The Ark

St. Sophia
Orthodox Church

Volume 11

Youth Quarterly

October – December 2019

St. Sophia

Orthodox Church

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Our parish festal icon, The Image Not Made by Hands:
St. Sophia the Wisdom of God – Jesus Christ, seen outside
at the front of our church.

The Rainbow Song

Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, pink!

Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, pink!

It's a rainbow, it's a rainbow,

God's beautiful rainbow in the sky!

It's a rainbow, it's a rainbow,

God's beautiful Promise in the sky!

–Anon

Upcoming Feast Days/Special Parish Youth Events (October – December)

Monday, October 14th – **Feast Day of the Protection of the Theotokos** Liturgy 10:30am **(Also Canadian Thanksgiving)**

Friday November 22nd – Pre-Nativity Concert 7pm (Open to public)

Wednesday, December 4th – **Feast Day of the Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple** Liturgy 10:30am

Thursday, December 19th – **Feast Day of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker** Liturgy 10:30am

Wednesday, December 25th – **Feast Day of St. Herman of Alaska** Liturgy 10:30am (Western Christmas)

Monday, January 6th – **The Nativity of our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ** Great Compline and Matins **9 pm** followed **immediately** by Divine Liturgy: (Youth Choir Sing before Holy Communion)

Sunday January 12th - The **Sixth Day of Christmas** Divine Liturgy 10:30 am followed by… Parish **Yolka** Entertainment & Festal Potluck Meal

FOR MORE wonderful things to read for the upcoming Feast Days and Nativity of our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, please visit The Ark Volume 4 and Volume 8 online

Parish Summer Camp 2019

A backdrop of forest, hiking trails, swimming pools and a bright moon- filled starry sky; guides, parents and youth enjoyed fun and fellowship for three days and two nights!

Campers were called to morning and evening prayers by a wooden semantron, fashioned out of local hemlock, a practice used in some monasteries.

The youth ages 5 and up recited morning and evening prayers and sang together.

Along with daily adventures and games by day, there were skits, singing, and campfire by night.

At campfire, there was a special time to receive and hear answers to previously submitted queries from the *Question Box*. Readings from the *Law of God* and the *Psalms* wound up each evening peacefully before evening prayers.

Of special note were the yummy, nutritious meals which deliciously suited the various diets, appetites and needs.

Many adults worked very hard and dedicated their time to making this camp safe, enjoyable and accessible to our Youth. To them, we say “Thank You”. Plans have already begun for next year’s Summer Family Retreat!

From a Skit from Summer Camp
Our Inner Beauty

What is Beauty?

Beauty is a combination of qualities that pleases us.

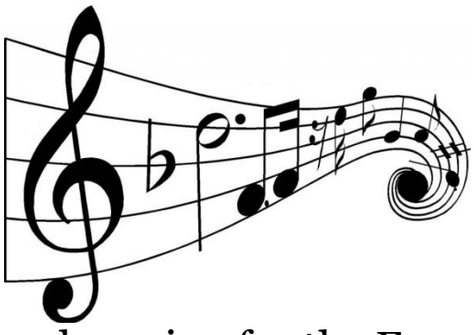
There are different kinds of beauty. **Natural** beauty might be a beautiful sunrise or the beautiful forest that surrounds us. **Worldly** beauty, or what is called **Outer** beauty is for example, the type of beauty you see when someone is dressed nicely. But, **Outer** beauty is only temporary – it doesn't last. What one person thinks is beautiful; another person might not think it is.

You might not even be aware of this but there is a lot of pressure on us to look beautiful. Social media shows that certain clothes or shoes are the cool things to wear. Maybe some of our friends make us feel we look good or maybe ridiculous. This pushes some of us to act or dress in a certain way.

Another kind of beauty is **Inner** Beauty. **This is the most important type of beauty.**

This is the beauty that lives inside us; in our hearts. This beauty *shines* when we show kindness to others; when we help someone who is hurting; when we listen to someone who is having a problem, or when we do a good deed for someone. We can do this anytime. We don't even need a reason. This type of beauty is much more important than Outer beauty. Inner Beauty is far more important than how we wear our hair, or how fashionable our clothes are.

True or Inner Beauty comes from a healthy soul that loves God. It lives in our **spirit**... in our **soul,** the part of us which God always sees and nourishes. When we are close to God, we 'glow' and reflect the Pre-eternal Light.

