SEPTEMBER 21, 2025

MYOCN PEW PALS



Sunday After Holy Cross

In today's Gospel, Jesus says: "Whoever is ashamed of Me and of My words, of him the Son of Man will also be ashamed when He comes in His Father's glory." This means that following Jesus is not only about giving things up—it's also about showing the world that we love Him. Carrying our cross means living in a way that clearly shows, "I am an Orthodox Christian!" It's not just about the hard choices; it's about being brave and joyful when we show our faith to others.

Imagine you play on a soccer team. On game day, you wear your team jersey with pride. You're happy for everyone to know which team you belong to, even if your team is losing or the game is tough. Being an Orthodox Christian is like wearing Jesus' "team jersey" all the time.

- It might mean making the sign of the Cross in public, even if other kids don't.
- It might mean saying a prayer before lunch at school.
- It might mean speaking kindly when others are teasing someone.

Following Jesus isn't only about giving things up—it's about living boldly for Him and letting their love for God shine in everyday life.

Family Homework

Family Challenge: Each family member chooses one small "cross" to carry this week—something kind or selfless to do, like helping with chores, forgiving a friend, or praying for someone in need.

Daily Blessing: Make the sign of the Cross together each morning, remembering that Jesus is with you all day.

Memory Verse





CRAFT - Cross of Strength

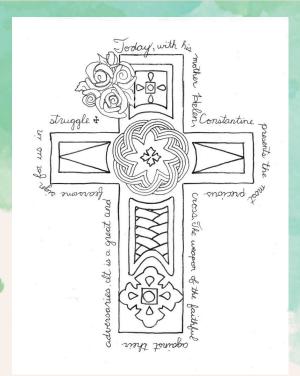
Supplies

- Colored paper or sturdy white paper/cardstock
- Paints
- Cotton balls
- Tape (to hold template in place)
- Markers or crayons



Instructions

- Create a Template: Draw a cross on a piece of paper and cut it out to use as a template. Tape it lightly to a backing paper (colored or white).
- Paint around the cross: use the cotton balls to make paint "dots" or patterns around the cross outline.
- Remove the template: When dry, carefully remove the cross template so the painted border remains—leaving a clean cross shape in the middle.
- Write or draw inside the Cross: Inside the blank cross, children write or draw something that Jesus gives them strength for. Examples:
 - "I trust Jesus when I'm scared."
 - "I help others even when nobody else does."
 - o "I forgive even when it's hard."



DISCUSSION PROMPT

"What is one way you can 'carry your cross' this week? Can you think of a time when doing the right thing was hard but made you feel closer to Jesus?"

SAINT STORIES

ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST & THEOLOGIAN

Saint John was one of Jesus' twelve apostles. He was the son of Zebedee and Salome, and his brother was Saint James. He is often called "the youngest apostle" because he stayed a student of Christ longer than many others and lived longer. He was present at many of the important moments in Jesus' life—he was at the Last Supper, he was at the foot of the Cross when Jesus died, and Jesus entrusted Mary (His mother) to John's care from the Cross.

He wrote the Gospel of John. He shows us what it means to follow Jesus with loyalty and love, even through hard times. Because he stayed near Jesus, he was able to learn deeply from Him. He is called "Theologian" in our Church, which means someone who loves God and thinks about God—who tries to understand the mysteries of Christ with faith. He teaches by his writings how to love Jesus, believe in His divinity, and live by His commandments.

Commemorated on September 26