

# BYZ KIDS

November 2023

## Divine Liturgy St. John Chrysostom





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# G

lory to Jesus Christ!

Dear ByziParents,



St. John Chrysostom says,  
“Let everything take second place to our care of our children, our bringing them up to the discipline and instruction of the Lord. If, from the beginning, we teach them to love true wisdom, they will have great wealth and glory than riches can provide.”

During the last week of July, I was honored to be invited to present ideas for a fresh approach to the education of our Byzantine Children to the God With Us: Eastern Catholic Formation Committee during their meeting at Sts. Cyril and Methodius Seminary in Pittsburgh. Under the direction of Bishop Francois Beyrouti of the Melkite Diocese of Newton and guided by Father Daniel Dozier of the Ruthenian Eparchy of Phoenix, the committee of eight members met, along with me, to discuss plans for the upcoming school year and beyond.

It was a new start for the God With Us group with new leadership, a new name and logo, and a fresh outlook. They discussed how they could bring their catechetical resources up to date and make them more relevant and accessible to today's ByziFamilies who need online and homeschool resources and updated lessons that reflect the issues their children face in our modern world. They talked about the development of radio programming, podcasts, online webinars, VBS materials, certification programs, and a spiral-based lesson plan for small parishes with few students and even fewer catechists. Their creativity in brainstorming ways they could witness to others was contagious!

In an age such as this, where we see congregations dwindling and fervor waning, it was a blessing to see so many eager to work together to revive and refresh our catechetical system! We are in such good hands!

St. John Chrysostom would be proud.

Enjoy the issue!

*Lynne*



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# I SPY IN MY LITTLE ICON



By Kh. Jocelyn Abyad

## St. John Chrysostom



This month's icon features St. John Chrysostom. He is a very important saint for our Byzantine Tradition- he is recognized as one of the Three Holy Hierarchs of the Church, he wrote the Divine Liturgy that we pray each Sunday, and his homilies continue to inspire us nearly 2,000 years after he spoke them. Though small in stature- he was only about five feet tall- his impact on the Church is huge!

St. John was born in the year 347 AD in Antioch and was trained to be a lawyer under the most prestigious teacher of his time, Libanius. When he was baptized at the age of 23, he decided to use all that he had learned in the service of Christ's Church instead of pursuing a secular career. He sought out a monastic life of solitude, but his inspiring sermons excited so many people, they took him by force and made him the Patriarch of Constantinople in the year 396 AD. In fact, the people loved his homilies so much that they gave him the name we know him by! "Chrysostom" means "golden mouthed" in Greek. They felt his words were as valuable as gold!

As Patriarch, St. John's homilies continued to garner an enormous amount of attention. He was known for criticizing excessive wealth & opulent living. The Empress at the time took these homilies as a personal offense, and along with other noblemen, set out to exile St. John as an enemy of the state. This exile did not deter the saint from continuing to write letters to the Church to encourage and instruct his flock.

If we take a look at the icon today, we can see St. John in his Bishop's vestments, specifically, the omophorion around his shoulders. He holds his right hand out in priestly blessing and in his left hand holds the Gospel book, the main tool that he used in his earthly endeavors. He honors the Holy Word of God by not touching the Gospel with his bare hands.

St. John Chrysostom entered the Heavenly Kingdom in the year 407 AD. His final words were "Glory be to God for all things!" May he intercede for us and may we join in his declaration, giving glory to God for all things!

## St. John Chrysostom's Golden Tongue Pasta



*St. John Chrysostom was the Archbishop of Constantinople during the fourth century. Known best by us as the author of our Divine Liturgy, he was so eloquent that he earned the name "Chrysosotom" which means "Golden Tongue".*

*We can think of this when we make this great commemorative spin on macaroni and cheese, a "Linguini" (it means "tongues" in Italian!) with a delicious golden sauce!*

### Ingredients

- O 1 lb linguine pasta
- O 2 medium sweet potatoes, cooked, peeled and diced
- O 1 cup raw cashews (or use oats!)
- O 1 cup water
- O ½ cup nutritional yeast
- O 1 tsp garlic powder
- O 1 Tablespoon lemon juice or cider vinegar
- O ½ tsp salt
- O 1 Tbsp fresh sage or thyme

### Preparation

Place a pot of salted water on to boil and prepare the pasta according to the directions.

Meanwhile, place the diced, cooked, and peeled sweet potatoes, cashews or oats, water, nutritional yeast, garlic, lemon juice, vinegar, and salt into a high-speed blender and blend until smooth.

Pour the sauce over the hot pasta, with half of the chopped herbs, stir to combine, garnish with the rest of the herbs and serve immediately.

### Tips

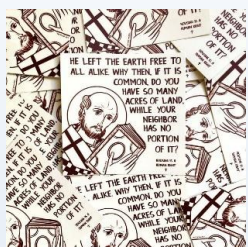
This dish is also really delicious when served with greens like rappini or kale, and sauteed mushrooms.



# MEANWHILE, BACK IN BYZANTIUM



by Kathryn Reetzke



(by Art of Marza\*)

St. John Chrysostom (c. 347-407 AD) is best known for writing the Divine Liturgy that we celebrate each Sunday (except during Lent) and for being the Patriarch of Constantinople (397 AD). Did you know that he also wrote letters and encouragements to his godchildren and fellow Christians? You might remember his letters to St. Olympias from an earlier edition.