Inner Beauty begins when we allow the Light of Christ's truth to shine within us, where every good is created, springs up and grows in us.

Youth Choir Report

We have an excellent junior and senior choir group! Since September 8th we have begun rehearsing for the Eve of Nativity Midnight Service. Rehearsals are also a fun time for fellowship, learning different aspects of group singing, and more of the saints whose prayers have provided the abridged poetry as lyrics to some of the pieces.

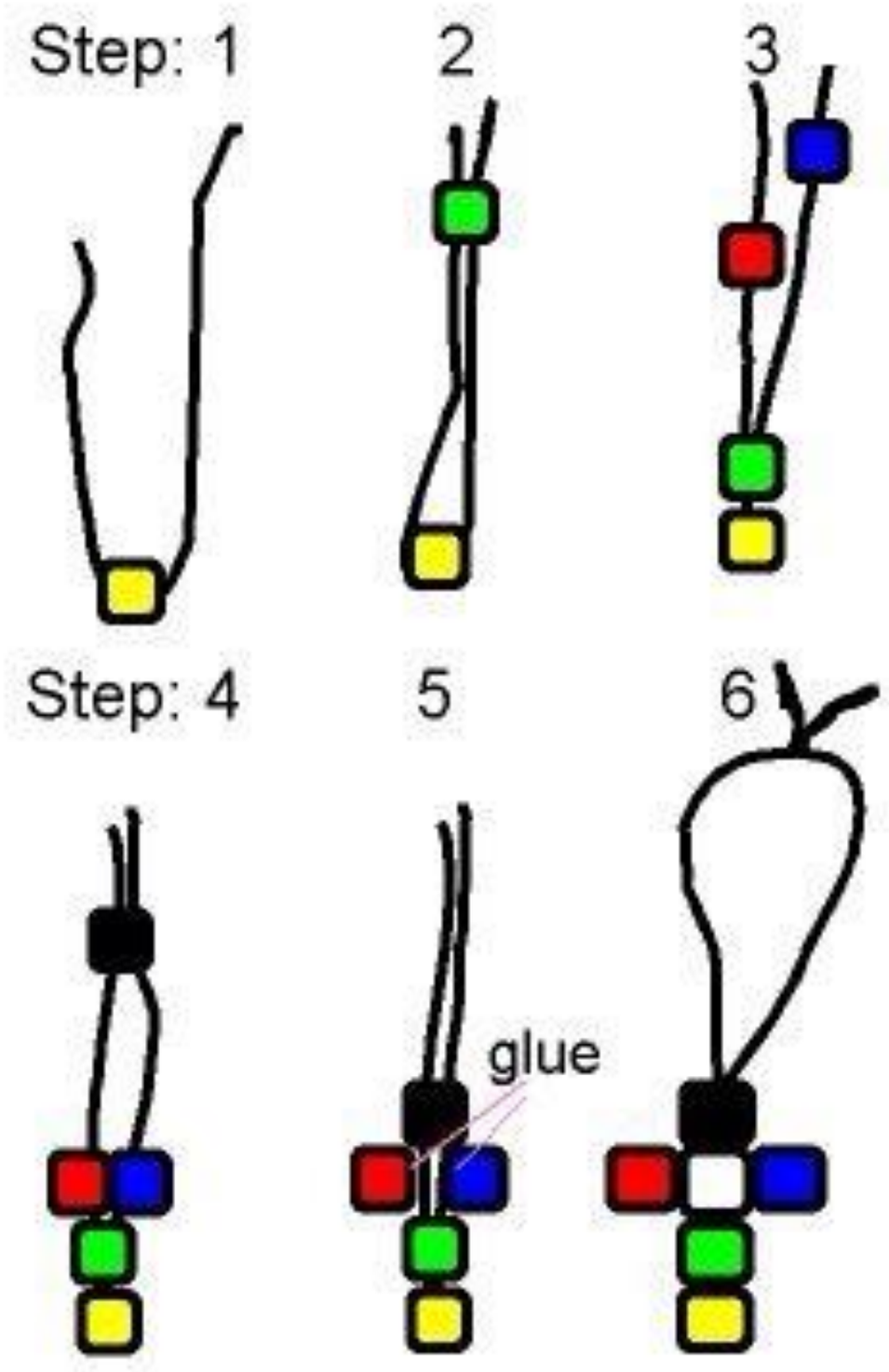
The juniors break off separately after a group warm up and have been taking extra time upstairs in Church viewing Icons, listening to stories, practicing verse and singing. Some topics covered include Sts Patrick and Anna, Jesus the Good Shepherd, our patron saint and name's day, being thankful, and our guardian angel. Then they join the seniors again for singing and preparation of the Nativity Concert. It's a quiet setting to share with one another and at a pace they feel comfortable with.

