



byz kids
January 2023

Mysteries of Initiation

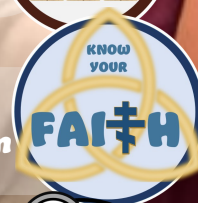
**S^t. Nonna
of Nazianzus**



**Do you remember
what your baptism
was like?**



**The Mystery
of Chrismation**



**Holy Communion
Mystery**



**A Baptismal Ornament Craft
Mysteries of Initiation Quotes
Calendar of events, Puzzle, and more.**



Cover Photo : Theia, being baptized by her dad, Fr. Zyad Abyad
Photo Credit : Jocelyn Abyad

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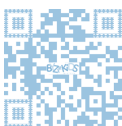
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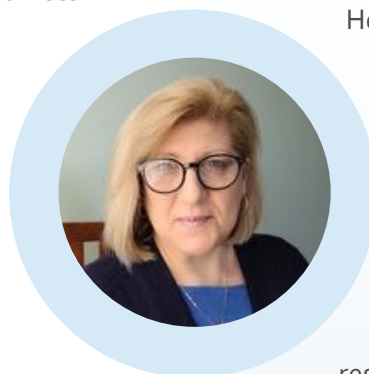
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check us out
online!

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Hello ByziParents!



Welcome to the start of our fifth year together! ByziKids has come so far from the online newsletter that it was back in 2018. We are so pleased to have such dedicated team members from all areas of the Eastern Christian Church community working together to bring you the best resources for bringing up your Byzantine family! We want to sincerely thank you for your faith in us and your support of our ministry.

January is a time for new beginnings. We begin 2023 by focusing on the Mysteries that initiate all of us into the Church, Baptism, Chrismation, and Holy Eucharist. These are ordinarily conferred upon us in infancy, so most of us don't remember participating in them for ourselves or how we felt after receiving these sacraments. However, we understand that these mysteries leave us changed and that we have the responsibility to act accordingly as newly enlightened members of the Body of Christ, which is the Church.

Let's work together this month to help our children understand what has changed. Let us remind them what was washed away by the water of baptism and discuss how all of their senses were sealed with Chrism at the peak of their perfection to be consecrated to God for use in His Kingdom. Remind them how the Body and Blood of Jesus nourish them to give them eternal life. What an excellent opportunity for us to revisit these Mysteries and renew our baptismal promises.

We hope to help you do just that so that in this new year of 2023, we can all begin again and become the best versions of ourselves that we can be.

Enjoy the issue!



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I SPY IN MY LITTLE ICON



By Kh. Jocelyn Abyad



As we have often mentioned before, icons are teaching tools- our very own windows into Heaven- and are not meant to depict physical realities specifically. This month's icon, The Communion of the Apostles, is a great example of this. This icon is teaching us the importance of Holy Communion within the Church and that this Mystery was instituted by Christ Himself at the Last Supper. It speaks of the eternal Liturgy going on in the Heavens that we are privileged to join when we attend our Divine Liturgy on Earth.

Christ is at the center of the icon, standing at the altar celebrating the Divine Liturgy. He wears a **red robe to symbolize His Divinity** with a **blue robe over it to symbolize His humanity**. In His halo, you see **Greek letters- O'ΩN-** which means "He who is." This is the name God announced to Moses on Mount Sinai so long ago. You will also notice the **Greek letters IC and XC** on either side of Christ. These are an abbreviation for "Jesus Christ" commonly found in icons as well.

Another interesting point to review in this month's icon is the marble **ciborium, or canopy**, above the altar. This decoration was common in ancient Byzantine churches. St. Gerasimos explained that the ciborium over the altar is representative of the Holy of Holies,

symbolizing that God again dwells in a place on Earth, specifically present on the altar in the Body and Blood of Christ during the Divine Liturgy.

The apostles approach Christ with their heads bowed in reverence. There are six men on each side lined up to receive Holy Communion. On the left, St. Peter leads the line and they are receiving the Body of Christ. On the right, they receive the Most Precious Blood. This is where the icon diverges from showing the historical picture of the Last Supper when Christ instituted the Eucharist. While Jesus was on Earth, Judas was present as one of the twelve apostles for this meal. However, since this icon represents the Mystical Supper that we all participate in, **Judas is omitted and replaced by St. Paul** at the head of the right side line. St. Paul was not at the Last Supper, but here we see his central role in forming the Early Church alongside the apostles by his inclusion among the twelve.

When we think about all the Holy Mysteries that we will receive in our lifetime, no Mystery is received more often than Holy Communion. As we receive this weekend, let us remember that it is truly Christ who is present with us, imparting Himself to us to strengthen us for the journey ahead.



A Child's Renewal of Baptismal Promises

Adapted from the Rite of Baptism in the Byzantine Church

By Lynne Wardach



Photo Credits : Jocelyn Abyad

Children can understand the concept of choosing good over evil as they grow in age. Your family may decide that the time is right to review the change that took place in each of you when you presented yourselves to receive the mystery of Baptism according to the Church, and take responsibility for the promises that were made in your name.

The following is taken directly from the Church's official rite of baptism but has been slightly modified for use at home. This revised text is not meant to be used for the conference of a sacrament but as a personal reminder of the promises made by the child, by his godparents on his behalf, to Christ.

All turn to face west to address the enemy, as to face east is seen as facing the direction of God in Heaven.

Parent: Do you reject the evil one, all his works, all his fallen angels, all forms of service to him, and all his empty promises?

