

# Pokrova – The Protection of the Mother of God Our Lady of Pochaiv

## Youth Group Session Eight (Final) – Session Leader

Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry – Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA  
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Objective: To provide a good understanding of:

- ✓ How the Theotokos not only intercedes for us but protects us in times of distress and danger

Items in **blue** are notes for the Session Leader. For younger children read for them – you may want to paraphrase and ask questions often to keep their interest. For older children, allow them to read aloud or to themselves.

This curriculum was written to be used in conjunction with the book *The Illustrated Life of the Theotokos for Children* by Georgia and Helen Hronas. This book is published by Light and Life and can be obtained from them at [www.light-n-life.com](http://www.light-n-life.com) or by calling 952-925-3888.

### **Related books for Session Leader's Reference:**

*The Illustrated Life of the Theotokos for Children* by Georgia and Helen Hronas – Light and Life Publishing.  
*The Incarnate God: The Feasts of Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary* editor Catherine Aslanoff translated by Paul Meyendorff. St. Vladimir Seminary Press, 2002.

### **Pre-session Preparation**

Make needed copies of Lesson eight Handouts.

Purchase needed number of books for *The Illustrated Life of the Theotokos for Children*

### **Craft – Mosaic Icon of the Theotokos and Child**

This craft will be worked on at each session. It is labor intensive but is extremely beautiful and will stay with the youth for their entire lives. See the attached explanation for the craft.

### **Session**

#### **Begin the session in prayer.**

We now understand why Mary the Mother of God intercedes for us. There are many ways in which she not only intercedes for us but also protects us! Here are two stories of how the faithful called upon her to intercede for them, and she came to their aid.

The Protection of the Mother of God or Pokrova is a very special event and feast of the Orthodox Church – it takes place on October 14/27. On this day we remember the appearance of the Mother of God in Constantinople in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. The people of Constantinople were afraid because they believed their city was going to be attacked. St. Andrew, known as the Fool for Christ, and St. Epiphanius were in church for services. They were all praying for God's help with the attack and in particular for the Theotokos to

intercede on their behalf and well-being. [Ask the students what they would do in this type of situation, how would they feel?](#)

It was then that they saw the Mother of God approach the altar, supported by St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist (Remember that all three of them had been dead for many years). [Take the time here to discuss why these two men. Go back and review how they played an important part in Mary's life.](#) She knelt and prayed with tears in her eyes. Then she took the veil she was wearing and extended it over her arms as a sign of protection. Constantinople was attacked, but the arrows bounced off of the city! They were saved by her protection.

There are many icons depicting this event, but in every one Mary is shown with the veil over her arms as a sign that she will always protect us. She is never alone but always with Christ. Today, with her veil (omophor) she stands in our church along with the saints. She is always ready to hear our prayers and to take them to the Throne of God. We pray: "Remember us in your prayers, O Birth-Giver of God."

Do you know of anywhere within our Ukrainian Orthodox Churches that we often use veils or cloths? [Rushnyks or embroidered cloths hung over icons.](#)

These cloths hang over our icons in our church or at home to help us remember the protection of the Mother of God.

The second story of the Mother of God protecting Christians is very special to Ukrainian Orthodox believers because it happened in Ukraine.

In the year 1340, two monks settled on the hill where the Pochaiv Monastery is now located. One day a monk from the monastery climbed to the top of the hill after he finished his daily prayers. Suddenly he saw the Most Holy Birth-giver of God standing upon a rock, surrounded by flames. He called his brother to see this miracle. A third witness was a shepherd, John (Ivan) Bosoy. He ran up the hill, and together the three men glorified God. On the rock upon which the Most Holy Bearer of God had stood remained a permanent imprint of her right foot! Today, this rock is enshrined within the Holy Dormition Church at the Monastery. The Monastery was built around her footprint.

A stream of Holy Water trickles out of the rock where Mary's footprint is. It continues to bring healing of body and soul to people who visit there. Mary's footprint reminds us that our footsteps are guided on the path of righteousness and salvation by her intercessions for us.