As of late October both groups will also begin work on Yolka Skits after choir class.

Easy Cross Craft

For Special Gifts, Bookmarks, Car

Mirror, Christmas Trees



Giving Thanks – Word Search

U L G P E C L T L Q G Y R K C
E O N F S O V U H N Z E R G O
V V I G T A F U I A J Q L O M
I E V S N Y L S A O N O W S F
G I I C O I S M I C R K I G O
D O G J N E V C S Y Z N F G R
T N S S L O E I P Y G P B U T
E M K B R B B Y G A O D L P L
L C N P R A I S E I S J E G J
T W A G N I G N I S K E S J S
F Q H Y C R E M R D N L S Y J
J L T C U H D V A R A G O O D
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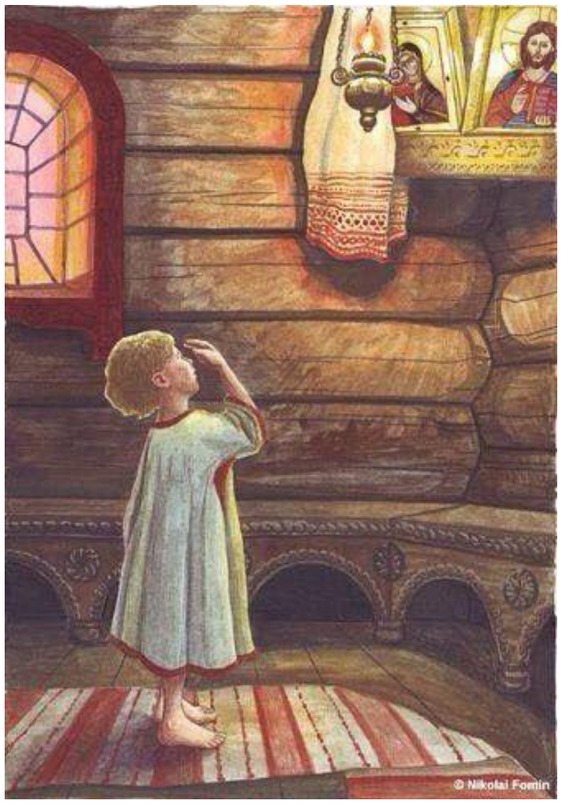


BLESS
BLESSING
COMFORT
GIVE
GIVING
GLAD

GLADNESS
GLORY
GOD
GOOD
JOY
JOYFUL
LET
LORD
LOVE
MERCY
PRAISE
PSALMS
REJOICE
SERVE
SING
SINGING
THANKFUL
THANKS
THANKSGIVING

Protection of the Mother of God

The Protection of the Mother of God is one of the most beloved feast days on the Orthodox calendar commemorated on October 14/1.

This feast day celebrates the appearance of the Mother of God, in the tenth century. At the end of St. Andrew's of Constantinople life, he, with his disciple St. Epiphanius, and a group of people, saw the Mother of God, St. John the Baptist, and several other saints and angels during a vigil service in the Church of Blachernae, nearby the city gates.

The church was originally built beside a miraculous fountain of healing water by the Emperor Justinian in the last years of his reign (559-560). He ordered this church to be built beside this holy well, with the remaining construction material from the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople.

The Blachernae Palace church was where several of her relics were kept. The relics were her robe, veil, and part of her belt that had been transferred from Palestine during the fifth century.