Response: I do reject him!

Parent: Do you reject the evil one, all his works, all his fallen angels, all forms of service to him, and all

his empty promises?

Response: I do reject him!

Parent: Do you reject the evil one, all his works, all his fallen angels, all forms of service to him, and all his empty promises?

Response: I do reject him!

Note that we reject three times because we do it to the highest degree...make no mistake. We mean what we say.

Parent: Have you rejected the evil one?

Response: I have rejected him!...(three times)

All turn to face east as we turn away from evil and address God!

Parent: Do you join yourself to Christ?

Response: I join myself to Him!...(three times)

(again, three times as a sign that we mean what we say!)

Parent: Do you believe in him?

Response: I believe in Him as my King and as my God!

Recite the Creed:

This is the official proclamation of what we Christians must believe. We recite this as a proclamation that we believe it too and declare ourselves to be faithful members of the Church.

I believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, creator of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, the only begotten, born of the Father before all ages. Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, one in essence with the Father. Through Whom all things were made. For us and for our salvation He came down from heaven: and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary, and became man. He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate; and suffered, and was buried. He rose on the third day, according to the Scriptures: He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He is coming again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom will have no end. And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, and Creator of life, who proceeds from the Father. Who together with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, Who spoke through the Prophets. In one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. I profess one baptism for the remission of sins. I expect the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Parent: Have you joined yourself to Christ?

Response: I have joined myself to Him!...(three times)

Parent: Then bow in worship.

Response: I bow before the +Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: Trinity, one in being and undivided.

Parent: Blessed be God, Who wants all men to be saved and to come to know the truth, now and forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Parent: Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Parent: O Master, Lord our God, call Your servant, **name**, to Your holy Illumination, and deem him(her) worthy of this great grace of Your holy baptism. Wash away his(her) old self and renew him(her) to everlasting life. Fill **name** with the power of Your Holy Spirit to be united to Christ and no longer to be a child of natural descent but rather a child of Your kingdom.

Through the love for mankind and grace of Your only-begotten Son with Whom You are blessed together with Your most holy, good, and life-giving Spirit, now and forever and ever.

All: Amen.



Photo Credits : Jocelyn Abyad

Quotes

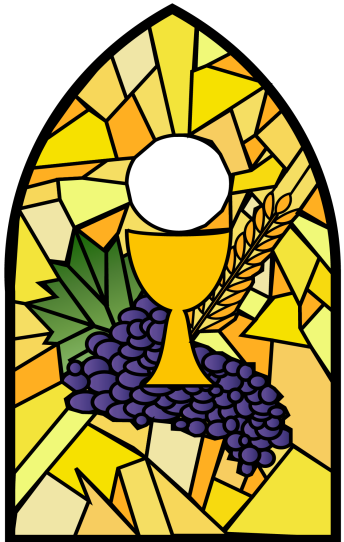


St. Justin Martyr

“We call this food Eucharist, and no one else is permitted to partake of it, except one who believes our teaching to be true and who has been washed in the washing which is for the remission of sins and for regeneration [i.e., has received baptism] and is thereby living as Christ enjoined. For not as common bread nor common drink do we receive these; but since Jesus Christ our Savior was made incarnate by the word of God and had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so too, as we have been taught, the food which has been made into the Eucharist by the Eucharistic prayer set down by him, and by the change of which our blood and flesh is nurtured, is both the flesh and the blood of that incarnated Jesus” (First Apology 66 [A.D. 151]).

St. Augustine

“I promised you [new Christians], who have now been baptized, a sermon in which I would explain the sacrament of the Lord’s Table. . . . That bread which you see on the altar, having been sanctified by the word of God, is the body of Christ. That chalice, or rather, what is in that chalice, having been sanctified by the word of God, is the blood of Christ” (Sermons 227 [A.D. 411]).



HIPPOLYTUS

“Baptize first the children, and if they can speak for themselves let them do so. Otherwise, let their parents or other relatives speak for them” (The Apostolic Tradition 21:16 [A.D. 215]).

Origen:

“The Church received from the apostles the tradition of giving baptism even to infants. The apostles, to whom were committed the secrets of the divine sacraments, knew there are in everyone innate strains of [original] sin, which must be washed away through water and the Spirit” (Commentaries on Romans 5:9 [A.D. 248])

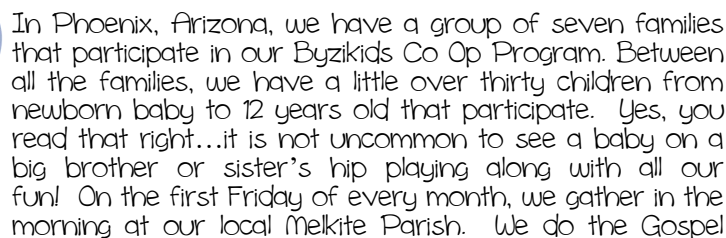


St Ephrem the Syrian:

“By the seal of the Holy Spirit are sealed all the entrances into your soul; by the seal of the anointing all your members are sealed.”

St. Cyril of Jerusalem:

This ointment is symbolically applied to your forehead and to your other senses; while your body is anointed with the visible ointment, your soul is sanctified by the holy and life-giving Spirit. Just as Christ, after his baptism, and the coming upon him of the Holy Spirit, went forth and defeated the adversary, so also with you after holy baptism and the mystical chrism, having put on the panoply of the Holy Spirit, you are to withstand the power of the adversary and defeat him, saying, ‘I am able to do all things in Christ, who strengthens me!’”



