



*Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
of North America, Metropolitan PHILIP, Primate*
DEPARTMENT OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
Carole A. Buleza, Director

**2007 Creative Festivals Lesson Plan:
Preschool to Kindergarten**

THEME:

“...Building up the Body of Christ; until we all come to the unity of the faith.”

Ephesians 4:12-13

GOALS:

1. To help students understand the theme well enough to express it in art, poetry, prose, or photography (check your individual diocese’s rules to see if entries for this age group are accepted in all categories).
2. To feel a special part of the parish family as a member of the Church.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To recognize Christ by His image on icons.
2. To discuss the church as not just a building but made up of the many families who believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God.
3. To hear that they are members of the Church because they receive Holy Communion.
4. To model the concept of unity by building a “church” with blocks together through group play.
5. To experience what it would be like if all the people in the Church worked together.

TIME: 30-40 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Icon of Christ
- Wooden building blocks, enough for the entire group (or blocks of other materials suitable for building)
- Drawing paper and crayons or photo of each child’s family, masking tape to attach drawings or photos to building blocks (optional items)
- Supplies for use in creating Festival entries as needed

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FOR THE CATECHIST:

The phrases Body of Christ and unity of faith are abstract concepts to the preschool/kindergarten child. You have the difficult task of conveying the intent of the Creative Arts Festival theme in images, words, or actions that the young child can grasp with his egocentric mind. The intention of the Festival theme is unity.

Overall, it is hoped that the catechists will guide students in understanding the importance of becoming a unified presence of Orthodoxy in the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese in North America and in the Orthodox Church on the North American continent in general. For the young child, however, a different approach is needed, and your task will be to connect new learning with what they already know.

The lesson suggested here is hands-on: To “build” a church as a group effort in harmony with one another with the same purpose of mind and for a good result. Each child will work on the project in some way. Each can contribute an idea. No one will be left out.

How the children interact with one another will reflect whether or not they are working in unity. Probably the most difficult part of your task as catechist will be to let the children work for a while without intervention by you to see how they can work together to accomplish their purpose. It is advised that you not interrupt their work but observe for several minutes—unless they behave in ways that are harmful to their persons or destructive to property.

Near the conclusion of their (unified) group effort, you can remark on their ability to share materials, take turns, work out a difficult problem, praise them for their cooperation, etc. When they have finished, you can seat them comfortably on the floor to discuss what they have really done: They worked together and did great work!

You will want to relate this to how the people in families work together and how the people in the Church work together, too. All the people come to church to be together to pray and worship God and to thank God for all the good things He has given us. We receive Holy Communion together and then we are the Church (the Body of Christ). You will want them to understand that the church is not just a building but a group of people who come together to be with Christ. And they receive Holy Communion in the Church.

(This cooperation we are expecting from the children in their work reflects the *synergy—the co-operation between God and humans.*)

THE LESSON PLAN

OPENING:

Gather children around the icon corner to say, “Our Father.”

INTRODUCTION:

Assemble the children in comfortable seating. Read aloud the theme and say you’ll help them understand what it means.

CONTENT:

Helping the children to understand what is meant by the *Body of Christ*.

Direct the children’s attention to the icon of Christ. Ask them to tell what they know about Christ. Help them to articulate that Jesus is the Son of God Who loves us and wants us to love Him. Ask the children why they come to church. Answers will vary. Be sure that someone (even you) mentions that we come to church to pray to God and to receive Holy Communion. You might also say,

“Each of us is part of a family, and we come to church with our family members. The church is made up of a lot of families—a lot of people—and Christ is the head of this big family called the Church. You can receive Holy Communion because you are members of this big family called the Church. Sometimes, it’s not just the building that we are talking about when we speak of the Church.”

If you have only kindergarten students, you might change using the phrase Body

of Christ. You will know whether your students are able to accept this image. If you do use this phrase, tell them that all the baptized Christians in the Church are called the Body of Christ. (Be sure they know that St. Paul didn’t mean the physical body of Jesus such as his chest, stomach, arms, legs, etc.)

Helping the children understand the idea of unity.

You are asked to help children understand the idea of **unity**, which the dictionary defines as oneness in spirit, aims, interests, and feelings; agreement; harmony; parts joined together to make a whole. The children will model the concept of unity by working together (or not) for the purpose of building a church, preferably out of wooden blocks. How they work together will reflect a unity of spirit, with “parts” joined together to make a completed “whole.”

Allow an inductive approach here. Give the children an opportunity to figure out for themselves what it means to work in unity.

RESPONSE:

Gather the children around the workspace where you have piled wooden blocks (or other suitable manipulative materials). Explain the task: To build a “church.”

- Each child will help.
- Each child can contribute an idea as to how it should look.
- No child shall be left out.

Allow the children time to work without intervention, unless someone behaves in

a way harmful to others or is destructive to property, at which time you'd have to step in. Observe how the children interact and whether they are working in harmony, working out a way to solve some problem with their building, or whether they are at odds in some way. Perhaps you can affirm something they are doing well, but don't correct them.

If you have time, you may want to have the children embellish the "church" by having each of them draw a picture of their family and attach their pictures to the "church" with masking tape circles on the back of the drawings. (If you have asked the children to bring in photos of their families, do the same with photos instead.) In addition, one child's task (or your task) can be to draw a picture (or provide a photo) of the priest and add it to the church as well.

ACTIVITY:

When the children have completed the project, ask them to sit nearby to talk about what they've just done. You will want to praise them for their efforts in working together. Here are some questions:

- What ways did you work together?
- Who were the builders?
- Who was a really good block builder? How do you know?
- Did the rest of you do good work? Why?
- Did everyone help? Why or why not?

(Children might be able to evaluate themselves: "I know how to build! My friend and I worked together! Nobody

knocked down blocks! Everybody helped!")

- How did some of you solve a problem with making the building?
- Did everyone share the blocks? How did this help with building your church?
- Did some of you not work together? Why not? (Possible reasons for not working well include "I couldn't get it right. We didn't share the blocks. He took all the blocks! She knocked down my blocks on purpose. He didn't want to help.")

As needed, pose these questions:

- Was anyone unkind to you? What did you do?
- How did it feel when someone was unkind or when someone bothered you?
- Were you unkind to someone else when you were building?
- Did anyone get angry?
- What happened when that person got angry? What happened to the building?
- What could you say to the person who was angry?

Talk about the results of working together or not working together:

- What happened when you worked together? (We built the church.)
- What happened (happens) when you argued or didn't share the blocks or let each person have a turn to build or decide what to do? (Things didn't get done, and

we made everybody mad. Some of us felt bad because we didn't have a turn and the church was spoiled, etc.)

- How did you feel when you worked together? (Ask for several responses.)

Explain how good it is when the children (people) work together to finish a job, just like when you're on a soccer team and each person has a job to do. If each player does what he is supposed to do, the team can win. The Church needs its members to do their share and to work together. It's like playing together and being happy together.)

- How did you feel when you saw the building was finished?
- Suppose Jesus was here with you as you worked on your building. How do you think Jesus wants you to behave when you are working together?
- Imagine how wonderful it would be if all the people in the Church worked together. What do you think would happen in our real church if everyone worked together? What if we didn't work together on something? Which do you think is better? Why?

You might then tell the children,

- "When the people of the Church work together and get along, it's what we mean by unity. Everybody shares the work and everybody works together to do something good for the Church. This is how Jesus wants us to behave in the Church."
- What would it be like if people in the Orthodox churches all over

America worked together to make the Church strong? (Answers might be fascinating.)

You can now review why we come to church each week: You might say:

- You have just built a church. This is a pretend church. We have a real church that we all go to. Who remembers why we go to church? (To pray, to receive Holy Communion, to be with Jesus)
- Why can you receive Holy Communion in the Church? (Because you belong to the church, you are a member of the Church, and Christ asks you to come to Communion.)
- Who are the people who go to Church? (All the families who believe in Jesus Christ; all the people who are baptized and belong to the Church)
- So is the church just a building? (No. People are in the church. The people make up the church.)
- Show the icon of Christ. Whom do we see on this icon? (Jesus Christ)
- Who do we say is the Head of our Church? (Jesus Christ)
- Why does Jesus want us to come to church? (To receive Holy Communion, to be with Him because He loves us.)

CLOSING:

You might give these or similar closing remarks:

“I hope you will always remember that Jesus loves each of us, and He wants us to love Him back. Jesus wants us to come to church to receive Holy Communion. We’re very special people because we belong to the Orthodox Church. I hope you will always be Orthodox and always be able to come to church for Holy Communion. This is a wonderful gift that we receive from Christ. Let’s thank Jesus for loving us and giving us His Holy Communion.”

Hold the icon of Christ so each child may reverence it.

Say a closing prayer.



*Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
of North America, Metropolitan PHILIP, Primate*
DEPARTMENT OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
Carole A. Buleza, Director

**2007 Creative Festivals Lesson Plan:
Grades 1-3**

THEME:

“...Building up the Body of Christ; until we all come to the unity of the faith.”

