

## Using the Theme Throughout the Year 2018

**Theme:** “They continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.” (Acts 2:42)

**Symbol:** Bread

**Icons:** The Mystical Supper, The Descent of the Holy Spirit (Pentecost)

**Prayers:** *The Creed; A Prayer of St. John Chrysostom* (found in the Prayers of Preparation Before Holy Communion)

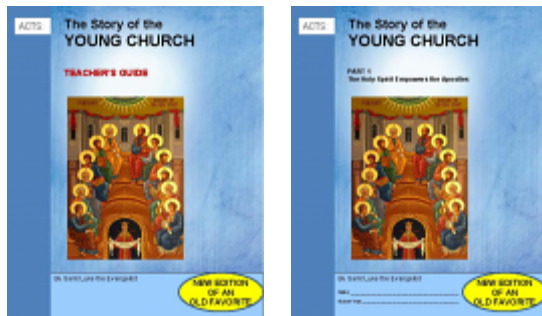
**Theme Song:** We Break Bread Together

<http://antiochian.org/festivals/cf/theme-song-2018>

**Lesson Plans:** Original lesson plans are provided for age levels ranging from preschool to high school:

<http://antiochian.org/festivals/cf/lesson-plans-2018>

**Curriculum:** *The Story of the Young Church Part 1: The Holy Spirit Empowers the Apostles*



10 lessons that cover the Ascension to the conversion of the Gentiles. (Acts 1 through Acts 11:18).

The Teacher’s Guide and Student Guide can be ordered online at:

<http://store.antiochianvillage.org/ACTS-The-Story-of-the-Young-Church-Teacher-s-Guide.html>

**Video:** *The Book of Acts in 3 Minutes*

This cartoon version of The Book of Acts provides a synopsis with a sense of humor that’s suitable for older kids and teens:

[https://search.aol.com/aol/video?q=the+book+of+acts+in+3+minutes+on+youtube&it=video-ans&sfVid=true&videoId=894F94D0FCBA0EB3F9C2894F94D0FCBA0EB3F9C2&v\\_t=loki-inbox](https://search.aol.com/aol/video?q=the+book+of+acts+in+3+minutes+on+youtube&it=video-ans&sfVid=true&videoId=894F94D0FCBA0EB3F9C2894F94D0FCBA0EB3F9C2&v_t=loki-inbox)

**Additional Lesson Relating to the Theme:**

<https://missionbibleclass.org/1b0-new-testament/new-testament-part-2/acts-the-church-begins/the-first-church/>

**Throughout the Church School Year:** Use the symbol on name tags, room signs, letterhead, bulletin boards, posters, and crafts.

**Quotations Relating to the Theme:**

“The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread.”

(I Corinthians 10:16-17)

“Bread is used not only to represent Jesus who is the Bread of Life, of which if any man eat he shall never hunger, but also to express the offering of our life to God. The Greek word for the offering bread is *prosforo*, which means an offering to God. Bread is used as an offering because it represents life. It is the staff of life. Once consumed it becomes part of us, i.e., our flesh and bones. Thus in bringing the loaf of bread to God, we are, in effect, offering our life to Him. It is the gift of our love.”

Excerpt from *Introducing the Orthodox Church* by Fr. Anthony Coniaris

**Here are some other ideas:**

1. Make sure the students know that the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. The Preschool/Kindergarten Lesson Plan contains a map of the world and a map showing where Antioch would be located today. Print out the maps, have the students find their approximate location on the world map, then after looking at the “Where is Antioch?” map, find the location of Antioch on the world map. Enable them to make the correlation that their church is part of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese.  
[http://antiochian.org/sites/default/files/2018\\_creative\\_festival\\_lesson\\_plan\\_preschool\\_to\\_kindergarten.pdf](http://antiochian.org/sites/default/files/2018_creative_festival_lesson_plan_preschool_to_kindergarten.pdf)
2. Have students share their family traditions with others in the class or others in the parish. For example, highlight special foods that are eaten on certain holidays or special customs that are observed, etc. Talk about why it’s important to keep these traditions alive.

3. Have someone in your parish teach the students how to make prosphora. Then offer it to be used in Divine Liturgy. For a recipe, instructions about prayer, and an article regarding baking prosphora, go to:  
<https://www.goarch.org/documents/32058/4435215/suts-week-13.pdf/b1c47906-026a-4049-bc0c-84de25487eb2>
4. The early Christians took care of each other just as we should be doing today. Have students think of ways they can use their time, talent, and treasure to help others, such as donating food to a food pantry, serving at a homeless shelter, raising funds for the IOCC, OCMC, Project Mexico, etc.
5. Encourage students to attend church on days other than Sundays, such as Feast Days, Vespers, and other special services throughout the year.
6. Stress that the Church is not just a building, but that people make up the Church. On one piece of paper, have the students draw or write about objects that can be found in the church. On another piece of paper, have the students draw or write about people praying together, listening to the Epistle and Gospel readings, partaking of Holy Communion, and joining in fellowship. Then have them determine which one is really the Church. Give them the following Bible verse to memorize:  
"For where two or three are gathered in My name, I am there in the midst of them."  
(Matthew 18:20)
7. Ask the students if they know the difference between apostles and disciples.  
(Disciple means follower. The apostles were the twelve men chosen by Christ to be His followers. So all apostles were disciples, but not all disciples were apostles.)
8. Discuss how we are modern day disciples of Christ. Talk about ways the students can be witnesses of the Faith and bring others into the Church. Host an Open House at your parish, invite a friend to church and/or Sunday School, invite a friend to a Joy Club or Teen Soyo event, to Vacation Church School, etc.
9. "*What on Earth is the Orthodox Church?*" is an article that is also available as a printed booklet from Ancient Faith Press and discusses the origin of our Faith.  
<http://www.antiochian.org/content/what-earth-orthodox-church>

10. Reenact an early Christian worship service. Have some students portray the apostles, teaching the early Christians. Have other students portray foreigners from other countries in and around the Holy Land who have become Christians. Assign one student to portray St. Peter and give his sermon found in Acts 2:14-30. Then have everyone sing psalms and share bread.
11. Have the students memorize The Creed and recite it at the end of each class.