For October, the Byzikiads theme was sewing and vestments. We were able to take an up close look at our priest's vestments during the Greek lesson and had a lot of fun solving the Gospel puzzle of the week together. After completing our iconography lesson about St. Hinnia the Laundress, we donned our own costumes and put on a performance about her life. Our snack was even on topic- we "sewed" fruit and cheese onto skewers and then enjoyed our "kabobs" together! We have so much fun as a group and it makes the lessons so much more memorable when we learn side by side with friends. We invite you to do the same in your own town!



Scan the QR code for the video of the skit!



KNOW YOUR FAITH

By Lynne Wardach

The Mystery of Chrismation



Ruthanne being chrismated after her baptism
Photo Credit : Kathryn Reetzke



Photo Credit : Rebecca O'Loughlin

Acts 2:38-39: Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the **gift of the Holy Spirit**. The promise is **for you and your children** and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

During the mystery of Chrismation, the Holy Spirit descended upon each and every one of us just as He did upon the twelve apostles at Pentecost! Did you know that when you were Chrismated, the priest anointed every one of your senses with a special oil known as Holy Chrism, sealing them with it to keep them pure, strong, and dedicated to God His service?

He anointed your....

Forehead, because you can not love what you do not know, but we can come to know God! How? Well, by reading His Word in our scripture stories, through the teachings of His Church at catechism classes, and through speaking to Him daily in our prayer. By this blessing, the priest asked the Holy Spirit to bless your mind and help your soul understand the things of God and your own place in God's kingdom. Keep your mind pure and try to think about God and holy things always.

Eyes, because Scripture tells us, "*The eye is the lamp of your body; when your eye is clear, your whole body also is full of light; but when it is bad, your body also is full of darkness.*" In order to consecrate your eyes to the service of God, it goes without saying that you must guard what it is that you allow yourself to see. It's impossible to "unsee" something, and memories of sights once seen will stay in the mind and can become a torment for us or even lead us to temptation. We need to keep those kinds of sights away and look only at things that will lead us to appreciate the goodness and beauty of the world, the landscape, and the forms and structures found in nature as God has created it so that we can learn to see God in everything and in everyone.

Nose, since the nose filters out impurities in the atmosphere around us so that we breathe in pure and clean air. Likewise, we need to discern which elements of our spiritual atmosphere can be allowed to pass into our being to nourish our souls and which elements must be filtered out as contaminants. This applies to books, movies, magazines, television programming, computer games, conversations, friends, classes, activities, trends, and fashions...everything! Become your own filter!

Mouth The mouth has two functions; it is used for both speaking and eating.

Concerning speech: *Form good speech habits, praise God, and support each other with positive and helpful speech. Refuse to engage in bad language, disparagement of others, and crude talk that is unbefitting a Christian. Consecrate all of your speech to God and His work.*

Concerning Nourishment: *Let's learn how to participate properly in all of the feasts and fasts of the Church in order to nourish and care for the body that God has provided for us.*

Ears: When we consecrate our ears to God's service, we learn to listen for the voice of Christ when others speak to us. It is obvious to consider what you do hear, but you must also be aware of how important it is to appreciate the absence of sound. Try often to be still; learn to listen for the small, still voice of God within you, speaking to your heart!

Chest, because that is where your heart is located! It's so very important to learn how to love! Love means that we want what is best for the salvation of others, especially those who are not kind to us. Remember that the Gospel of the Sheep and Goats tells us that we must learn to love well so that we can be counted among the sheep!

Hands: The love that you cultivate in your hearts should lead you to work and pray for others! Try to work, clean, cook, etc. cheerfully....a good work ethic is so very pleasing to God, who loves a "cheerful giver." Develop the habit of giving gifts of service to others; send cards and handmade gifts to loved ones, spiritual fathers, and religious too! Collect pennies for the poor and use them to buy Thanksgiving items for the food drive or gather items for a clothing drive. Help your parents to deliver meals to those who are grieving a loss or welcoming a newborn. Handiwork makes a great gift to others and to God. Create things in imitation of the Father and give them to others as He gives to us!

Feet: Our feet are blessed so that we can not only profess to be Christians but can also "walk the walk." Choose an honorable path and bring the light of Christ to others wherever you may go. Also, GO to Liturgy and participate in everything in it as soon as possible. Stand, sing (even if you do so very loudly and off-key!...God loves to hear little voices, and so do most parishioners!) Participate in processions, pilgrimages, and missions, do prostrations when it is appropriate, and make an excellent sign of the cross as a witness to everyone that you are a believer.

YOU are the next generation of believers, and you should not only be welcomed but encouraged to participate. Remember that the Holy Spirit has sealed all these gifts that God has given to all little believers in your perfection when you were Chrismated. It's up to the whole Church to provide the right conditions and encouragement so that you can have the courage to open these gifts up and share them with the world!



A Baptismal Ornament Craft



Theophany is a perfect time to focus on reviewing the sacrament of baptism as a family and what it means to you! Take the time to reminisce a bit with your children about the day they were baptized. Show them the photographs and videos and let them know that it was important to you to have brought them to the fullness of membership in the Church and to have them freed from ancestral sin brought to us by our first parents, Adam and Eve. The waters of baptism perform both those actions for us and by it we are introduced to our life as a true Christian.

You may choose to have the children renew their baptismal vows today so that they can feel and know that they have freely made this declaration of faith for themselves and should take ownership of that decision and nurture their souls accordingly, as they have promised.

