

Puppet Script

PUPPET SCRIPT DAY 1.....

Have the puppet's sailor hat on the ledge, ready for him to put on.

MC: Boys and girls, I'd like you to greet someone who will be joining us every day at this time. His name is _____ (puppet's name) (*holds hand to ear and waits for the children to yell out his name, if they already know the character*) and he'll be joining us this week. _____, come out and meet the boys and girls!

P: (*peeks up slowly, shyly, at the boys and girls, then "smiles" and bounces up and down as he sees them*)

Hi everybody! (*says it over and over until the kids respond to him loudly and enthusiastically*)

What's all this I hear about an ark? Is Noah here with the animals? Who's traveling on the ark? Nothing beats a great boat ride with my friends.

MC: Well, _____, this week we are taking a trip on the Ark of Salvation with Jesus and Mary, the Theotokos.

P: Wow—can I go with all of you on the Ark of Vacation?! Where are we going? Greece? South America? Australia?

MC: It's the Ark of SALVATION, _____, not the Ark of VACATION!

P: Oh, okay. But can I be the captain and drive the ship?!

MC: On this ship, Jesus is our captain, but

you can be a member of the crew just like everyone else. Here—let's put on your sailor hat. And the Theotokos is our guide on our journey.

P: I know who Jesus is, but who is the Tokos?

MC: That's THE-O-TO-KOS, and it's another name for Jesus's mother, Mary. The-o-to-kos. It's a Greek word, and it means "God bearer." Can you say her name now?

P: The TO-KOS.

MC: Boys and girls, can you help _____ say her name correctly? All together now: THE-O-TO-KOS. Great!

This week we are learning about all the things she did and what we can learn from her life.

P: So, what did everyone learn about today?

MC: Today they learned how Joachim and Anna prayed to God for a child and were given the gift of a daughter named Mary—that's the name of the Theotokos. They raised her to be faithful to God.

P: Okay, so what does that have to do with all the boys and girls here?

MC: Well, _____, they were all born (just like Mary) and their parents are raising them up to be faithful to God—after all, look at all the boys and girls here at Vacation Church School this week.

P: Do they all have special names like the Tokos?

MC: Not exactly, but every Orthodox Christian family says special prayers

when a new baby is just eight days old, and each child gets his or her own special name.

P: What's special about that name? Is it hard to say? Is it a secret?

MC: No, it's not a secret, but it is the name of a holy person or an angel who will help and pray for that child all his life. My special name is _____.
(says his or her baptismal name)
Children, when I say 1-2-3, I want each of you to tell _____ your baptismal name, okay? That's the name you give the priest when you receive Holy Communion.

1-2-3! *(helps children say their baptismal names)* If you don't know your special name, ask your mom or dad tonight!

P: Wow! I wonder if there is a Saint _____?

MC: I don't know!

P: Hey, I heard some singing earlier.
(sings out "We're Traveling on the Ark of Vacation....") Will it get any BETTER??? 'Cause it sounds like you are kinda new at this....

MC: I'm sure our singing will get better the more we practice! We're just getting started! We are going to learn some new songs this week, and you can sing with us if you like.

P: I'd like that. I like taking trips, and I'm sure gonna have fun traveling with all these new friends. What else will we do this week?

MC: We're going to play games, learn some

more songs, worship in church everyday, and even go on a treasure hunt.

P: OOOH! I can't wait to go on a treasure hunt! Should I bring my shovel and bucket to help dig for the treasure?

MC: No, _____, you won't need a bucket and shovel! We aren't DIGGING for treasure—we are going to discover something that is out in the open! Tomorrow we are going to learn about the Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple and about the sacrament of Holy Baptism.

P: Rapp-ism? What is rappism? Are we gonna learn rap songs?

MC: (*shakes her head*) Do we need to have your hearing checked? (*looks in his ears*) We are learning about BAptism, not RAPPism!

P: Oh boy! I can't wait for tomorrow! (*bounds out, saying in a rap-style voice*) I'm gonna learn some rappisms, I'm gonna learn some rappisms.

