

**2019 Creative Festivals Lesson Plan:
Middle School/High School**

Theme:

Antiochian Village: Past, Present, and Future

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." (Philippians 4:13)

Goal:

To help the students understand the theme well enough to express it in art, photography, poetry, and creative writing.

Lesson Objectives:

The students will be able to:

- Describe the conditions in which St. Paul is writing the Letter to the Philippians.
- Explain in their own words what gives Paul strength in the midst of those circumstances.
- Name ways that Christ could help them overcome any challenges or obstacles they may face.
- Relate the passage "*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*" to our church's establishment of Antiochian Village, its preservation, and its future.

Time: 40 minutes

Materials:

- Photo of the arch at the entrance to Antiochian Village Camp
- Orthodox Study Bibles
- Icon of the Apostle Paul [From St. John Chrysostom Orthodox Church, York, PA] (*Attached.*)
- Article "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me," by Fr. Stavros (*Attached. Print one copy for each student.*) <http://myocn.net/daily-devotion-i-can-do-all-things-through-christ-who-strengthens-me/>
- Smart phones
- Paper and Pencils
- Copy of "A Prayer Before Commencing Any Task" (*Attached. Print one copy of the prayer for each student.*)

Opening Prayer:

For Joy and Gladness

(A prayer from the early church taken from "The Clementine Liturgy")

"Blessed art thou, O Lord, who hast nourished me from my youth up, who gives food to all flesh. Fill our hearts with joy and gladness, that we, always having a sufficiency in all things, may abound to every work in Christ Jesus our Lord, through whom to Thee be glory, honor, might, majesty, and dominion, forever and ever. Amen."

Introduction to the Theme:

Explain to the students that the Creative Festival theme has two parts this year- the Biblical quote from Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" and Antiochian Village: Past, Present, and Future. Ask if anyone knows how these two ideas are related. (The Biblical quote is on the arch at the entrance to Antiochian Village Camp.) Show the students the photo of the arch.

Philippians 4:10-13

Have the students read aloud the background information in the Orthodox Study Bible for The Book of Philippians. Show them the icon of St. Paul.

Have them read aloud Philippians 4:10-13.

Discussion:

- Where is St. Paul at the writing of Philippians? (Rome under house arrest.)
- Who pays for his housing and food? (St. Paul's housing and support are paid for by contributions from the churches and from his own savings. The Church at Philippi just sent some money.)
- How is St. Paul held? (In chains.)
- Who guards him? What was so special about them? (Praetorian Guard, the elite guard of the Roman Emperor.)
- St. Paul writes, "I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me." What does he mean by this statement? Does he really mean that he can do **all** things? (Through prayer and faith in Christ, St. Paul has learned that "...in whatever state I am to be content." He has suffered, but has survived because he trusts Christ to give him the patience, wisdom, and strength to overcome these difficult times.) How do you think this verse applies to our lives today? (Obtain responses.)

Hand out copies of the article, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Have students take turns reading aloud to the class. Have them discuss things they feel Christ might help them with, including any obstacles or challenges He could help them overcome. Emphasize that we need to understand that we must follow God's plan for us. Sometimes what we're praying for may not come to pass because it's not God's will. But God is always there to help us cope with anything that happens. He will give us strength to overcome any obstacles when we follow His plan for us.

Antiochian Village: Past, Present, and Future

Have a student read aloud the Antiochian Village Camp Mission Statement:

“Antiochian Village Camp transforms the lives of young people and families and nurtures their faith in Jesus Christ through Orthodox Christian community living, worship, education, fellowship and love.”

Have a student read aloud the dedication statement of the Metropolitan at the time Antiochian Village was established:

“I do not dream impossible dreams, I merely interpret the dream and aspirations of my flock. The Antiochian Village was the dream of my people, I have only striven to translate these dreams into reality. Each achievement presents us with another beginning. There is no summit, only height, in doing the work of Jesus Christ.”