The Theotokos approached the centre of the church, knelt down and remained in prayer for a long time. Her face was drowned in tears. Then she took her veil off and spread it over the people as a sign of protection…

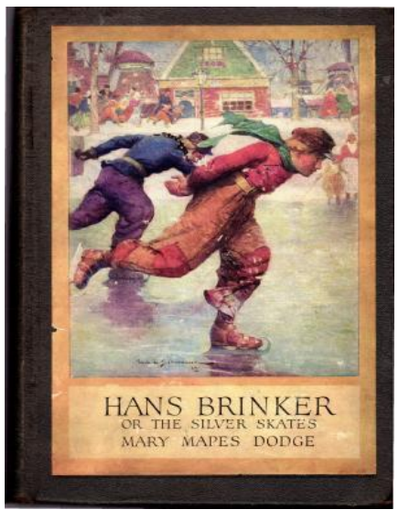
During the time, the city was threatened by a barbarian invasion. After the appearance of the Mother of God, the danger was averted and the city was spared from bloodshed and suffering. *-From Orthodox Wiki and other sources*

O Most Holy Theotokos, Save Us!

Theotokos literally means 'God-bearer' or translated as the 'Mother of God'. Mary is Theotokos because her son Jesus is one person who is both God and man, divine and human.

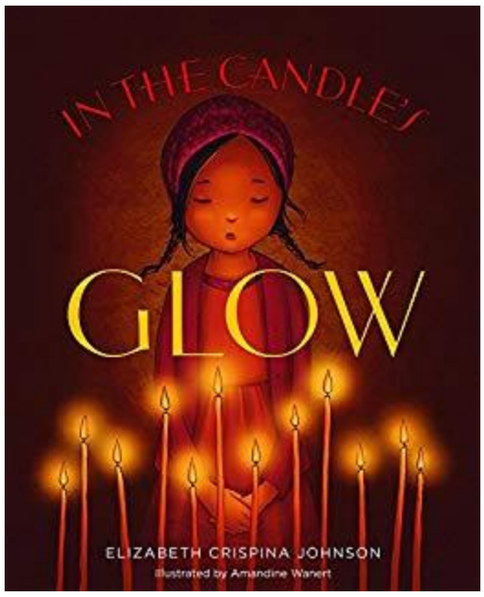
Because Mary is the mother of Jesus, and since Jesus is God, Mary is the Mother of God or Theotokos.

From the Parish Library



Hans Brinker or the Silver Skates *Mary Mapes Dodge*

Hans Brinker is a beautiful story about a hard-working, honorable boy who faces challenges in his family's poverty. While he greatly desires to enter a big ice-skating race with his sister, Hans is more concerned about his father's health. When Hans learns of an expensive doctor who may be able to treat his father, he offers the money he had saved for race skates to the doctor for the surgery. The outcome has thrilled and surprised readers for well over one hundred years.



In the Candle's Glow

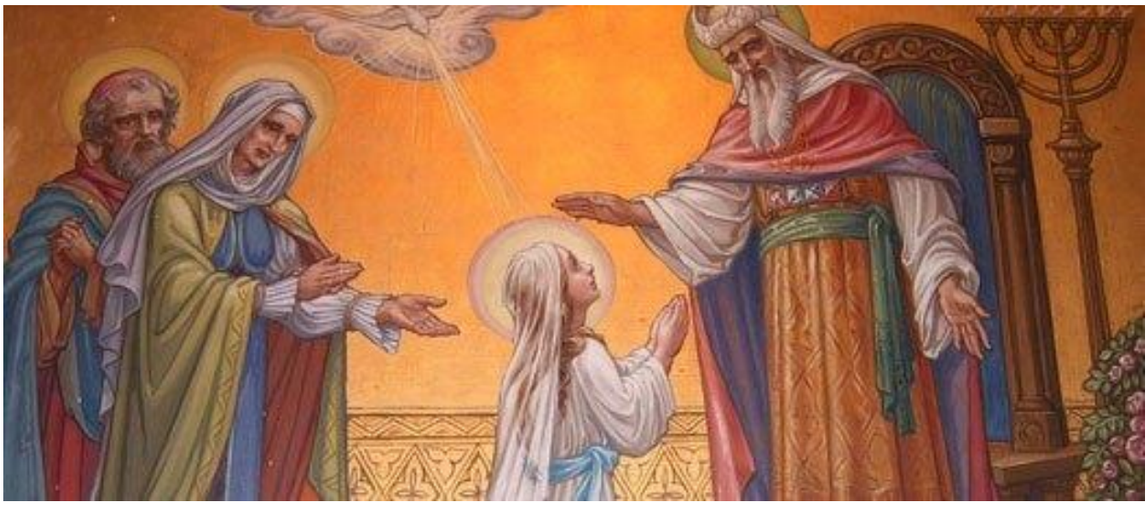
Elizabeth Crispin Johnson

The bees do their work. The beekeeper does hers. And little Felicia, with the honesty and faith of a child, takes the fruit of the bee and the beekeeper's efforts and lights her candle and prays. She prays once, she prays twice, she prays three prayers, then watches the breeze from the window carry her prayers from the candle heavenward.