Ephesians 4:12-13

GOALS:

1. To help students understand the theme well enough to express it in art, poetry, prose, or photography.
2. To encourage student understanding of themselves as members of the Body of Christ with Christ as the Head of the Church.
3. To help mediate student growth as Orthodox Christians in an increasingly diverse world and among diverse Orthodox Christian populations and jurisdictions.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Discuss that the Church is not just a building we go to on Sundays but a group of people who are baptized Christians and who believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God Who rose from the dead.
2. Hear that the Church is the Body of Christ and each Orthodox Christian is a member of the Body of Christ.
3. Say Christ is the Head of the Church and we are members of His Body.
4. Demonstrate themselves to be the Body of Christ with Christ as the Head.
5. Sing the Communion Hymn “Receive the Body of Christ.”
6. Draw or write three ways they can become more active members of the Body of Christ
7. Draw or write three ways they can share their Faith with others.

TIME: 45 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Icon of Christ (Pantocrator)
- Photo or illustration of chalice and spoon used for Holy Communion (If possible, take a “field trip” to the church and have the priest or deacon show them the chalice and spoon.)
- Chalkboard and chalk or large sheets of paper and markers
- Music for Communion Hymn: “Receive the Body of Christ; Taste the Fountain of Immortality”
- Communion Prayer said by the faithful before Communion

For the students:

- Sheets of drawing paper or writing paper for each student
- Pencils for each student; crayons
- Large beach ball
- 2 bean bags or balls

FOR THE CATECHIST:

There are many layers of meaning to the words “Body of Christ.” You will need to consider how much your students already know and how much they are able to absorb. The six-year-old may not have attained the same fullness of understanding as has the eight-year-old. Yet, you’ll want to challenge all the students under your care.

Consider also the advice from Sr. Magdalen about using the words body and blood with young children and how you will approach any discussion of the Eucharist without distorting the Truth of our Orthodox Faith. (See “The Body of Christ is Holy Communion.”) The important thing is that students

understand the Church not as building only; rather, they should know the Church as the gathering of Christians who become members of the Body of Christ with Christ as its Head. Those who rightly believe and rightly glorify God attain to the unity of the True Faith.

Suggested Readings:

Sr. Magdalen: *Children in the Church. An Orthodox Perspective.*
The Orthodox Study Bible, Ephesians, pp. 436-452.

THE LESSON PLAN

OPENING:

Gather students around the icon corner to pray "Our Father." Ask them to remain standing and lead them to an area for the Team activity.

INTRODUCTION:

Draw upon the students' experience as members of a sports team or club to explain the word member. Remind them that each sports team usually has a head coach and each club has a leader or president. Since some students may not be a member of a team, you might create two make-believe teams and have an activity such as a bean bag toss or other relay-team activity. This might be a good icebreaker. Have the students identify the designated leader and the individual member that makes up the group.

Tell students to keep in mind the idea of a group of people who do something together as you prepare for the Creative Arts Festival.

Read aloud the verse for the Creative Arts Festival and tell the students you will help them understand what some of the words mean, such as "Body of Christ" and "unity of the faith." Then the students will need to think about what they want to draw or write about. Explain that this verse comes from St. Paul's Letter (Epistle) to the Ephesians. The Ephesians were people who lived in Ephesus, a city in Greece.

CONTENT:

The Church as People. Talk with the students about what a church is. Some will think of the church as a building; some might say it's a place where we go on Sundays. Some might refer to church as the place where we get Holy Communion. Allow them time to express their understanding. You might list or draw their phrases on a chalkboard or large sheet of paper.

Introduce the idea, if it was not already mentioned, that the Church is a group of people. These people come to a building to pray, sing to God, and to receive Holy Communion. You might pose these questions:

- What do we call the people who come to church? (Christians)
- How did they get to be Christians? (They were baptized.)

Some students might say that they are Orthodox; and you might add that they were Chrismated with Holy Chrism and are now members of the Orthodox Church.

- Why do these Orthodox Christians who come to church call themselves Christians? (Because they believe in Jesus Christ)
- Who is Christ? (Answers will vary. Help students to proclaim Christ as the Son of God Who died on the cross and who rose from the dead. Emphasize Christ's Resurrection and that He died to save us from sin and gives us eternal life.)

Christians as members of Christ's Church.

Remind students that Christ told us He would send the Holy Spirit to the people. This happened on Pentecost. (Students should be familiar with this event, based on last year's Festival theme.) With younger students, you might ask them to make the Sign of the Cross with emphasis on the words Holy Spirit. Sometimes we say that the "birthday of the Church" was on Pentecost when the Holy Spirit appeared as tongues of fire on the disciples.

Tell students that *people* who were baptized Christians became members of the Church. They were first called Christians at Antioch in Syria!

Refer to the exercise where you talked about/formed teams in the Introduction of the Lesson Plan. Help students to articulate that we are *members of the Orthodox Church* because we are baptized Christians and we are Chrismated in the Orthodox Church. Just as members of a team work together to win the game, the members of the church work together to grow closer to Christ and do what He wants for His people.

The Body of Christ.

Print the phrase *Body of Christ* on the middle of the chalkboard or in the middle of a large piece of paper. Say the phrase aloud and ask students to repeat it. Explain that in the Epistle the phrase *Body of Christ* doesn't mean Jesus's actual arms, legs, hands, feet, stomach, or chest. Instead, St. Paul uses the phrase *Body of Christ* to talk about all the people who are baptized Christians and who believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who died on the Cross and rose

from the dead to save us from sin and give us eternal life. St. Paul would say that all these people are members of the *Body of Christ*.

You might also say,
"The Body of Christ is one way to talk about the baptized people of the Church."

You might then say,
"The Church is the Body of Christ." (Students could repeat this.)
You might state this in equation form: The Church = the Body of Christ. When we say "The Church," we mean the Body of Christ. When we say the "Body of Christ," we mean "The Church."

Christ is the Head of the Body.

Pose the serious questions: How can a body have no head? How can a head have no body? Direct students' attention to Christ as Head:

Tell students: We know that the Church is all the people who are the *Body of Christ*. Who is the Head? Some students may say that Christ is the Head of the Body, but you will most likely need to convey this for students to repeat:
Christ is the Head of the Body (The Church).

Christ is the Head of the Church and we are *members* of His body.

Show this for kinesthetic learners by having everyone stand in a circle to represent "members" of the Church. This is the Body of Christ. (Since we are a conciliar church, form a circle.) Then stand in the middle of the circle and raise an icon of Christ as Pantocrator above the heads of the *Body of Christ*.

You can show this visually by placing a paper icon of Christ at the top of a page where you have drawn people as members of the church.

The Body of Christ in Holy Communion.

Show a picture of the chalice and spoon used in Holy Communion (or take the children into the church and have the priest or deacon show them the chalice and spoon). Students will know what these are and why they are used in Church. Ask students to verbalize *why* they come to Communion. Help them articulate that as Orthodox Christians we come to receive Christ Who loves us so much He asks us to come to Him in Holy Communion. You might consider the age and maturity of your group of students with regard to their understanding about Body and Blood of Christ. Sister Magdalen writes in *Children in the Church Today. An Orthodox Perspective*:

When we speak about Holy Communion to very young children, they sometimes react negatively to the expression “the body and blood of Christ.” This occurs in discussions rather than in the context of the liturgy itself. Probably it is enough for them to hear the Words of Institution at the liturgy, and the priest’s words as they receive the Holy Gifts. At other times we can speak of Christ coming to be within us, or of receiving Christ. We should certainly never deny that we receive Christ’s body and blood, but sometimes our “explanations” only cause children to imagine flesh and bones, and they feel distaste. Christ comes to us in the form of bread and wine because He condescends to us, and knows how difficult it would be for us otherwise to partake of His life. (p. 64, *Chapter 6, Liturgical and Spiritual Life*)

You might ask for direction from your parish priest regarding the way to phrase this for any students in your class who might be upset by the words body and blood. You can emphasize that we all are members of the Body of Christ with Christ as the Head of the Church, provided you have explained that St. Paul did not mean Jesus’s physical body.

Ask students to recall the words of the hymn sung during Communion: “Receive the **Body of Christ**. Taste the Fountain of Immortality” and sing it during class. Use also the prayer recited just before Communion by the faithful:

“I believe, O Lord, and I confess that Thou art truly the Christ, the Son of the living God....I believe also that this is truly Thine own most pure **Body**, and that this is truly Thine own precious Blood....”

You might say,

“When we receive Holy Communion, we receive Christ’s Body and Blood.

It looks like bread and wine, but it is *mystically* also His Body and Blood.

The Church teaches us that this is a Mystery.

This is our One True Faith, handed down from the time of the Apostles.”

You might say,

“When we receive Holy Communion, we become the Body of Christ.”

Everywhere in the United States, everywhere in the world, when Orthodox

Christians are gathered together in Church for Divine Liturgy, they can receive Holy Communion, the Body and Blood of Christ. When all these Orthodox people receive Holy Communion, they make up the Body of Christ and are **united in the Orthodox Faith. They are One Body and One Faith.**

Try not to get into a discussion about whether non-Orthodox Christians can partake of the sacraments in the Orthodox Church for this age group. If a student asks about it, answer honestly and point out our belief that we hold the fullness of faith. If other Christians don't believe the same as we do, then they cannot be united with us.

Each Orthodox Christian is a member of the Body of Christ.