Discussion:

- Ask the students if any of them have attended Antiochian Village Camp (or if you live in another part of the country, one of our other Antiochian Camps.)
- Ask them to share their experiences about attending camp. What did they like about it? What did they dislike? Did they feel any different after attending camp? Did attending camp bring them closer to God?
- Did they feel the camp fulfilled its stated mission?
- What is meant by statement, *“There is no summit, only height, in doing the work of Jesus Christ”*? (Our work is never completed; we must always strive to do more.)

Exploring Creatively:

Break up the class into three groups. Give each group an aspect of Antiochian Village to research and discuss. (Past, Present, and Future.) Allow them to use smart phones in their groups. Give them paper and pencils and have someone in each group take notes. At the end of this exercise, have each group share their findings with the class.

- Past: Give a brief history of Antiochian Village. When was it established? By which Metropolitan? Do you think it took a lot of courage to do this? Could you have made the decision to purchase the grounds and establish the camp and conference center? What saint is buried on the grounds of Antiochian Village? (St. Raphael)
- Present: How is Antiochian Village currently used? What are some things that can be found there? (Tell a little bit about the Camp, Conference Center, Museum, Library, etc.) What are some events that take place there? (Parish Life Conferences, Sacred Music Institute, Clergy Symposium, etc.)
- Future: What do you see as the future of Antiochian Village? For what other purposes could the Village be used? In what ways do you think the Camp and/or Conference Center could be improved? How do you see Antiochian

Village serving Christ and His flock in the future? Do you think Metropolitan Phillip's translation of his peoples' dream is finished or in the midst of a new beginning?

Have each group share the information they've learned with the class.

Conclusion:

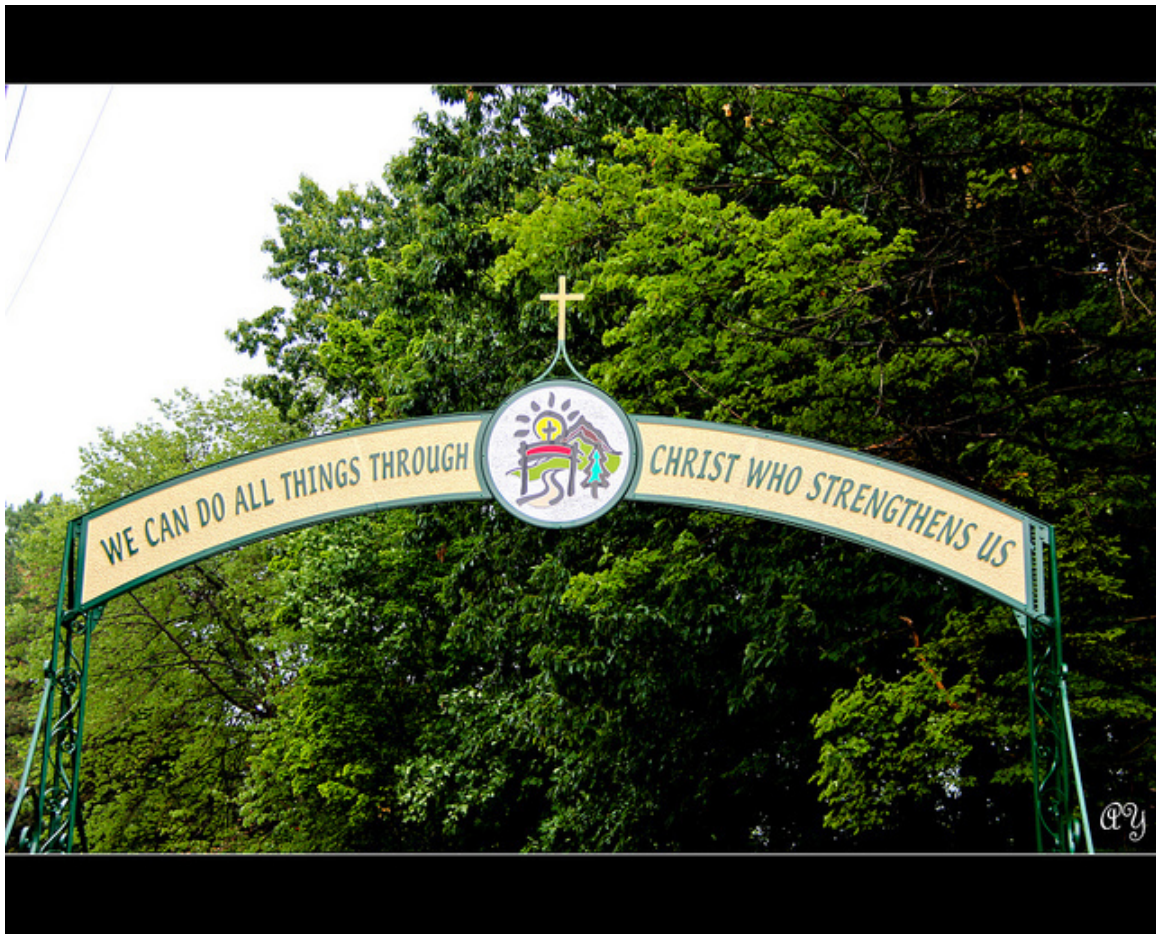
The establishment of Antiochian Village has changed thousands of lives. Like St. Paul's statement, "I can do things through Christ who strengthens me," the dream of Antiochian Village lives on beyond the life of Metropolitan PHILLIP and those who helped found it. Let us look to the future and help it grow.