St. John also faced unfair persecution during his time as a church leader, including exile in 404 AD. However, this didn't prevent him from living a holy life, devoted to helping others. St. John also wrote sermons asking his listeners to help others, especially the poor. He also wrote a sermon especially on Fasting and Almsgiving, something along with prayer that we are about to do for 40 days this Nativity Fast!

St. John encourages us that all the things we have belong to God. "For even if you received them from your parents or your grandparents, they belong to God." As we approach the Nativity Fast on November 15th, think of ways you can give to others. If you don't have money, clothes, or toys to

donate, then do you have time? Can you bake cookies for an elderly neighbor or member of your parish? Perhaps you can help to clean your church or parish hall. Can you prepare a meal for your family or put away all the dishes, giving your parents more time to pray?

Let us take the words of St. John with us into the Nativity Fast:

"Almsgiving is thus the wing of prayer. If you do not provide your prayer with wings, it will never fly. When, however, your soul sprouts wings, it flies immediately to heaven. How long will the love of money and the desire for possessions last? All those things, brother, last no longer than the present life." St. John Chrysostom's Homily on *Fasting and Almsgiving*



A copy of "On Fasting and Almsgiving" from a Patriarchal Homiliary (Munich, Bavarian State Library, Cod.graec. 255)

\*Marza is a dork and misfit who draws inspiration from iconography, the lives of the saints, graffiti, anime, and pop culture to bring God to unexpected places. Sticker by Artofmarza.com



# KNOW YOUR FAITH

By Lynne Wardach



## St John Chrysostom and the Divine Liturgy

After the Lord rose from the dead, He stayed with His disciples for forty days, walking, talking, and preparing them for the day He would ascend to Heaven. Once He left them, Jesus expected them to go out and preach so that they would bring all people to worship the One True God, but He didn't want them to feel as if He was abandoning them. He told them...

**Matt 28:20** "...And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

What did Jesus mean by this? How could He be "with them" when ascending out of the disciples' sight? And what did Jesus mean by "to the end of the age"? Is He with us now?

The truth is, the Lord IS with us always, even today! We are in his presence every time we attend the Divine Liturgy. The Liturgy is where all souls, whether human or angelic, on earth or in heaven, are present

with the Holy Trinity. It is the only place we can partake of Christ's Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity and become unified in the Holy Eucharist. It is where earth and heaven merge and become a blessed Kingdom! Let's examine the Divine Liturgy and learn what makes it very important.

**The Greek word "Litourgeia" means the "work of the people."**

The Liturgy isn't supposed to be a performance, although it is spectacular. The clergy and servers wear elaborate vestments and carry intricate props of gold and jewels. There's choreography and singing, and each movement is intended to remind you of something extraordinary about your relationship with your Creator.

We hear the bells, reminding us of the magnificent



voices of the angels calling us to worship as we approach the temple.

We see the priest at the side altar, performing the **Proskomedia**, preparing the bread and wine that will become the Body and Blood of Christ. The Diskos (plate) that will hold the bread has a cover with a little star called an asterisk dangling above it, just like the star of Bethlehem! When we see this, we are to remember the feast of the Nativity when Christ is born!

We see the Deacon **incense** the interior of the Church, all the icons, and the people present. This cloud of incense signifies that a great event is about to occur. Although we can't usually see it, the fragrance indicates that it is present, reminding us of the invisible presence of the Holy Spirit. When the Deacon incenses you, bow your head and allow the cloud of smoke to carry your prayers to God.

**"Blessed is the Kingdom..."** With these words, the priest sets the stage for the unfolding of the story of Christ's life, and we realize that the kingdom consists of all of God's creation; the angels are present, the saints and souls of the just are present with us, from all times and places! There is no sense of time in the Kingdom, but all of us are mystically together all at once, so it is the perfect time to acknowledge the angels and the souls of the saints and even your loved ones because they are all truly there with us!

We begin to call to mind those in most need as we start the **litany** and sing "Lord, have mercy!" after each petition. With each petition, you can call to mind those you know who are sick, suffering, in despair, traveling, or in need.

When we sing the **Antiphons**, we remember the Psalms of the Old Testament and how the Christ child was brought into the world through those who also proclaimed these same songs. Then we sing the **Incarnation Hymn** to remind us of the purpose of the coming of Jesus into the world.

Next, we see the **Little Entrance** when the priest processes with the Gospel, reminding us of the entrance of Christ into the world as a preacher. Years ago, people gathered outside the church and waited for the priest to lead them into the church in procession behind the Gospel book. Now we gather indoors instead. This Little Entrance is a remnant of that event.

We sing the **Troparia and Kontakia** to engage everyone in the commemoration of the day and the Trisagion Hymn (Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal, have mercy on us!) as we praise the Holy Trinity and

ask for mercy.

Next come the **Epistle and Gospel Readings**, symbolizing Christ's preaching. As we listen, we remember the Sermon on the Mount, where He first taught the people about the Kingdom of God.

**Great Entrance** with the gifts during the singing of the **Cherubic Hymn** represents the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem. We prepare our hearts by laying aside our cares to be fully present when Christ comes to us at the consecration.

This is also when we can offer prayers for our loved ones, family, and friends. When the priest walks through the Royal Doors saying, "May the Lord, Our God remember in His kingdom..." you can mentally offer your own prayers, placing your cares upon the diskos with the bread offering, and ask God to remember your family, friends, and all your concerns specifically in His Kingdom!

