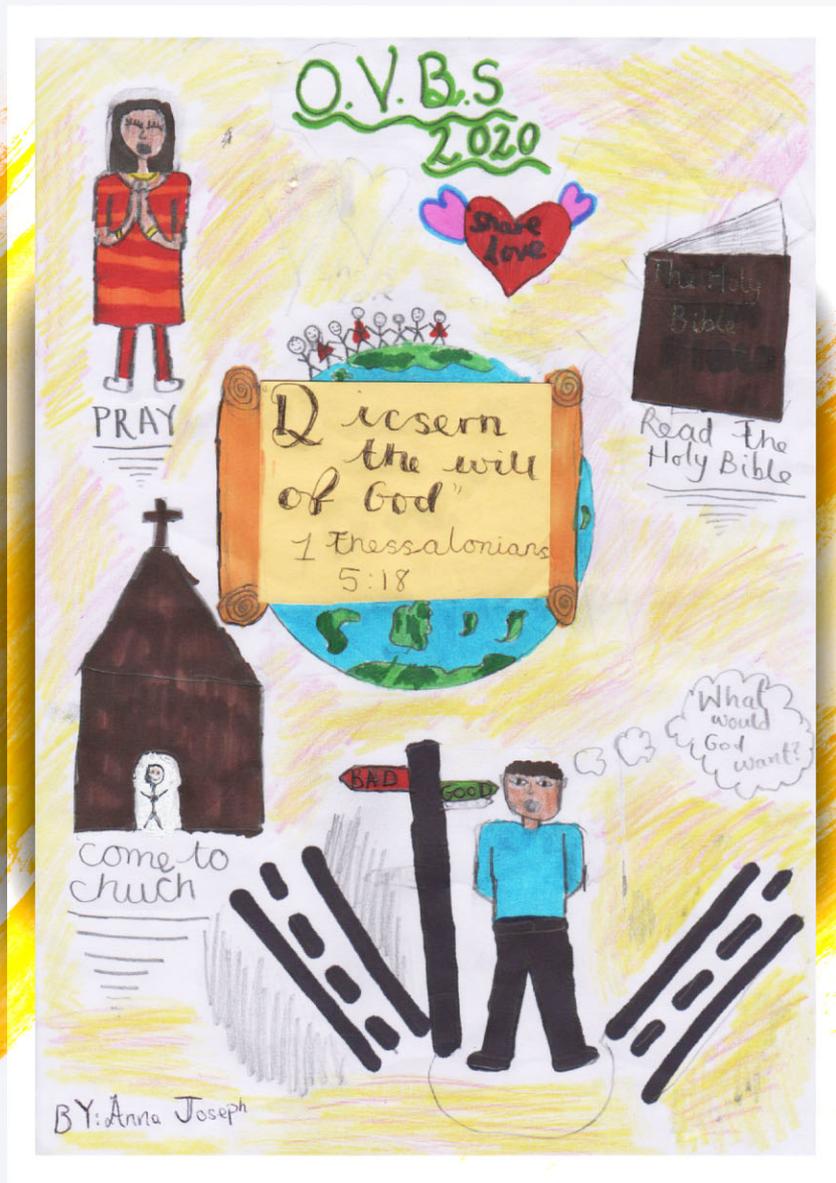


Orthodox Vacation Bible School 2020
Theme Book: Beginners

Seeds



OSSAE

Diocese of UK, Europe & Africa of Indian (Malankara) Orthodox Church

THE INDIAN (MALANKARA) ORTHODOX CHURCH

Diocese of UK- Europe and Africa

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SOUK/20/007

01 March 2020

Blessings to the Vicars/Priests-in-Charge, Sunday School Teachers, Parents and Students:

Dearly beloved in Christ!

Sunday School is the cradle and foundation of our Church. With all gratitude to God Almighty We are overwhelmed to see the blessed functioning of the OSSAE activities in our diocese. We appreciate the Parents and Teachers for your vigour and commitment for providing the right spiritual nourishment for our young children.

