

FOLLOWERS – LESSON PLAN

Age	Term	Mod.	Module Theme	Module Title	Lesson Number and Title
5	1	1	Faith	Christ is born	14: Saint Stephen

Use the syllabus framework to complete above. Infants: 20 minutes; Juniors: 30 minutes; Middles & Seniors: 45 minutes (Mod. = Module Number, Module Theme - in the heading, Module Title - uppercase in the cell, Lesson Title - lowercase in the cell)

							
Verbal V <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Logical L	Spatial S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Kinaesthetic K <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Musical M	Intra - personal P1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Inter - personal P2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Natural N

Tick the appropriate box(es) above [copy this] for the modes of learning being used in this session.

Prayer O Great St. Stephen, the Scriptures tell us that your face was like an angel's as you witnessed to the truth of Christ. Please ask the Most Holy Trinity to fill my soul with a deep hunger for the truth that comes from Jesus, and also with loving courage. Amen

Starter: *Christian virtues treasure hunt.* Set of flash cards representing the Christian virtues are hidden in the classroom, children are invited to search for them, and when all are found, the teacher will discuss about each virtue offering examples and inviting children to explore what the illustration on each of the flashcards represent.

Learning objectives: To learn about Archdeacon Stephen helping people become followers of Christ and about his martyrdom. To discover ways to cultivate the Christian virtues at school, within the family and their own circle of friends.

Core Activities and Learning

Children will be told that they will be learning about the Holy Protomartyr (First Martyr) and Archdeacon Stephen who was the eldest of the seven deacons, appointed by the Apostles themselves, and therefore called "archdeacon."

1. Saint Stephen was the first Christian martyr, and he suffered for Christ. The teacher will explain the meaning of *martyr* (one who bears witness of the truth, and suffers death in the cause of Christ).

God worked many miracles through St. Stephen. He spoke with such wisdom and grace that many people who heard him, became followers of Jesus. The enemies of the Church of Jesus were furious to see how successful Saint Stephen's preaching was. Explain what a *miracle* is (a marvellous event manifesting a supernatural act of God, it is amazing and wonderful) Talk to the children about what we experience when we witness a miracle (awe and wonder).

They could not answer his wise arguments, so they laid a plot and got men to lie about him. These men said that he had spoken sinfully against God. St. Stephen faced that great gathering of enemies without any fear. In fact, the Holy Bible says that his face looked like the face of an angel. Stephen spoke about Jesus, showing that he is the Saviour God had promised to send. He told off his enemies for not having believed in Jesus. At that, they rose up in great anger and shouted at him. But Stephen looked up to heaven. He said that he saw the heavens opening and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. His enemies closed their ears and refused to listen to another word. They dragged him out of the city and stoned him, but the holy martyr prayed for his murderers. Far off on the heights stood the Mother of God with the holy Apostle John the Theologian, and She prayed fervently for the martyr.

Before his death St Stephen said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. O Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Then he joyfully gave up his pure soul to Christ. The early Christians buried Stephen in a small chapel in Jerusalem, which was dedicated to his memory and was known as the chapel of St. Stephen. He is commemorated on 27th of December.

2. The teacher will explain and describe what it means to suffer for Christ (hardship of any kind, endured for the sake of the Truth or for God's service or for the sake of ourselves as we live a Christian life, we may go through many difficult experiences to grow in the various Christian virtues, love, hope and faith but also honesty, courage and justice). The teacher will generate a discussion around each of the Christian virtues based on visuals and drawing on children experience of what each and every virtue means to them and how we practice them in our daily lives, at school, within the family our circle of friends.

3. Create a lift the flap book, containing three pages using paper card onto which children will glue pictures with Saint Stephen's icon and pictures to illustrate the preaching and the stoning of Saint Stephen and then to create the book flaps (offer guidance and help). On each page the teacher will write a message related to each specific illustration, on the page containing the icon of Saint Stephen, the hymn of the feast will appear on the top of the page (*For the struggles you endured for Christ God, a royal diadem crowns your head, O First Champion of Martyrs.*), and *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. O Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.*

Resources

New Testament Bible stories for children, icon of Saint Stephen, paper card to create a lift the flap book, glue, pictures with a copy of Saint Stephen icon, picture illustrating the preaching and the stoning of Saint Stephen.

Review

In the next session ask one of the children to recall what we have learnt this Sunday.

Follow Up

In the next session we will learn more about the New Year and Saint Basil.