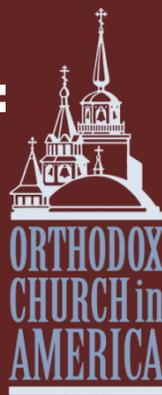


Blessed is the Kingdom: An Orthodox Church School Curriculum



Lesson 3

Preschool

The Great Litany

Objective: Through looking at The Great Litany students gain an understanding of corporate prayer and the peace of Christ gained through prayer.

Lesson Introduction

5 min

Begin by **saying** :

Last week we talked about how Adam and Eve disobeyed God and fell out of communion with God. They lost their connection. We also talked about some ways that we can regain that connection. Do you remember any of those ways? (Attend church, pray, be kind, fast) Our goal is to have God's peace. What do you think peace means?

Take answers, and then **explain**.

Peace can mean not fighting or arguing. But God's peace means more than this. It means feeling safe and secure. Christ is our peace. Through Him we are brought near to God.

Pull out the bowl with water. Then **say**:

Let's pretend this bowl of water is us. What are some things that may make you feel upset or angry?

Take answers and after each one, **sprinkle** a bit of pepper into the water. Then **say**:

Living in a fallen world, we encounter upsetting things. They can overwhelm us and cover us in worry. But thankfully, when we have God on our side, he protects us and grants us His peace. He sent his son, Christ, (hold up the soap) to help us overcome the world. His peace protects us.

Place the piece or drop of soap into the center of the bowl of water. The pepper should move away from the soap.



Opening Prayer

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth who art everywhere and fillest all things. Treasury of Blessings, and Giver of Life: Come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good one.

Supplies Needed

- Bowl with water
- Pepper
- Small piece of soap or drop of Dawn dish soap



Lesson—25 min

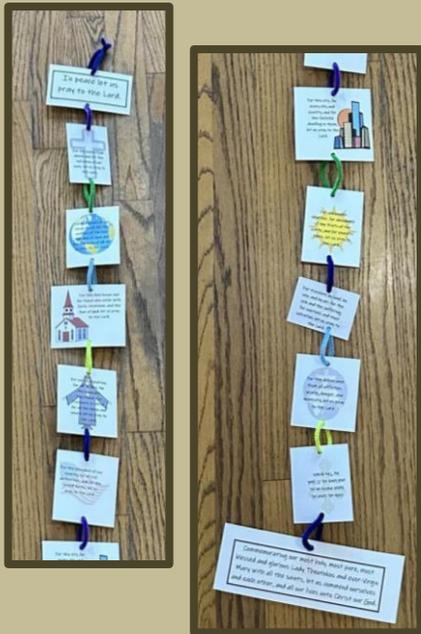
Supplies Needed

One per student:

- Small bag of candy to eat or take home, if desired

One per class:

- Device or screen to play audio or video
- The Great Litany printable (one for the teacher for the lesson portion)
- Plate
- Hard coated candy--enough to put in a circle around the plate
- Warm water



Liturgy Link

The Great Litany

<https://www.oca.org/media/video/20th-aac-thursday-morning-divine-liturgy>

Skip to 18:52-21:30 for this portion

Begin by **saying**:

We know from our past two lessons that Liturgy begins with "Blessed is the kingdom of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit". In church we begin our prayers with saying: "In peace let us pray to the Lord." When we say these prayers, we are not simply praying by ourselves or as a group, but we are praying as part of Christ's body or through Christ. This is what praying "in peace" means. That we are praying along with Christ. He is protecting us and guiding us like what we saw happen with the pepper and soap. Let's listen to what comes next in the service.

Listen to the entire Great Litany. Using The Great Litany printable, **read** each picture/petition, and **discuss** what each one means. After reading each, **ask** the students what they think it means, and then guide them through the answers below as needed. **If students need to get their wiggles out, practice standing and crossing themselves each time you read a petition.**