OVBS indeed plays an inevitable role in the Sunday School activities. It brings up motivation and enthusiasm in young children to learn the Holy Book and Church's teachings. This year our OVBS classes will be conducted in all our Sunday School units during the months of May to July as per the convenience of individual units.

The theme for OVBS 2020 is "Discern the will of God." This is based on 1 Thessalonians 5:18 which says, "*give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*" Let us remember and teach our children that Praising and Glorifying God is the corner stone of Christian Faith. Whatever we receive, whether it is as per your wish or not so comfortable to you, is the will of God which we shall adhere and accept in full spirit. We could see that Thanksgiving to God is very prominent throughout the Bible.

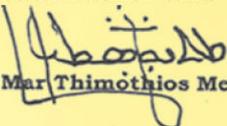
OSSAE diocesan Vice President Fr Anoop Abraham, Diocesan OSSAE officials and Sunday School Teachers are extensively contributing their wisdom and energy for the preparations for the sessions and it is well noticed that a song book will be published for this year's OVBS classes. The songs are well chosen and We are sure that it would be an added benefit and cheer for our children. Congratulation to the team behind this wonderful achievement.

We urge all the Parents and Sunday School teachers to encourage our children to attend the OVBS classes and be blessed.

We pray and extend best wishes for the success of OVBS 2020.

May God Bless you all!

Your Spiritual Father and Shepherd


+ Mathews Mar Thimothios Metropolitan

Foreword



Beloved Sunday School teachers, parents and my dear children,

First of all, I thank Our Lord Almighty for His kindness and mercy upon us during this pandemic. As we prepare ourselves for another OVBS, amidst all the joy and happiness of OVBS this year, we are also going through a very tough and sad situation. Let's seek the loving kindness of our Lord to overcome this, with all positiveness and Christian hope.

Orthodox Vacation Bible School is the season of fun, most of our children look year after year, but it's also a season of transformation and learning lessons that kids carry with them for the rest of their lives. Also, it is an opportunity for the church to teach children The Holy Bible and the Orthodox faith. This year we have an interesting theme for our OVBS "Discern the Will of God" from 1 Thessalonians 5:18 "give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus". This verse gives an inspiring hope in perceiving, recognising and understanding the Will of God and giving thanks to God during a pandemic, which badly affects our life. If we belong to Christ, we have to renew our thankfulness by delighting to look into our heavenly Father's will he has revealed in the Scriptures. OVBS 2020 theme will help us to "Discern the Will of God" in our spiritual journey.

I take this opportunity to thank you all, especially our Diocesan Metropolitan H G Dr Mathews Mar Thimothios Thirumeni, all Vicars, OSSAE UK Director, Secretary, Treasurer, OVBS coordinators, District Inspectors, Head Teachers, Teachers, Volunteers and Parents, for your dedication, selfless work and support to OSSAE-UK and OVBS 2020. Special thanks to the team behind the song and theme books. Your every effort to support and nurture our children in Christ will be rewarded by Our Lord.

In our song book, as previous years, we have included official songs provided by OSSAE OVBS 2020 and a few English songs to make it more lively for our children. Each unit has the freedom to choose a number of songs from the song book based on their OVBS duration, however, prayer, marching and theme songs are mandatory to be taught in all units.

Even though we conclude our OVBS with a Holy Qurbana and rally every year, I would request vicars and head teachers to conduct OVBS 2020 based on the convenience available at individual churches i.e. using online medium or smaller groups depending on the situation.

Prayers and wishes for a blessed OVBS 2020.

Yours in Christ

**Fr. Anoop Abraham Malayil
(Vice President OSSAE –UK)**

 Morning Prayer

LORD, thank you for a new day.
Please go before me and clear the way.
Thank you for protecting me.
Thank you for guiding me.
Thank you for loving me.
In Jesus name, Amen.