Ask students to say that he/she is an Orthodox Christian who is:

- a member of the Orthodox Church
- a member of the Body of Christ
- a faithful Christian
- a faithful Christian who believes in Jesus Christ as the Son of God Who died on the cross and rose from the dead. (Refer to the Paschal season when we say, "Christ is risen! Indeed, He is risen!")

Summarize: We are all Orthodox Christians who are members of the Orthodox Church. We are the Body of Christ, which is the Church. Christ is the Head of the Church, and we are members of His Body. When we receive Holy Communion (the Body and Blood of Christ), we are united in the Faith.

How can we let other people know about our wonderful Orthodox Faith?

ACTIVITY:

You might pair students to complete the two-pronged exercise that follows: Perhaps a first-grader could work with an older child who is better able to write and spell. Distribute drawing paper, pencils, and crayons to each student seated at a workspace.

1. Draw or write down three ways that you as an Orthodox Christian can become an *active member of the Body of Christ.*

Possible responses:

- To think about all the good things God gives us and to thank Him for everything;
- To be obedient to parents, since this what God wants us to do;
- To pray at church and pay attention during the services or talk to Jesus anytime;
- To be kind to everyone, including animals;
- To take good care of our bodies as well as our belongings;
- To be willing to share with others and not be selfish;
- To receive Holy Communion; to go to confession, if you are old enough.

2. We want to tell others about Christ and our Orthodox Faith. Draw or write two or three ways that you can tell others about Christ and about being an Orthodox Christian.

Possible responses:

- Tell them about the ways you celebrate Pascha or Christmas or your names day;
- Be kind and respectful when talking about other people's beliefs but also proudly tell your own beliefs about your Orthodox Faith;
- Invite a friend to join you at church;
- Behave the way Christ wants each of us to behave. (Example says a lot!)
- By honoring one's parents and not talking back out of disrespect;
- By being honest and trustworthy and doing the work assigned to you;
- By helping an elderly person with some task;
- By helping at church with coffee hour or working on a church project;
- By offering money earned from one's allowance or chores;
- By not arguing or fighting with brothers and sisters or school friends.

Ask students to share responses with the group. You might display their work.

CLOSING:

Gather students into a small circle. Bring out a beach ball to use for a question-and-answer review. Toss the ball to one

of the students who will try to answer the question. Then the student will toss the ball to another student who will try to answer the next question.

What does St. Paul mean when he says the "Body of Christ"? (Not flesh and bones but all the people who believe in Christ and are baptized and who receive Holy Communion.)

Who is the Head of the Church? (Christ)
Fill in the blank: We say Christ is the Head of the Church and we are _____ (members) of His Body.

Why do we go to Holy Communion? (To receive Jesus Christ)

At Communion, we sing a hymn. What are its words? (Receive the Body of Christ; Taste the Fountain of Immortality)

Fill in the missing word in this sentence: When Orthodox Christians receive Holy Communion together, they are _____ (united) in the Orthodox Faith.

Why should we want to tell other people about our Orthodox Faith? (Because Christ wants all people to come to Him and love Him. We should let everyone know about Christ.)

Tell us one way you can be an active member of the Orthodox Church. (Varied individual responses)

Gather students around the icon corner.

Say a closing prayer or sing an "Alleluia" or other hymn customary for your parish.



*Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
of North America, Metropolitan PHILIP, Primate*
DEPARTMENT OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
Carole A. Buleza, Director

**2007 Creative Festivals Lesson Plan:
Grades 4-5**

THEME:

“...Building up the Body of Christ; until we all come to the unity of the faith.”

Ephesians 4:12-13

GOALS:

1. To help students understand the theme well enough to express it in art, poetry, prose, or photography.
2. To encourage student understanding of themselves as members of the Body of Christ with Christ as the Head of the Church.
3. To help mediate student growth as Orthodox Christians in an increasingly diverse world and among diverse Orthodox Christian populations and jurisdictions.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To define the Church as a gathering of baptized and chrismated Christians who worship the Holy Trinity and to understand the term *ecclesia* used by the Early Church as meaning “gathering.”
2. To define the Body of Christ as all the baptized and chrismated members of the Church who believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God.
3. To hear and repeat the sentence: Christ is the Head of the Church, and we are members of His Body.
4. To demonstrate the Body of Christ as the “whole body knit together” with a variety of jobs, talents, and skills needed to do the work of the Church.
5. To describe one talent or skill he or she can offer to the Church for working toward the unity of all Orthodox Christians on the North American continent.

TIME: 45-50 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Large Icon of Christ (Pantocrator) or of The Resurrection
- Placard or oak tag with definitions:
Ecclesia-A Greek word used by the early Christians to describe the Church. It means “gathering.”
Unity-Oneness as in spirit, aims, interests, feelings; a whole made up of a variety of parts.
Diversity-Variety, different parts or expressions.
Unity of faith- United in the same Faith, the same belief, the same purpose for coming together. For us today, this means the Orthodox Church.
- Chalkboard and chalk or large sheets of paper and markers
- Copies of the Home Page of the Department of Missions and Evangelism
www.antiochian.org/missions
- Bibles
- One sheet 9”x12” construction paper or drawing paper for each student
- One marker or crayon for each student.

FOR THE CATECHIST:

This year’s Festival theme contains two important phrases: *Body of Christ* and *unity of the faith*. The intent of the theme is directed toward unity at the Archdiocesan level and at the Orthodox Church on the North American continent. You will need to be sure that your students understand the Body of Christ with its various levels of meaning and as St. Paul uses the image in *Ephesians 4*. Then you will want to direct student

thinking toward the possibilities of unity of the Orthodox Faith in North America.

The portion of the lesson that deals with the Body of Christ relies heavily on what St. Paul presents in his Epistle to the Ephesians. Depending on the abilities of your class, you can utilize as many of the references to *Ephesians* as you think are helpful. If your students are well versed in knowing what the Body of Christ means, you can continue on with discussion about what it would be like to have unity among the Orthodox Churches in America—and what the student can do toward unity among the Orthodox. Each section of the lesson is presented with a bold-faced question.

Another aspect of this lesson deals with spiritual gifts, which St. Paul calls grace. It will be important for students to know that by virtue of their chrismation and as members of the Orthodox Church, they can already contribute their particular gifts and skills to the building up of the Church. This is not limited to the “gifted and talented.” Each person is unique and able to offer Time, Talent, and Treasure to the Church. During the Activity section, students may brainstorm the diverse roles and “jobs” needed for the Church to function and how people who fill these roles contribute as parts “knit and joined together” to form the whole Body of Christ. This whole strives to attain the unity of faith—communion with the One Truth in Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Then, of course, this Truth must be proclaimed to all peoples in all nations. So then begins the work with individual persons growing into Christ, coming together as the Body of Christ, and making the Body grow and be known to all.

Suggested Readings:

The Orthodox Study Bible. Ephesians,
pp. 436-452, especially “The Church,” p.
445.

Sr. Magdalen: *Children in the Church*
Today. An Orthodox Perspective.

THE LESSON PLAN

OPENING:

Gather students around the icon corner to say “Our Father.”

INTRODUCTION:

Announce the theme for the Creative Arts Festival and explain that it comes from St. Paul’s *Epistle to the Ephesians*, Chapter 4. Call attention to the important phrases of Body of Christ and unity in faith. Tell students you will talk about what St. Paul meant by “Body of Christ” and then concentrate on what unity could mean for the Orthodox Church. Ask a good reader to read the *section* of Chapter 4 from which the theme is derived: Verse 7, and verses 11-16. Explain that as you continue with the lesson you will refer to some of these verses, so the students should keep their Bibles open to *Ephesians*, Chapter 4.

CONTENT:

The Church as People. Ask students, “What do you think it means when we talk about “the Church”? What is “the Church”? Write their ideas on the chalkboard or on a large paper. Introduce the idea, if it was not already mentioned, that the Church is a group of baptized and chrismated Christians who *gather together* to worship the Holy Trinity; to pray and sing to God; to receive Holy Communion, etc. The Early Church was called the *ecclesia*, which translated means *gathering*. (We get the word ecclesiastical from the Greek word ecclesia. You can write these words on the chalkboard and ask students to repeat them.)

Remind students that Christ told us He would send the Holy Spirit, “the Helper” to His people. This happened on Pentecost. (Students should be familiar with this event, based on last year’s Festival theme.) Tell students that *people* who were baptized became members of the Church. They were first called Christians at Antioch in Syria!

Help students to articulate that we are *members of the Orthodox Church* because we are baptized Christians who have been chrismated in the Orthodox Church.

The Body of Christ.

Write the phrase *Body of Christ* on the chalkboard or on a large piece of paper. Some students may already understand what this phrase means, even in its many layers of meaning. Say the phrase aloud and ask students to repeat it. Explain that in the Epistle the phrase *Body of Christ* doesn’t mean Christ’s actual arms, legs, hands, feet, stomach, or chest. Instead, St. Paul uses the phrase *Body of Christ* to talk about all the people who are baptized Christians who believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who died on the Cross and rose from the dead to save us from sin and give us eternal life. St. Paul would say that all these people are members of the *Body of Christ*.

You might also say,

“The Body of Christ is one way to talk about the baptized people of the Church.”

You might then say,

“The Church is the Body of Christ.” (Students could repeat this.) Refer students to *Ephesians* 4:12.

Christ is the Head of the Body.