You may also want to mark the occasion of the renewal of the children's baptismal vows by having them make this little commemorative ornament! It can be packed away with the Christmas things and be brought out each year, and perhaps hung on the Christmas tree, to remember the occasion.

We use a scallop shell, a longstanding symbol of the sacrament of baptism because the shell was often used as an instrument to pour water over the head of the catechumen. Because shells are often symbols of a journey or traveling to a new place, perhaps the scallop shell symbolizes the journey the soul will take along its new path of Christianity as well.

You Will Need

- Scallop shell, one per person, with a hole drilled into the top of the shell (parents help required) (can be bought at most craft stores, or in the aquarium section of most pet shops)
- Old nail polish, or craft paint
- Sharpie Marker
- Ribbon for hanging

Optional: Craft store pearl beads, one per person
Gold marker for decorating the edge of the shell

Instructions

Each person should take their shell and thinly paint the outer surface with nail polish or craft paint and allow it to completely dry.

While the paint is drying, discuss the day each of the children was baptized. Tell each of them the date of their baptism and let them know that it should be a special day for them, like their birthday and their name-day! Have the children practice writing their full name and the date on which they were baptized on a sheet of paper, so they can write it nicely later on.

Once the paint is completely dry (this is very important!), take the sharpie marker and have them write their full name and the date of their baptism on the inside of their shell.

Once this is completely dry, paint over the entire shell, inside and out, with clear nail polish, or spray it with varnish to seal and protect their work. Once the shells are completely dry, you can hot glue a craft pearl to the top of the inside of the shell for decoration, perhaps apply some markings to the edge of the shell with a metallic gold marker, thread the ribbon through the hole that was drilled into the shell, and hang it up to enjoy!



MEANWHILE, BACK IN BYZANTIUM

by Kathryn Reetzke

Do you remember what your baptism was like? Have you seen others baptized? Ask your parents for a photo of the day you were baptized and compare it to the icon of St Ananias baptizing St Paul (formerly Saul) below.



Source of St Ananias baptized Saul, becoming St Paul from Monastery Decani, Kosovo 1335-1350

As most of us know, the main cathedral in the city of Constantinople during Byzantine times was the Hagia Sophia. It stood against the city scape as a welcoming reminder to Christians of the majesty of the faith. It also housed ways for Christians to “put on Christ” through the sacrament of Holy Baptism. This sacrament welcomes new members into the faith by being immersed in the watery grave of baptism, a new person emerges from the waters ready to serve God.

We still have at least two artifacts of baptismal fonts remaining from when Hagia Sophia was a Christian Cathedral. The Byzantine baptismal chapel was converted to Sultan’s tombs when Muslims converted the church into a mosque. There remains a smaller baptismal font displayed in the museum in the Exonarthex. The larger one pictured below was removed from the baptistery, yet remained intact despite being buried under soil in the courtyard. It would’ve be used during the reign of St Justinian and St Theodora when the church was restored after a fire. It is large enough for two adults to comfortably stand inside.



Photo of the marble Baptismal font discovered in 2010 from 6th century unearthed in Hagia Sophia.

Source:
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/byzants/48276984526/in/photostream>

May Christ who was baptized in the Jordan continue to bless us in the Holy Sacrament of our baptisms!

Caught You Listening

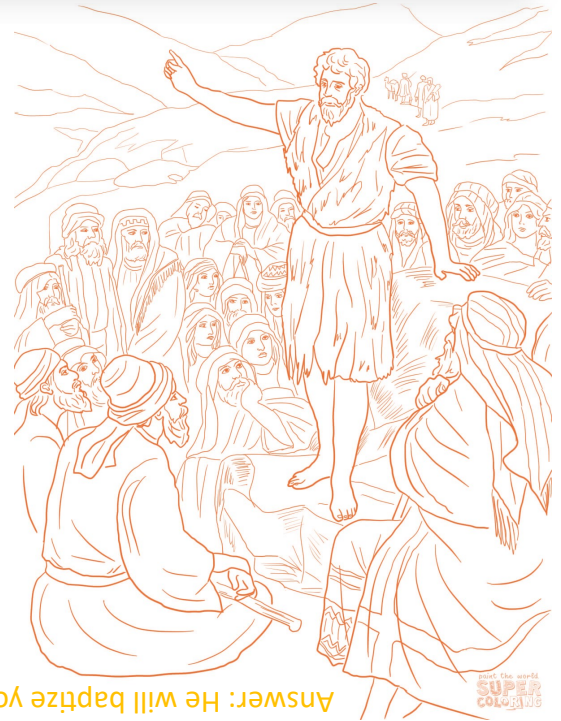
Khouria Sylvia Dorham

January 1, 2023

Gospel: Mark 1: 1-8

John the Forerunner baptized the people, listening to their confessions. He told them someone greater than him was coming. What did he say the person would do? Change one letter in each word to find out!

Hi
Wall
Raptize
Yon
Wits
She
Hold
Opirit



Answer: He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.

January 8, 2023

Matthew 4: 12-17

The Gospel today has a quote from Isaiah the prophet. Draw a line from each person to what he gives and find out what a prophet gives to people.

