

Lesson No. (1)

Saint Stephen

References

Acts 6:8-7:60.

Notes for Servants

- ★ Your toil and sacrifices for Christ should be accompanied by earnest prayer and honest work. By doing so, the Lord will be with you.
- ★ St. Stephen saw the glory of God in heaven while he was on earth.
- ★ Stephen was a deacon, and you, as a servant in the church, offer your services honestly through teaching. Always worship, contemplate and be a good example for the children.

Objectives

General: Honouring saints and praising their firm stand in faith.

Specific:

The children will be able to ...

- A. Discover the reason for honouring Saints.
- B. Learn that they should be like them in love and forgiveness.
- C. Declare their truth with sincerity.

Bible Verse

“ Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. ”

Acts 7:60

Teaching Aids

Icon of St. Stephen.

Introduction

- (1) Review last week's lesson.
- (2) Who remembers the verse?
- (3) Remind the children about the church occasions for the coming week.
- (4) Explain the meaning of the word "martyr" from a Christian point of view.
- (5) Who was the first martyr in the church?
- (6) What is the meaning of the name "Stephen?" (The Crowned)

Story Time

The Christian faith was spread by the hands of the Apostles, whom the Lord Christ appointed.

Christians had many things in common. They needed servants to devote themselves to serving widows, orphans and poor people. They chose seven deacons who were filled with the Holy Spirit and St. Stephen was one of them. He served the poor and needy and distributed gifts and alms among them. He also preached in the church and as he convinced Non-Christians, the number of believers increased.

One day a large number of Jews met to discuss religious matters with St. Stephen. He answered them using verses from the Scriptures, explaining to them that Christ is the only Saviour through whom we can enter heaven. His words did not appeal to them so they took him away to the Synagogue to judge him.

- What is your name?

+ I am Christian.

- Do not mention this name.

+ I love Christ.

- We shall kill you.

+ I do not fear death ... if we live we live, for the Lord.

- We crucified Christ.

+ You crucified Him and He was buried. He stayed in the tomb for three days; but then He rose and ascended to heaven and I am going to Him.

The Jews were angry with him because he told the truth. They wanted to kill him so they accused him of blaspheming God and Moses. They grabbed him and dragged him into the streets. When they were out of the city, the men stopped. They tore off their clothes and looked around to find a man to guard their clothes. Then, they saw a man named Saul. This man, Saul, approved of killing St. Stephen. They dug a hole and threw him in it. They took big stones and threw them at his head, his legs, his back and arms until he fell to the ground, bruised and bleeding. The Lord gave him strength and St. Stephen knelt down and prayed. As he lifted his eyes, the heavens opened, and he saw Jesus surrounded by angels and in great glory. There hosts of angels were dressed in white and were shining as bright lights. They were coming down one by one saying: "Holy, Holy, Holy." St. Stephen rejoiced upon seeing this vision: one of the angels was holding a crown. The people stood in great surprise because St. Stephen was happy in spite of the stones thrown at his body. They asked one another: Why does St. Stephen look up to heaven? What does he see? They threw more stones at his head but he was still joyfull. He said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of man standing at right hand of God" (Acts 7:56). They threw the stones at his mouth to prevent him from speaking.

St. Stephen said, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin." Stephen could see angels were driving demons away from him. His face shone as the face of an angel, then he fell asleep.

Discussion

- 1 - Follow up the story by talking about it with the children.
- 2 - Continue the discussion while they do the activity.

Learning Activities

Activity Sheet.