Tell students: We know that the Church is all the people who are the *Body of Christ*. Who is the Head of the Body of Christ? (Jesus Christ, the Son of God) Most students should be able to answer that Christ is the Head of the Church. You will want to emphasize the sentence the Church uses to state this truth:

Christ is the Head of the Church and we are *members* of His body.

Ask students to repeat this sentence.

Refer students to *Ephesians* 4:15-16. In verse 15, emphasize the word head. Christ is the Head! By speaking the truth in **love**, we may grow up in all things into Him, Christ.

In verses 16-17 St. Paul uses the image of the body joined and knit together. St. Paul's image is one of a body working in unity with all its part functioning—each part doing its share--in a spirit of love. The head and body are fully joined and working in unity.

Look at Verse 16 and the words “from the whole body knit together.” Notice that St. Paul uses the phrase **whole body**, not just part of the body. Think of Christ as the Head of the whole body joined together with the same purpose and same belief (Faith). What do you have? The Body of Christ!

How do we build up the Body of Christ?

Tell students that St. Paul gives us some ideas about how we can build up the Body of Christ (the Church).

Direct attention to verse 7, read it aloud for students, and point out that Christ gives grace (or spiritual gifts) to each person. Christ decides what He will give to each and for what purpose.

Continue with Verse 11. Grace (spiritual gifts) is given to some people so that they can become apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Verse 12 tells us the purpose for these gifts:

- equipping the saints (Anyone can become a saint; the assumption is that everyone will try to achieve saintliness.)
- for the work of ministry (service to others)
- building up of the Body of Christ (the Church).

Tell students we sometimes hear the phrase “Unity with diversity.” Within the One Body of Christ there is diversity of people with different gifts and expression of these gifts, talents, skills. You may need to define diversity as variety and it usually is understood nowadays as variety within a group of people.

Direct students' attention to the roles people in the Church could have, depending upon their gifts, talents, or skills. Take a few minutes to pose these questions:

- a) What functions or “roles” in the church does St. Paul write about? (Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers)
- b) Are these the only roles or jobs needed to build up the Church? (No,

there are others to keep the Church going. St. Paul listed roles that are leadership or teaching roles. Numerous other tasks are required to do the work of the Church.)

Students can name some, such as architects, iconographers, chanters, choir singers, those who clean, paint, repair; those who visit the sick, etc. Later, in the Activity, students will write on large paper the various categories, roles, and jobs of people in the Church.

c) How can a young child, such as you, participate in some of these roles or jobs? (Not as leaders such as a priest, or evangelizer (missionary) but one can talk about his or her Faith, do service projects with the help of adult leaders; use a talent such as in art, music, or even leadership skills; praying for others.)

d) A lot of people with different talents can do things for the Church. What can *all* these people do in the Church, regardless of their skills or talents? (They can participate in worship and receive Holy Communion. Anyone can worship; those chrismated Orthodox Christians who prepare themselves can receive Holy Communion because they are members of the Orthodox Church and in the fullness of the Faith.)

Verse 13 is important. The word attain means “to gain through effort.” The phrase *unity of faith* means everyone is united in the same Faith, the same belief, the same purpose for coming together. For us today, this means the Orthodox Church.

Note the phrase *of the knowledge of the Son of God*. This means we know Christ, the Son of God, because we have a

relationship with Him through prayer, worship, and Holy Communion. It’s not just by reading about Christ or discussing what we know.

St. Paul suggests that all Christians should work toward becoming perfect or holy. Students may remember hearing Christ words: “...as My Father is perfect in heaven” or “Be holy, for I am holy” (1Peter 1:16). This is the Christian life. Explain to students that even St. Paul knew this is difficult to do and wants us to support one another as we strive to the “fullness of Christ.” (Verse 13). That’s why he uses the word attain which means “to gain through effort.” It’s hard work to be the kind of Christian that Christ wants us to be.

Point out to your students that St. Paul also says we don’t do this alone. This is what he means about the whole body working together “by which every part does its share.” He means that when each person contributes to the work of the Church, then the Body of Christ (the Church) grows closer to Christ and to a unity of faith.

What is the faith that St. Paul talks about?

Point out the “Oneness” of the faith in Jesus Christ as Son of God. There is One God, One Body of Christ, One Church, One Truth. St. Paul wanted to warn Christians not to get swept “to and fro” by false beliefs. Verse 14 tells **why** we need to build up the Body of Christ to unity of the faith.

- a) So all people would know the Truth, which is Jesus Christ as the Son of God;
- b) So people would not fall into believing false doctrines;

- c) So people would not be tricked into believing Christ is not who the Church says He is (or who Christ says He is).

A unity of faith means that everyone believes the same thing. In this case, it means that all Christians believe the Truth about Christ and Who He is and what the Church is and should be. It also has the meaning of everyone sharing in the “fullness of faith.”

Here you can remind students that The Orthodox Church believes it has the “fullness of Faith” handed down from the time of the Apostles and this is why the Church believes so strongly in preserving this Faith in Truth. (Holy tradition)

What does this mean for unity?

Ask students to say in their own words what unity means, whether in daily life or in the context of the Church: Refer to the definition of unity as “oneness as in spirit, aims, interests, feelings but made up of a variety of people or parts.”

Possible responses:

A team works together; each player has a particular skill and does what he is supposed to do, and so the team wins.

A class project has different members, each contributing his or her skill, talents, ideas, and the project becomes something good.

A church project might be people raising money to help someone who is sick; workers for Habitat for Humanity; people raising money by going on a “Walk” for a charity.

The Divine Liturgy has different people working together (leitourgeia) with the priest and deacon doing what their role is and the parishioners responding—and together everyone participates in the Divine Liturgy with Holy Communion.

Students should be helped to understand: The people who live in unity of faith would have the same beliefs and the same purpose in the Church but might have different gifts to do the work of the Church.

Quote from *Psalms 133* which is one of the psalms used at The Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts. *The Orthodox Study Bible* refers to this psalm as “Blessed Unity of the People of God,” (p. 743). The verses quoted here are from the more traditional translations

“Behold, how good and pleasant it is
When brothers dwell in unity.
It is like the precious oil upon the head,
Running down the beard, the beard of Aaron.
Running down on the collar of his robe....”
Psalms 132/133.

Note the words good and pleasant and dwell in unity. Remind students that oil would have been costly and indeed precious in Jewish culture; often it was used for anointing. We shouldn’t think of it as we do fuel oil or cooking oil. Think of myrrh. Ask students to imagine how it feels to have warm, smooth oil on their arms or someone rubbing their arms or face with oil.

Or how else might it feel to have “brothers dwell in unity”?

Imagine what it would be like if all Orthodox people in North America came together as one Body of Christ. Unity could mean that all jurisdictions would be joined together as one. (Recall

St. Paul's description in *Ephesians* 4:16. "joined and knit together....) Use the senses to stimulate discussion:

How would that look to you?

Possible responses: A lot of people as part of the "church"; A blend of cultural expression, customs, iconography, liturgical music, architecture, service organizations.

How would it sound?

Possible responses: A strong voice in the nation; A mix of musical styles in the services; perhaps unfamiliar music at Divine Liturgy; possibly people speaking different languages at church.

How would it taste? Would it leave a bad taste in your mouth? A good taste?

Possible responses: Varied menus at church. Everyone receives the **Eucharist**: One Body of Christ expressed in Holy Communion.

How would it feel? (Emotional responses here)

Possible responses: Pride in making a real presence on the American scene; Pride in a common goal, in overcoming obstacles of uniting the various jurisdictions; Security in larger number of Orthodox Christians one knows; Discomfort with new members until one knows them better.

What do the people in the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese need to do to achieve unity of faith?

As students think up answers, write them on large sheets of paper and post them. You might ask students to consider some of the ideas listed below, if they haven't mentioned them. Show the Home Page of the Department of Missions of the Archdiocese and point out the quotes as

well as the objectives of the Department in reaching out to America to bring America to Orthodoxy.

- The clergy and the laity need to pray to the Holy Spirit to guide them about what to do.
- The bishops need to work with other jurisdictions so that all the Orthodox Churches on the North American continent work together and share the resources they each have.
- All the Orthodox—clergy and laity—need to be the living Church through regular worship of the Holy Trinity and frequent reception of the Eucharist and other sacraments.
- Clergy and laity need to follow the Great Commission to go out to all nations and baptize them in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit (*Matthew* 28:16-20, *Mark* 16:14-18; *Luke* 24:44-49).
- All the Orthodox clergy and laity need to work in harmony toward one Orthodox Church on the North American continent. This can be accomplished through people using their gifts for the Church in different organizations.

What can you do as a young person to work toward unity on the North American continent?

Ask for student responses. Offer these suggestions as ways students can contribute toward spreading the Faith or toward building up the Church on this continent. You may want to point out

that spiritual work is important: Building themselves up in faith now so they are better equipped to do the work of the Church. By example, they can inspire others. Emphasize that cooperation between hierarchy and the laity is needed to achieve this effort.