Entrance of the Theotokos

As a three-year old child, Mary is brought by her parents, Joachim and Anna, to the Temple in Jerusalem, where she "is presented today to the house of the Lord."

The High Priest leads her into the Holy of Holies, an unusual act, for only the High Priest himself entered there once a year.



The Entrance (Presentation) of the Theotokos into the Temple Mary's parents, Joachim and Anna, had always worshipped God and were very faithful to Him. After Mary was about three years old, they went to the Temple in Jerusalem to pray and offer a sacrifice (a gift) to God for blessing them with their special little girl.

The Temple was a very large building, divided into several areas. There was a golden altar, with many vessels, and furniture that was covered with gold. There were places where the priests offered sacrifices of animals, and special areas where incense and candles were burned. There were lamp-stands of pure gold, cups, large bowls or basins where the priests could wash their hands, a small altar-stand for burning sweet-smelling incense, and gold and silver stored in the treasury. This glorious Temple stood on

a large stone hill and could be seen from everywhere around.

When they entered the Temple, Joachim and Anna led their little girl Mary towards the place called the “Holy of Holies” (like the Sanctuary, the place of the Altar in our Church). It was the place in the Temple where only the priests were allowed to go, where they offered prayers and spoke to God.

Outside the sanctuary, there were rooms where the priests lived and other places for people who helped to take care of the Temple and its visitors.

Joachim and Anna led their daughter towards the Sanctuary, to present her to the Lord, but something very unusual happened.

As they neared the steps, the High Priest came out. He led Mary toward the holy place in the Temple, where only he could go, just once each year. Then, even more surprising, the High Priest took Mary’s hand and led her into the Sanctuary, the most Holy of Holies!

Joachim and Anna were not sure what had happened, but they believed God had blessed their child in a special way. Many people came from long distances to worship and offer gifts and sacrifices in the Temple, like Joachim and Anna. They often stayed in the buildings around the Temple during the great holidays, where they were cared for by the women who helped provide them with food and shelter.

Mary's parents were growing old, and were older than most parents with a young child. They worried about what would happen to Mary when they died. Who would take care of her? After seeing the surprising thing that happened to Mary in the Temple, they spoke with the women who helped there. They made arrangements for Mary to live near the Temple with them and help them with the work of caring for the Temple. She would be able to live there until she was old enough to marry, or to decide to remain there as a virgin with the other women.