Lesson 1 St. Paul- theme background

Who is St. Paul?

He was the apostle who taught the gospel of Christ.



Getting to know St. Paul-

-  I was known as Saul before I became a Christian.
-  I was a Greek speaking, Jew.
-  I mistreated Christians in the first half of my life.
-  I became an apostle once I met Jesus Christ.
-  14 of the 27 books in the New testament has been attributed to St. Paul.
-  8 books in the New Testament were written by St. Paul.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Bartolomeo_Montagna_-_Saint_Paul_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg
<https://images.app.goo.gl/QFbQ7BPVkdFV6Ep38>

When did St. Paul see Jesus?

As explained in Acts of Apostles chapter 9, when Paul was on a journey to Damascus suddenly a light from the heavens flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him "Saul, Saul why are you persecuting me" he became blind for 3 days after this incident. When he reached Damascus a disciple named Ananias restored his sight and baptized him. Soul started preaching straight away and said Christ is the son of God.



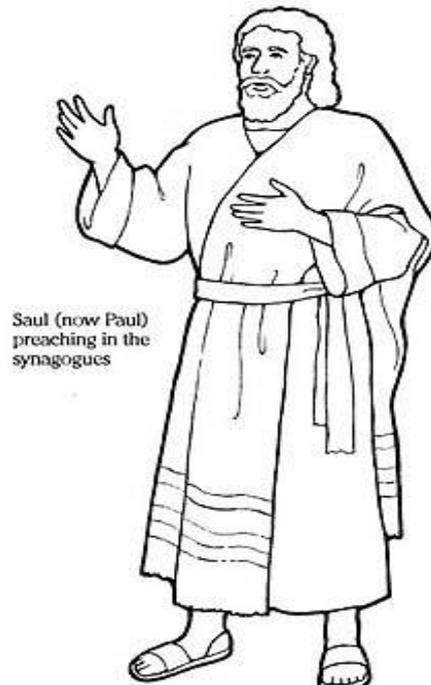
Saul receiving a vision on the road to Damascus



Saul praying



Ananias blessing Saul



Saul (now Paul) preaching in the synagogues

Activity 1: Coloring pages.
Paul blinded on the road to Damascus.



<http://www.supercoloring.com/coloring-pages/paul-blinded-on-the-road-to-damascus?version=print>

Let's watch the story of conversion of Paul the Apostle.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9eRXq-cKmr0>

Activity 2:

Paul Escaped in a Basket: Acts 9:20-25

You will need:

Paper plates, Hole punch, Crayons, Paper and Yarn

Step 1. Guide children in coloring a paper plate brown. Cut the paper plate in half and punch holes around the outside rims of the plates.

Step 2. Instruct children to put the two halves of the paper plate together (colored sides out) and use a long piece of yarn to lace the two sides together leaving long pieces of yarn on either side.

Step 3. Have children draw or color a picture of Paul on paper and then carefully cut it out. Now Paul can be placed in the basket and lowered up and down as the children act out the story

https://sundayschoolzone.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Paul_Rescued_Basket_Craft.pdf



<https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/175640454200051212/?d=t&mt=login>

Prayer for the end of the lesson



<https://images.app.goo.gl/7A7CQzGd18zzwsWM7>

Lesson 2.

Paul's letter to the Thessalonica-give thanks in all circumstances.

In his letter, Paul asked the Thessalonians to thank for everything.

Have you all heard about the story of Job?

