

Following the Saints to God

stories and activities to introduce students to tithing and much more!



100%

With all the saints,
let us commend ourselves
and our whole lives
unto Christ our God.



TO TITHE IS TO SHARE • TO TITHE IS TO CARE

Campaign of the Department of Christian Education to restore tithing to Orthodoxy.

The Department gratefully acknowledges the on-going support of The Order of St. Ignatius which helps fund, in part, the programs we offer.



HIGH SCHOOL

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PRAYER

“With all the saints let us commend ourselves and our whole lives unto Christ our God.”

Getting Started

Where have you heard this prayer before?

We hear this prayer at least six times during the Divine Liturgy. This prayer helps us to remember that we are not alone. In this prayer, we remember the saints. We join with them. Together with them we commend—or give—ourselves to God. How much of ourselves? Our whole selves. 100%!

This sounds like a lot until we remember that it's God who has given us everything that we have. Without Him, what would we have?

We also remember that the saints have given all of their lives to God. They show us how we can do the same. We can learn from their lives. In this booklet we will meet some saints who serve as good examples for us.

In this booklet, you will find

- stories about saints,
- facts about the saints,
- verses that relate to the themes,
- ideas about how to practice the themes,
- information about where your money goes when you add your tithe (or offering) to the collection, and
- activities to help you remember what you're learning.

With your parents' permission, you can also visit www.antiochian.org/tithe, where you can find other information and activities, such as longer stories, icons to color, posters, and a kit to make a special envelope to keep your money until it's time to give it in the collection at Church.

This booklet introduces tithing (giving 10% back to God). Tithing is one way for us to begin to give our whole selves to God. As we meet and follow the saints, we will become more like them and more like God.

Acknowledgments

Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, New King James Version, © 1982 Thomas Nelson, Inc., except the paraphrase of Psalm 37:23 on pages 8-9. Photo illustrations of children with icons are courtesy of John Ritter and Rich Rogowski. Icons of Saint Joachim and Saint Anna, Saint Innocent, and Saint Emmelia are courtesy of comeandseeicons.com; proceeds from sales support an Orthodox homeless ministry in Philadelphia, Pa. Icon with scenes of Saint Raphael's life is courtesy of The Orthodox Church in America (www.oca.org). The other Saint Raphael icon is courtesy of Fr. Paul Albert. Photos of Alaska and Saint Innocent are courtesy of Alaska State Library Historical Collections. Clip art is courtesy of Microsoft Office and stock.xchng. Permission is granted to copy and distribute the materials in this booklet.

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DEFINITIONS

Exemplar

Someone who is worthy of imitation, an ideal that serves as a pattern, an archetype.

Tithe

to give 10%; for example, one dollar of every 10 dollars.

Meet the Saints

Get ready to learn about these saints!



Saint Joachim and Saint Anna were *thankful* and gave back their daughter to God.

Saint Raphael of Brooklyn showed *dedication* to God by establishing churches in North America.

Saint Innocent of Alaska *trusted* God by traveling to difficult places and serving God.

Saint Emmelia and Saint Basil were *good stewards* of their family and many of their children became saints.



These saints are good examples of how we can love God with 100% of our time, talents, and treasure.

Along with these saints, "Let us commend ourselves and our whole lives unto Christ our God."



- The saints demonstrate that we should give all of our lives as an offering to God.
- One way we can offer ourselves to God is by giving money in the collection at Church. A tithe (10%) is one dollar for every 10 dollars.

WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR OFFERING?

When we tithe, where does the money go?

Part of the money goes to your priest and bishop so they can serve God.

Do the Math

One way we can show God that we love him is to give money in the collection at Church.


What is the average total of your

- allowance,
- earnings from a job, and
- gifts?

How much is a tithe (10%) of that total?

How much do you put in the collection?

THEN AND NOW

- In the Old Testament, God asked the Jews to give 10% of their crops and animals, plus other offerings, to support the priests, hold religious feasts, and to help the poor.
- In the New Testament, Christians gave generously to provide for the needs of others; some even gave their houses and land!
- Early Church fathers, such as John Chrysostom and Saint Irenaeus, encouraged Christians to give a greater percentage than the Jews. 

- List some of the ways that you and others benefit from your priest and bishop.

- Ask the parish council treasurer for a copy of your parish's spending plan. Figure out the percentage of the expenses that involve upkeep of the facility (maintenance, utilities, and cleaning supplies).

Meet Saint Joachim and Saint Anna

exemplars of
Thankfulness



Some married couples have a hard time getting pregnant. It can be heart breaking. Here is a story about such a couple, and what they gave to God in thanksgiving for what He did for them.