- **For the peace from above and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.**
 - *We are again requesting peace from Christ and our salvation into the Kingdom of God. We are praying to be joined with God as Adam and Eve were with Him in the garden.*
- **For the peace of the whole world, for the welfare of the holy churches of God, and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.**
 - *Not only are we praying for the whole world, but also it reminds us not to look to this world for that peace, but to look to God. We still ask God to protect the world and the Church and extend his peace to all.*
- **For this holy house and for those who enter with faith, reverence, and the fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.**
 - *What's the name of our church? Who is someone in our parish we can pray for?*
- **For our Metropolitan; for our Bishop; for the honorable Priesthood, the Diaconate in Christ, for all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord.**
 - *Remind students who their Metropolitan is, who their Bishop is, and who their priest and other parish clergy are.*
- **For the President of our country, for all civil authorities, and for the armed forces, let us pray to the Lord.**
 - *Remind them who their president is, and that we pray for them to have the peace of Christ as well.*
- **For this city, for every city and country(side), and for the faithful dwelling in them, let us pray to the Lord.**
 - *What city or town do we live in?*

Lesson Continued

5 Minute Bonus

Talk about praying in church versus praying at home privately. Set up a mini icon corner in your classroom to demonstrate things that can help us pray at home. Stand in front of these during your closing prayer. Some things to include: an icon, a cross, a prayer rope, a prayer book, a censor, a candle.

Supplemental Ideas

- Modge Podge an icon of Christ to add to their icon corner at home
- Decorate battery powered tea lights for their icon corners

Teacher Resource

OCA Essential Orthodox Christian Beliefs: A Manual for Adult Instruction

<https://www.oca.org/cdn/PDFs/2023-0609-EOCB.pdf>

Chapter 2 The Kingdom of God and the World



- **For seasonable weather, for abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.**
 - *What is seasonable weather? It is not always sun—rain is needed at times. Do any of you grow a garden?*
- **For travelers by land, by sea, and by air; for the sick and the suffering; for captives and their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.**
 - *We pray for all those in need. Do you know anyone traveling? Have you ever flown or gone on a road trip? Or anyone you can remember to pray for that is sick?*
- **For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.**
 - *What does affliction mean? (Sickness); what does wrath mean? (Anger); what could be a danger you would want to avoid? (Take answers); Necessities are needs; what is something you would need? (Take answers)*
- **Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.**
 - *We ask again for God's peace through His salvation and His mercy.*
- **Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, Let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.**
 - *We specifically remember the Theotokos and all the saints. And we likewise give all of our life to Christ. As everything we do should be for Him.*

After talking about all of the petitions of the Great Litany, **pull** out the plate and the hard coated candy. Then **say**:

When we come to church, we pray collectively as members of the church or the Body of Christ. In doing this we regain our connection with God, and work to have the peace of Christ that we talked about at the start of the lesson. We support each other in this life. Each of the candy represents one of us entering the church.

Place candy around the edge of the plate in a circle. Then slowly add warm water to the plate to slightly cover the candy. Then **continue**:

Our prayers (hold up the cup of water) surround us and mix together as a whole. The incense used in the service represents our prayers rising to heaven. Watch what happens when I add water (or prayers) to the candy.

Lesson Activities

Prayer Chain—10 min

Note: This craft may require an extra helper or two to help with the pipe cleaners depending on the number of students in your class.

Supplies needed: pages at the end of this lesson printed on cardstock (precut out with holes cut at the top and bottom of each); 6 pipe cleaners per student (cut in half); crayons or markers

Begin by **saying**:

Today you are going to get to create your own prayer chain to take home to remind you of the prayers we say during the Great Litany. If you want, you could bring this to Liturgy next week to help you follow along with the prayers.

Starting with the In Peace Let us pray to the Lord, hand out The Great Litany petitions one at a time. Have holes pre-punched on the top and bottom of each petition, so students can thread a pipe cleaner to connect them into a chain. Attach one to the top so they can hang them up in their prayer corner at home.

Depending on the time allotted, you can print the pages in black and white, and have the students color each one prior to connecting them.



Closing Thoughts— 5 min

Remind students of the peace of Christ, and that we want to strive to capture it in our lives. Before leaving to reenter the busy world, ask them to stand quietly for 30 seconds in front of an icon of Christ and be still and peaceful. Then recite the closing prayer together.

Body of Christ Tag—10 min

Supplies needed: space for students to run

Students stand in a line at one end of the room. The teacher is it (and represents the body of Christ or the church), and when they say go, everyone must run to the opposite side of the room.

If a student gets tagged by the teacher, then they are also it and link arms with the tagger. Thus they are growing the Body of Christ or the church. This creates a tagging “blob”, and makes it harder for students to pass them to get to the other side. The “it blob” continues to say go, and the other students continue to run back and forth on command until all students have joined the “blob”. They are now all members of the Body of Christ or part of the church.