- Know that without a doubt you can contribute to the Church through personal prayer, in your family, in the local parish. You are a member of the Orthodox Church right now!
- Pray and study the Scriptures, learn about what the Orthodox Church teaches, and grow closer in your relationship to Christ.
- Worship regularly and partake of Holy Communion and other sacraments on a regular basis.
- Become involved in parish activities, camps, and the Parish-Life Conference with activities such as the Creative Arts Festival. As you get older, you can participate in the Bible Bowl and Oratorical and join Teen SOYO. When you become an adult, you can become a member of the Fellowship of St. John the Divine, Antiochian Women, Order of St. Ignatius, or participate in work of the various departments; or you might work as a young adult on projects for Orthodox Christian Missions Commission, etc.
- Give of your Time, Talent, and Treasure. This means you will give of yourself to serve others, and you will know something about the “gifts” God has given

you, whether in sports, music, arts, intellect, leadership, or being able to help people—which itself is a gift. You can help support the church by donating a portion of your allowance, or other money you might have.

- Learn something about the saints of the Church and about the history of the Orthodox Church so that when people of other faiths try to convert you, you can defend the Truth and your own beliefs.
- Work toward being friendly and open and respectful of all peoples of all races and cultures. As you respect others, they will respect you and your beliefs.

ACTIVITY:

You can demonstrate, especially for kinesthetic learners, “unity in diversity” in the Body of Christ with Christ as its Head by asking students to name all the variety of people and workers in the Church. Distribute one 9”x12” sheet of construction paper and a marker to each child. One by one, have students call out a category of a member of the Church such as parent; or a role that a person has in the Church, such as priest; or a job that has to be done such as architect to build the Church, etc. That student will write his choice on the sheet of paper and take his or her place to form a circle. See the list below:

Laity/clergy; parents/children;
grandparents; boys/girls; deacon/
priest/ bishop/ archbishop/patriarch;

chanters/choir singers/choir directors;
iconographers/architects;
catechists/students; gardeners;
painters; cooks/bakers; cleaners;
parish council members; altar servers;
missionaries, etc.

Everyone should then stand in a circle with his or her signs to represent “members” of the Church. This is the Body of Christ. Next, place an icon of Christ as Pantocrator or an icon of The Resurrection above the heads of the *Body of Christ*. All the members of the Body of Christ worship together and work together, each part doing its share in the Church. The Head and the Body are fully joined and function together as a whole.

Next, take a few moments for students to group themselves into what “category” they think they might fit into—what they would like to do for the Church or what talent or skill they already have to offer for the building up of the Church. e.g.: Someone who sings well might want to be part of the church choir or compose liturgical music. Someone might want to teach or preach. Someone might want to be a good parent. Perhaps one child will say how important it is to pray. Ask the students how they feel being part of this “church” and about possibly doing some special job or taking on some special role for the church. Ask students to remain seated in the circle for some final questions.

CLOSING:

You can review with students by posing these questions:

We’ve been talking a lot about the Church. Why do we say the church is

not just a building? (The church is made up of people who worship the Holy Trinity.)

What is the Greek word that describes the church as a gathering? (Ecclesia, which translated means “gathering.”)

Who is Head of the Church? (Christ—not any human being)

What is the Body of Christ? (All the members of the Church)

Who are members of the Orthodox Church? (All people who are chrismated in the Orthodox Church are members of the Orthodox Church.)

Finish this sentence: The Church is the Body of ____ (Christ) and we are _____ (members) of His Body.

Describe St. Paul’s image of the Body of Christ. (Not flesh and bones as in a human body; all the believers in Christ; the church; the *whole* body joined and knit together with all the parts working together in unity. The Head and Body are fully joined and working in unity.)

We Orthodox Christians are given spiritual gifts which we can use to build up the Body of Christ. What is another word for these spiritual gifts? (Grace)

Who bestows these spiritual gifts on each one of us? (Christ Our God through the Holy Spirit)

What spiritual gift do you think you have to use toward building up the Church, the Body of Christ? (Ask each child in turn to say what he/she can do. Perhaps a child feels more comfortable

saying what he or she would like to do for the Church).

What do we mean by the word unity? (Oneness, as in spirit, aims, interests, or feelings;
A whole made up of a variety of parts)

What do we mean by unity of faith? (One faith—one belief. Everyone believes the same thing. Everyone is in communion with one another. The Orthodox Church believes it has the “fullness of Faith.”)

Why is it important for us Orthodox Christians to work together for the building up of the Church? (The Church is not just one person, but a gathering of people who worship the One True God. Working together, everybody can get the job done—just as a team works together to attain its goal. When each person uses his skills and talents or does something to help the Church grow, the whole body of the Church works together efficiently and “fits together” to make up the Body of Christ with Christ as the Head.)

Who remembers what the Great Commission is? (Jesus told His disciples to go out to all nations to baptize all the people in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.)

Why is it important for us in the Antiochian Archdiocese to work toward unity on the American continent? (Accept individual answers. Christ has asked us to bring all people into “the unity of faith”—so that all believe the same Truths about Jesus Christ and His Church. When all people share in the same Holy Communion, they share in

the Body of Christ in a unity of faith. We want everyone to know Christ and the Orthodox Faith!)

Optional Questions:

Why can we say that there is unity among all Orthodox Christians who receive Holy Communion? (All Orthodox Christians belong to the same Faith—and all who receive Holy Communion are in union with each other or else they could not receive the Eucharist. Communion means “in union.”)

What does the word diversity mean? (Variety; different parts or expressions).

We’ve used the phrase “unity in diversity” regarding the Church. Tell what this means to you. (There is One Church and One Faith, but within the Church, there are people who have different languages, customs, talents, and jobs. Even though they are different people, they all make up the Body of Christ, receive Holy Communion, and work together toward building up the Church.)

Gather students around the icon corner. Read from *I Corinthians* 12:12-14:

“For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.

For by one Spirit were we all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

For in fact the body is not one member but many.”

Say a closing prayer or sing “It Is Truly Meet” or another hymn customary for your parish



*Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
of North America, Metropolitan PHILIP, Primate*
DEPARTMENT OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
Carole A. Buleza, Director

**2007 Creative Festivals Lesson Plan:
Grades 6-12**

THEME:

“...Building up the Body of Christ; until we all come to the unity of the faith.”

Ephesians 4:12-13

GOALS:

1. To help students understand the theme well enough to express it in art, poetry, prose, or photography.
2. To encourage student understanding of themselves as members of the Body of Christ with Christ as the Head of the Church.
3. To help mediate student growth as Orthodox Christians in an increasingly diverse world and among diverse Orthodox Christian populations and jurisdictions.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To acquaint students with the Missions and Evangelism Home Page of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese. (www.antiochian.org/missions)
2. To analyze the theme verse in the context of St. Paul's image of the Body of Christ
3. To learn the wording of the Church's teaching: The Church is the Body of Christ; and Christ is the Head of the Church and we are members of His Body.
4. To discuss the image of the Body of Christ as a model for the unity of the faith.
5. To analyze the impact of having a unified Orthodox Christian presence in North America.
6. To brainstorm what the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese can do to achieve unity on the North American continent.
7. To consider what each young person can do to prepare himself for working toward unity on the North American continent now and as he or she grows older.
8. To name one character trait about oneself that leads to a closer relationship with Christ and one character trait that impedes one's progress in growing closer to Christ.
9. To discern the spiritual gifts, talents, and skills one can use to build up the Orthodox Church now or in the future.

TIME: 45-50 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Icon of Christ
- Large sheets of paper; markers for catechist
- Placard or oak tag with definitions to be displayed in the classroom
Unity: Oneness as in spirit, aims, interests, feelings, etc.; harmony.
To attain: to gain with effort.
- Prayer of the Hours
- Psalm 133 as it is chanted in The Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts.
- Bibles
- Copies of the Home Page of the Department of Missions and Evangelism
www.antiochian.org/missions
- List of Churches, Missions, and Mission Projects from the Archdiocesan website
- Page of questions for the Activity

FOR THE CATECHIST:

This year's Festival theme is directed toward Orthodox unity both at the Archdiocesan level and among all Orthodox churches on the North American continent. Your students will be at varying levels of cognitive understanding, spiritual discipline, knowledge about Christ and the Church—and, age! This is a challenge for you, the one who will decide what your students already know, can handle in terms of content, and how much they can be stretched and challenged to understand the abstract words *Body of Christ* and *unity of the faith*.

Presented in this Plan are suggestions to work with the theme verse in the context of *Ephesians*, the varied meanings of the Body of Christ, and numerous ideas

about what the students can do about unity as members of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese. Finally, there is a suggested activity which requires students to examine their own relationship to Christ, albeit in a limited way, and to consider their particular spiritual gifts and how they can be expressed for the Body of Christ. For all ages, spiritual growth in the fullness of Faith is essential; and that means participation in the liturgical life of the parish, reading the Scriptures, and knowing something about the teachings of the Church Fathers. Having discerned their gifts, talents, or skills, students can use their diverse gifts, talents, or skills for the Glory of God.

The material presented about *Ephesians* is detailed for your ease in presenting it, and you can use as much detail as you feel your students need in order to understand the theme verse. The Plan includes many possible responses regarding what students can do to bring about unity; you will think of others. Again, they are listed to help you and your students consider a variety of approaches to the theme topic.

At the time of this writing, the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad issued a statement May 11, 2006 saying it adopted a resolution calling for “spiritual unity” with the Moscow Patriarchate but administrative autonomy after more than 80 years of separation resulting from the 1917 Communist revolution. How propitious that His Eminence, Metropolitan PHILIP, has asked our youth to consider the theme of Orthodox unity for 2007.