Next, we say the **Creed**, a declaration of our allegiance to the teachings of the true faith, together with all true Christians everywhere, so we are worthy to witness the consecration.

When we hear the hymn, **"Holy, Holy, Holy..."** we recognize the presence of the angelic hosts among us who are also preparing themselves for the coming of Christ in the Eucharist. We sing with them, Hosannah! Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord!

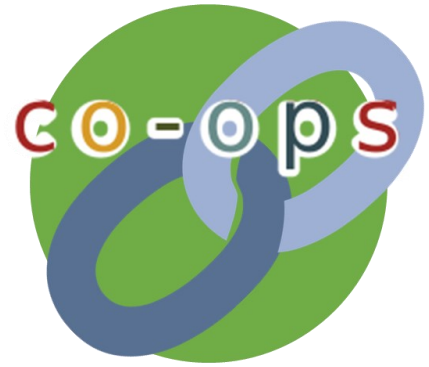
Now that we've sung with the angels, we sing the **Lord's Prayer**, asking God for our daily bread physically (asking to meet our needs) and spiritually (asking for worthiness to receive the Eucharistic bread).

With all the mental and spiritual preparation done, it is time to commemorate the Last Supper when the priest repeats the same words of **Consecration** that Jesus used. When we hear Father say, "Take, Eat, this is my Body..." we mystically become present alongside the apostles in the upper room at the last Passover Supper.

Here is the answer to our original question. There is no time in heaven and no space, so we all are present, past, present, and future with the Lord at once. He can be with us always, even to the end of the age, in this way. We can receive Him in the Eucharist and enter into communion with Him. We also enter into communion with everyone who receives Him then, past, present, or future. It is in this mystical way that we are all ONE in Him!



# Co-Op Connection



In our Co Op Connection articles, we try to share the successes of parishes all around the country in gathering children and growing closer to God together. After seeing all the fun, you may be wondering how to get a group started in your area as well! Let us share a few ideas with you that have worked for other families and parishes. We hope that they will encourage you as well!

The first step is often simply knowing what to do with your time together. The Byzikids Team has come up with a solution to this problem and recently launched the ByziClassroom Program. This program is free to sign up for and provides you with a detailed guide each month to turn the activities from our magazine into a full blown celebration with your friends. The guide follows the model of pray, learn and play, and is easily customizable to different group sizes and ages that you may be working with. The activities are tried and true and guaranteed to work in a group setting! We even added a dedicated page on our ByziMom.com website to make accessing the information simple from wherever you are holding your meeting!

The second step is finding people to celebrate with! There are a few options that have been successful:

1. **Invite over just one or two families to your home for a play date. These can be friends you already know or families from your parish that you would like to get to know. Let the families know that you will have some planned activities for the children that day!**
2. **With your pastor's permission, plan a children's day at your church. Advertise the event for at least one month ahead of time so that everyone has plenty of time to mark their calendars.**
3. **Reach out to your wider community- send invitations to other nearby parishes, over social media, and through your friends. The ByziClassroom team is more than happy to help you to create flyers and garner attention for your gathering!**

If you would like to see a ByziClassroom guide or you have additional questions, feel free to reach out to us at [thebyzimom@gmail.com](mailto:thebyzimom@gmail.com). We love hearing from you!



Learning together with friends is always more fun!



A "royal banquet" in honor of St. Helena



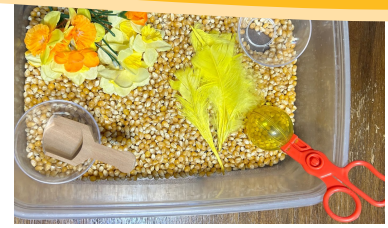
# Sense-Ability

Let us be attentive to God's Creation



When God created us, He made us both body and soul, meaning we are both physical and spiritual beings. We are not like angels that are just spirits. For this reason, when we use our bodies to help us learn, our spirits are changed as well!

Have you played with a sensory bin before? A sensory bin is a small tub or table filled with items that you can touch, smell, taste or make noise with. They typically include items that are all about a particular theme. When we use our senses to help us learn something, it helps our brain to recall the information better.



*As we learn about St. John Chrysostom this month, we are choosing to focus on the color gold in our sensory bins! Chrysostom means "golden-mouthed" in Greek, and our beloved saint earned this nickname because of his fantastic homilies and the large volume of works that he wrote for the Church. Everyone loved hearing what he had to say, and you are all going to love this sensory bin!*

*As a base, we are using popcorn kernels this month. Fill your container with a layer of unpopped popcorn kernels, then add a few additional golden items for a variety of textures. We had feathers and silk flowers on hand; surely you can find a few things in your craft cabinet, too!*

*If your craft cabinet is as bare as Old Mother Hubbard's, the dollar store near you will have feathers & silk flowers like we used and many other glittering, golden items this time of year!*

*For an early learning skill, include "scooping tongs" in your bin. These strengthen your little one's hands for the future skill of writing. Plus, for the older kids, they're just plain fun!*

*We'd love to see your sensory bin in action- you can always send us an email with your sensory bin photos to [byzimom@gmail.com](mailto:byzimom@gmail.com) and we can share them in a future issue!*