MC: Children, what are we going to learn about tomorrow...and it's not rappisms?

ALL: BAPTISM! Bye, _____! See you tomorrow!

PUPPET SCRIPT DAY 2.....

Have the puppet wearing his sailor hat.

MC: Boys and girls, let's call our friend to join us. When I say 1-2-3, let's say the words: "_____, _____, he's our friend. Let's give him a great big hand. Uh huh! Uh huh!"

1-2-3!

All: _____, _____, he's our friend. Let's give him a great big hand. Uh huh! Uh huh!

P: (*comes out in rhythm, rapping*) Boys and girls, you are my friends! I'm gonna give you a great big hand! Uh huh! Uh huh!

MC: _____, were you rapping just now?

P: You bet. I'm trying to stay with the theme today.

MC: Boys and girls, would you tell _____ what you learned about today? _____ It wasn't "rappism." We learned about _____ (*puts hand to ear*).

All: Baptism!

P: Oh, okay. So, where did the Ark of Vacation take everyone today?

MC: The Ark of SALVATION, not VACATION, _____! Today we traveled further on our voyage and learned that the Theotokos was brought to the Temple to live when she was just three years old.

P: The Tokos was only three years old? Didn't she miss her mom and dad? I know their names...ummm...Joseph and Hannah?

MC: That's pretty close, _____.

Children, what were Mary's parents' names?

All: Joachim and Anna!

P: So didn't she miss Joseph and Hannah?

MC: Maybe a bit, but she was a very special person. And there were other special people who lived there and helped to take care of her. They all served God together there in the Temple, in God's house.

P: So do all these boys and girls live HERE in God's house? Where do they sleep?

MC: (*laughing*) No, not quite! But Orthodox Christian parents do bring their children to the church for a special event, called Holy Baptism.

P: Not rappism?

MC: No, BAPTism. Just like the Theotokos went to the Temple, we are all baptized and chrismated, and we are brought into the Church so we can learn how to serve God. This is a very big step in our life's journey.

P: What happens when they get baptismed?

MC: When a person is baptized, there is a special service at the church. Children, what is a person put into when they are baptized?

All: Water in the baptismal font.

P: So baptism is like getting a bath?

MC: Yes, but in this bath, God washes us clean of the bad things that can hurt us. Then we put on new white clothes, and God gives us a special gift.

P: I know! That's when you get your cross to wear!

MC: That's true, _____. But the best gift is the gift of God's Holy Spirit, which we receive when the priest puts special oil on us. It's called Holy Chrismation.

P: Is that like Christmas? Is that why you get gifts?

MC: No, Holy Chrismation is when this special oil, called Holy Chrism, is put on our faces and hands and bodies and feet, to help us to follow God.

P: Wow. You Orthodox Christian boys and girls sure are special! What else have they been learning?

MC: They've been learning some more names for Mary. We've learned "Theotokos" already. Another name is "All Holy One." Boys and girls, can you help _____ say "All Holy One?"

All: All Holy One.

P: If she is "all holy," then can I be like her, too???

MC: Absolutely! We all learn from her example: to be kind to others, worship God, say nice things to one another, obey our parents....

P: And sing songs to God?

MC: That's exactly right! Today we are going to sing a hymn of the Church that thanks the Theotokos for helping save a city from all kinds of perils, terrors, and other troubles.

P: Can I hear the song?

MC: In a little bit. Now, tomorrow we are going to learn about how Mary said yes to Jesus at the Annunciation and how we can all say yes to Jesus.

P: The ANNOUNCEMENT of Jesus? I can announce Jesus! (*nearly shouting the name*) JESUS!

MC: (*shaking her head*) I'm so glad you can ANNOUNCE Jesus! But this announcement is one that was made to the Theotokos, by an angel of God.

P: Oh, I really like angels! I guess I'll see you tomorrow, on board the Ark of Vacation!

MC: (*shaking her head*) Bye, _____.

P: Bye-bye, boys and girls. (*bounces off, humming "We're traveling on the Ark of Vacation"*)

PUPPET SCRIPT DAY 3.....