Mailman	Cleanliness
Priest	Letters and packages
Teacher	Rides
Prophet	Sacraments
Cook	Writings
Driver	Prophecy
Cleaner	Knowledge
Author	Meals



Icon courtesy of Iconographics (www.theologic.com)

Answers: Mailman: Letters and packages; Priest: Sacraments; Teacher: Knowledge; Prophet: Prophecy; Cook: Meals; Driver: Rides; Cleaner: Cleanliness; Author: Writings

January 15, 2023

Gospel: Matthew 15:21-28

Today's Gospel is about a woman who had great faith in Jesus.

Open your Bible and read the Gospel selection. Number the woman's actions in the order she did them. The first one is done for you.

- ___ Tells Jesus her daughter is demon possessed.
- ___ Cries out after Jesus' disciples.
- 1 Cries out to Jesus
- ___ She came and worshiped him, saying, "Lord, help me!"
- ___ Her daughter is healed by Jesus.
- ___ Says, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David"
- ___ She convinces Jesus to help her.



Answer: 3;4;1;5;7;2;6

January 22, 2023

Gospel: Luke 19:1-10

Today's Gospel takes place in a town with an exciting history!

In Joshua chapter 6, spies of Israel stay at the house of a woman who most people don't like. Later, the walls of the city fall down! When Jesus comes to Jericho in today's Gospel, he also stays at the house of someone most people don't like, Zaccheus, the tax collector. Later, the walls of Zaccheus' heart fall down!

For each letter in the word JERICHO, write a word starting with that letter that has to do with the events in Jericho. The first one has been done for you.

Jesus

E.....

R.....

I.....

C.....

H.....

O.....



Answers will vary

• IT'S ALL GREEK TO ME •



The Mysteries of Initiation

Written by Father Sebastian

This month we meditate upon the Holy Mysteries of Baptism, Chrismation, and Eucharist.

The word "mystery" is from the Greek *mysterion*. The apostles used this Greek word to describe the actions of God in salvation history (1 Cor 4:1), particularly those that bring us into Christ (Gal 3:27) and through which we are, therefore, saved (1 Pet 3:20-21).

The word "mystery" was chosen by the apostles because, while we know something about God's actions, we never completely understand them. They are, like God, beyond the grasp of the human mind. They are mysteries.

Rev. Sebastian Carnazzo, PhD is pastor of St Elias Melkite Church in San Jose, CA (STELIASMELKITE.ORG) and teaches online Greek classes for kids through The Academy of Classical Greek (ACADEMYOFCCLASSICALGREEK.COM)



Have you ever wished there was something similar to the Christmas Jesse Tree activity to help you better prepare your children for Pascha? When friends began to implement my Jesse Tree Guide, this became a frequent request and so I began to compile The Zacchaeus Tree. This daily guide will lead the entire family from Zacchaeus Sunday right through to the Resurrection.

The Zacchaeus Tree

is the result of decades of teaching, crafting, cooking, sharing, and compiling memories with my own little saints, as well as with the many catechism students I've taught over the years. It is my honor and my joy to share it with your family. I hope that it will help you and your children see Christ more clearly as you, just like Zacchaeus, make the Lenten climb toward heaven.

Lessons include:

- Preparatory discussion of the season of the Great Fast as outlined by the Byzantine pre-Lenten Sundays.
- Daily meditations for adults and children, leading through the Passion of Christ, and a guided discussion of each lesson.
- Accompanying crafts, projects, recipes, or suggestions for each daily lesson that will earn each child a leaf to put on his own Zacchaeus Tree, as a gift to Jesus.
- Instructions and discussion on the hymns and prayers that are contained in the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. Zacchaeus Sunday is January 17/ February 14! -
- Available at ByziMom.com/gift-shop