# DID YOU KNOW?...

- ✠ Most saints are commemorated on the day of their death. St. John Chrysostom entered eternal life on the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, September 14 but is commemorated on November 13, the day he began his ministry in Constantinople.
- ✠ Before the tenth century, the Liturgy of St Basil was celebrated more often than the Liturgy of St John Chrysostom.
- ✠ St. John Chrysostom noticed that the people began to grow restless during the long prayers of the Liturgy of St. Basil the Great, so he developed a shorter version of the Divine Liturgy which is attributed to him, although he really didn't write much of it himself.
- ✠ Although St. John Chrysostom developed his Divine Liturgy in the fourth century, the Trisagion hymn was only introduced into the Divine Liturgy during the fifth century, and the Cherubic hymn in the sixth. The Antiphons were added in the seventh century, and by the end of the eighth century, the formula was well established as we would recognize it today.
- ✠ Speaking of Antiphons during the first centuries of the early church, people would gather in the town square and be led in procession to the Church by the cantor, who would sing verses from the psalms known as Antiphons. The people would all sing a response after each verse, "Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior save us!"
- ✠ In early Constantinople, the scripture readings were proclaimed, not from the center of the church or from before the Royal Doors as they are today, but from an elevated pillar in the center of the nave known as the Ambo.
- ✠ Catechumens, those who were not yet baptized, were asked to leave the Divine Liturgy before the part of the service known as the Liturgy of the Eucharist was to begin, just before the saying of the Creed. This is why they intone, "The doors, the doors, in wisdom, let us be attentive!"
- ✠ The people used to bring offerings of bread and wine for use during the Divine Liturgy and leave them with the deacons. During the service, they would process into and throughout the church carrying the people's gifts and thanking them as they passed by them in the congregation. This was the origin of the Great Entrance with the gifts before the consecration.
- ✠ Like John the Baptist, John Chrysostom called out the Emperor and Empress for misconduct and was subsequently exiled. He died on his way there, his last words being, "Glory be to God for all things!"



## Sources:

*The Divine Liturgy: The Facts that You Didn't Know* by Alexander Adomenas; February 6, 2019

<https://pravlife.org/ru/content/bozhestvennaya-liturgiya-chego-vy-ne-znali>

12 Facts from the Life of St. John Chrysostom;

<https://catalog.obitel-minsk.com/blog/2018/11/12-facts-from-life-of-st-john-chrysosto>





# Q U O T E S

"When we teach our children to be good, to be gentle, to be forgiving (all these are attributes of God), to be generous, to love their fellow men, to regard this present age as nothing, we instill virtue in their souls, and reveal the image of God within them."

"We are so concerned with our children's schooling; if only we were equally zealous in bringing them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord!"

"Neglect of children is one of the greatest sins, and it is the highest degree of impiety. ...we will nevertheless be subjected to the most extreme punishment if we do not take care for the salvation of our children."

"Let everything take second place to our care of our children, our bringing them up to the discipline and instruction of the Lord. If from the beginning we teach them to love true wisdom, they will have great wealth and glory than riches can provide."

~ all from Saint John Chrysostom

"For me [the church] still possesses much poetical charm. I very often attend the services. I consider the liturgy of St. John Chrysostom one of the greatest productions of art. If we follow the service very carefully and enter into the meaning of every ceremony, it is impossible not to be profoundly moved by the liturgy of our own Orthodox Church... to be startled from one's trance by a burst from the choir, to be carried away by the poetry of this music; to be thrilled when... the words ring out, 'Praise the name of the Lord!' – all this is infinitely precious to me! One of my deepest joys!"

~Russian composer Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky; 1877

"I have been thinking about the Liturgy for a long time, and for a long time, I strove to write it. I started to work on it somehow by chance and then suddenly became fascinated with it. And then I finished it very quickly. Not for a long time have I written anything with such pleasure."

~Russian composer Sergei Rachmaninov; 1910

# Caught You Listening

Khouria Sylvia Dorham

## NOVEMBER 5

### ○ Gospel: Luke 16: 19-31

Fill in the blanks about today's Gospel.

- What color did the rich man wear? \_\_\_\_\_
- What did the rich man eat every day? \_\_\_\_\_
- What was the name of the poor man at his gate? \_\_\_\_\_
- What did the dogs do to the poor man? \_\_\_\_\_
- Who died first? \_\_\_\_\_
- What did the angels do to Lazarus? \_\_\_\_\_
- What was between Lazarus in Abraham's bosom and the rich man in Hades? \_\_\_\_\_
- Did Abraham send Lazarus to the rich man's brothers? \_\_\_\_\_
- Abraham indicates that we should \_\_\_\_\_ in the testimony of Moses and the prophets.



Icon courtesy of Iconographics

## NOVEMBER 12

### ○ Gospel: Luke 10: 25-37

What did the Samaritan show to the wounded man?

Circle every third letter to see.

NDMEIEMLRDQCUPYJS

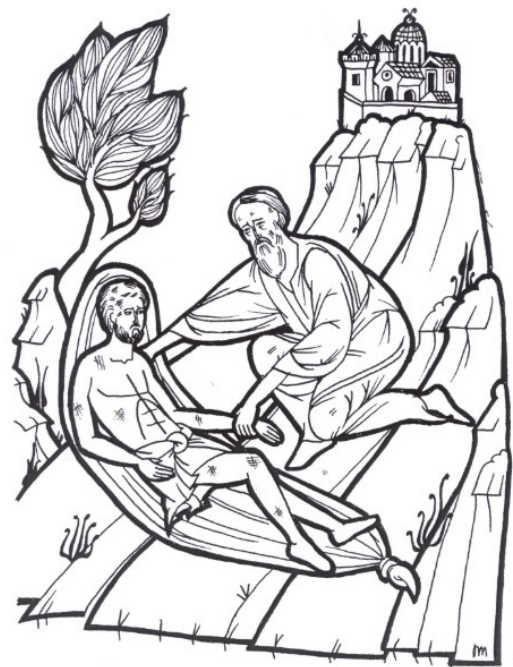
\_\_\_\_\_

What does Jesus tell us to do?