On the ledge, _____ has a plastic pail, shovel, and a map of the church. He wears his sailor hat.

MC: Boys and girls, can you help me call our friend? _____ !!!

(_____ doesn't respond until the kids yell out for him)

P: Hello, everybody! What's going on today?!

MC: Hello, _____! Are you ready to continue our journey on the Ark of Salvation?

P: Ab-so-lute-ly!!! I've been waiting all day to go on the treasure hunt, but there's just no place to dig in this building.

MC: _____, that's because we searched for treasure that was out in the open. *(takes _____'s map)* We went through the church looking for the Theotokos in the icons.

P: In the pythons?! I didn't see any snakes in the church!

MC: Not PY-thons, _____, ICONS! An icon is a special picture that teaches us about God and His Church. Did you see the Theotokos pictured in the church?

P: Oh, I've been in the church, and the Tokos is everywhere. I must have seen her in about fifteen different pythons.

MC: ICONS! You have good eyes, _____. She's an important person, so we see her a lot. This week, the children have learned another name we use for her.

Would you like to learn it, too?

P: Well, so far I've learned "Mary," the "Tokos," and "All Holy One." How many more names does she have?

MC: Many, many more. One of them is "Mother of God."

P: I get it! Jesus is God, and Mary is His mother, so she's called the Mother of God!

MC: That's right, _____. Good job! She was the very first person to say YES to Jesus. The Archangel Gabriel appeared to her and told her that she would have a baby and that His name would be Jesus. And she said yes.

P: Wow, what an awesome thing—she had an angel come and talk to her!

MC: It WAS awesome. Father *Name* told us about angels today, and guess what we found on the doors on the iconostasis?

P: Pythons of angels! And one of them even has a sword. He must be a warrior angel.

MC: Yes, _____, the Archangel Michael has the important job of protecting God's people.

P: But the angel who came to Mary didn't have a sword, did he? That would be scary.

MC: No, that was the Archangel Gabriel. His important job is to bring messages from God to His people.

P: So angels have jobs, just like people and dogs? My job is to eat steak and play outside all day long and sleep all

night!

MC: Mary had a job, too. Do you know what it was?

P: To be God's mother and to say YES to God! I want to say YES to God, too.

MC: That's very good. In fact, we can all say yes to Jesus. Do you know how the children are learning to say yes?

P: Let me think.... (*pauses and leans head to one side*) By obeying their parents, being nice to each other, saying their prayers, and singing songs about God?

MC: Very good. You've had your thinking cap on this week! How can you say yes to God?

P: Let me think.... By not slurping the water out of my bowl. Maybe I won't chew up my master's shoes. I guess I could stay out of the trash can.

MC: Can you think of any good things to do, to say yes to God?

P: I know! I could carry my food bowl into the kitchen when it's time to eat! I could stand quietly at the back door when I need to go out, instead of scratching on it. Hmm. I guess I don't have to bark at EVERY dog that walks by. Boy, this is going to be hard work, saying yes to God!

MC: Sometimes saying yes IS hard work. Hey, we are going to learn a new song today. Would you like to hear it? It goes (*singing*) "Yes, I will do this awesome thing! Yes, I will trust in the Lord. Yes, I will follow God. Yes, I will do His will. Yes, Lord, I am your servant."

P: I like those words. It reminds me how the Tokos said yes to God, and how I can do it, too! But I really need to go back inside and rest awhile. All this looking for treasure and saying yes talk has made me sleepy. (*yawns*)

MC: I have an idea: You go inside and rest, and listen to the children as they learn the "Saying, Yes!" song. Would that be okay?

P: Okay. (*yawns*) Bye-bye, boys and girls!

PUPPET SCRIPT DAY 4.....

MC: Girls and boys, remember our song to get _____ to come and join us?

"_____, _____, he's our friend. Let's give him a great big hand. Uh huh! Uh huh!"

All together now!

All: _____, _____, he's our friend. Let's give him a great big hand. Uh huh!

(_____ pops up, bopping with the beat)

P: You guys are really sounding good! I'm so glad to see you again! What's been going on today with the Tokos on the Ark of Vacation? I heard a lot of singing in the church this morning. What was going on?