In Israel during the first century before Christ, there lived a herdsman named Joachim. When he was 20 years old, he married Anna, the daughter of a priest. They loved God and found ways to thank Him for all the good things He had done for them. They always divided their money into three parts: one part they gave to the temple and one part to people who were poor; they used the third part for their own needs.

Although they were blessed with a good life, they were without a child. They prayed daily and promised God that if He would give them a child, in thanksgiving they would give the child back to God. But after 50 years of marriage, they still did not have a child.

Joachim regularly went to the temple to give offerings to God. One day, when Joachim arrived at the temple, the priest told him to go away. He said that God didn't want Joachim's offering because he and Anna didn't have any children. The priest thought that God was keeping His blessing of children from Joachim and Anna because God was not pleased with them. Joachim checked the temple records and discovered that every other righteous man in Israel had at least one child. Humiliated, he took his flocks into the wilderness to pray and fast. He said, "May my tears be my food and the wilderness my home until God hears me."

When Joachim left, Anna was now alone and cried out to God, "Now I'm not just childless, but also a widow." She went into her garden to pray. She reminded God that even the birds in her garden had families, but that she did not.

God sent the Archangel Gabriel to Joachim in the desert and Anna in her garden to tell them that He had heard their prayers and they would have a child. Gabriel instructed them to go to the Golden Gate in Jerusalem, where they met and embraced each other. This touching scene is often depicted in icons.

Joachim and Anna gave thanks to God for hearing their prayers. Nine months later, Anna gave birth as Gabriel had promised. They named their daughter Mary.

When Mary was three years old, Joachim and Anna kept their promise and in thanksgiving took her to the temple so that she could serve God there. During the next seven years until their deaths, they visited Mary often, giving thanks to God for hearing their prayers and for all that He had done for them. When Mary grew up, she became the mother of Jesus.

Every one of us has been blessed by God. Let's think for a moment about what God has given us and be thankful.

One way we can thank God is by giving something back to Him. What can we give back to God?

To tithe is to show God we know how to say "Thank you" for what He gives to us.

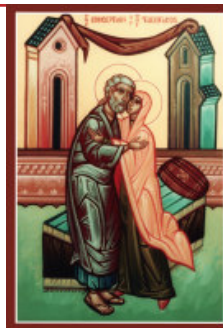
DID YOU KNOW?

- Saint Joachim lived on the earth for 80 years and Saint Anna for 79.
- They are commemorated on September 9 and her falling asleep is commemorated on July 25.
- We learn this story from a book called the *Protoevangelium of James*.

Discover more at
[www.antiochian.org/
tithe](http://www.antiochian.org/tithe)

TROPARION

Let us sing praises to Joachim and Anna, the couple honored by God (and they are His kinsmen). They have borne for us the Maiden who in a manner beyond understanding gave birth to Him Who though fleshless, became the Incarnate to save the world. With her they intercede for our souls.



THANKFULNESS IN THE BIBLE

In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

1 Thessalonians 5:18
NKJV

PRACTICE THANKFULNESS

- Remember to say "Thank you" to your parents, priest, and teachers for helping you learn about God.
- Make and send a "Thank you" card for someone who has done something for you.
- List 12 things you are thankful for, with each word beginning with a letter of the word **thanksgiving**.

WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR OFFERING?

When we tithe, where does the money go?

Part of your offering goes to pay for the facility. Make a list of all the facility expenses that you can think of. Don't forget electricity, water and sewer, landscaping, paint for the walls.

Timely Tunes

Use your imagination! Put these song titles in Joachim and Anna's favs lists by adding << or >>. Some songs appear in both lists. Then number each list in the order of the events the songs describe.

Joachim's Fav's

Anna's Fav's

<< You told me I don't belong

<< It was an angel >>

Diet of tears

Beautiful like her mother

1 One-third is enough

When a dad says goodbye

Baby on the way

All my friends (are having babies)

I met him at the Golden Gate

Alone (Garden Song)

He's mine >>

1

Thankful (as I look back)

Meet Saint Raphael of Brooklyn

exemplar of
Dedication to God

**To tithe is
to take a step
on the path
of being
dedicated
to God.**

Here's a story about a man who was dedicated to God. He did everything he could to serve God and the Church.