Practical Tip

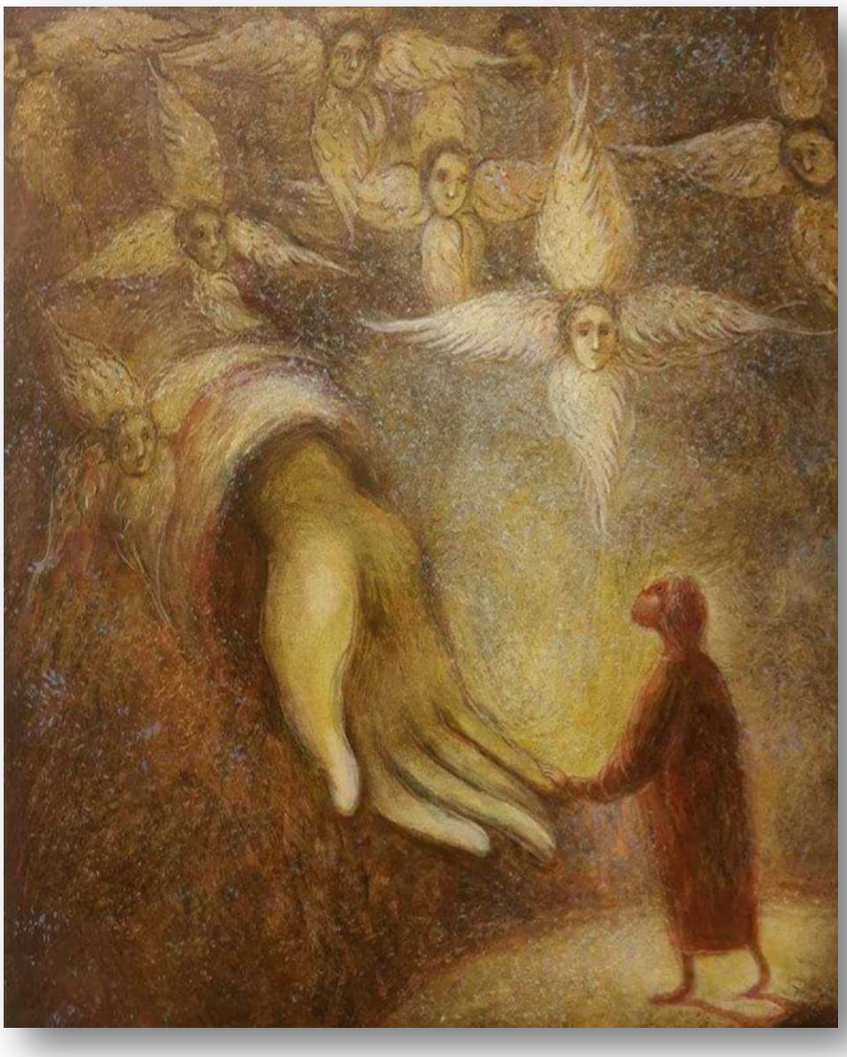
When we come to church we remember *why* we are here and participate in church services as much as possible.

God sees everything we do. He sees all our efforts, and knows all our feelings and thoughts.

If you can sing, come stand with the choir and sing.

Did you know that singing together in church is Powerful Prayer?

By getting to know God better, we offer back to God in thanksgiving, all He has given us, and His love for us.



The Fruit of the Spirit is

1. Love
2. Joy
3. Peace
4. Patience
5. Kindness
6. Goodness
7. Faithfulness
8. Gentleness
9. Self-control

Galatians 5:22

Jesus Christ, Our Salvation Through Holy Baptism

When we arise out of the baptismal waters, we are completely reborn in spirit. God also gives us a guardian angel to stay with us our whole life!

During our earthly life, we will sail through many calm and stormy oceans within the **Ark of the Church**. Many Orthodox churches are built in the shape of an ark.

God spared Noah, his family, and the world's countless pairs of creatures (miraculously sent to him by God) from the great flood, which covered the whole earth.

The rainbow is a covenant which means a promise, or reminder. It is a promise God will never destroy the earth by flood again.

God gave a sign of that love, in the rainbow.

After the flood waters disappeared, Noah stepped onto dry land, built an altar, and immediately made a thanksgiving offering to God.

Like Noah and his family, let us remember to give thanks for salvation, in The Ark of the Church.

Let us also, live our lives as a gift from God!

Noah's Ark

Centuries after Adam and Eve left the Garden of Eden; people chose to forget about God and became wicked. Only one man and his family in the whole world remained good! His name was Noah.

One day God said to Noah: "The earth is wicked and I shall wash away all with a flood of waters. Every living thing will perish, except your family and those with you, for you have obeyed My laws." Then God told Noah to build a huge covered boat, called an ark. People laughed at Noah and his sons when they began to build this boat in the middle of dry land, but Noah still did what God told him. God sent

Noah two of every kind of creature that lived on earth. At last all was ready, and food was stored away for many months ahead within the ark.

Noah and his family entered the ark. The Lord shut them in. In seven days the rain began to fall. It rained forty days and forty nights without stopping. Even the mountains were covered with water. Nothing remained alive on the earth.

Seven months after the beginning of the flood, Noah's ark came to rest on a mountain top. Noah opened the window of his ark to let a dove fly. The dove could find no place to rest, so it returned to the ark. Noah waited another seven days and let the dove out again. When it returned, it carried a green olive leaf in its beak. After another week the dove flew away and never came back.

God told Noah to leave the ark and release all the creatures that were with him. Noah and his family thanked God for keeping them safe. Suddenly a beautiful rainbow appeared in the sky.

God said, "This is the sign of My promise that never again shall there be a flood great enough to destroy all living things on the earth."

The rainbow is God's beautiful Promise in the sky!