

# HIGH SCHOOL MISSIONS LESSON PLAN

## OUTLINE OF LESSONS FOR TEACHERS (WITHOUT POWERPOINT)

This text is prepared for you if you do not have the necessary equipment for a visual presentation.

**Theme:** Sharing Our Faith

**Scripture:**

- Scriptures: “As the Father sent me, even so I also send you.” (John 20:21) and “These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.” (John 15: 11-12.)

**Focus Region:** Turkana

## OBJECTIVES AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS

### Introduction – The Theme – Sharing Our Faith

Today is Mission Sunday and we’ll explore how the Orthodox Christian Mission Center strives to spread the Orthodox faith worldwide. They achieve this by sending missionaries or by providing financial support for mission work. Our lesson is about the Turkana people in Kenya, who first received Christ in 2007 and are now sharing their faith with others who have not heard the message of God’s love and mercy.

### Pre-Discussion Questions:

Use the pre-lesson discussion questions to introduce the topic of “faith” and our responsibility as Orthodox Christians to share our faith with others.

When do you feel closest to God in your life? (nature, accepted/valued, comforted, mystery, etc)

1. Jesus is compared to tangible necessities: light of the world, bread of life, and living water. Describe the spiritual needs that Jesus meets by comparing them to the physical needs, in importance, urgency, etc.
2. What is the Orthodox Christian’s responsibility to share spiritual light, bread, and water with the world?



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3. *Possible responses:* It's best if teens think of it themselves, but you could offer some examples to get them started.
  - a. nature, feeling accepted and valued, feeling comforted, experiencing the “mystery”, etc.
  - b. Jesus is light because without faith in Him, we can be in a “dark” world with no purpose or direction.
  - c. We have the knowledge of Christ and the Orthodox Christian faith, so we are called to share it with those who don't have it.

## Teach the Scripture lessons

Read the Scripture passages and explain that Jesus intends for us to share our faith with others.

- Sharing our faith with the world is done in love to bring the fullness of life to others. It is central to living the Christian life. Scripture clearly calls Christians to share the Gospel message they have received, to make it available to the world.
- When we are baptized in Christ, we become part of the Body of Christ and become participants in Christ's mission of redemption of the whole world. As faithful servants of Christ, we are called to expand His earthly ministry to the ends of the earth.
- Redemption refers supremely to the work of Christ on our behalf, whereby He purchases us, He ransoms us, at the price of His own life, securing our deliverance from the bondage and condemnation of sin.

## Illustrate

Show how mission work is happening around the world by sharing the story of the Turkana people in the lesson. If possible, play the video that is 2.37 minutes.

## Discuss the elements of the story

After introducing the mission work in Turkana, continue to ask questions to engage your students and connect their faith experience with the teaching in the Scripture verses and the story of the Turkana people. Discuss missionary efforts today and how we can fulfill Christ's commandment to share our faith and to “love one another.” Expand the circle of “Who is my neighbor?” (Luke 10:29).

## Possible answers



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Who is my neighbor? All people everywhere. Share the good news with them, give them the opportunity to believe, support those who go as missionaries, go ourselves.

## **Challenge / Call to Action**

How can we share our faith with others? Use the provided examples to help the children find ways to make sharing their faith a part of their life and growth in Christ.



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## MISSION SUNDAY LESSON

**Theme:** Sharing Our Faith

**Focus Region:** Turkana

**Prayer:** “God of truth and love: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, hear our prayer for those who do not know You. Make us witnesses of Your goodness, full of love, strength and faith—for Your glory and the salvation of the entire world. Amen.

Introduce the theme Sharing Our Faith, Mission Sunday, and Orthodox Christian Mission Center.

### **Introduce the Orthodox Christian Mission Center:**

Today is Mission Sunday and we'll explore how the Orthodox Christian Mission Center strives to spread the Orthodox faith worldwide. They achieve this by sending missionaries or by providing financial support for mission work. Our lesson is about the Turkana people in Kenya, who first received Christ in 2007 and are now sharing their faith with others who have not heard the message of God's love and mercy.

### **Pre-lesson questions, discussion or survey on paper; share responses**

1. When do you feel closest to God in your life? (nature, accepted/valued, comforted, mystery, etc.)
2. Jesus is compared to tangible necessities: light of the world, bread of life, and living water. Describe the spiritual needs that Jesus meets by comparing them to the physical needs, in importance, urgency, etc. (Ex: Jesus is light because without faith in Him, we can be in a “dark” world with no purpose or direction.)
3. What is the Orthodox Christian's responsibility to share spiritual light, bread, and water with the world?

