



MOTHER MARIA OF PARIS

Saint Emmelia Ministries Homeschool Curriculum

Orthodox Christian Homeschooling

Title: Silent as a Stone: Mother Maria of Paris and the Trash Can Rescue

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Category: Hagiography of an Orthodox Saint

Summary: Mother Maria of Paris teaches the importance of prayer and participation of God's mercy through her courageous and sacrificial love in response to WWII and Germany's occupation in France.

Social Studies: Relationships & Our Call to Love Our Neighbor

The story begins with Mother Maria's concern for her fellow Parisians, for she was witnessing the persecution of the Jews during the Nazi Regime. Mother Maria prayed that the Jewish people would be delivered from their persecutors and desired to aid in any way she could. However, this was a dangerous endeavor. Before reading the story, ask your child to think of a time they saw someone mistreated or witnessed someone treated unfairly. Ask them what they did in that situation and how it challenged their courage.

After reading, discuss what Mother Maria did to help her community. Then inquire what your child can do to be more like Mother Maria.

Social Studies: WWII & Relationships of Cause & Effect

During WWII many sides of the truth were steeped in corruption. Hitler, a German leader, grasped onto beliefs he held to be right, but they caused the death of millions. He led a group called the Nazis, and they believed that the world could be controlled by a hierarchy in which Germany would be on top, granting them power. This idea entailed segregating people by race, religious denominations, and physical characteristics. Chief amongst these victims were the Jews. The Jews placed their hope in God, whereas Hitler and the Nazis were not steadfast in their faith, often altering their religious expressions.

Describe how Hitler and his followers' actions demonstrated pride, and how this vice can lead to fragmentation in our communities. Have a discussion about what things in your life or your children's life may have hurt others through pride, and contemplate how those situations could have been avoided or healed.

Social Studies: Geography-Europe

During WWII Mother Maria lived in France, which was an Allied power, except when it was occupied by German from 1940-1944. The other major Allied powers were Great Britain, Russia, the United States, and China, while the major Axis powers were Germany, Italy, and Japan. On a map locate the Allied and Axis powers.

Social Studies: Geography- World War 2 powers

World War 2 divided the World into Axis and Allied powers. Take a world map and color in the countries and regions that were with the Axis powers and Allied powers.

Social Studies: Geography – Paris landmarks

St Maria of Paris lived in Paris for many years and that is where our story takes place. Look up a map of Paris and draw your own simplified version. Include major landmarks like Eiffel Tower, Arc De Triomphe and the Louvre. Also mark places important to the life of St Maria: 77 rue de

Lourmel (shelter), Noisy-le-Grand (asylum), Velodrome d'Hiver (the setting for *Silent as a Stone*)

Social Studies: Refugees

Saint Maria of Paris helped Russian refugees. A refugee is someone who has been forced to leave their home because of war, famine, persecution, or natural disasters. You may have refugees in your parish, town, or state. Where have they come from? What was happening in their previous country that made it so they had to leave?

Language Arts: Writing - Narration

A natural way to prepare your child for written communication is to begin with oral communication. Before reading the book, inform your child that you will be asking them to narrate the story. Depending upon your child's experience with narrations and age, adjust the length and type of narration you request. If your child is unaccustomed to providing narrations ask for an oral narration of a page. If your child is ready and accustomed to retelling stories, request that he or she write a narration of the story.

Language Arts: Writing - Imitation

As children develop in their writing, they are ready to write imitations. This process not only aids in strengthening the child's understanding of how words are related to one another in a sentence, but also provides a beautiful form from which to structure a sentence and improve vocabulary. Consider asking your child to label the parts of speech for the adjectives, nouns, and verbs from a sentence in the book or from the following sentences from the story:

For beginning writers: "The locked gate was open." (Label the noun and 2 adjectives) or "Neighbors filled the kitchen." (Label the verb and 2 nouns.)

For more experienced writers: "Papa got me out by the window just before they broke down the door." (Label the parts of speech of the underlined words.)

Then ask your child to create 2 or 3 synonyms for each of the words labeled and rewrite the sentence in the same form while using the synonyms instead.

Language Arts: Writing - Copywork

Copying beautiful words helps children remember them with more clarity and provides practice in penmanship. Mother Maria offered prayer and thanksgiving to the Lord and His blessed Mother after rescuing the children from the Nazi soldiers. Consider having your child copy this quotation to practice penmanship while contemplating a form for prayer or words of spiritual encouragement.

"Thank you Lord Jesus. Thank you, Mother of God. Thank you for showing us a way to help. Thank you for giving the trash collectors courage. Protect the children on their journey and comfort their parents."

"However hard I try, I find it impossible to construct anything greater than these three words: 'Love one another.' Only, to the end, and without exceptions." — St. Maria Skobtsova of Paris

Language Arts: Adjectives

An adjective is a part of speech that modifies or describes a noun or pronoun, answering one of four questions: how many, whose, which one, or what kind.