The Zacchaeus Tree

A Family Guide Through
the Season of the Great Fast



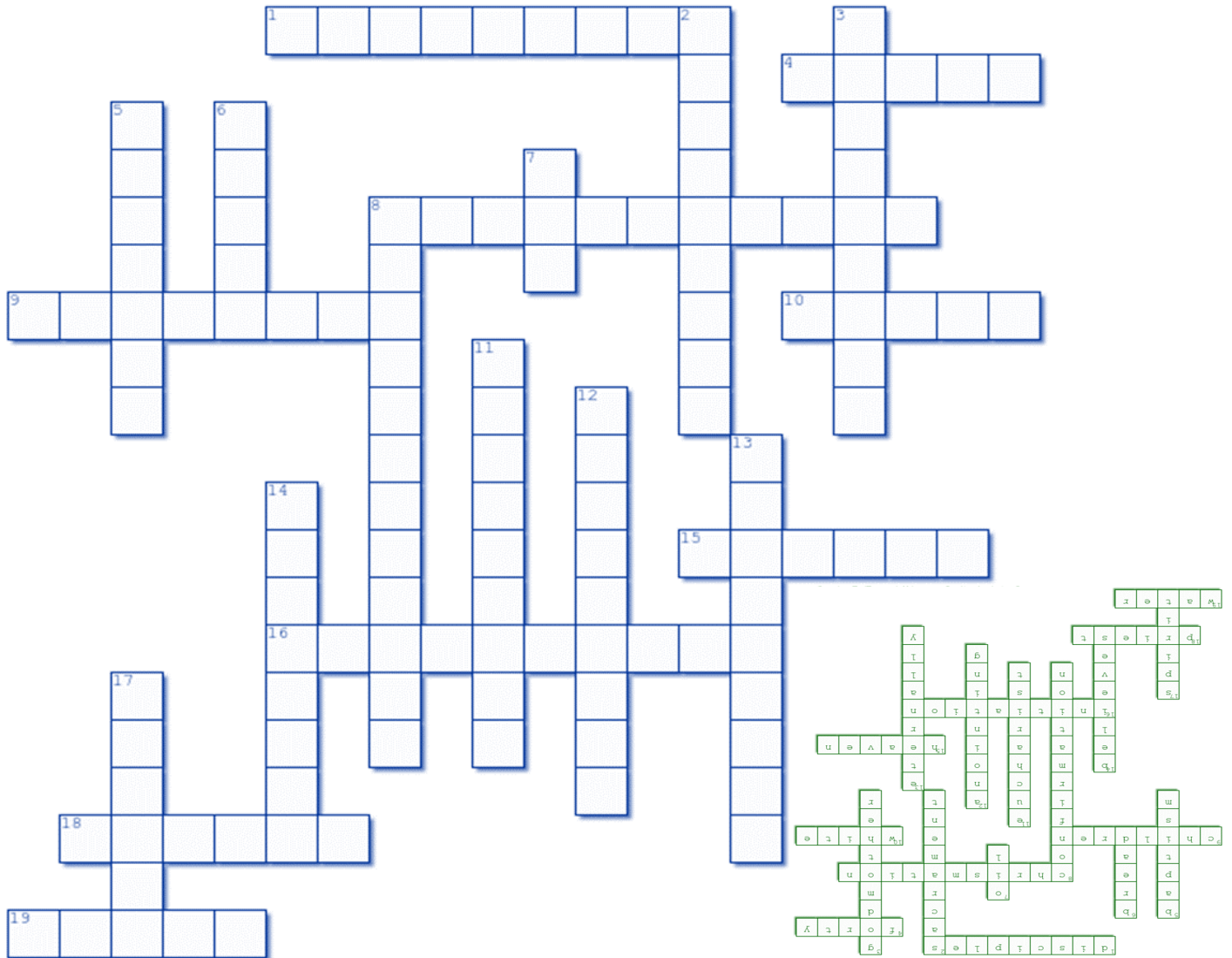
by
Lynne Drozdik Wardach

39 C 16 R 21 O 27 S 27 S

14 W 21 O 16 R 74 D

68 P 19 U 37 Z 37 Z 34 L 15 E

Name: _____



Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

Across

1. (Mt 28:19) Go therefore & make _____ of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father & of the Son & of the Holy Spir
4. traditionally, babies receive the holy mysteries when they are _____ days old
8. 'the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit'
9. (Luke 18:15) Jesus says, "Let the _____ come to me and do not hinder them."
10. we put on _____ clothes after baptism to symbolize our purity
15. (Jn 6:50) This is the bread that comes down from _____ so that one may eat it and not die
16. The mysteries of _____ make us part of the Christian family
18. Before baptism, the _____ blesses water to make it holy through God's power
19. _____ is necessary for baptism

Down

2. another word for holy mystery
3. During the mysteries of initiation, the _____ holds the baby
5. the very first holy mystery
6. (1 Cor 11:26) For as often as you eat this _____ & drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes
7. _____ is used at chrismation many times
8. the mystery of chrismation is sometimes called _____
11. the body and blood of Jesus Christ
12. (1Jn 2:20) 'You have _____ (chrism) from the Holy One, and know all things'
13. Our Christian baptism stays with us forever- _____
14. (Mk 16:16) Whoever _____ and is baptized will be saved
17. (Acts 8:17) The apostles laid hands on them and they received the Holy _____

Once Upon a SAINT

Rebecca O'Loughlin

St. Nonna of Nazianzus



Source : <https://iconandlight.wordpress.com/2017/01/25/saint-nonna-mother-of-saint-gregory-the-theologian/>

In the 4th century, in a small Province in what is now Turkey, lived a beautiful Christian girl named Nonna. Nonna belonged to a wealthy family, and they all adored Christ. However, rather than marry Nonna to another Christian, her parents chose a wealthy landowner in Nazianzus to be her husband. His name was Gregory. He was very kind, but he was a funny sort of pagan who believed in one Creator of all, yet also worshiped fire and other Earth powers as lesser gods who demand glorification. He often sang rowdy pagan songs around the house that Nonna found quite shocking. His paganism made Nonna very unhappy, for she wished to have a Christian family, but she was determined to be a good wife and mother. She loved her new husband very much, for he really was a nice person, and very interesting to talk to.

In time, Gregory and Nonna had three lovely children. Their names were Gregory, Caesarius, and Gorgonia. Religion in those days was through the father only, so poor Nonna was not permitted to teach her children very much about Christ. This caused her a great deal of suffering. Nonna decided that the best way to bring her family to Christ was to convert her husband. So, every day Nonna offered up all her sufferings for her husband to know Christ, and she prayed ceaselessly.



One night, Gregory (the elder) had a dream of being Baptized, Chrismated, and finally receiving the Body of Christ in the Holy Eucharist. He woke with a strong desire to become Christian, and he told Nonna about it immediately. She was overjoyed, as you can imagine,

and from then on, Gregory was a devout Christian. In fact, it wasn't long before he consecrated his whole self to God, becoming deacon, priest and bishop in Nazianzus. He was even present at the first Ecumenical Council! Meanwhile, Gregory and Nonna's three children grew up, and Nonna became a deaconess, dedicating her life to good works for the poor and to ministry in the Church. In those days deaconesses were especially necessary to help during baptism for other women, but they had many other duties as well.