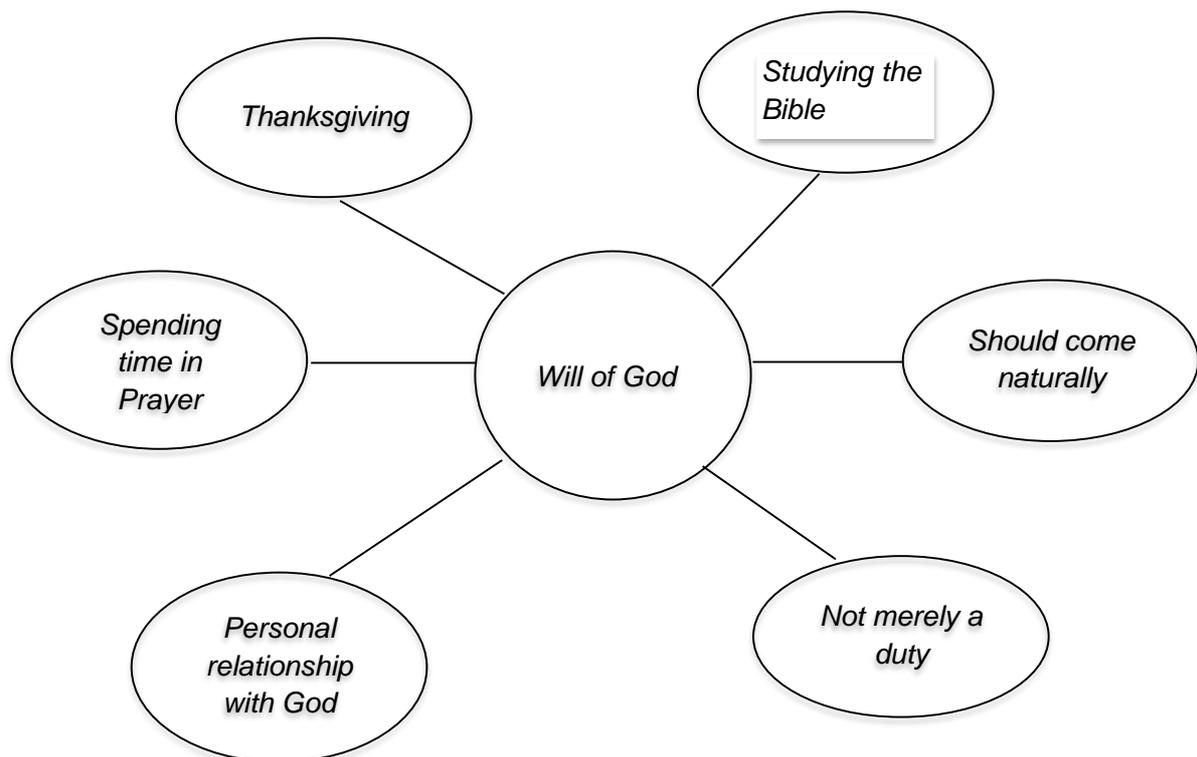
- ✚ Job lost all his family and belongings.
- ✚ Even in the worst times of his life he was thankful to God.

Teachers please show this short video to your students so they can understand the story of Job- please follow the youtube link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L-T2PUIGXXw>