Cross out every second letter to find out.

GHOKAINLDPDAOSLXIZKWEMWRINSGEH

\_\_\_\_\_



Icon courtesy of Iconographics



## NOVEMBER 19

### ○ Gospel: Luke 12: 16-22

In today's Gospel, Jesus gives us some good advice on how to live our lives. Unscramble the words to find out what he says.

NTDO OERST PU HLYTERA URTESAER.

---

EB HIRC AWOTDR OGD.

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Icon courtesy of Iconographics

## NOVEMBER 26

### ○ Gospel: Luke 18: 18-27

In today's Gospel, a ruler knows the Ten Commandments and recites them to Jesus.

Can you? Write down as many of the Ten Commandments as you can. Give yourself one point for each one you know and go look up the rest (Exodus 20:3-17)!

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

Your score: \_\_\_\_\_

0-3: Whoops! 4-6: Fair 7-9: Great 10: Super!

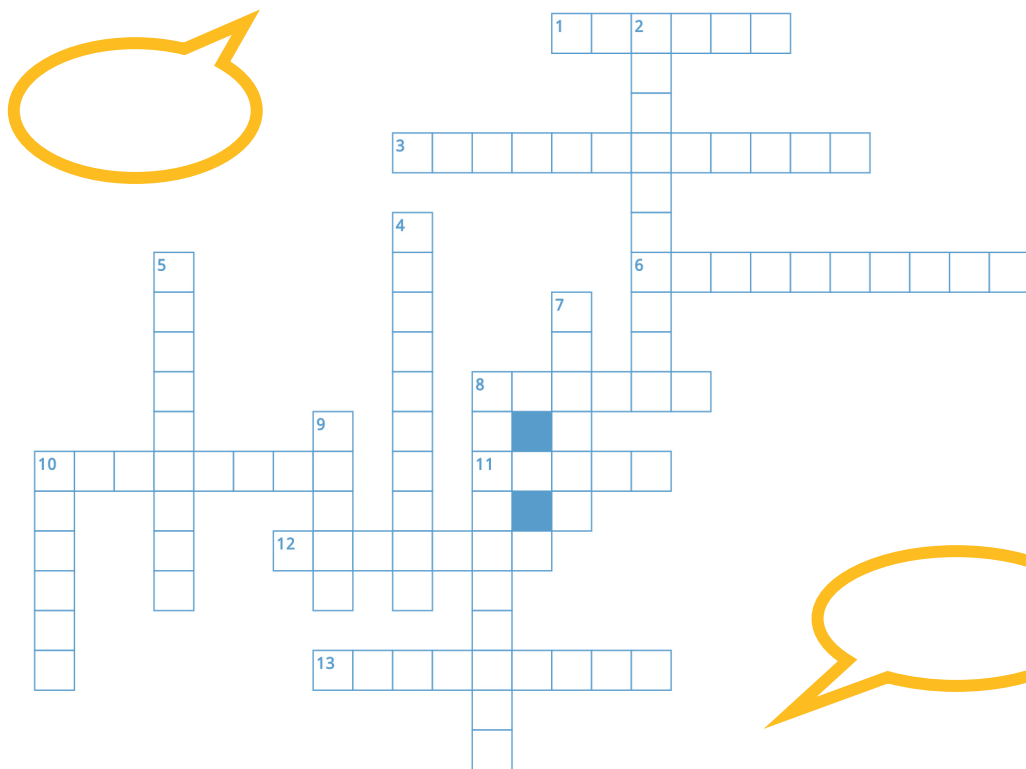


Icon courtesy of Iconographics

# CROSSWORD

## PUZZLE

### Sayings of St. John Chrysostom



#### Across

1. Let no one weep for his iniquities, for \_\_\_\_\_ has shown forth from the grave.
3. Those who are not saved by the justice of God are saved by the \_\_\_\_\_ of Mary.
6. When you are before the altar where Christ reposes, believe that there are troops of angels and \_\_\_\_\_ standing by you
8. \_\_\_\_\_ is the place of refuge for every worry, a foundation for cheerfulness
10. When we teach our \_\_\_\_\_ to be good, to be gentle, to be forgiving, we reveal the image of God within them
11. No matter how just your words may be, when you \_\_\_\_\_ with anger, you ruin all.
12. The bee is more \_\_\_\_\_ than other animals, not because she labors, but because she labors for others.
13. \_\_\_\_\_ can only be achieved by learning to enjoy whatever life has.