Gregory and Nonna's two younger children, Caesarius and Gorgonia, became Christian before too long, receiving the Sacraments of Initiation like Gregory the Elder. But their elder brother Gregory (the younger) held off, instead traveling around the world and having what he thought was great fun. Gregory happily set out with some pleasant new friends he had made, intending to sail from Alexandria to Athens. It was the wrong time to go sailing, however, and the crew soon grew terrified by a terrible storm that arose. While the sailors were worried about losing their lives, Gregory soon realized that he was terrified of losing his soul. He began to petition God loudly, begging God to let him live until he could be baptized. Soon the entire ship was making the same plea, promising to give their lives to God, if only He would spare them. Gregory later related that it was like being in a ship of family, they were all of one mind and prayer!

Suddenly, the young cabin boy saw Nonna walking calmly across the sea, taking hold of the bow and carefully pulling the ship to shore. When asked about the instance later, Nonna admitted that she and her husband had been woken up by a dream that their son was in need, and the two of them immediately began to pray for Gregory's safety. The entire ship kept their promise to God, and converted to Christianity. Gregory (the younger) was finally Baptised, Chrismated and received His first Holy Communion! Not long after, he became a priest, and then a Bishop and Patriarch, eventually becoming our beloved doctor of the Church, Gregory Nanzianzus.

It was not long before Gregory and Nonna's younger children, Caesarius and Gorgonia, died and went to heaven. They are honored as saints and thanks to the stories that their brother St. Gregory Nazianzus tells of them, they are known to have been exemplary spouses and parents. Many of their own children also became known saints. The year after the death of his two younger children, holy Gregory (the elder) also passed on, having reached more than 100 years old! Nonna was very sad to lose so many in her family, and she decided that she too was ready to leave this world. But young Gregory was not ready to lose his mother! This time it was Nonna's son who prayed in the night. In the morning he went to see his mother, and asked if she needed anything. "What more could I need, dear son?" she replied, with a peaceful smile, "it was enough that you fed me during the night and stayed by my side!"

Gregory was surprised, but the nurses motioned for him to say nothing. Later they related to him that Nonna had seen Gregory take the sweetest, freshest bread to her. He blessed it and they shared it together. The nurses cautioned Gregory not to say anything contrary-wise, since they had not seen Nonna so healthy or happy in a long time. Gregory believed it was God's grace though his prayers and that granted his mother this beautiful and healing vision and food.

Nonna's feast day is celebrated by the Catholics and Orthodox alike, on August 5th. Although they lived in Turkey, her family was originally from Greece, and the name Nonna is derived from the Greek word for the word "ninth" one. This could mean that St. Nonna was the ninth child in her family, or perhaps that she was born in the ninth month. She is prayed to especially by people who have lost their own children, and has as her special patronage Catholic or Orthodox information services, responses, and women's organizations.





CHOIR PRACTICE

Khouria Sylvia Dorham

Holy Mysteries of Initiation

How do we join
God's family?
By initiation,
1-2-3

Baptism
Chrismation
Eucharist

The first holy mysteries
On the list

CHORUS:

Holy Mysteries
Number one: baptism
Two and three
Chrismation
Eucharist

Born again in
The water font
To wear the robe of light
Is all I want

CHORUS

Signed with oil
From toe to tip
Seal of the Gift
Of the Holy Spirit

CHORUS

The servant of God
Receives the Body and Blood
To take away their sin
And live forever in love.

CHORUS



Scan
To
Hear



Prayer Before Communion

O Lord, I believe and profess
that you are truly Christ,
The Son of the living God,
who came into the world
To save sinners of whom I am the first.

Accept me today
as a partaker of your mystical supper,
O Son of God,
For I will not reveal
your mystery to your enemies,
Nor will I give you a kiss as did Judas,
But like the thief I profess to you:

Remember me, O Lord,
when you come into your kingdom.
Remember me, O Master,
when you come into your kingdom.
Remember me, O Holy One,
when you come into your kingdom.

May the partaking of your
Holy mysteries, O Lord,
Be not for my judgment or condemnation,
But for the healing of my soul and body.

O Lord, I also believe and profess, that this,
Which I am about to receive,
Is truly your most precious Body,
and your life-giving Blood,

Which, I pray, make me worthy to receive
For the remission of all my sins
and for life everlasting. Amen

