

Saint Demetrios, Myrrhstreamer and Great Martyr of Thessoliniki {Teacher's Edition}

Lesson Objective: To have children become familiar with St. Demetrios and his life.
FEAST DAY – OCTOBER 26

Introduction:

St. Demetrios was a young man whose parents taught him to love God. He was a soldier who wanted to spread the message of God's love to non-Christians, but this was forbidden in his time. As a result, he was arrested, tortured and finally killed. Today, this humble martyr's relics are in Thessaloniki, in Northern Greece, the city where he worked to protect and to keep so many people safe. He made a difference in many people's lives by showing them God's path.

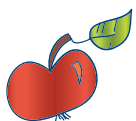
Bible Reading:

Following Jesus in the Bible

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." Matthew 16:24-25 **This explains the idea of being a martyr.**

Highlights:

1. St. Demetrios was born in Thessaloniki in 270 AD. To a wealthy and religious family. He was an athletic officer in the Roman army. However, he always said that he was a soldier of Christ first and foremost. St. Demetrios believed in God and in spreading His word so much, that he thought nothing of breaking the law in order to convert the pagans to Christianity. When Emperor Maximian heard about what was happening, he had St. Demetrios arrested.
2. Soon after, Lyaeus, a famous, giant gladiator taunted any Christian who dared to fight him. Nestor, after getting St. Demetrios' blessing, fought against Lyaeus, said "God of Demetrios, help me", and won. When Emperor Maximian found out, he ordered that St. Demetrios and Nestor be tortured and put to death for being Christians. St. Demetrios is the patron saint of Thessaloniki and is credited with many miraculous interventions there. A scented myrrh streams continuously from his tomb giving him the title of myrrhstreamer.



Icon

St. Demetrios is depicted in various ways on icons. On some, he is shown wearing military armor while on horseback, and holding a spear that is pointed at his enemies, the pagans. On other icons we see him wearing the same military armor, but the horse is not shown. Finally, we sometimes see him simply wearing the clothes of a noble man while holding a cross. In all of these, he is very young.

Activity:

Have children follow the lines and put each letter in a blank square to complete the message. MARTYR

Prayer:

The whole world has found you as a mighty champion in dangers, O Victor, who routed the nations. Therefore, as you destroyed the pride of Lyaios in the stadium by giving Nestor courage, holy great Martyr Demetrios, implore Christ our God to grant us His great mercy.
- Tropar of St. Demetrios -