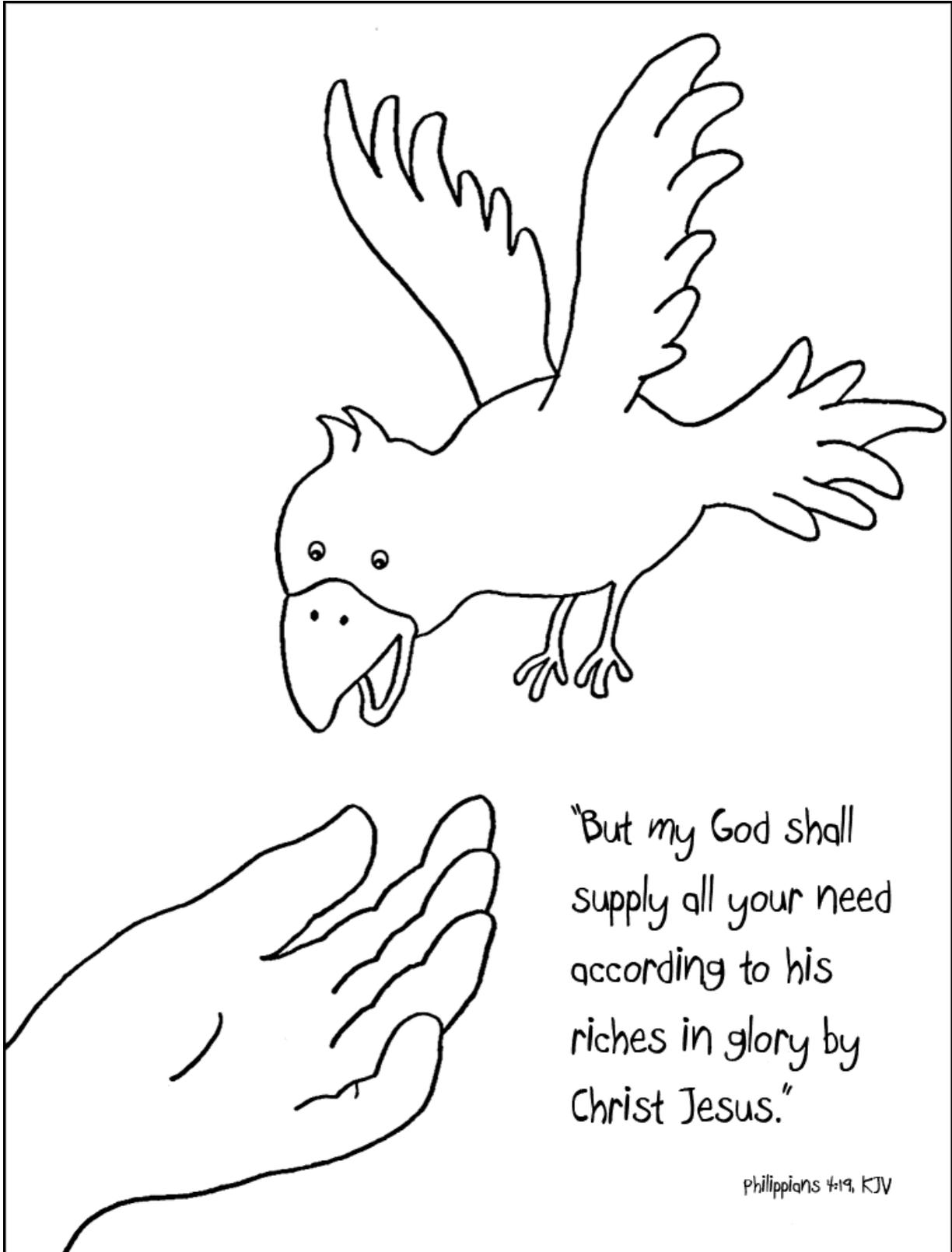
Similarly there will be difficult times in our life where we should be thankful to God.

Paul reminds us that God gives us strength to overcome everything in life.



<https://images.app.goo.gl/pe2hHQKM6ka6MZyV9> Let kids color the follow picture and discuss how god will help and protect us

Activity 1:



"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:19, KJV

Activity 2:

Write down all things you are thankful for.



<https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/469781804859818738/?autologin=true>

God loved us so much that he gave his only son for us to receive eternal life.
From this sentence discuss the love God has for us.

Activity 3: video link

Please find below a small thank you song to teach kids which they will find interesting.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i7FHbFWKzVY>

Activity 4: Coloring

Beloved, let us

LOVE one another,

for love is from God, and whoever loves is born of God, and knows God.



1 John 4:7

Lesson 3. Surrendering your will to God's will.

Identifying the ways to find God's will:

As an orthodox Christian, we become children of God through baptism and received Holy Spirit. To maintain Holy Spirit, we come to church every Sunday and take part in holy Qurbana and receive Holy Communion. This is a way of saying thank you Lord for all you have given to me.