#### Down

2. Sin is the wound, \_\_\_\_\_ is the medicine
4. When you are in church, be there in silence, fear, and \_\_\_\_\_.
5. God loves us more than a father, mother, friend, or any else could love, and even more than we are able to love \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Wherever you may find yourself, you can set up an altar to God in your mind by means of \_\_\_\_\_.
8. The rich man is not one who is in \_\_\_\_\_ of much, but one who gives much.
9. Why not learn to \_\_\_\_\_ the little things- there are so many of them.
10. If you cannot find \_\_\_\_\_ in the beggar at the church door, you will not find Him in the chalice

Answer



## An excerpt from *Coffee with St. John Chrysostom*:

*An Interview on the Raising of Children, an essay written for ByziMom.com/Coffee Hour.*  
By Lynne Wardach

Don't you just love it when somebody asks you that question, "If you could go back in time and have a conversation with any famous person from history, who would it be?" I never know what to say! Well, now I do. I have to share this with you. I recently read (and re-read, and re-re-read) the most interesting sermon, written by St. John Chrysostom, regarding the bringing up of children. you can see the sermon in its entirety here:

[http://www.strobertbellarmine.net/books/Chrysostom--Vainglory\\_and\\_Children.pdf](http://www.strobertbellarmine.net/books/Chrysostom--Vainglory_and_Children.pdf)

It fascinated me that this fourth-century bishop, with no children and no father since the age of two, had such a firm grip on the timeless, daily struggles of parenthood and that his advice was overwhelmingly spot on, in most cases...in my humble opinion. :)

After having digested all the advice given, I began to daydream a bit about what it would be like if I were to have had a real conversation with him on such a topic. Just for fun, I've jotted down my impression of what this interview might look like. I've quoted all his answers directly from his sermon, and it seems he's anticipated all my questions!

I think it would go something like this:



**ByziMom:** Oh, St. John Chrysostom, please give me advice about my son. He's getting a bit older now, and he's begun to talk back to me whenever I give him any kind of instruction! He doesn't even speak kindly to his brothers and sisters anymore. I'm at my wit's end, trying to get him to stop mouthing off and be kind and respectful. I think he learned this bad behavior from his friends at school.

**St. JC:** What reason for insolence or evil-speaking should he have? He contends only with companions of his own age. Make a law straightway that he uses no one in despite, that he speak ill of no man, that he swear not, that he be not contentious. If thou shouldst see him transgressing this law, punish him, now with a stern look, now with incisive, now with reproachful words; at other times, win him with gentleness and promises.

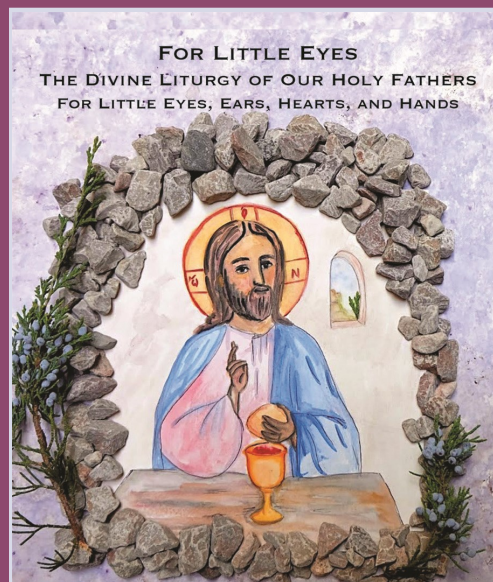


**ByziMom:** Punish him with a look, a word, gentleness? So, you do not advocate the use of corporal punishment, then?

**St. JC:** Have not recourse to blows constantly and accustom him not to be trained by the rod; for if he feel it constantly as he is being trained, he will learn to despise it. And when he has learnt to despise it, he has reduced thy system to naught.

So St. John Chrysostom seems to agree with Gentle Parenting! Who knew?!

*To read more of my "Interview" with St. John Chrysostom, visit the Coffee Hour Page at ByziMom.com!*



For Little Eyes provides children with an excellent aid for learning the Divine Liturgy. The book contains the text of the Divine Liturgy accompanied by over 30 original watercolor illustrations by our own Rebecca O'Loughlin.

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# Once Upon a SAINT

Rebecca O'Loughlin



A little friend came to honor Chrysostom during the photo shoot. See if you can spot him!

My Dearest Children,

In Antioch (which is now in Turkey), in the year 347 AD, a young woman named Anthusa gave birth to a small boy named John. His father was a high ranking military officer and a Christian, and he died soon after John's birth.

"Lord," Anthusa prayed, "I no longer have my dear Secundus to be father to our son. Every child needs a father, so You will have to be Father to baby John, not just as his Creator, but in every way and

moment. Without Your help, I can do nothing."

Through her prayers, Anthusa felt God's blessing upon her and John. Since Secundus left them a great deal of money, she gave John a wonderful education with learned men of both pagan and Christian background.

John enjoyed school, but he also liked theater, music, fishing, and other normal and fun things. He thought he was too worldly, because his best friend, Basil, wanted to pray, fast, and sacrifice all the time and didn't care about music and fishing. John wasn't very strong, and though he tried to do big sacrifices like Basil (such as not eating for a long time), it was his smaller sacrifices that were successful. For instance, he walked to school instead of riding his horse. He offered up difficult moments, instead of complaining about them. He helped his mother around the house without her asking.

John grew up to be an intelligent, prayerful, and somewhat delicate young man. John's mother died, and it was rumored that the Patriarch wanted to ordain John and Basil. In those days, priests were chosen from among the people.

"Basil," John said to his best friend, "I am giving away my inheritance, and I'm going to be a hermit. The Patriarch can't make me a priest if he can't find me."

"In that case, I'll go with you," Basil replied. "We can be hermits together."

"Well, alright," John replied. "I guess you can come..." but inside, John felt sad, because he thought Basil would be a very good priest.

Basil continued: "And if the Patriarch catches us, we can still be priests together."



