principle of humanity, justice, charity and tolerance;
- the rebirth of the persecuted and devastated Church in the former Soviet Union.

Saint Andrew's Society fulfills its mission and vision by providing:

- humanitarian aid to the needy, the orphans, the elderly, and the refugees in Ukraine;
- financial and logistical assistance to seminaries in Ukraine and scholarships for theological students to study abroad;
- publications of religious literature, assistance towards medical projects and church restorations.

Українське Православне Товариство Святого Андрія було засноване в 1990 році вірними Української

Православної Церкви США як благодійна та релігійна організація.

Як невід'ємне служіння Церкви, благодійна місія Товариства зосереджена на гуманітарній допомозі потребуючим та підтримці проектів пов'язаних з життям церкви на Україні.

Від початки свого заснування, Товариство зібрало понад 1,3 мільйони доларів на потреби релігійних, освітніх та гуманітарних проектів.

Місія Товариства Святого Андрія підтримує:

- відродження Християнського духовного життя Українського народу та ліквідацію наслідків руйнівного Радянського атеїзму;
- намагання Української Православної Церкви відновити загальні людські принципи гуманності, справедливості, милосердя та взаємної толерантності;
- відродження Церкви, яка була переслідувана та знищена Радянським Союзом.

Товариство св. Андрія виконує свою місію та мету надаючи:

- гуманітарну допомогу бідним, сиротам, людям похилого віку та переселенцям на Україні;
- фінансову та організаційну допомогу семінаріям на Україні, та нагороджуючи стипендіями семінаристів, які вчать за кордоном;
- допомагаючи видавати релігійну літературу, підтримуючи медичні проекти та відновлюючи храми.

Praxis Session Two: Family Icons



St. Marcina the Younger and her brothers St. Basil the Great, St. Gregory of Nyssa, and St. Peter of Sabaste
Icon courtesy of Archangel Icons



Sample Family Icon courtesy of Archangel Icons (you may find additional examples at www.archangelicons.com)

What did I learn about family icons? My notes:

Praxis Session Three: Monastic Life

What did I learn about the life of monastics? What really made an impression on me when I visited the monastery/watch the monastery video/met a monastic? My Notes:

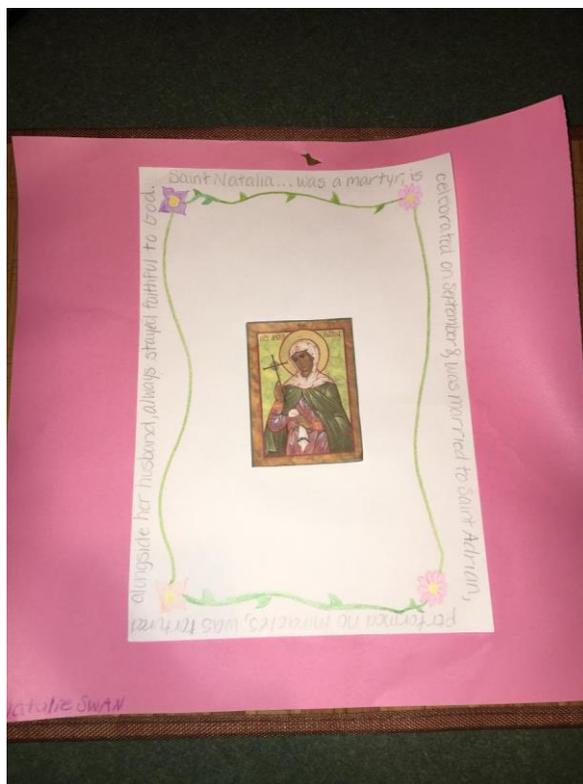


Praxis Session Four:

Gallery Walk

What did I enjoy about the Gallery Walk? How did this help myself and other in becoming champions of the faith?

My Notes:



“Champions of the Faith” Celebrating 100 Years of Ukrainian Orthodoxy in America

Published by the
Consistory Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry and the
Ukrainian History & Education Center (Somerset, New Jersey)
(2017-2018)

We ask all parish youth to create a poster board (tri-fold board) documenting the history of the parish which will be placed on display at the Metropolia Center during the celebration in July 2018 (see “Parish History Project” for further instructions). In addition, these boards can be displayed either before or after July in the home parishes, showcasing the work of the youth. It is our goal, that through the lesson plans, the youth of the parish will learn more about their home parishes, as well as the history of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the USA.

What ideas do we have for our parish history display?