With your child, list adjectives that describe Mother Maria's actions and then also list adjectives to describe how the young Jewish children may have felt.

Language arts: Poetry

Silent as a Stone is the story of one way St Maria helped Jewish children. During World War 2, the Nazis made Jews wear a yellow star of David and had many laws that were against Jews. St. Maria was heartbroken by this ill treatment and wrote this poem. Read this poem and discuss what some of the terms mean.

*Two triangles, a star,
The shield of King David, our forefather.
This is election, not offense.
The great path and not an evil.
Once more in a term fulfilled,
Once more roars the trumpet of the end;
And the fate of a great people
Once more is by the prophet proclaimed.
Thou art persecuted again, O Israel,
But what can human malice mean to thee,
who have heard the thunder from Sinai?*

Language arts: Problem and solution

In most stories, there is a problem in the story and as it unfolds, the characters find a solution. In the Three Little Pigs, the problem is that the Big Bad Wolf is destroying the pigs' houses. The solution is the pigs tricking him into going down the chimney. What is the problem that St Maria faces in this story? What is the solution? Who is involved in the problem? Who is involved in the solution?

Art: Iconography - Glykophilousa

On the first and final page of the story, Mother Maria is depicted praying before an icon. The name of this icon is called Glykophilousa, which is also called Loving Kindness and Sweet-kissing. If you look closely you may notice that Mary and Jesus hold each other in a similar embrace.

When writing an icon, iconographers often use cartoons, not to be confused with comic strips or television shows. In the art of iconography, a cartoon is a line drawing of Christ, the Theotokos, Saints, or festal events in the life of the Church.

When beginning iconography, following a cartoon is an especially important practice, as it aids in ensuring that one is following tradition. Tracing these cartoons is also a beautiful way to pray with our hands as well. Consider praying "The Prayer Before any Task" then making the sign of the cross thrice; once over yourself, once over the work you are about to begin, and once more over yourself. Contemplate your work and the silence. Also consider the feeling of those in the tender embrace.

Supplies and Tools: print out of Glykophilousa cartoon, tracing paper, pencil, colored pencils (optional)

Art-Embroidery

Saint Maria embroidered small pictures. Kids can begin to learn embroidery with burlap and yarn. The burlap has big holes and the yarn can be used on a big plastic needle. A simple star or flower is a good design to start with. Children with more developed fine motor skills can use cross stitch fabric or linen and a smaller needle with embroidery thread. Keep the design simple at first and master the techniques of up and down in the fabric before moving on to harder designs.

Art- shading

The illustrations are done with colored pencil and to give more depth to the drawings. Look at the folds on St Maria's clothes. It shows the many different shades in the black fabric. Using colored pencils or oil pastels, draw a simple shape like a circle and press down harder as you do the bottom side. The marks will be darker and begin to look like shading. With pencils, you can do crosshatching (making marks that intersect) to add shading.

Math- money

St Maria was often receiving and giving money. She had to buy food and clothes for the poor. Make up some math problems using the idea of receiving and giving. You will use adding as you receive and subtraction as you give. Younger students can use pennies. Older students can use all the coins and bills to act out the stories.

Math- measuring distance

Because of political upheavals and war, St Maria lived in many places in her life. Using an online map like Google maps, find the distance between all the places she lived (listed below) and add up how many miles she traveled in her life.

Riga, Latvia

Anapa, Russia

St. Petersburg, Russia

Tblisi, Georgia

Istanbul, Turkey

Yugoslavia

Paris, France

Math: Symmetry

The Star of David was a symbol of the Jewish faith, and the Nazis required the Jewish people to wear this yellow badge as a means of identification. If you look closely at this symbol you'll notice that it has symmetry. Two common types of symmetry are bilateral symmetry and radial symmetry.

Symmetry consists of having a mirror image of an item when it is divided by an imaginary line. The imaginary line that creates the symmetrical parts is called the axis of symmetry.

Bilateral symmetry consists of when a shape has only one axis of symmetry, whereas radial symmetry consists of when a shape has multiple axes of symmetry with the lines of symmetry meeting at the center.

Examine the Star of David and determine whether it is symmetrical and if so, does it have bilateral symmetry or radial symmetry. Then explore your environment, contemplating the symmetry of other shapes around you.

Science- cooking soup

One of the meals that was frequently made for the poor people that St Maria helped was soup. Find a recipe for a simple soup and follow it. Discuss the measurement units you will be using (cups, tablespoons, teaspoons). How many teaspoons to make a tablespoon? How many cups of water fit in your pot? Talk about the states of matter. What happens to the soup when it is

on high power on the stove? What would happen if you left it boiling for a long time? What happens to the ingredients in the soup as the water boils and simmers? Why?

When you have cooked soup, eat it together and take a bowl of it to a neighbor in need.