### **OCMC responds to this need and to scriptural calls for mission:**

1. As the Father sent me, so I also send you. (John 20:21)  
*Scripture clearly calls Christians to share the Gospel message they have received, to make it available to the world.*  
When we are baptized in Christ, we become part of the Body of Christ and become participants in Christ's mission of **redemption** of the whole world. As faithful servants of Christ, we are called to expand His earthly ministry to the ends of the earth.
2. “These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.” (John 15:11-12)



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## THE TURKANA: A STORY OF INTRODUCTION TO AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE.



### Introduction:

The Turkana people of northwest Kenya are pastoral, nomadic, moving in search of water and grazing land for their herds. Most had not heard of Jesus or the Christian message until the growing Orthodox Church of Kenya reached out to them. OCMC was invited to send a mission outreach team in 2010.

### Video:

As you watch, look for these key details:

- water as a key part of the Turkana's openness to the Gospel message
- the shaman's (spiritual leader of the village) openness to the Gospel message

Play the 2:37 minute video available [here](#) or by scanning the QR code below.

### Discussion Questions

1. Discuss the two details above. How did God use water and the shaman to bring the Gospel message to the Turkana people?
2. The lack of water is a real problem for Turkana. When the riverbed filled overnight, did they see it as a sign of God's blessing?
3. The shaman received a message that the visitors had crossed the river (he didn't think they would do that) and he went to meet them. Was the water a sign that their message was good? Or was the fact that they waded across the river the sign that the people's motives were good?

### Discuss:

Given that Jesus Christ is the "light, bread, water", how has the life of the Turkana people changed? Spiritually? Physically? *Possible responses:* Spiritual: hope, faith in a loving, caring God, salvation. Physical: education, water (wells), etc.

In October of 2024, a liturgy and ordination took place in Turkana, with His Grace Neofitos of Eldoret and Northern Kenya and an OCMC team from America. Fr. Vladimir, who oversees four new Orthodox communities in Turkana, co-celebrated along with four other priests from Turkana. A new deacon was ordained as part of the celebration.



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## TURKANA EVANGELISM TEAMS



### Background information:

A small group from the Mission Center and faithful traveled to Kenya in October of 2024 and celebrated with the Turkana people the ordination of a new deacon. They held the liturgy outdoors, under a large tree, because there was no church. His Grace Bishop Neofitos was elevated to the newly created Diocese of Eldoret and Northern Kenya just one year earlier.

His Grace Bishop Neofitos on the first ordination in the Turkana district: *I chose to give him the name Gabriel because like the Archangel Gabriel he is always to bring the Good News of salvation of Jesus Christ to the people.* He likened this day in Turkana to the Day of Pentecost, “*where the Holy Spirit filled all things.*”



The Orthodox Christian Mission Center is funding training for catechist teams that will share the Gospel with 10 villages that have not heard the Good News; they are learning now with appointed catechists and traveling priests.

They’ve ordained Deacon Gabriel from within the Turkana community, and God-willing other young Turkana men will answer the call. The Turkana were drawn to the Christian faith through the Holy Spirit, but someone needed to bring the message to them.

OCMC mission teams have provided funds and practical help to assist seminaries, establish schools, dig wells, and establish churches. There is a need for theologically trained missionaries to aid in the training of catechists and the development of the catechetical program.

### Discuss:

What is our duty as Orthodox Christians to the rest of the world? “Who is my neighbor?” (Luke 10:29).

**The Orthodox Christian Mission Center** is currently active in 33 countries and 36 Diocese. We work to establish lasting relationships with hierarchs and leaders in jurisdictions around the world. By opening and maintaining these pathways, we can identify and support missions in areas where the people have not heard the Gospel or are a minority in their region and have little or no resources or opportunity to share their faith.



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## **Call to Action: What can you do to share your Faith?**

Possible ideas:

- Lead the collection of money during Lent with the OCMC coin boxes to support the work of Missions.
- Host a Kenyan meal for a Fellowship Hour as a fundraiser for the work in Turkana.
- Lead the effort to support the work of Missions in your parish.
- Help with a local mission project? i.e. Local soup kitchen?
- Bring a friend to church (share your faith with your neighbor).
- Welcome visitors. Many new people are coming to our Church.
- What other way can you think of to share your faith?



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