MC: Today we had the Divine Liturgy—the Church service when we receive Holy Communion. The boys and girls were all there, and they sang all the hymns of the service.

P: That must be why they sound so good—they've been getting lots of practice. I've been practicing, too!

MC: What have you been practicing?

P: All the names for the Tokos that I've learned: Mary, Mother of God, and All Holy One.

MC: Very good! Would you like to learn another name for Mary today?

P: I think I can manage one more. What is it?

MC: Blessed of God.

P: (*speaking slowly and deliberately*)
BLESS-ED OF GOD. I've got it. But why do we call her that?

MC: Because God gave her the special honor or blessing of being the mother of God's Son, Jesus. The Holy Scriptures tell us that we should call her "blessed" because she received that special honor.

P: Blessed of God, Mary, the Tokos, All Holy One, Mother of God. Wow, she really is a special person! I'm glad I've learned some of her names.

MC: Speaking of learning, today and tomorrow we are learning about the Dormition of the Theotokos. We also call it the Falling Asleep of the Theotokos. It was when her life on earth ended and she went to heaven to be with Jesus.

P: That sounds kind of happy and sad at the same time.

MC: You're right, _____—whenever something good comes to an end, or when we say good-bye to our family and friends, it can make us feel sad. But knowing something really special and wonderful is going to happen makes us happy.

P: I think I understand. And tomorrow is our last day at Vacation Church School, so we are saying good-bye to the friends we have made here this week. That makes me kind of sad.

MC: Yes, but think of all the good friends we have made and interesting things we have done and learned. Have you had a good time?

P: Oh yes! And I'm looking forward to the

summertime, and playing outdoors, and going swimming, and visiting other dogs, and traveling to new places, and that makes me happy!

MC: Speaking of traveling to new places, we've "traveled" this week to [insert a dialogue that connects your program's missions focus to the theme of the *Theotokos*, like the one that follows here] a country in Central America called Guatemala. Can you say that word?

P: Hot Tamales?

MC: No, not "hot tamales," _____. Gua-te-ma-la. In Guatemala, the people speak Spanish. Do you speak Spanish?

P: Spinach? They speak Spinach in Hot Tamales?

MC: Not Spinach. SPANISH! Can you count to three in Spanish? I can!

P: You can count to three in Spinach? How do you do that?

MC: Uno, dos, tres. Try it.

P: Juno, toes, lace. I've got it! Juno, toes, lace! Juno, toes, lace! What a funny language.

MC: Boys and girls, can you help _____ out? Let's say it together: "uno, dos, tres."

All: (repeat several times; _____ joins in with his version)

P: Why have you been traveling to Hot Tamales this week?

MC: We've been learning about a place called the Hogar, where boys and girls who don't have moms and dads to take care of

them can go to live. It's called an orphanage. Many of the children there will be adopted and go to live with other families.

P: *I know what that means! I was 'adopted! When I was a puppy, I was in a shelter until my master picked me out and took me home.*

MC: *That's right, _____ . And while these children are at the Hogar they learn all about God and how to be Orthodox Christians. Some very nice people called nuns take care of them and teach them.*

P: *What's a nun?*

MC: *A nun is a woman who lives with other women. Nuns devote themselves to prayer and to doing God's work of helping people.*

P: *Isn't that like when the Tokos was living in the Temple—in God's house—when she was little?*

MC: *Very good! Yes, the Hogar is like that, and the nuns try to live like the Mother of God did, living holy lives and serving God.*

P: *It must be a wonderful place—I'd like to go there.*

MC: *Maybe you will someday. Lots of people send money to help the orphans, or they go to visit and work for a while. There are lots of children there that need our help.*

P: *Is that why I see the boys and girls bringing money to church this week?*

MC: *You're right—they've been bringing*

donations every day, and tomorrow we'll collect some donations from the moms and dads as well and add it all up. We hope there is lots and lots of money to send to help *the nuns and orphans at the Hogar.*

P: I'll bring my donation later. But I'd better go for now. Bye-bye!