John nodded, but he didn't think he would be a good priest himself since he was often sick, big sacrifices weren't easy for him, and he still liked theater and music.

John and Basil were hermits for almost two years, living in complete silence. But then they were found out. Basil was caught by the Patriarch's men, but John escaped, running and laughing to himself, relieved that Basil would have to become a priest after all. Basil was going to be such a wonderful Father!

After Fr. Basil was ordained, he went back to John, quite annoyed: "How could you run away, John? I thought that if they caught us, we'd be priests together. We are brothers in spirit, you and I. And you ran away!"

John laughed, "Ah well, you make a much better priest."

Fr. Basil was irritated. "You would be a good priest too! You think too much about being weak. But God loves to work great things through weakness. It's the strong people that struggle with letting God do His work the way He wants. We're too used to trying to control things. Come to the Patriarch, John. You've hidden long enough. I think it's God's will for you to be a priest."

John went with Fr. Basil to the Patriarch. When the Patriarch laid his hands on John, a shining white dove appeared above his head. The Holy Spirit descends on every newly ordained priest, but the sign of the Holy Spirit happened to be visible for the newly ordained Father John.

Why was this sign visible? Because the gifts of the Holy Spirit would be especially visible in Fr. John. In particular, Fr. John was given the ability to preach inspiring and enlightening sermons on the Bible and Truth. Who would've thought that the man who lived as a silent hermit would now be called "Chrysostom," which means "Golden Tongued," in honor of his beautiful words?! Chrysostom is often shown with a bee or beehive in iconography, as a symbol of the golden honey or words that came from his mouth. Not long after, he became the Patriarch of Constantinople after the old Patriarch died.

"The bee is more honored than other animals, not because she labors, but because she labors for others." Chrysostom told his people.

Fr. Basil was right: Patriarch John Chrysostom did make an excellent priest, not because he made big impossible sacrifices, but because he joyfully offered every small thing he was and had for his people. Like the bee in his sermon, Chrysostom labored for others with a cheerful soul.

Under his care, Chrysostom's Patriarchate fed and clothed more than 3000 widows daily, and orphans and the sick were cared for in addition. He studied and preached, he wrote the version of the Divine Liturgy as we use it today, and he added music and antiphons (so you see, Chrysostom's love of music really had a great spiritual value!). By this point, Chrysostom figured out that certain foods made him sick, so he became a perpetual faster from many foods. He usually refused to be a guest for dinner because he didn't want to embarrass hosts by not eating the food they offered.

But he always kept fasting in perspective: "The value of fasting consists not in abstinence from food," wrote Chrysostom, "but in withdrawing from sinful practices."

Chrysostom was exiled for being a staunch defender of the Truth. While in exile, he continued to write to his people and serve as he could, whether it was giving away food or comforting those in prison. Chrysostom was sick and dying, and suffering terribly. He received the Holy Mysteries, and was finally able to rest his weary body, exclaiming as he died: "Glory to God for all things!" It was September 14th, 407 AD.

Sometimes God allows part or all of a saint to be incorrupt from death, so as to show us something about the saint. In St. John Chrysostom's case, his right hand has been preserved from decay. This is to show his position of great authority, and to remind us about all that his hand wrote for us! St. John Chrysostom's left ear is also incorrupt. St. Paul the apostle appeared to him and whispered in Chrysostom's ear how to interpret Paul's letters. Both relics are venerated on Mount Athos.

The main feast of St. John Chrysostom is celebrated on November 13th. How nice to have Chrysostom's feast right before the Christmas Fast to remind us that all our fasting and offerings, no matter how small, should have one aim: to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ! Let us be like little bees, laboring and fasting for others.

# CHOIR PRACTICE

Saint John Chrysostom  
Archbishop of Constantinople



By Sylvia Dorham

Loved God courageously  
In the 4<sup>th</sup> Century, AD

Eloquent speaker  
Wisdom teacher  
In the 4<sup>th</sup> Century, AD

Encouraged philanthropy  
Wrote Divine Liturgy  
In the 4<sup>th</sup> Century, AD

Saint John Chrysostom  
Archbishop of Constantinople

Loved God courageously  
In the 4<sup>th</sup> Century, AD

This song is a march.

You can imagine a platoon of soldiers stepping in time, 1-2-3-4, 1-2-3-4 while you chant this march.

Have the older kids say the long words and let the younger ones say the chorus.

March around the room, your yard, or down the street while you sing about one of the Three Holy Hierarchs, St. John Chrysostom!