For those in middle school, emphasize that they can prepare themselves as members of the *Body of Christ* and as future leaders of the Orthodox Church in North America. High-school students will have more immediate viable options for working toward unity of the Orthodox Church on the North American continent. As students grow older, we can hope they will take their places in serving Christ in His Church, led by the Holy Spirit and church hierarchy. Perhaps you will assure your students that they, too, as members of the Body of Christ, can reach out to the hierarchy and express their hope and desire for a unified presence of Orthodoxy in America. Let no student feel that he or she is alone in this effort.

Suggested Readings:

The Orthodox Study Bible. Ephesians, pp. 436-452, especially “The Church,” p. 445.

Sr. Magdalen: *Children in the Church Today. An Orthodox Perspective.*

THE LESSON PLAN

OPENING:

Gather students around the icon corner to say The Trisagion Prayers..

INTRODUCTION:

Distribute copies of the Home Page of the Missions and Evangelism of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese. Ask good readers to read aloud the three quotes at the beginning of the Home Page. Point out the quote from Metropolitan PHILIP:

”I feel strongly that our best gift to America will be a stable Christianity that is rooted in the Bible, holy tradition and the Fathers of the Church.”

Ask students to glance at the page listing the Churches, Missions, and Mission Projects.

Tell students this connects with the theme for the Creative Arts Festival, and announce the theme. Explain that students will look briefly at the context in which the theme is found in *Ephesians 4*; what is meant by *Body of Christ*; and then concentrate on *unity of faith*.

CONTENT:

Understanding the theme verse in the context of Ephesians, Chapter 4.

(You may discuss as much of this as is needed to understand St. Paul’s words.) Ask a student to read aloud from Ephesians 7; and 11-13. Point out words from the theme in verses 13-14. Some translations use the word edifying instead of the word building up.

Edifying has the connotation of building up in spiritual ways.

Go back to verse 7 and point out that grace is given to each person by Christ who decides what He will give to each and for what purpose.

Verse 11. Grace (spiritual gifts) is given to some of the people so that they can become apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Verse 12 tells us the purpose for these gifts:

- a) Equipping the saints (Anyone can become a saint; the assumption is that everyone will try to achieve saintliness.)
- b) For the work of ministry (service to others)
- c) Building up of the Body of Christ (the Church).

Refer students to the dictionary definitions of unity and to attain.

Verse 13 is important. St. Paul tells us some are given spiritual gifts as leaders so that all work together to “attain the unity of the Faith.” The word attain means “to gain through effort.” It’s not only “leaders” of the Church who can be given grace. Each person can receive the grace given by Christ... “The grace of the Holy Spirit”. St. Paul suggests that we all work together, not as individual Christians, but as the people of the church helping one another with our particular gifts to grow closer and closer to Christ.

Note the phrase *of the knowledge of the Son of God*. This means we would know Christ, the Son of God, because we have a relationship with Him in the Eucharist in the Church.

The words “to the perfect man, to the measure....fullness of Christ” refer to the Christian’s struggle to be perfect “as My Father is perfect in heaven” and again, striving not as individuals but together as the Body of Christ.

Verse 14 tells **why** we need to build up the Body of Christ to the unity of the faith.

- a) So all people would know the Truth, which is Jesus Christ as the Son of God
- b) So people would not fall into believing false doctrines
- c) So people would not be tricked into believing Christ is not who the Church says He is (or who Christ himself says He is).

You might read this quote from *The Church Is One* by Alexy S. Khomiakov, p. 20:

“...And the Church herself does not err, for she is the truth, she is incapable of cunning or cowardice, for she is holy....”

Here you can remind students that The Orthodox Church believes it has the “fullness of Faith” handed down from the time of the Apostles and this is why the Church believes so strongly in preserving this Faith in Truth. (Holy tradition)

Call attention to St. Paul’s choice of words “no longer tossed to and fro” in verse 14. This suggests an image of something being wobbly or rocky. Refer students again to Metropolitan PHILIP’s quote and his phrase, “a **stable** Christianity”. The fullness of Faith is a stable Faith, not beset by false doctrines or people branching off into other practices or beliefs.

In verse 15, emphasize the word head. Christ is the Head! By speaking the truth in **love**, we may grow up in all things into Him, Christ.

In verses 16-17 St. Paul uses the image of the body joined and knit together by all its various members working together to grow closer to Christ. St. Paul’s image is one of a body working in unity with all its parts functioning—each part doing its share--in a spirit of love. The head and body are fully joined and working in unity. How do you visualize this image of “knit together”?

Look at Verse 16 and the words “from the whole body knit together.” Notice that St. Paul uses the phrase **whole body**, not just part of the body. Think of Christ as the Head of the whole body joined together with the same purpose and same belief. What do you have? The Body of Christ.

We often hear the phrase “Unity with diversity.” Within the One Body of Christ there is diversity of people with different gifts and expression of these gifts, talents, and skills.

For high school students, you can add remarks about the use of the phrase “unity of the faith” as found in the Prayer of the Hours.

“Unity of the Faith” is found in the Prayer of the Hours which we read before every Divine Liturgy and at other services:

“...Surround us with Your holy angels so that guided and guarded by them, we may attain to the **unity of the Faith** and to the full knowledge of Your unapproachable glory. For You are blessed unto ages of ages. Amen.”

Ask students what they think “unity of the faith” means here. (In this part of the prayer we ask angels for protection so that we may always keep to the True Faith and not be tempted to depart from the Faith of Christ as our Lord and Savior. The phrase “attain... to the full knowledge” does not mean merely cognitive knowledge (mental or intellectual) but a deeper meaning of experiencing the Truth *of* God and salvation through Jesus Christ. There is a difference between knowing *about* God and knowing *of* God. Another famous quote: “*The theologian is the one who prays.*”

This can refer to *synergy*—sometimes defined as the cooperation between God and humankind. This synergy means that God offers us salvation and we can freely respond to what God wants us to be and do.

Continue with an overview of the various levels of meanings for *Body of Christ*.

Refer to the list of mission parishes that you’ve handed out, and comment that each time we establish a parish, a church, we are helping to build the Body of Christ.

Find out what students already understand about this phrase. Write responses on a large sheet of paper under the heading “Body of Christ” and post the responses on the wall. Fill in any gaps in student understanding so that you have discussed these aspects:

- St. Paul’s use of this image to mean all baptized and chrismated Orthodox Christians;
- The Church as the Body of Christ; with Christ as its Head. See *Ephesians* 1:22-23

“And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things in the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”

- Common phrasing used: Christ is the Head of the Church and we are members of His Body;
- The Eucharist. Holy Communion, i.e., the Body of Christ; referring to the bread that has been transformed into Christ’s Body during Divine Liturgy;
- The Eucharist is central to the Orthodox Church’s worship;
- Communion hymn: “Receive the Body of Christ; Taste the Fountain of Immortality.”
- When we partake of the Eucharist, we become the “Body of Christ.”
- The Church is a living organism, not an organization, and not just a building.

We can use the image of One Body of Christ as a model for a discussion of “unity of the faith” as it is presented in the Festival theme.

Because there is one Head (Christ), there is One Body (the Church), and there is One True Faith (Orthodoxy). There should not be a division of “churches” but one “unity of the faith.”

Recall the event of Pentecost and remind students there is One Spirit that guides the Church. (For by One Spirit were we all baptized into one body...*I Corinthians* 12:13)

Students can refer also to *John* 14:16-17 where Christ tells His disciples that He will pray the Father to send into His Church “another Helper, that He may

abide with you forever—“the Spirit of Truth....”

The Orthodox Church proclaims itself the True Faith as revealed by Christ and handed down from the laying-on-of hands by the apostles to the present time. Students may be familiar with the expression “fullness of the faith” which Orthodoxy proclaims.

Discuss briefly the idea of “fullness of the faith” that cannot be compromised or watered down. You might speak in terms of

- One Body, One Church (See *John* 17:21-23:)

“...that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You. That they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

And the glory which You gave Me I have given them that they may be one just as We are one;

I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.”

- The unity expressed in The Holy Trinity: One in Essence and Undivided;
- We are not in communion (not in **union**) with other churches that do not believe all that we hold as Truth.
- There is unity in diversity: There is One Lord, One Faith, but there are different gifts to different peoples within the Body of Christ (See *Ephesians* 4:7 and 11-13.)

- Diversity can be expressed in different cultures, languages, piety, and races.

Ask students to imagine what it would be like if all Orthodox people in North America came together as one Body of Christ.

Unity could mean that all jurisdictions would be joined together as one. (Recall St. Paul’s description in *Ephesians* 4:16. “joined and knit together....”)

Use the senses to stimulate discussion: How would that look to you?

Possible responses: A lot of people as part of the “church”; A blend of cultural expression, customs, iconography, liturgical music, architecture, service organizations.

How would it sound?

Possible responses: A strong voice in the nation; A mix of musical styles in the services; perhaps unfamiliar music at Divine Liturgy; possibly people speaking different languages at church.

How would it taste?

Possible responses: Everyone receives the **Eucharist**: One Body of Christ expressed in Holy Communion; Different foods from different cultures at church functions.