PUPPET SCRIPT DAY 5.....

_____ is attired in his sailor hat. He has a dollar bill next to him to put in the missions money can, which is on his ledge. Nearby, have a goody bag with a finished Theotokos medallion (untied), a postcard, a bookmark, and a Travel Journal.

MC: Girls and boys, let's introduce our special friend to all our guests today. Can we call him by name? All together now!

All: _____!

P: (very formally) Hello, ladies and gentlemen. Greetings to all parents, grandparents, Godparents, aunts, uncles, siblings, teachers, boys, and girls. It's nice to see all of you.

MC: _____, what good manners you have!

P: Well, I know that this is a special day, and I wanted to make a good impression! (bounces up and down)

MC: And you have, I'm sure. _____, I see you are wearing your sailor hat.

P: That's right. Can I tell our visitors about all the fun we had on our journey this week? We traveled on the Ark of Vacation as we sailed through the four feasts of the Tokos (*he whispers to the group*) That means "God-bearer."

MC: Very good! _____, do you remember some more of the names of Mary we learned this week?

P: (scratches his head) I'll try. Here goes. Mary, the Tokos, All Holy One, Mother of God, Blessed of God.

MC: EXCELLENT! What else did we learn about the Theotokos?

P: We learned that we have a lot in common with her and we can learn a lot from her. Just like Mary was born to parents who raised her to love God, all the boys and girls who came to VCS this week are learning how to be like Mary and love God.

MC: She entered the Temple to serve God; we are baptized and chrismated as Orthodox Christians to serve God.

P: And the Theotokos was the first person to say yes to God when the angel came to her at the ANNOUNCEMENT.

MC: And we say yes to Christ by loving and obeying our parents, singing and praying to God, and being kind to one another—especially our brothers and sisters.

_____, you really listened well. Do you remember what we were going to learn about today?

P: (*lowering his head, he sighs deeply and says seriously*) We were going to learn how to say good-bye to all the friends we've made this week, just like Mary said good-bye to all the Apostles when she fell asleep in the Lord.

MC: That's right. Pat _____ on the head. Have you learned anything else you would like to share?

P: (*brightens up and jumps up and down*) I have learned that the boys and girls have gotten to be really good singers this week. And, best of all, I had a great time on this journey—even though I didn't see Noah and his friends on the

Ark of Vacation—I met all of you and we had a fun journey learning all those different names of Mary, finding treasure in the church, making medallions, and learning so much about the Tokos, and learning about the [insert _____-style reference to missions focus] Spinach orphans in Hot Tamales!

MC: You mean the [insert correct version of missions reference] Spanish-speaking orphans at the Hogar orphanage in Guatemala?

P: Yeah, that's them.

MC: Anything else?

P: Yes! We learned some really neat new songs. My favorite is "Yes, I will do this awesome thing...." (_____ sings, "howling" the words)

MC: Thanks, _____, I think we understand. So you like the yes song best of all? Why?

P: 'Cause I like to say yes to God—I want to follow Him, too.

MC: I'm glad. Now would you tell our guests about the crafts the kids made this week?

P: Oh, they made such beautiful Tokos medallions—look, they're wearing them today! And we're all wearing our sailor hats that they decorated (or they made luggage tags for their backpacks). And they made postcards and bookmarks, too.

MC: Which is your favorite?

P: I like the Tokos medallion best. It reminds me of how Mary is close to us

and ready to help us.

- MC: _____, we have enjoyed our time with you this week. We have a little thank-you gift that the children made just for you. (*pulls each item out of the goody bag and explains it*)
- Your very own Theotokos medallion to remind you of the Mother of God... (*ties it around _____'s neck*)
- A postcard to send to someone you love to let them know the Theotokos is praying for them...
- A bookmark to use in your Bible...
- And a Travel Journal to remember all the things you have done and learned this week—it even has the words to all the songs we learned!
- P: Oh, thank you, boys and girls! I'm really happy now!
- MC: Have a great summer, _____! Bye-bye!
- P: Bye-bye! (*waves enthusiastically, blowing kisses as he leaves*)