

Level 2: "God is With Us!"

*Focus: **God sends His Son to Earth to Save Us***

The whole earth prepares for the birth of Christ as we recognize the different calls or signs heard in the church hymns. We greet the child Jesus who is "God with Us" but raised as a child in a human family with his mother Mary, and Joseph. Jesus' parents bring Him to the Temple. Simeon and Anna recognize Him as the one who comes to save us.

Session 1 What is the Nativity Fast?

- **Identify** the steps in preparing for an important event (such as a trip).
- **Relate** these steps to the Church's preparation for the birth of Christ.
- **Create** an aid (paper chain or Advent Calendar) to help families prepare for Christmas.
- **Begin** to recognize and respond to the Christmas greeting: Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

Session 2 Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

- **Explain** how silence is important for being able to listen.
- **Tell** how Mary listened for and responded to God's call.
- **Listen**, in the hymns of the services, for examples of preparation for the coming of Christ.
- **Demonstrate** an understanding of the icon of the feast.

Session 3 The "Winter" Saints

- **Recognize** the varied meanings of the word, "hero."
- **Show** how saints should be our heroes, through the way that they lived their lives.
- **Retell** the major events of the life of St. Herman of Alaska.

Session 4 St. Nicholas of Myra and Lycia

- **Compare and contrast** the acts of "getting vs. giving."
- **Retell** the generous acts of St. Nicholas and list ways that we can imitate St. Nicholas in this way.
- **Sing** the troparion of St. Nicholas
- **Demonstrate an understanding** of good works by participating in a charitable project.

Session 5 The Ancestors of Christ

- **Retell** briefly the story of Abraham and Sarah and their son Isaac.
- **Give examples** of how God always keeps his promises.
- **Relate** personal experiences with promises, both kept and broken.

Session 6 The Genealogy of Jesus Christ

- **Describe** a genealogy as a "family tree."
- **Listen for and identify** the gospel reading of the Sunday before the Nativity as the genealogy (family tree) of Jesus Christ.
- **Recall** some of the names that are

listed in Jesus' Family Tree.

Session 7 The Prefeast of the Nativity

- Using the verses of Christmas Eve, **explain** what the different parts of God's creation offered Christ at His birth.
- **Understand** the role of the angels at the Nativity
- **Recite** their greeting: "Glory to God in the highest!"
- **Sing** the troparion of the Nativity.

Session 8 "God is With Us!"

- **Give reasons** why you think it was important for Jesus to come to us as a real person.
- **Sing** the refrain: "for God is with us!" as the verses are chanted on the eve of the Feast of the Nativity..
- **Tell** the story of Jesus' being brought to the Temple as a little child.
- **Sing** the prayer of St. Simeon.