How would it feel? (Emotional responses here)

Possible responses: Pride in making a real presence on the American scene; Pride in a common goal, in overcoming obstacles of uniting the various jurisdictions; Security in larger number of Orthodox Christians one knows.

Quote *Psalm* 133 that is one of the psalms chanted during The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. Perhaps a student would read it for the class. (You could mention that *The Orthodox Study Bible*, p. 743, calls this psalm the “Blessed Unity of the People of God.”)

“Behold, how good and pleasant it is
When brothers dwell in unity.
It is like the precious oil upon the head,
Running down the beard, the beard of Aaron.
Running down on the collar of his robe....”
Psalm 132/133.

Note the words good and pleasant and dwell in unity. Remind students that oil would have been costly and indeed precious in Jewish culture; often it was used for anointing. We shouldn’t think of it as we do fuel oil or cooking oil. Think of myrrh.

How much impact would a unified Orthodox presence have in North America?

Ask students to consider various ways: spiritually, politically, economically, personally. Possible answers:

Combined resources of Time, Talent, and Treasure to provide for:

- Proclaiming the Truth about the Risen Christ
- Discerning what the Holy Spirit wants for the Body of Christ
- All hierarchs and other clergy working together to minister to their flock and to evangelize
- More missions established and supported to full-parish status
- More programs for spiritual development of members
- More support for monastic communities on the North American continent

- More ministering to those in need
- More media coverage

Political influence in a secular culture

- Sanctity of life issues
- Science and technology issues
- National security and health issues

Media

- Coverage of events connected with the Orthodox Church
- Radio/TV broadcasts for the faithful as well as unchurched
- Influence on the quality of programming.

What does the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America need to do to achieve unity?

As students think up answers, write them down on large sheets of paper for all to see. You might organize students into groups for this brainstorming activity. You might ask them to consider the following areas, if they are not already brought up by the students:

- Overtures from the hierarchy toward unity and cooperation among different jurisdictions.
- Discernment: being aware of what the Holy Spirit wants us to do.
- Following the examples of the missionary efforts and work of Sts. Raphael, Patriarch TIKHON of Moscow, Alexis Toth, Herman of Alaska, and Alexander Hotovitsky in trying to establish a unified Orthodox Church in the U.S. at the turn of the twentieth century.

- All Orthodox clergy and laity working in harmony toward one united presence: Focused efforts of Department of Missions, Department of Christian Education, Antiochian Women, Order of St. Ignatius, camping activities; Orthodox Christian Fellowships and related activities; Parish-Life Conferences; FOCA, GOYA, SOYO, and OCMC.
- The experience of Orthodox Christians as the living Church through liturgical worship and frequent reception of the Eucharist and other sacraments;
- A belief in the rightness of Orthodox unity and a willingness to achieve it.

What can YOU do to proclaim Orthodox unity on the North America continent?

Students should be encouraged to come up with a multitude of responses. Ask for two people to record student responses for the entire group.

Break into smaller groups to discuss if your group is large. Ask one student to record responses. Then have each group share responses with the entire group. Assist in facilitating discussion, as needed.

A variety of possible areas of response are provided here for the catechist:

Pray, read the Scriptures on a regular basis, and be involved in the liturgical life of the Church with frequent reception of the sacraments.

Work on personal development of character and an openness to growth in

the spiritual life, which means a closer relationship with Christ and love of neighbor, whomever the neighbor might be.

Become actively involved in church organizations in your home parish (Teen SOYO, service projects, etc.), on the Archdiocesan level (Creative Arts Festival, Bible Bowl, Oratorical, etc.), and in multi-national efforts such as the Orthodox Christian Missions Commission (OCMC) which often includes young adults in its projects. Through such encounters, one gains experience in dealing with diverse groups of Orthodox Christians.

Increase what you know about your Orthodox Faith so that as you encounter others who do not believe in Christ or the fullness of our Orthodox Faith, you can proclaim the Truth about Jesus Christ without feeling inadequate, intimidated or doubtful of what you believe.

Identify your strengths and weaknesses in your striving toward deification (union with God) and accept the help of a spiritual father in discerning what is right for you in your Christian struggle. When the time comes for you to be active as an adult, you will be strengthened by the Word of God and more able to do what you are called to do.

Learn something about the saints' lives and know something about the history of the Orthodox Church so that when you read lessons in school you will know that some of what you are taught may not be historically accurate or ethically in agreement with Orthodox teaching.

Know that **even as a teen** you can make a difference in your family, your community of faith, your school, and in the world in general. (Think of St. Peter the Aleut, age 12, who defended his Orthodox Faith and is a martyr.)

Be firm in your struggle to overcome any private prejudices and holding on to local piety when it might get in the way of Orthodox unity among people from diverse cultures and different ethnic backgrounds.

Expect—with hard work—to overcome barriers of cultural or racial differences you might discover in yourself as more and more people are brought into the Body of Christ during your lifetime.

Learn how to use your Time, Talents, and Treasures for the building up of the Body of Christ that is the Orthodox Church.

Support mission parishes through fundraisers and related projects in your local parish.

Let clergy and hierarchy know that you desire the Body of Christ to be One Orthodox Church on the North American continent.

Pray. Pray. Pray.

ACTIVITY:

Provide each student with pencils and the sheet of questions for them to answer. Assure them no names are required and their responses will not be scored or collected. Tell them this activity will be an opportunity to consider something

about their relationship with Christ as a member of the Body of Christ.

1. Name one character trait about yourself that you realize is a good trait leading you to a closer relationship with Jesus Christ. In a few phrases explain why.
2. Name one character trait about yourself that you realize prevents you from becoming the person Christ wants you to be. In a few phrases explain why.
3. How can you use your gifts, talents, and skills to build up the Church (whether now or in the future) so that we bring all the Orthodox Churches closer together and attain unity of the faith? Identify your gift, talent, or skill and explain in a few phrases.

A brave soul or two may want to share responses with the group. Your purpose here is to identify strengths and weakness in their struggles to attain a fuller knowledge of Christ—not information about Christ—and not limited to cognitive information, but a relationship with Christ and Who He is. How will each person be able to offer his gifts, spiritual and otherwise, to the building up of the Church in a unity of faith?

CLOSING:

You might ask students to form teams for this review:

1. What image does St. Paul use to describe the Body of Christ? (“...from whom the whole body joined and knit together by what every joint supplies....: Ephesians 4:16)
2. Why are the words whole body important in St. Paul’s image of the Body of Christ?
(The whole body--all the members of the Church--are fully joined to the One Head of the Body who is Christ. The idea of “whole body” implies a sense of unity—all the parts are together in one body.)
3. What does this image show and teach us about how we should work toward building up the Church? (Each person offers his or her spiritual gifts, talents, and skills for the work of the Church in harmony with one another toward one purpose with Christ as the Head of the Church with its many diverse members. The One Body would believe the One Truth—a unity of faith about Jesus Christ.)
4. Fill in this sentence: The Church is the _____ (Body) of Christ.
5. Who is the Head of the Church? (Christ) Finish this sentence: Christ is the Head of the Church and we are _____ (members) of His _____ (Body).
6. What are the words of the Communion Hymn sung while the Orthodox Christians receive Holy Communion? (Receive the Body of Christ; Taste the Fountain of Immortality)
7. What does Body of Christ mean in that hymn? (It refers to the Communion: Christ’s actual Body mystically present in

the form of bread; it can also mean that all those who partake of the Eucharist make up the Body of Christ, which is the Church, and are united with Christ in the Eucharist.)

8. What do you think is one of the more important ways a unified Orthodox presence can make a difference in North America? Which do you hope would really come to fruition?
9. Tell one thing the Archdiocese can do right now to achieve unity among the Orthodox in North America. (Ask for two or three students to respond.)
10. I’d like each of you in turn to tell what you need to do to prepare for living as an Orthodox Christian in an American society that does not always practice what the Orthodox Church professes.
11. What talent, skill, or spiritual gift can you use as a member of an Orthodox Christian parish in the Archdiocese to work toward a unified Orthodox Church now and in the future? What talent, skill, or spiritual gift do you want to develop for service in the Church?

Say a closing prayer or sing “It Is Truly Meet” or another hymn customary for your parish. Ask students to pray about what the Orthodox Church means to them in America.