If the “it blob” is struggling to tag students, then decrease the width of the boundaries of play, so that the blob can spread out side to side and make it almost impossible for the students to run past without getting tagged.



Closing Prayer

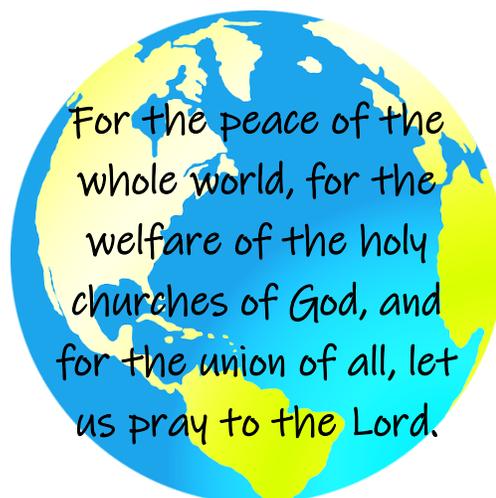
It is truly meet to bless you, O Theotokos, ever-blessed and most pure, and the Mother of our God. More honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, without defilement you gave birth to God the Word. True Theotokos we magnify you!

Craft Great Litany Petitions Printable 1

In peace let us
pray to the Lord.



For the peace from
above and for the
salvation of our
souls, let us pray to
the Lord.

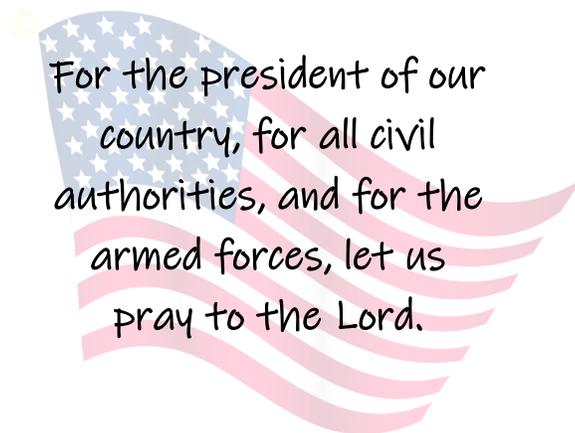


For the peace of the
whole world, for the
welfare of the holy
churches of God, and
for the union of all, let
us pray to the Lord.



For this holy house
and for those who
enter with faith,
reverence, and the
fear of God, let us
pray to the Lord.

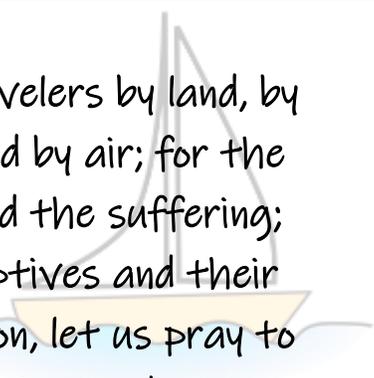
Craft Great Litany Petitions Printable 2



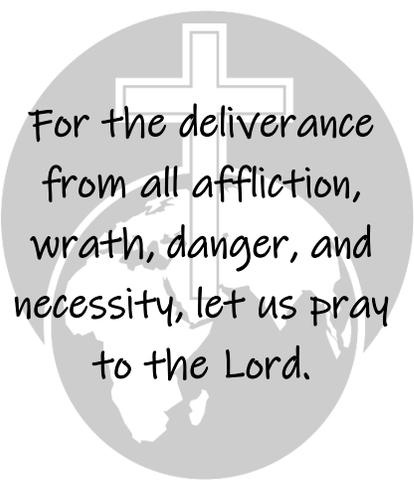
For this city, for
every city and
country, and for
the faithful
dwelling in them,
let us pray to the
Lord.



Craft Great Litany Petitions Printable 3



For travelers by land, by
sea, and by air; for the
sick and the suffering;
for captives and their
salvation, let us pray to
the Lord.



For the deliverance
from all affliction,
wrath, danger, and
necessity, let us pray
to the Lord.



Help us, save us,
have mercy on us,
and keep us, O God,
by Thy grace.

Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most
blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-Virgin
Mary with all the saints, let us commend ourselves
and each other, and all our lives unto Christ our God.