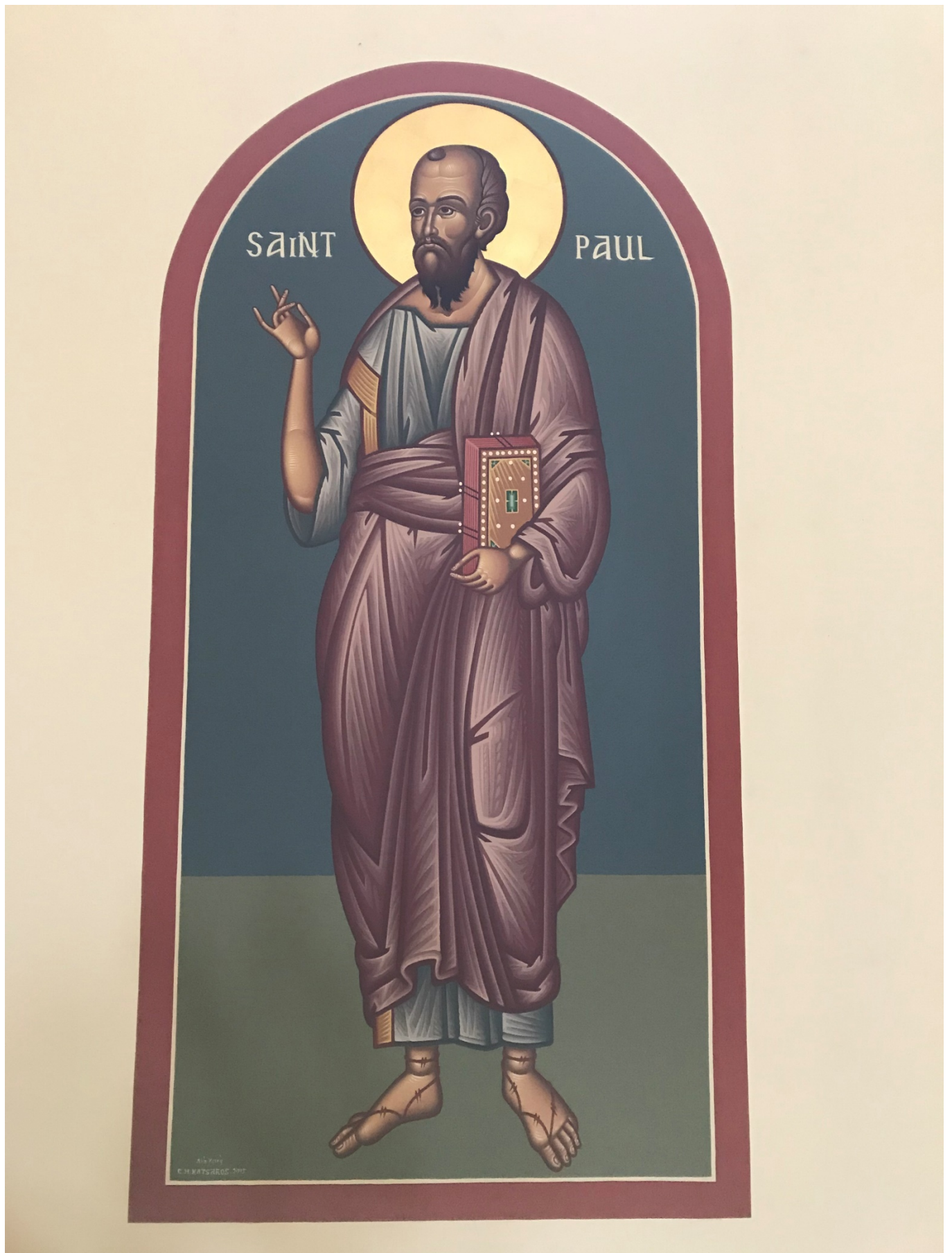
Closing Prayer:

Give each student a copy of the following prayer. Tell them they can say this prayer whenever they need God's help to do something. Say the prayer together.

A PRAYER BEFORE COMMENCING ANY TASK

Almighty God, our Help and Refuge, Fountain of wisdom and Tower of strength, who knowest that I can do nothing without thy guidance and help; assist me, I pray thee, and direct me to divine wisdom and power, that I may accomplish this task, and whatever I may undertake to do, faithfully and diligently, according to thy will, so that it may be profitable to myself and others, and to the glory of thy Holy Name. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.





Philippians 4:13

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Philippians 4:13

I

Who am I? I am created in the image and likeness of God. I have the Light of Christ in me. I have gifts and talents that will allow me to make a positive contribution to Society as well as to make a positive witness for Christ I am unique and special because God made me that way. I was not created with flaws but I have flaws because I live in a flawed world. My flaws contribute to my being a sinful person. I am not a lost cause. I can find my way to Paradise through faith, works, repentance and God's grace.

Can

Can is a positive word. It focuses on what is possible, not impossible. *With God all things are possible.* (Matthew 19:26) *Every good and perfect gift is from Above.* (James 1: 17) *Apart from God we can do nothing.* (John 15:5) Christ, faith, hope, salvation-these are all positive things, All things that we CAN have. This is a mindset we must create-a positive mindset that sees the good in things, sees the glass half-full, finds Joy and Christ in all things.

Do

There is a difference between "hearing" and "doing". Being a Christian, having faith is not only a state of "being", and is not only based on what we "hear" but on what we do. *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.* James 1:22

All

The Holy Spirit is everywhere and fills all things. There isn't a good work that we undertake where Christ can't be involved. Nor is Christianity something that we should compartmentalize-it is something that should be ever-present in our lives.

Things

What are the things that Christ helps us do? He helps us achieve the positive things that St. Paul speaks about-the things that are true, noble, just, pure, lovely, of good report, the praiseworthy things that glorify God. He helps us overcome things that challenge-being abased, being hungry, being in need.

Through

With the assistance of, in tandem with, in union with, with Christ as the head of Our lives. Christ is with us, in us, and we should allow Him to lead us.

Christ

Our Lord, God, Savior, our Hope, our Rock, our Salvation.

Who

Christ is fully God and became fully man. He is at the same time our Creator and our redeemer. He has the strength of God but understands the weakness of man. He experienced also the need for God.

Strengthens

Christ gives the strength to overcome challenges that can be overcome, He gives Strength to be patient with the challenges that cannot be overcome, He Gives us wisdom to know when to surrender and when to fight. He is the Comforting Father who consoles His children when they are sad. He is the Encouraging Father who directs His children when they have lost their way.

Me

I am in the middle of God's grand plan. I have already been born. I have yet to Die. I'm working my way through life, in the hope of everlasting life. I have constant challenges and obstacles in my path. I can't make it by myself. I need His help, which comes both directly from Him, and through other people. This is why I am part of the church-to be around other people who can help me through life, to commune with Christ while on my journey. My relationship with Christ is at the same time communal- I belong to a community of people, joined with the saints and angels. But at the same time, faith is personal to me. I have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Have a great day!

+Fr. Stavros

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