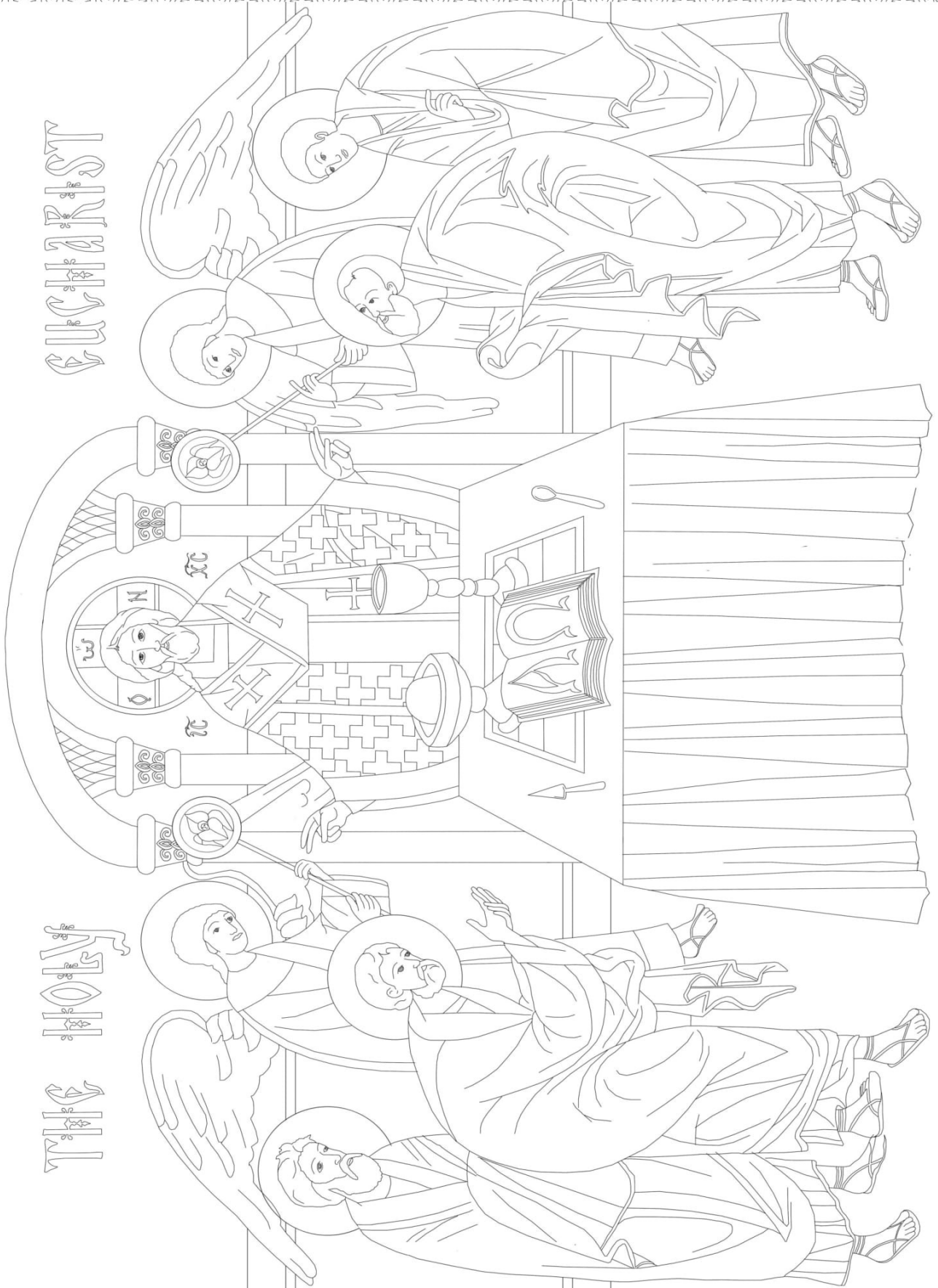
O God, be merciful to me, a sinner.
O God, cleanse me of my sins
and have mercy on me.
O Lord, forgive me
for I have sinned without number.



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EUCCHARIST

THE HOLY



JANUARY

Calendar of Events

January
1st

Feast of the Circumcision of Our Lord. The Feast of St. Basil the Great;

- Make [Vasilopita](#), share, and see who gets the coin!
- Feast of St. Emilia—Have a family dinner with [St. Emilia Crockpot Fondue Recipe](#)

January
2nd

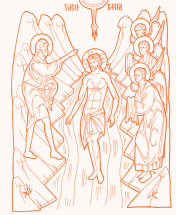
St. Seraphim of Sarov



- Make St. Seraphim [Mushroom Cookies Recipe](#) (Courtesy of Mrs. Lillian Baron)
- Get the [St. Seraphim Coloring Page](#)

January
6th

Theophany: the Great Blessing of the Waters



- Learn about the [Theophany Icon](#) and [color your own!](#)
- Print the [Theophany Crossword](#)
- Prepare for your House Blessing, Print the [House Blessing Prayer](#) & [Maze](#)
- Learn the [Hymn To Jordan's Water](#), Sheet Music courtesy of the Metropolitan Cantor Institute
- Renew your [Baptismal Vows](#), and then make a commemorative
- [Baptismal Ornament](#) for your tree!
- Learn the Greeting for Theophany in 7 languages!

January
16th

Commemoration of the Chains of St. Peter

- Have some [Chains of St. Peter Soup](#) for lunch!

January
17th

St. Anthony the Great



- [Learn about his icon](#) and then print the [St. Anthony Coloring Page](#)

January
22nd

Zacchaeus Sunday for many Eastern Catholics!



We have so many activities and printables to help you prepare for the Great Fast!!

- [Zacchaeus Tree Potted Plant Craft](#), Coloring Page, Tree Maze
- [Zacchaeus Tree Cinnamon Roll Recipe](#)
- [Hymn for Zacchaeus Sunday](#), from our friends at the Metropolitan Cantor Institute
- Get the [Countdown to Great Lent Calendar](#) (For both the Julian & Gregorian Paschalion)

January
24th

St. Xenia of Rome:

- Make [St. Xenia's Wreath of Star Cookies](#)



January
29th

Sunday of the Publican & the Pharisee (EC)/ Zacchaeus Sunday (EO)



- Make a [Jesus Prayer Chotki Craft](#)
- Check out the [Publican & Pharisee Cookies Recipe](#)

January
31st

Learn the 3 Holy Hierarchs Song



- Print the [Coloring Page](#)
- Make a Triple Hierarch Metro(neo)politan Cake to celebrate!



Scan the QR code to see the links