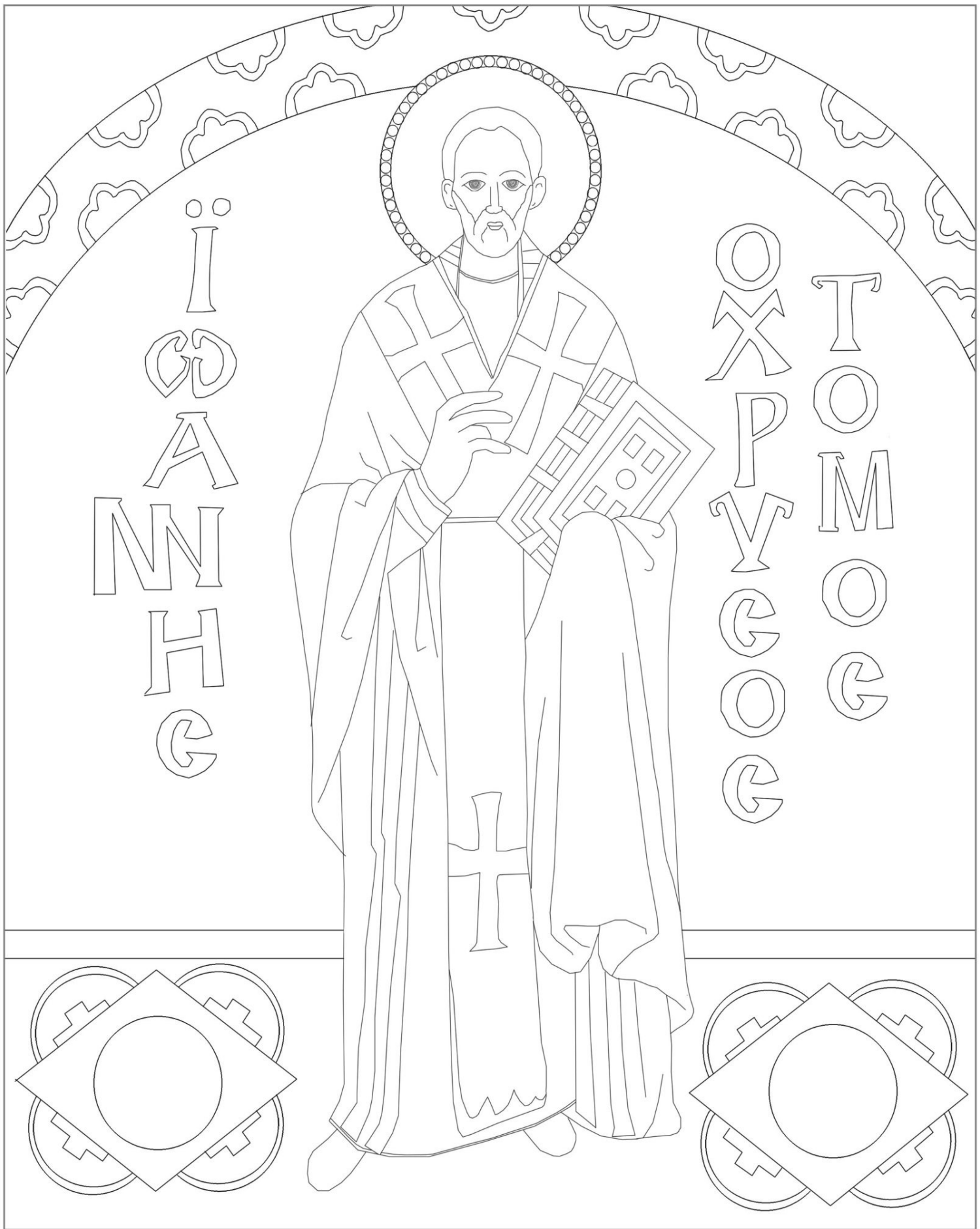


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To  
Hear



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## November Activities Calendar

Scan the QR code to see the links for the activities

This month is filled with so many fun and interesting things to do! Visit the *Activities Index* on the *ByziKids* page at *ByziMom.com* for all the links! <https://www.byzimom.com/byzikids-magazine-extras>

### November 1

- **Feast of Venerable Andrej Sheptytski;** Get the Coloring Page



### November 15

- **The Nativity Fast begins**
- Get the 2022 Nativity Fast Advent Calendar (to coordinate with the book,
- The Jesse Tree, by Lynne Wardach. available on the gift shop page at ByziMom.com!)
- Have fun with the God's Family Tree Puppet Timeline Activity
- Learn the Song, We're Going Home, by Kh.Sylvia Dorham
- Listen to it on the ByziKids Page at ByziMom.com!

### November 8

- **Synaxis of the Archangel Michael and All the Bodiless Powers**
- Download the St. Michael Coloring Page & St. Michael Maze
- Make the Guardian Angel Prayer Bookmark or Natural Angel Ornament Craft
- See the I Spy in my Little Icon: Angel with a Scroll
- Get the recipe to make the Archangel Michael's Crown - it's a Blackberry Cake!



### November 21

- **The Presentation of the Theotokos** (We have a whole issue about this feast!)
- Visit the Archives and look for the November 2020 issue!)
- See the I Spy in My Little Icon: Entrance of the Theotokos in the Temple
- Entrance of the Theotokos Coloring Page
- Sts. Joachim & Anna Thankfulness Worksheet



### November 13

- **St. John Chrysostom:** Make the Golden Tongue Pasta Recipe for dinner and get the coloring page, and I Spy in My Little Icon of St. John Chrysostom in this issue!
- You can read about his life in Once Upon a Saint in this issue too!



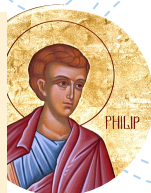
### November 25

- Find the recipe for **St Catherine of Alexandria's** Yummy Koulouri Wheels and read her story in Once Upon a Saint
- **The 4th Saturday of November is Holodomor Remembrance Day**
- Visit the Activities Index to download the story and commemorative coloring page.



### November 14

- **It's the Feast of St Philip**
- Make a batch of St. Philip's Snakes (they're delicious!)
- Activity: Plant a batch of St. Philip's Snake Repellant in decorated pots!



### November 30

- **Feast of the Apostle Andrew, the First-Called**
- Make a batch of St. Andrew's Garlic Rolls