Science: Observation & Comparison of Leavened and Unleavened Bread

In her desire to love her neighbor, Mother Maria offers loaves of bread to her hungry neighbors. Bread is an important food for us as Christians. Christ fed the five thousand with 12 loaves—nourishing their souls and bodies. We offer a simple loaf, but every Divine Liturgy it is transfigured into the Body of Christ. The bread offered and shared throughout history has changed in form.

God showered manna on the Isrealites, as they wandered in the desert. Christ offered bread during the Passover meal, which was an unleavened, and now we offer a leavened loaf to the church to be used in the liturgy.

The Jewish people in the story would have eaten unleavened bread for their Passover meal while Orthodox Christians use leavened bread for Pascha. Ask your child to contemplate the similarities and differences between prosphora and matzoh. This practice of comparison is an essential question science asks.

Consider making a loaf of prosphora and purchasing matzoh at your local grocery store. Then list what both have, are, and do. Then looking at these similarities ask what the difference is between the similarities. See below for an example:

Prosphora Describe the similarity	Similarities	Matzoh Describe the similarity
taller and cylindrical in shape with 2 levels.	HAVE a shape	it is flat and rectangular in shape with 1 level
ivory with golden color around the edges	ARE whitish	ivory with some brown spots
remind us of Christ's Passion and Resurrection	DO help us remember	reminds us of the manna God showered from Heaven during the Exodus

After noting the comparisons between prosphora (leavened bread) and Matzoh (unleavened bread), have your child contemplate why Orthodox Christians use leavened bread for the Eucharist. Start by considering what leaven does and how, what types of things are leaveners, etc.

Spirituality: Echos from Scriptures

Mother Maria believed that “the way to God lies through the love of people.” Read Matthew 25:31-40 and reflect upon how Mother Maria followed Christ’s commandment to love your neighbor.”

Discussion Questions for Spiritual Connection:

Where in our lives can we serve others?

What do our neighbors need?

Mother Maria believed “that each person is the very icon of Christ.” How can we better see our neighbors as icons of Christ?

How can we be better icons of Christ?

A famous quote from St Maria of Paris is: “Each person is the very icon of God incarnate in the world”. How can people be like icons? How can we be like icons? Name some people in your life that have been like a window to heaven, showing you God’s love.

St Maria’s name at birth was Elizabeth. She chose the name Maria when she became a nun.

What qualities do you see in the Theotokos and St Maria of Paris? How were they both carrying Christ in the world?

Talk about the concept of vocation. A vocation is the work that God means for us to do in particular. This may be paid work like a career that helps people, or volunteering time for other important work. St Maria of Paris said her vocation was “monasticism in the world. By this she meant living the life of prayer of a monastic, but not being separated from the pain and suffering in the world. How did she live out her vocation in the story Silent as a Stone? What are some vocations of adults that you know? What do you think might be your vocation?

Math: Symmetry

Is the Star of David symmetrical? And if so, does it have bilateral or radial symmetry? If it has radial symmetry, discover its center by drawing the axis of symmetry.



Science: Observation & Comparison of Leavened and Unleavened Bread

List the similarities between leavened and unleavened bread by answering what both of them Have, Are, and Do in the middle column. List as many similarities as you are able. Then describe how the similarities are different on the right and left column.

Prosphora Describe the similarity	Similarities	Matzoh Describe the similarity
	HAVE	
	HAVE	
	HAVE	
	ARE	
	ARE	
	ARE	
	DO	
	DO	

	DO	
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After listing the similarities and difference, why do you think Orthodox Christians use leavened bread for the Eucharist?

Prosphora

Prayer before beginning:

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Almighty God, our Help and Refuge, Fountain of Wisdom and Tower of Strength, Who knows that I can do nothing without Your guidance and help: assist me, I pray You, 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 Your will so that it may be profitable to myself and others and to the glory of Your Holy Name. Through the prayers of our holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

7 1/2 to 8 level cups flour (all purpose)

2 3/8 to 2 1/2 cups warm water (depending on flour)

1 1/2 tsps. dry yeast (instant active; if using packet, not quite 1 pkg.)

3/4 tsp. salt

In a large bowl combine flour, salt, and yeast. Add water and mix.

Knead by hand for 10 minutes on a lightly-floured surface.

Divide dough into 3 equal pieces (approx. one pound each) and use a rolling pin to smooth into a round shape, about 8 inches in diameter. Place each on a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. (Don't grease pans.)

Imprint with the seal, pressing as deeply into the loaf as possible. (Saying the Lord's Prayer as you are pressing down typically offered a good amount of time for a deep impression.

Cover and allow to rise 1 hour.

Just before baking, prick around the seal with a toothpick, specifically on each corner, praying "In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.") Repeat for all corners of the "Lamb" in the middle of the seal.

Set oven for 350 degrees. Bake bread for approx. 20-25 minutes (Tops should not be brown).

After baking, set on a rack to cool, wrapped in towels, upside down, (While the loaves are still hot, you may use a wet cloth or paper towel to wipe the outside of the bread.)

When cool, place in a double freezer bag if the loaf is to be frozen.