CHURCHES, MISSIONS AND MISSION PROJECTS

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America Department of Missions and Evangelism, 1988 to present

Updated 8/04

Missions

Birmingham, AL (205) 980-1231
Antiochian Orthodox Mission
Fr. Nabil Fino

Dothan, AL (770) 489-0010
St. Michael Mission
Fr. Andrew Moore

Homer, AK (907) 235-8871
All Saints of America Mission
Fr. Paul Jaroslaw

Mesa, AZ (480) 892-6224
St. Ignatius Mission
Fr. Elias Ziton

Fayetteville, AR (479) 751-2522
St. Nicholas Mission
Fr. John Atchison

Little Rock, AR (501) 664-6668
Holy Trinity Mission
Fr. Timothy Cremeens

Modesto, CA (831) 338-9355
St. James Mission
Fr. Thomas Zell

Palm Springs, CA (760) 322-0960
St. Raphael Mission
Fr. David Kruse

Rohnert Park, CA (707) 664-9892
All Saints Mission
Fr. Iskandar El-Far

San Juan Capistrano, CA
(949) 459-2299
St. John Mission
Fr. Andrew Welzig

Melbourne, FL (321) 385-1322
St. Anthony Mission
Fr. Paul Moses

Boise, ID (208) 375-9630
Holy Transfiguration Mission
Fr. Patrick O'Grady

Orland Park, IL (630) 782-0740
Virgin Mary Mission
Fr. Malek Rihani

Iowa City, IA (319) 337-6784
St. Raphael Mission
Fr. Philip Vreeland

Hillsboro, KS (620) 947-3194
Holy Transfiguration Mission
Fr. John Baize

Overland Park, KS (913) 663-2200
St. Basil Mission
Fr. Elias Issa

Lafayette, LA (409) 866-7721
Archangel Gabriel Mission
Fr. John Badeen

Fall River, MA (401) 726-1202
St. Elias Mission Station
Fr. Isaac Crow

Hingham, MA (781) 740-0220
All Saints Mission
Fr. Dianysius Wilhelm

Ann Arbor, MI (419) 885-8373
St. Catherine Mission
Fr. Steve Ziton

Poughkeepsie, NY (845) 462-2951
St. James Mission
Fr. Hisham Nimri

Ashville, NC (828) 681-8080
St. Raphael Mission
Fr. Joseph Huneycutt

Boone, NC (423) 543-8887
Sts. Peter & Paul Mission
Fr. Daniel Thomas

Fargo, ND (712) 258-7166
All Saints Mission
Fr. Thomas Begley

Columbus, OH (740) 362-7980
St. Barnabas Mission
Fr. Athanasius Dresdow

Solon, OH (440) 582-2076
St. Luke Mission
Fr. Elias Meena

Norman, OK (405) 579-9190
Ascension Mission
Fr. Justin McFeeters

Stillwater, OK (918) 584-7300
St. James Mission
Fr. George Eber

Great Valley, PA (215) 721-4947
Holy Ascension Mission
Fr. Joseph Butts

Surfside Beach, SC (843) 238-8636
St. Nicholas Mission
Fr. Gabriel Bullock

Rapid City, SD (605) 716-7052
St. John the Theologian Mission
Fr. James Thayer

Johnson City, TN (423) 543-8887
Holy Resurrection Mission
Fr. Daniel Thomas

Abilene, TX (352) 409-1313
St. Luke Mission
Fr. Michael Keiser

Dripping Springs, TX (512) 301-2216
Holy Wisdom
Fr. James Kenna

Sugar Land, TX (281) 240-4845
Forty Holy Martyrs of Sabaste
Mission
Fr. John Morris

Newport News, VA (757) 223-4159
St. Basil Mission
Fr. Gregory MacGregor

Spokane, WA (509) 891-7632
Christ the Savior Mission
Fr. Michael Shanbour

Missions that have become Churches

Wasilla, AK (907) 688-2637
St. Herman Church
Fr. Michael Molloy

Calgary, AB (403) 217-1131
Church of the Annunciation
Fr. Ibrahim Chahoud

Vancouver, BC (604) 526-8393
St. Joseph Damascene Church
Fr. Michel Boghos

Anaheim, CA (909) 907-7783
St. James Church
Fr. Stephanos Farahat

Palmdale, CA (805) 245-3571
Holy Cross Church
Fr. Nicholas Neyman

Riverside, CA (909) 369-0309
St. Andrew Church
Fr. Josiah Trenham

San Diego, CA (619) 458-0992
St. Anthony Church
Fr. Jon Braun

San Dimas, CA (909) 599-2378
St. Peter Church
Fr. Joseph Corrigan

San Jose, CA (408) 366-2968
St. Stephen Church
Fr. Patrick Jackson

Upland, CA (909) 985-6844
St. George Church
Fr. George Manneh

Fairfield, CA (707) 864-6236
St. Timothy Church
Fr. Silas Ruark

Ft. Collins, CO (970) 568-3942
St. James Church
Fr. Mark Cranor

Lafayette, CO (303) 665-4013
St. Luke Church
Fr. David Mustian

Arvada, CO (303) 463-1864
St. Elias Church
Fr. Seraphim Gisetti

Wilmington, DE (302) 798-3888
St. Athanasius Church
Fr. John Terrell

Holly Hill, FL (904) 255-7671
Holy Cross Church
Fr. Michael Byars

Naples, FL (941) 348-0828
St. Paul Church
Fr. Joseph Shaheen

Post Falls, ID (208) 777-1128
St. John the Baptist Church
Fr. Gregory Horton

Twin Falls, ID (208) 375-9630
St. Ignatius Church
Fr. Patrick O'Grady

Chicago, IL (773) 481-1090
All Saints Church
Fr. Patrick Reardon

Urbana, IL (217) 328-9643
St. Nicholas Church
Fr. James Ellison

Wheaton, IL (630) 836-1319
Holy Transfiguration Church
Fr. William Caldaroni

Bloomington, IN (812) 331-7086
All Saints Church
Fr. Athanasius Wilson

Goshen, IN (574) 534-8410
St. Mary Church
Fr. Anthony Bell

Manhattan, KS (785) 823-3735
St. Mary Magdalene Church
Fr. Daniel Griffith

Salina, KS (785) 823-3735
All Saints Orthodox Church
Fr. Daniel Griffith

Topeka, KS (785) 354-7718
SS Peter & Paul Church
Fr. Michael Shanbour

Shreveport, LA (318) 797-2226
St. Nicholas Church
Fr. Gregory Harrige

Baltimore, MD (410) 850-5090
Holy Cross Church
Fr. Gregory Mathewes-Green

Cotuit, MA (781) 255-0057
St. Michael Church
Fr. Nicholas Manikas

Williamston, MI (517) 655-4788
St. James Church
Fr. Richard Peters

Santa Fe, NM (505) 983-5826
Holy Trinity Church
Fr. John Bethancourt

Raleigh, NC (919) 859-1332
All Saints Church
Fr. Nicholas Sorensen

Loveland, OH (513) 583-9600
St. James Church
Fr. George Sayaf

North Royalton, OH (440) 582-5673
St. Matthew Church
Fr. Andrew Harmon

Mississauga, ON (905) 212-9046
St. Mary Church
Fr. Boulos Moussa

Beaver Falls, PA (724) 847-1111
St. John the Evangelist Church
Fr. Chris Davis

Chambersburg, PA (717) 249-5319
St. Mary Church
Fr. Theodore Pulcini

York, PA (717) 751-4709
St. John Chrysostom Church
Fr. Peter Pier

Charlottetown, PE (902) 892-6914
SS. Peter & Paul Church
Fr. Paul Kara

Montreal, PQ (514) 858-7004
Virgin Mary Church
Fr. Michel Fawaz

Aiken, SC (803) 641-9995
St. Catherine Church
Fr. Gregory Rogers

Anderson, SC (864) 224-7478
Christ the Savior Church
Fr. David Randolph

Charleston, SC (843) 554-8691
St. John Maximovich Church
Fr. Titus Fulcher

W. Columbia, SC (803) 641-9995
St. Barnabas Church
Fr. Gregory Rogers

Austin, TX (940) 716-0520
St. John the Forerunner Church
Fr. Aidan Wilcoxson

Corpus Christi, TX (361) 985-0650

Holy Trinity Church
Fr. Mark Haas

Houston, TX (713) 973-7001
St. Joseph Church
Fr. Matt Mackay

Salt Lake City, UT (801) 532-5456
SS Peter & Paul Church
Fr. Basil Hartung

Arlington, WA (360) 435-9769
St. Andrew Church
Fr. David Hovik

Everson, WA (360) 966-3055
St. Innocent Church
Fr. Melvin Gimmaka

Cedarburg, WI (262) 377-6902
St. Nicholas Church
Fr. William Olnhausen

Madison, WI (608) 223-0133
St. Ignatius Church
Fr. Patrick Kinder

Gillette, WY (307) 682-3225
Holy Resurrection Church
Fr. James Thayer

Mission Projects

(potential missions)

Mountain Home, AR (501) 664-6668
St. John of Chicago
Fr. Timothy Cremeens

Langley, BC (604) 512-1013
Pacific Orthodox Society
Fr. Michael Gillis

Pleasanton, CA (925) 580-1771
Fr. John Finley

Honolulu, HI (808) 456-5242
Fr. Isaiah Gillette

Peoria, IL (708) 656-2927
Fr. Nicholas Dahdal

Midland, MI (810) 732-0720
Fr. Joseph Abud

St. Louis, MO (352) 409-1313
Fr. Michael Keiser

Hickory, NC (919) 859-1332
Fr. Nicholas Sorensen

Barrie, ON (905) 731-7210
Fr. Iskander Younes

Niagara Peninsula, ON
(905) 835-2884
Fr. Paul Solberg

College Station, TX (713) 855-7306
Fr. Matt MacKay

San Antonio, TX (281) 350-6784
Fr. George Dahdouh

Snohomish-Monroe, WA
(425) 771-1916
Fr. James Bernstein

Sites Being Explored

Conway, AR
Creston, BC
Chanhassen, MN
Shelby, NC
Mt. Vernon, OH
Bend, OR
Salem, OR
Pierre, SD
Murfreesboro, TN
Texarkana, TX
Fairfax, VA
Burlington, WA
Waukesha County, WI