In the same week that Abraham Lincoln was elected president of the United States, Saint Raphael was born in Beirut, Lebanon. His family had just escaped from persecution in Damascus, Syria. More than 1,500 people, including the family's priest, were killed because they were Christians. When it was safe to return, the family went back to their homeland, where Saint Raphael spent most of his childhood. He was a good student who liked school. When he was 13, his family was too poor to pay for his education. Fortunately, he was accepted into the Patriarchate school in Damascus. He was such a good student that he was chosen to be a substitute teaching assistant when he was 16. When he was 18 years old, he became a monk.

Later, he continued his studies near Constantinople (in Turkey) and in Kiev (in Russia). He was ordained a deacon at age 25 and a priest when he was 28. While in Russia, he wrote many articles and books.

One day when he was 34 years old, Saint Raphael received an invitation to serve as a priest in New York. Saint Raphael loved God and His people, so he agreed. He was welcomed by a delegation of Arab Christians who were eagerly waiting for their new priest. Within two weeks, he set up a chapel in lower Manhattan and began to hold services.

Before long, he realized that there were many Orthodox people scattered throughout North America who did not have a priest. Some of them were leaving the Orthodox faith. Saint Raphael had compassion on them. To serve them, he traveled for months at a time, often by train, throughout the United States, Canada, and Mexico. He celebrated the Divine Liturgy, preached, listened to confessions, performed marriages, and

baptized people. He also started 30 new churches in less than 20 years.

Saint Raphael also became a bishop, the first one to be consecrated as a bishop on American soil. As bishop, he recommended that all the parishes use English in their services and that the children in particular be taught the Orthodox faith.

Twice he was offered important positions back in his homeland, but both times he declined. He loved the American people and dedicated his life to serve them.

Saint Raphael departed this life in 1915 at the age of 54. He is called the Good Shepherd of the Lost Sheep in America. He took care of Christians who needed a priest and still intercedes for us today.

**See what
good can
happen when
we dedicate
our lives to
God? Serving
God can help
more people
than we will
ever know!**



DID YOU KNOW?

- Saint Raphael could serve the entire Divine Liturgy in perfect Arabic, Greek, Russian, and English.
- Saint Raphael is the founder of *The Word* magazine.
- Saint Raphael is buried at the Antiochian Village in Ligonier, Pa.
- Saint Raphael is commemorated on the first Saturday in November.

Discover more at
[www.antiochian.org/
tithe](http://www.antiochian.org/tithe)

TROPARION

Rejoice, O Father Raphael, Adornment of the Holy Church!
 Thou art Champion of the true Faith, Seeker of the lost,
 Consolation of the oppressed, Father to orphans,
 and Friend of the poor, Peacemaker and Good Shepherd,
 Joy of all the Orthodox, Son of Antioch, Boast of America:
 Intercede with Christ God for us and for all who honor thee.



DEDICATION TO GOD IN THE BIBLE

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

Romans 12:1 NKJV

PRACTICE DEDICATION TO GOD

- Make a list of the things that are most important to you. Is God at the top of your list?
- Saint Raphael was on time for Church services. What can you do to help your family get to Church services on time?

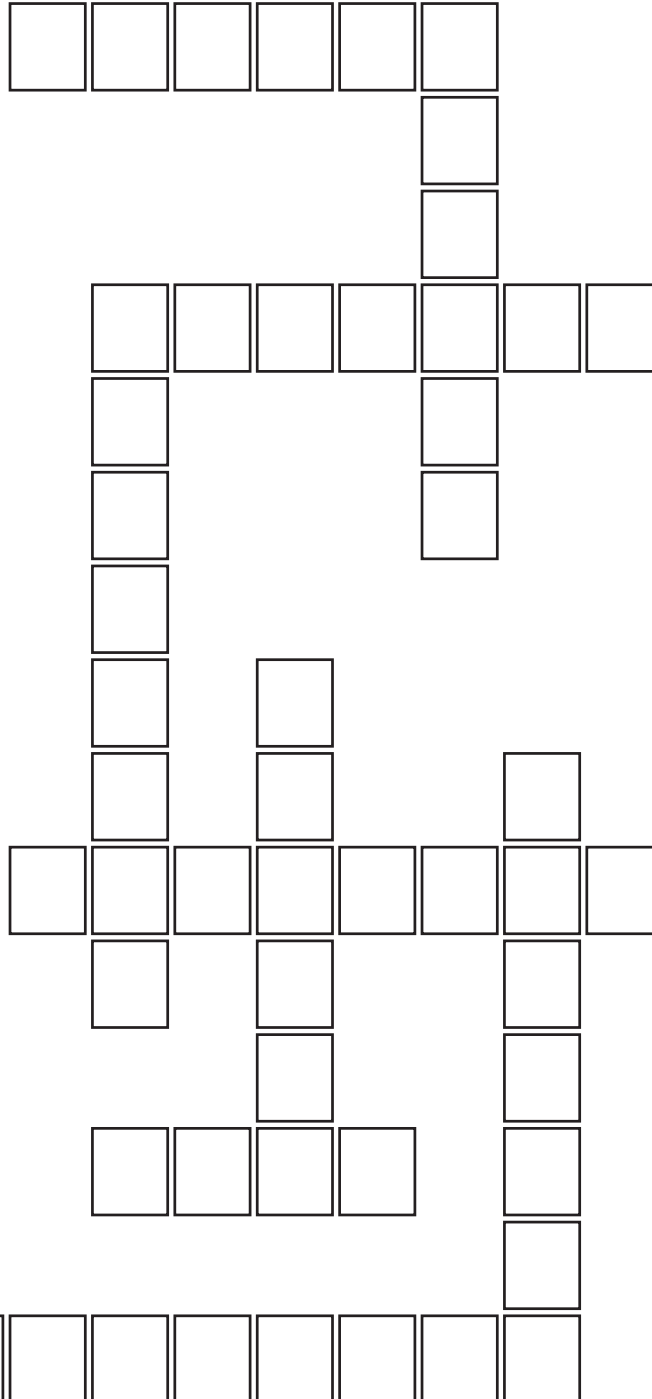
WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR OFFERING?

