

## *“The Spirit of Peace”*

**Level:** Pre-K – 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

**Themes:** “Acquire the spirit of peace, and a thousand souls around you shall be saved.”  
– St. Seraphim of Sarov

“Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.”  
– James 3:18

**Objectives:**

- **Introduce** the idea to “acquire the spirit of peace, and a thousand souls around you shall be saved”
- **Establish** a connection between the “spirit of peace” and the ability to share Christ with those who do not know Him and to pique interest in those who do not know Him.
- **Understand** that when we have a spirit of peace, that helps to show others about the peacefulness and love that Christ is in us. It helps make others want to know more about us and our beliefs.
- **Challenge** students to realize that it is part of our faith to share Christ with others.
- **Identify** the ways that Orthodox Missionaries (such as Christina Semon) have a spirit of peace that assists them in their mission to spread the love of God.
- **Act** by collecting funds throughout Lent with the Mission Coin Boxes to support the work of the Mission Center so that many more are empowered to use their spirit of peace to bring others to the faith.

**Overview:**

- Begin the lesson with the prayer provided.
- Do Activity #1 (What does peaceful mean to you?)
- Do Activity #2 (Identifying peacefulness)
- Do Activity #3 (Meet Christina Semon, Missionary to Moldova)
- Do Activity #4 (Assemble the Coin Boxes and send them home with students with the instructions that the donations they return with will support the work of the Mission Center)

**Note to teacher:**

The word “peace” in this lesson refers to the inner peace that we gain through accepting Christ into our lives. Through this peacefulness, we can bring others to a life in Christ by not only keeping a peace within ourselves but also sharing it with others. Those who do not know Christ will see through this peace we have within ourselves that we are different. This difference will result in curiosity and that curiosity will be our chance to share the love of Christ we have and to bring others to Orthodoxy.

OCMC long-term missionary to Moldova, Christina Semon, is a perfect example of this inner peace. In her work as a missionary, she exudes a spirit of peace that she shares with others as she shares Orthodoxy with the youth of Moldova.

## **Pray:**

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God

We pray for all people from all nations around the world

That they may come to know the peace that is only offered through a life lived with You.

Help me to open my own heart to your peace, and that I would be a good example of your love to others.

That I may be bold to welcome new believers into your Church

And that people will know that I am a Christian by my peace and my life.

## **Lesson:**

Introduce the idea of “spirit of peace” with the quote and verse.

### **Activity 1: What does “peaceful” mean to you?**

In the space provided on the attached sheet, have students either draw a picture or write about a peaceful person in their life. This can be a description or drawing of someone in their life who is peaceful.

Then have them answer the questions included.

After they spend a few minutes on their drawings or descriptions, choose some students to share what they wrote and have a discussion about the attributes of a peaceful person. What makes them feel connected to the peaceful person? How can they learn from this person to show the same inner peace and have others be attracted to them and drawn more toward Christ as a result?

### **Activity 2: Identify Peacefulness**

Share the page with the images of happy and sad/mad faces, having them circle the images that make them think of peace and happiness and to put an X through the ones that make them feel sad or scared. Discuss.

### **Activity 3: Meet Christina Semon, Missionary to Moldova**

Read Christina’s story as a class and then go over the discussion questions.



# ORTHODOX **MISSION SUNDAY**

## **Activity 4: Assemble the OCMC Coin Boxes**

Discuss how these funds will be used to support the ministries of the Mission Center to spread Christ's love around the world. Send the boxes home with the students and ask them to fill them and return the boxes at a time you decide upon. Remind the class of their role in spreading Christ's love through having a spirit of peace within themselves.

**Activity Sheet 1: What does “peaceful” mean to you?**

Use the space below to draw or write about a peaceful person or things in your life. It can be anyone or anything that makes you feel peaceful and happy.



**Questions:**

1. Tell us about the person or thing that is peaceful to you
2. How does this person or thing make you feel?
3. Do you want to be more like this person? If you drew a “thing” that makes you happy, is it something that you want to do or use more?

## Activity 2: Identifying Peacefulness

Share the attached sheet with the happy and sad/angry pictures. Ask the class to circle the pictures that make them feel happy and peaceful and to put an X through the ones that make them feel sad or scared.

After they're done, ask them what about the images make them feel that way. Discuss how when they smile and are happy, they make other people feel that way. When they have love, they show love to others and give others love. When they yell or are mad, it makes others sad or scared. Discuss the importance of having Christ's love within us, giving us an inner peace and happiness that we can share with others to make them happy and full of love, too.



### Activity 3: Getting to know Christina Semon, Missionary to Moldova

Read Christina's story and follow up with the discussion questions provided.

*"Her ways are good ways and all her paths are in peace." Proverbs 3:17*

I became a long-term missionary after I finished college. I was baptized as an Orthodox Christian by my parents. They raised me in the Orthodox Church where I went to Sunday school, youth activities, and the Divine Liturgy every Sunday. Along with my church activities, I also went to school and played sports. I loved to play softball and swim. After high school, I went to college and played softball there. I was so happy to be there, but I was faced with problems too.

When I left home, my life changed. I lost control of my life and stopped feeling and acting like myself. The peace that I had was gone. God was always with me, though, and He showed me the way back to His peace and love.

God gave me a chance to spend part of my college study in another country called Russia. During my time in Russia, I was happy living in an Orthodox country. This time let me think about my life and the peace I had known growing up in the Church. The peace I found while in Russia made me much stronger as a Christian. Because of this, I knew I wanted to live a life working for the Church.

After I graduated college, I kept wishing to work for the Church. I wanted to serve the Church and to help people. In my free time, I looked for work in another country. I loved travel and God. God led me to the Orthodox Christian Mission Center. I am a missionary in a country called Moldova now.

I prayed that my parents would not worry, knowing that I was in God's hands. I am blessed to be here in Moldova now where I am a missionary and am able to share the joy of a life lived in Jesus Christ with young people who are just beginning to understand how deep Christ's love is. Here in Moldova, I work with many young kids. I help young mothers take care of their babies. I also teach teenage girls how to cook and sew. By doing these things, I show the people I work with that Christ loves them and cares about them. The love that I show to them is a reflection of Christ's love. Glory to God for all things!

#### Discuss:

Lead a short discussion on each of the excerpts from the story of Christina with the class. Help them have a discussion about how we can gain and lose peace throughout our lives, but as long as we keep God with us in our hearts, we will have peace and be able to share that peace with others.

"The peace that I had was gone"

"God was always with me, though, and He showed me the way back to His peace and love."

"I show the people I work with that Christ loves them and cares about them."

### Activity 4: Assemble the OCMC Coin Boxes