<https://images.app.goo.gl/tb6JhYePYqaKq4SQ7>

Teacher please Consider the points below and help the child to understand the ways to find God's will:

1. Study Bible
2. Spending time in prayer
3. Helping those who are in need of love and care.

Two stories from the Bible showing how god's will was carried out.

1. Abraham's decision to sacrifice his only son when God asked.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kbUqRVsEayU>
2. Mother Mary surrendering herself to god's will.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VrYvuYwPAvU>

Another point that Paul discusses in his letter to the Thessalonians is the importance of having the right norms and morals that need to be practiced for a Christian life. This is only possible by forming a personal relationship with God which is developed through one's relationship with Christ. The Foundation of this relationship is the Holy Spirit and that in a sense is the cornerstone of a perfect Christian life.

We will now think about how Jesus Christ the only son of god surrendered to god's will by saying "Not my will but yours be done "Luke 22:42

Activity 1:

Jesus in Gethsemane

Name:

1. Jesus obeyed the _____
and took the _____ of punishment for us
2. Jesus was _____ so that His _____
can be with us _____
3. Jesus offered Himself _____
for us

Luke 22:42



Jesus prayed in the garden of Gethsemane.

<https://images.app.goo.gl/kpE7eVurQkGVpz8u9>

Teacher kindly discuss this with students explaining how badly Jesus Christ was persecuted before his crucifixion.

Activity 2: Teachers Please get a bag of M & M candy for the below activity

m&m Prayer



“Now to him who is able to do i**M**measurably **M**ore than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.” Eph. 3:20-21

Pass around a handful of m&m candies for each child to hold. (You may put them in sandwich bags so children are not tempted to eat them.) Pray according to the following colors.

For each **GREEN** candy, thank God for one gift or good thing in your life (family, love, health, enough, etc.) .

For each **BLUE** candy, pray for a friend or neighbor who needs help or who needs to know Jesus.

For each **RED** candy, pray for someone you love.

For each **YELLOW** candy, pray for our leaders or those God put in charge (church, school, government).

For each **ORANGE** candy, pray for someone who is sick or hurt and needs to be healed

For each **BROWN** candy, pray for yourself. Tell God something you are sorry for, something that is worrying you or something you need help with.

Afterwards, celebrate God's power to answer prayer by feasting on the candies.

<https://images.app.goo.gl/b5gkW4aQGeSrpN3GA>

Thankful Prayer

Father, Father up above

Thank you, thank you for your love

Thank you, for my parents and my teachers too

I can see and I know these came from you

Father, Father up above

Thank you, thank you for your love

Thank you for my meals and my warm bed too

I can see and I know these came from you

Father, Father up above

Thank you, thank you for your love

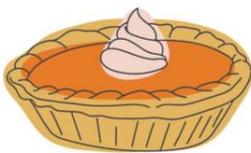
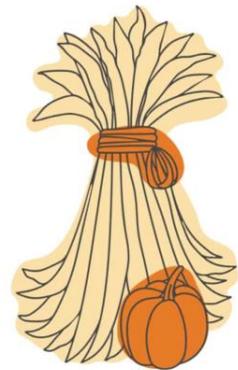
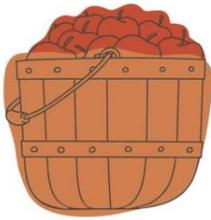
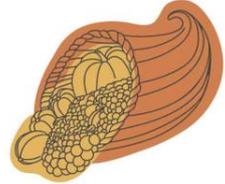
Thank you, for my friends old and new

I can see and I know these came from you

Thank you Father

For your gifts to me

Amen



Authors:-

- **Mr. Biju Mathew**
 - **Dr. Deepa S Joseph**
 - **Mrs. Rini Mathew**
 - **Mrs. Sony Jerrin**
- (St. John The Baptist IOC Stoke-on-Trent)**

Acknowledgement



All OVBS participants, head teachers, teachers, coordinators, music teachers, parents and volunteers, Let us praise and thank our Almighty God for guiding us in all our centralized Sunday school activities within UK and Ireland. This is our eighth successive centralized OVBS programme. Considering the unique needs of our children growing up in the UK and Ireland, similar to previous years, the OVBS scheme has been developed and modified by incorporating some changes to make it an enjoyable experience for the children but keeping the essential and core components from OSSAE.