In the year 1559, a Greek Bishop, Metropolitan Neophytus from Constantinople, traveled through the region of Volyn, Ukraine (very close to the monastery). He blessed a local woman named Anna Hoyska by giving her a gift. The gift was an icon of the Theotokos holding Christ. They were surrounded by saints in the frame. Soon miracles began taking place around the icon. The woman gave this miraculous icon to the monks at the monastery.

The holy image was placed in the church built in honor of the Dormition of the Holy Birth-giver of God. You can still see this icon today!

Do you know of any miraculous icons? Why were they miraculous? [Take time here to allow them to tell their stories.](#)

In the 1700's, during an attack by an enemy army, the monks carried the icon in a procession around the church. The Mother of God appeared above the main cupola (dome) of the Pochaiv Monastery and sent the cannon-balls hurling backwards toward the people who fired them. This is just like the protection of Constantinople!

These are just two examples of the Mother of God protecting us. She protects us every day, and all we have to do is ask! Mother Mary is always there for us! O Holy Birth-Giver of God, Save Us!

[Wrap up the lesson and review what was discussed. You may want to devise a fun trivia question game to review all of the lessons.](#)

At this time you may do any of the following:

- Have a short discussion time about the material or for teenagers an open Q & A.
- Review and discuss the icons of Pokrova and Pochaiv
- Present a copy of the icon of the Pokrova or Pochaiv to each participant
- Give time for a snack and short break for the participants to play games
- Move right into the next activity
- End the session in prayer to the Theotokos, "Hail Mary Full of Grace". This prayer should be used for the remainder of the lessons.
- Add their worksheet to their worksheet binder and give it to them to take home

Have the participants use the remaining time to complete their mosaic icons.

## A Phrase of Many Languages Worksheet

Hello	Good-Bye	Christ is Risen! Indeed He Is Risen!
1. "Dobry Den" Ukrainian	1 "Do Pobachanya" Ukrainian	1. "Hristos Voskres" "Voistinu Voskres" Ukrainian
2. "Hello" English	2. "Good Bye" English	2. "Christ is Risen" "Indeed He is Risen!" English
3. "Hola" Spanish	3. "Adios" Spanish	3. Cristo ha resucitado! Verdaderamente ha resucitado! Spanish
4. "Konnichi wa" Japanese	4. "Ja ne" Japanese	4. "Harisutosu Fukkatsu" "Jitsu Ni Fukkatsu!" Japanese
5. "Ciao" Italian	5. "Ciao" Italian	5. "Cristo è risorto!" "È veramente risorto!" Italian
6. "Shalom" Hebrew	6. "Shalom" Hebrew	6. "Ha Mashiyach qam!" "Ken hoo qam!" Hebrew
7. Urdu Arabic	7. "Ila Lika Arabic	7. "Al Maseeh Qam!" "Haqqan Qam!" Arabic
8. "Bon Jour" French	8. "Au Revoir" French	8. "Le Christ est Resuscite" "En verite il est resuscite!" French
9. "Ni Hao" Chinese	9. "La Revedere" Romanian	9. "Hristos a-inviat" "Adevarat a inviat!" Romanian
10. "Aloha" Hawaiian	10. "Aloha" Hawaiian	10. "Ua ala hou `o Kristo!" "Ua ala `I `o no `oia!" Hawaiian
11. " <b>Geia sou</b> " Greek	11. "Khairere" Greek	11. "Christos Anesti" "Alithos Anesti" Greek
12. "Jambo" Swahili	12. "Tot Siens"	
Lord Have Mercy – English Senior Ten Piedad – Spanish	Kyrie Elison – Greek Bwana Udu Mea – Swahili	Hospodi Pomiluy – Ukrainian Doamne Miluieshte - Romanian
	Irish Gaelic	13. "Tá Críod ar éirigh!" "Go deimhin, tá e ar éirigh!"