

**2020 Creative Festivals Lesson Plan:
Grade 4-6**

Theme:

“For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world through Him might be saved.” (John 3:17)

Goal:

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

Lesson Objectives:

The students will be able to:

- Describe the meaning of salvation.
- Explain that God offers us salvation without judgment.
- State that in order to receive God’s salvation, we need to accept Him.
- Identify ways the Orthodox church helps us on our path to salvation.

Time: 40-60 Minutes

Materials:

- Bibles or Children’s bibles
- Icon of Christ the Savior (*If an actual icon of Christ the Savior is not available, use the one that is attached.*)
- Several packs of multi-flavored candy life savers
- Blank sheets of paper- one per student
- Pencils and glue sticks
- Several copies of life preserver drawing
- Real life preserver or pool float

Opening Prayer: (Face the Icon of Christ.) *“Thank you, Father, for sending Your Son Jesus to save us, not to judge and condemn us. Help us to know your will for us and to receive your salvation. Amen.”*

Introduction: (10 minutes) Give each student a pack of life savers and a blank sheet of paper. Have them divide the paper into 4 squares by drawing a cross using the whole page. Ask students to choose 4 flavors of candy and glue one into each square. Inside each section of the cross, for each flavor, they are to draw a picture or write a sentence about a time they were “saved” from an unpleasant situation. (Someone helped them when they were scared, someone helped them through a

difficult time, someone saved them from an embarrassing situation, etc.) Ask each student to share one of their life saver stories with the class.

Lesson/Discussion: (10 minutes) *“People help each other through difficult times or situations because they care about someone. When someone is helping us or ‘saving’ us, they are not judging us. Our parents help us through difficult times because they love us, not because they are condemning what we did. Jesus came to save us, not to judge us. What does ‘salvation’ mean?”* (Allow time for answers.) *“In the world, salvation means protection from harm. In the church, salvation means becoming free from sin. God wants to protect us from the harmful effects of our sins. Let the candy life savers be a reminder to you that we all need salvation and God is our Savior. God’s salvation is there for us in times of joy as well as in times of need.”*

Role Playing Activity: Choose 2 students at a time. Have one student pretend to be drowning. Have the second student toss the life preserver to him/her. Tell the drowning student to reach out and grab it. Choose 2 other students to repeat the activity. This time tell the drowning student to NOT reach for the life preserver. Discuss how useless the life preserver would be if a drowning person didn’t reach for it. *“Jesus is our life preserver. He does not judge or condemn us. He came to save us, and we need to ‘reach out’ and accept Him.”*

Small group activity: Divide class into small groups.

Hand each group a picture of the life preserver. They can also use bibles to help them.

Directions: *“As Orthodox Christians, we are given many opportunities to accept God’s salvation without being judged. In each of the 4 sections of the life preserver, write one of those opportunities or ‘life preservers’ that God offers to us. One example is prayer. We are able to come to God in prayer and He will hear our prayers without judgment. As you complete each section, discuss with your group how we use each of those opportunities to accept God’s salvation.”* (They will probably need some guidance for this activity.)

Allow groups to work for about 10 minutes, then have each group share some of their ideas. Possible answers may include:

Confession- God forgives us of our sins through confession without condemning us for our sins. Our priest does not condemn us, but he helps to lead us on the path to salvation.

Communion- We freely receive God’s Body and Blood for our salvation. Neither our priest nor God judges us. Communion brings us closer to God.

Worship/Prayer- We are free to pray and worship without being judged. Worshiping God shows our acceptance of God's salvation. Prayer brings us closer to God.

Ministry- Examples of various ministries might be helping the poor, teaching others about God's love, service in the church, etc. By doing God's work, we are closer to God and show acceptance of His love and salvation.

God's commandments- We show our love for God by obeying His commandments. He sent His Son to show us the way to Salvation by giving us commandments.

Fellowship- We show love for God by showing love for each other, and reaching out to help one another.

(Students may come up with other answers.)

Conclusion: *"Remember that the life preserver, the opportunities for God's salvation, will only help us if we reach out and hold tightly onto them. Receive the sacraments, pray on a regular basis, follow God's commandments, get involved in the ministries of the church. There will be times that you think you can 'swim' alone, but God is always with you, offering his love and salvation."*

Hang the life preservers up as a reminder of God's salvation.

Closing Prayer: *"Thank you Lord, for sending your Son to us, that through Him, we might be saved. You are our protector and our life preserver. Help us to reach out to you in times of joy and times of struggle. Help us to remember that you are our light and our salvation."*



