

Lesson No. (1)

Saint Mark

References

St. Mark, H.H. Pope Shenouda III.

Notes for Servants

- ★ "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12).
- ★ When one commits sin, one denies their Christian faith. Therefore, avoid and keep away from sin so that your Redeemer may not deny you.
- ★ Standing firm in faith does not mean fanaticism but rather it requires us to have a strong faith in our creed and to show tolerance at the same time.

Objectives

General: Standing firm in faith until death.

Specific: The children will be able to:

- A. Know the characteristics of the saints;
- B. Conclude the reason that we honour them;
- C. Understand what they should do to be like them.

Bible Verse

"For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Philippians 1:21

Teaching Aids

1. Prepare Saint Mark's icon and some flowers.
2. The servant and the children start to decorate the icon with the flowers.
3. The teacher should make the lesson a very cheerful one, as it is a very happy occasion. It would be an excellent idea to lead the children in singing a few hymns that are associated with Neirouz.

Introduction

- (1) Review last week's lesson.
- (2) Recite last week verse.
- (3) Remind the children about the church occasions for the coming week.
- (4) Servants are to put a strong emphasis on the celebration in this lesson.
- (5) Servant may start the lesson by the following questions:
 - a. Whose picture is this?
 - b. Why do we draw a lion beside him?
 - c. Where was he born?
- (6) Teacher should prepare the appropriate questions to emphasize the objectives during the lesson.

Story Time

St. Mark was born of a rich Jewish family. He was raised in the city of Cyrene in Pentapolis (which is Libya now). He had two names (John) a Jewish name and (Mark) a gentile name. St. Mark moved with his family back to Jerusalem while he was a teen at the time Jesus started his ministry.

St. Mark became one of the seventy apostles whom the Lord Christ chose. He witnessed the miraculous deeds of Christ such as the healing of the sick and the raising of the dead. His first miracle was with his father. One day after the coming of the Holy Spirit, while Mark was walking with his father in a deserted area, two lions appeared to them. Mark's father asked him to run fast while he kept the lions busy. But Mark prayed saying "O Christ the son of God save us. At once the lions fell dead, then his father believed in Christ and was baptized. Shortly after that his father died.

St. Mark joined some of the apostles in their missions. He joined St. Paul and his uncle St. Barnabas. Later after his uncle died he travelled alone. The first city he went to was Alexandria.

In Alexandria, St. Mark prayed to God to guide him in his mission and message. He walked in the streets of the city until his sandals were torn. Because of his torn sandals, someone led him to a shoemaker called Ananias. While Ananias was fixing the sandals, however, a sharp device called an awl pricked Ananias' hand. He cried out in pain, "O God the only One." Then St. Mark took some mud and put it on Ananias' hand. The shoemaker's hand was healed at once. Then Ananias invited St. Mark to his house. At Ananias' house St. Mark talked to him and his family about Christ. They believed and were baptized and became the first Christian family in Alexandria.

Ananias' house became the first church in Alexandria. Many Egyptians became Christians and were later known as the Copts. Their numbers increased so much that the pagans (people who worship idols) decided to kill St. Mark. One day, they attacked the church, while the Christians were celebrating Easter mass. They took St. Mark out, beat him and dragged him around the city until he died.

St. Mark became the first martyr in Egypt and St. Ananias became the second Pope of Alexandria after St. Mark.

The church celebrates his martyrdom on May 8, may the prayer of these two saints be with us. Amen.

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.