When we tithe, where does the money go?

Part of your offering pays for the educational needs of the parish. Ask the parish council treasurer for a copy of your parish's spending plan. Figure out the percentage of education expenses.

Crossword zelPuz

Saint Raphael was busy and had many jobs throughout his life. Read through the story of Saint Raphael looking for his job "titles." Then figure where they fit into the crossword puzzle.



Need a hint? Here are the answers, but it look like the person who typed the list had their hands on the wrong keys. You'll need to unscramble them first!

koMn
 hipsOB
 aDneoc
 siPter
 duneStt
 Threace
 raPhrece
 dreephhS
 stresclinore



Meet Saint Innocent of Alaska

exemplar of
Trust

**To tithe is
to trust that
God will
provide for all
we truly need.**

Courage, dedication, a sense of adventure, and above all, trust in God. Do any of these words describe you? They all describe a saint who lived only 200 years ago.

In Russia in the early 1800s, there lived a young priest named Father John. He and his family were content in their parish and the parishioners loved him. When the bishop asked for volunteers to go to faraway Alaska to serve as missionaries, Father John was not interested. Alaska was wild and dangerous and missionary work did not pay well.

A traveling businessman told Father John about the people in Alaska, how they wanted to know the Word of God, and about their zeal in prayer. As he listened to the stories, Father John “began to burn with desire to go to such a people.” He trusted God and volunteered to go. On May 7, 1823, Father John, his wife Catherine, his son, his elderly mother, and his brother began their trip to Alaska. The difficult journey of more than 2,000 miles took more than a year. During their trip, a daughter was born to Father John and Catherine.

When they arrived in Alaska, Father John and his family built and moved into a dirt hut. He traveled by kayak, dog sled, and even reindeer, often through frigid weather and storms, to tell the people about God. He learned six dialects, created a new alphabet, translated Scriptures, and wrote books for the people. He built churches, orphanages, and schools. He taught the people how to make furniture, build houses, grow crops,

and take care of animals. He also wrote for magazines back in Moscow scientific articles about his observations of plants, animals, and meteorology. Best of all, he trusted God and showed the people the way to God’s Kingdom.

Many years later, after Catherine died, Father John became a bishop, taking the name Innocent in honor of a saint from his hometown of Irkutsk in Siberia. Saint Innocent was the first bishop to live in Alaska. As bishop, he required all the parishes to begin a Sunday Church school to educate the children in the ways of Orthodoxy. When the United States purchased Alaska from Russia in 1867, he immediately replaced the Russian language in the services with English so the people would learn to communicate in the language of their new country. Eventually, Saint Innocent became the Metropolitan of Moscow, and continued telling people about God and encouraging others to become missionaries. His favorite verse was “The Lord guides a man safely in the way he should go.” (Ps. 37:23)

Saint Innocent trusted God so much that he went to faraway places to serve Him. As we think about what we are going to do with our lives, let’s trust that God will lead us and then obey.



Monument marking the site of the First Orthodox Church in Sitka, Alaska, built around 1810.



Studio portrait of Saint Innocent.



DID YOU KNOW?