First of all, I would like to express my humble gratitude to H.G. Dr Mathews Mar Thimothios, our Diocesan Metropolitan and president for OSSAE-UK & Ireland for the blessings and invaluable guidance to all our Sunday school activities in this region.

Sunday schools in UK and Ireland are greatly indebted to Central OVBS committee headed by H. G. Dr Gabriel Mar Gregorios, President OSSAE; Rev. Fr. Dr.Varghese Varghese, Director General OSSAE; Rev. Fr. Mathew Koshy, OVBS Director; Dr. Ipe Varghese, General Secretary OVBS; Prof. Dr. Cherian Thomas, Publication Officer; Prof. K.V. George, OSSAE Executive Officer for providing us with OVBS central curriculum and song book of OSSAE.

My sincere gratitude to Rev. Fr. Anoop Malayil Abraham, Vice President OSSAE-UK & Ireland for his inspirational leadership and encouragement specifically towards OVBS and generally to all Sunday school activities within UK and Ireland region.

I whole heartedly thank Rev. Fr. Aashu Alexander for spending his valuable time and effort in preparing the synopsis and reviewing all theme books.

Kindly join me to convey our hearty gratitude to Mrs. Merlin Robin (St. Thomas IOC, Cambridge), our OVBS Coordinator and Mrs. Sony Jerrin (St. John The Baptist IOC Stoke-on-Trent), OVBS Assistant coordinator for their valuable contribution and painstaking efforts especially in compiling OVBS theme books and song book for UK and Ireland as well as in the procurement and distribution of OVBS materials to all participating units. Specially acknowledging all the Sunday school teachers and students assisted them. Also passing our sincere gratitude to all the students who sent drawing book covers.

Extending a big thanks to Suresh Daniel, Secretary of OSSAE-UK & Ireland for his support in preparation of this years' OVBS. Also remembering Mr. Baby Cherian, our dear treasurer for his support in OVBS activities.

Similar to previous years, the OVBS Theme books have been prepared exclusively for OSSAE-UK & Ireland by Sunday school teachers from different units. I hereby sincerely thank all teachers who wrote and reviewed the lessons namely

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Sunday school activities in UK and Ireland are strengthened and led by all our vicars, district Inspectors, Sunday School head teachers, teachers, talent competition coordinator, volunteers and parents working at different capacities within limited resources and in various circumstances. I thank each and everyone for their commitment, dedication and efforts for making our children grow in Orthodox faith enabling them to serve God in the true Christian way.

A special mention to Mrs. Gincy Shine Panicker [Holy Trinity IOC, Cork] for composing three songs for this year's OVBS.

We have chosen a few out of the 21 cover page designs received from our children. Sincerely thanking all the students, parents and teachers for showing interest.

Finally, I would like to thank all Sunday school children in all units for their enthusiasm and spirit; Sunday school teachers, music teachers, and OVBS unit coordinators for their commitment; head teachers and district inspectors for their dedication; volunteers and parents for their motivation; OSSAE-UK & Ireland executive committee members for their outstanding support; and Church managing committee of various units for jointly working with Sunday school teachers to make this OVBS a grand success.

May God Almighty continue to shower His Blessings in all our activities in future and help us to work together for His Glory and spiritual growth of our students!

Yours in Christ

Simon Chacko | Sunday School Director-UK& Ireland| sundayschool.iocuk@gmail.com)

