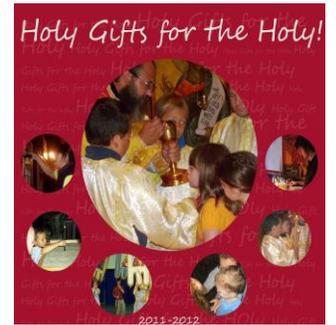


## *Holy Gifts for the Holy* *October - Focus on Worship!*



### *Focus-*

Bring your youth to a better understanding of what worship is and what it means in the Orthodox Church

### *Discussion -*

Children - Ask the children, "How do they show their parents that they love them?" Discuss that when we love someone we show them in very special ways. God is the most important person in our lives. He gives us everything, He created us and we want to thank Him and love Him as best we can. The way we show God that we love Him is in the way that we worship.

How do we worship in the Orthodox Church? Allow a few minutes for responses. Explain that the main form of worship in the Orthodox church is through its services. Ask the children what services they can name. The most important service is the Divine Liturgy - which means the work of the people. How is the Divine Liturgy like work? This month we will discover what that means.

Teenagers - (it is highly recommended to purchase and utilize the Heaven on Earth curriculum. If you are unable to purchase the curriculum, please utilize the following suggestions.)

What does it mean to worship? Allow time for discussion.

Utilize the Q & A provided on the OCA website. Ask the participants the questions. After they respond - read the answers provided.

State: We believe that the Divine Liturgy is the "work of the people", it is our active participation and worship of God. It is not a dramatization that we "watch" while the clergy enact like a show but something we are an integral part of.

Make copies of The Divine Liturgy section of the Orthodox Faith - Worship by Fr. Thomas Hopko. Either have the participants read it and then discuss or have them take it home and discuss through-out the coming month.

### *Look -*

Children - Remind the children each week to pay close attention to during the Divine Liturgy to see what "work" is being done. Discuss each of their observations. At the third week ask them to place special attention on Holy Communion. In the final week discuss how the Divine Liturgy is our most important form of worship because it is when we all partake as one family in Christ of Holy Communion. The work of the Divine Liturgy is the preparation and participation in this holy gift.

Teenagers - Have the participants conduct the same exercise as the children. In addition, ask them to discover how they are an active part of the Liturgy. What can they be doing to accomplish this participation.

### *Activities -*

Children - Have the children create collages of all of the different components that take place during the Liturgy (lighting candles, praying, making the sign of the cross, Small and Great Entrance, venerating icons, and holy communion.

Teenager - Receive the blessing from your priest to visit a local worship service of a different Christian

theology (Roman Catholic, Protestant, etc.). Prior to the service, remind the participants that this will be different from our form of worship but that does not mean that we should be judgmental of their way of worshiping.

Following the service take the participants out to lunch.

Discuss these points:

- What was similar to the service at our home parish?
- What was different?

In light of what we learned about the Divine Liturgy, what did you learn about our form of worship?

Be prepared ahead of time to answer questions concerning the theology of the other type of service. It is recommended to meet with your priest after the service to have him included in the discussion.

Keep notes of the discussion to use during a subsequent discussion during the year. Relate their perceptions on this outing as they grow in their understanding and love of the Divine Liturgy.