- Saint Innocent was born in 1797 to a poor family in Siberia, Russia.
- Saint Innocent wrote many books.
- Saint Innocent departed this life in 1879.
- We commemorate Saint Innocent on March 31 and October 6.

Discover more at
[www.antiochian.org/
tithe](http://www.antiochian.org/tithe)

TROPARION

O Holy Father Innocent, in obedience to the will of God You accepted dangers and tribulations, bringing many peoples to the knowledge of truth. You showed us the way. Now by your prayers help lead us into the Kingdom of Heaven.



TRUST IN THE BIBLE

Trust in the Lord and do good.

Psalm 37:3 NKJV

Command those who are rich not to trust in riches, but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.

1 Timothy 6:17 NKJV

Fill It In!

St. Innocent's favorite verse was Psalm 37:23, which begins "The Lord guides..." Fill all empty squares so that each word of the verse segment appears once in each row, column, and 3x3 box.

The Lord guides...

	safely		the		a			should
a					in		go	way
man	in			safely	should	the		
		should	go	a		man	way	
safely		man				he		go
		way		man	safely	a		
			a	way			safely	man
go	way		safely					the
the			he		go		in	

What is *your* favorite verse?

PRACTICE TRUST

- As you look into the future, what worries you the most?
- Ask God to help you remember His promises.
- Ask your parents to pray for and with you.

WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR OFFERING?

When we tithe, where does the money go?

Part of your offering goes to pay for items related to worship. Looking at your parish's spending plan, figure out the percentage of expenses that relate to worship. Don't forget icons, choir books, and candles.

Meet Saint Emmelia and Saint Basil

exemplars of
Stewardship

Can you imagine growing up in a family that has eight saints in it? I'm going to tell you about a family like that. Obviously, the parents were good stewards of the children that God gave to them.

More than 1600 years ago in what is now the country of Turkey, there was a woman named Emmelia and a man named Basil who was a lawyer and teacher. They were both from Christian families—Emmelia's parents had been martyred for their faith and Basil's mother was Saint Macrina the Elder. After Emmelia and Basil got married, God gave them 10 children, five boys and five girls.

Emmelia and Basil loved their children and trained them in the ways of God. They took their children to the services of the Church and taught them the Scriptures, especially the Psalms. They gave generously to the Church and to people who were poor. They lived and demonstrated godly lives and are considered saints of the Church.

Six of their children also became saints. One of them is Saint Basil the Great, one of the Three Holy Hierarchs. He wrote the Divine Liturgy that we celebrate during Great Lent and on special feast days. To help tell them apart, we call the father Saint Basil *the Elder* and the son Saint Basil *the Great*.

Their oldest daughter, Saint Macrina (whom we call *the Younger* to distinguish her from her grandmother Saint Macrina *the Elder*) was a leader in the family. After her fiancé died, she decided to stay single and helped to raise her younger siblings. When her brothers, Basil and Gregory, (known to us as Saint Gregory of Nyssa) returned from college full of worldly knowledge and pride, she exhorted them to be humble. They became monks and eventually bishops in the Church. Their other children included Naucratius, a monk who died at age 27, and Theosebia, a deaconess.

After Basil the Elder departed this life, Emmelia sold almost everything to start a monastery with Macrina the Younger and some of their freed servants. On her deathbed, she gathered her daughter Macrina and her youngest son Peter (who became a bishop whom we know as Saint Peter of Sebaste). She said, "God, I offer back to You my firstborn child as my first-fruit offering and my tenth child as my tithe."

In the ways that they raised their children, Saint Emmelia and Saint Basil the Elder demonstrate for us how to be good stewards.

We can be good stewards by showing others how to live a virtuous life like Emmelia and Basil did for their children, and by taking care of what God has given us.



**To tithe
is to be
a good
steward
of what
God has
given us.**

DID YOU KNOW?

- Saint Emmelia and Saint Basil lived in Cappadocia, which is now part of the country of Turkey.
- They are commemorated on May 8 or May 30.
- Saint Emmelia is often called "the mother of saints."

Discover more at
[www.antiochian.org/
tithe](http://www.antiochian.org/tithe)

Match It!

Draw a line from each icon to the saints' names, a line from the saints' names to their character traits, and a line from their character traits to the facts about them.



**Saint Innocent
of Alaska**

waited many years to have a
child

exemplars of
Stewardship



**Saint Joachim
and Saint Anna**

started churches in
North America

exemplar of
Trust



**Saint Raphael
of Brooklyn**

traveled to a faraway place
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Thanksgiving



**Saint Emmelia
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raised 10 children

exemplar of
Dedication to God