



# HOLD FAST

*what you have*

that no one may take your crown - Rev 3:11



MAHRAGAN ALKERAZA 2015

English Edition Gr 1-2

# HOLD FAST

*what you have*



**H.H. Pope Tawadros II**  
Pope of Alexandria &  
Patriarch of the See of St. Mark



**H.G. Bishop Mina**  
Bishop of Mississauga,  
Vancouver and Western Canada

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## INTRODUCTION

### Mahragan Alkeraza 2015

As we celebrated the conclusion of last year's Mahragan with the distribution of the trophies for the first, second and third place winners, we were grateful for God's blessings for a successful 2014 Mahragan. His Holiness Pope Tawadros II said during the Awards Ceremony in Egypt, "I am happy to see the activities of the Youth Bishopric, I am glad that our beautiful Church that is 2000 years old is full of young youth and I am proud to see the creative work and achievements of the youth."

Last year, in addition to the usual participation from Egypt and Sudan, we had a great worldwide participation from 192 Churches representing more than 20 countries and 8 languages.

The theme for Mahragan 2015 is **"Hold Fast What You Have, That No One May Take Your Crown"** (Rev 3:11). This year, God is asking each one of us to grow in Christ by:

1. Having a Strong and Unshaken Faith
2. Reading our Precious Bible Daily
3. Being Faithful to our God
4. Being Successful
5. Honouring Our Home

We hope that all of you will participate in the Mahragan activities this year, and encourage everyone you know to join us in one of the greatest annual events, presented by our mother, the Coptic Orthodox Church.

May God bless Mahragan Alkeraza this year and the efforts of all the participants and coordinators, through the prayers of our beloved father Pope Tawadros II.

✠ My best wishes for a happy  
Festival

✠ Bishop Mousa

## MY FAITH IS STRONG AND UNSHAKEN

*It's Tuesday afternoon after a long day at school. As usual, John takes out his crayons and his favourite book from his knapsack and begins to doodle with his precious red crayon. As he scribbles away...*

**N:** Phew... That was close! The crayon was coming at me so fast, I thought he was gonna...

**O:** Oh no! He's gonna cross me out! Help! Help!

**W:** Oh my! John is at it again!

**C:** Come on W! We gotta go help O before it's too late. He's about to get crossed out. PULL!

*C, W and N pull their friend O to get him away from the red crayon.*



**O:** Thank you guys! I'm so happy to have friends like you. I thought it was the end for me.

**N:** I know! What are we going to do? Everyday, John gets closer and closer to crossing us out. We lose a letter almost everyday!

**O:** That's it! I'm leaving this book and going to another. I can't stay here. It's too dangerous!

**N:** O! Wait, leaving is not the solution!

**C:** N, you're right. O, please wait. What if we talk to John? We can explain that we have a bigger purpose than this and that we can teach him many things. He shouldn't just scribble all over us.

**W:** I agree with C, we should tell him that he's not using his crayons the right way!

**N:** Alright that's a great idea! Let's go!

*One by one, they jump off the page and into John's knapsack.*

**W:** Woah! It's so dark, I can't see anything!

**N:** Wait. I see there's an opening on the other side. Follow me.

**C:** Oh yes! I see the light! Let me go have a look.

**O:** Watch out C, don't fall! Don't...

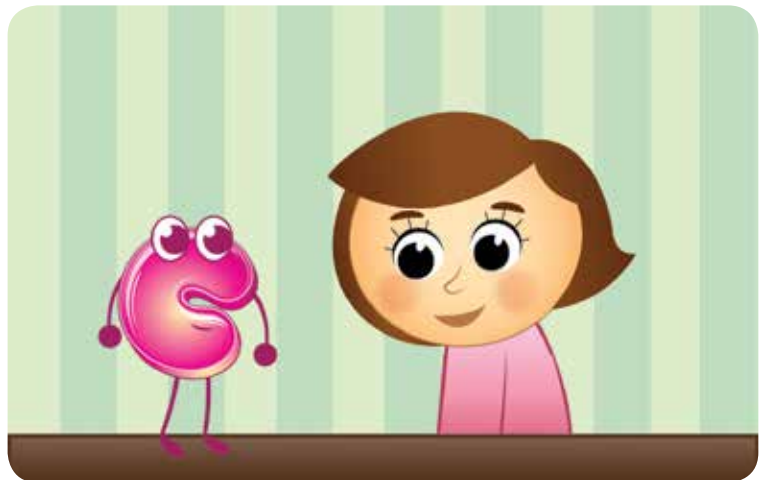
**C:** Heeeeee! I'm falling...

**N:** No C!! Hang on!! Oh no! We lost him! We lost C!

**C:** What happened? Where am I? What is this place? Oh wait! That's Julie, John's sister. Julie! JULIE!

**Julie:** Hello? Who's calling me?

**C:** Hi Julie, look down here. I'm the letter C.



**Julie:** Woah! I didn't know that letters move and talk! That's awesome! Hi C!

**C:** Hi Julie! Yes we talk and move in our book all the time! Except I fell from John's knapsack and I'm afraid I'm never gonna see my friends again.

**Julie:** I don't understand... What happened?

# HOLD FAST

*what you have*

**C:** You see, my friends N, W, O and I decided to leave our book to speak to John because we had a problem that we were trying to solve. But I fell from the bag and I'm lost. I can't find the bag or my friends! I miss them so much and now that they can't see me, they probably forgot all about me.

**Julie:** No C! Don't say that! Your friends won't forget you just because you're far away from them. Let me tell you something. I have many friends who love me even though I'm far away from them. They don't forget me even though they don't live on this earth.



**C:** Wait! I don't understand! How are they your friends if they don't live here with you on earth?

**Julie:** Let me explain. Some of my friends are angels which were always in heaven. Others were once here on earth and did a lot of amazing things and then they went to heaven. All their stories are written down for us. They're our friends, the saints and we all love them very much.

**C:** So your friends are saints? How can they be your friends if their lives on earth ended and they don't live with you anymore?

**Julie:** Well, even though they don't live with us on earth, they live in heaven with God, because God Himself said: "For He is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live to Him." Luke 20:38. And since the saints who live in heaven are alive, I can talk to them and they hear me and see me. That's why when I have a problem, I pray to God saying "Through the intercessions of my friends the saints, please God hear my prayer!"

**C:** Intercession of the saints? What does that mean?

**Julie:** Intercession is when the saints pray for us, because they love us. The Bible teaches:



**Memory verse: "Pray for one another." James 5:16**

**C:** Wow! I can't believe you have friends in heaven! You're so lucky. Can you introduce them to me?



**St. Mary**



**Archangel  
Michael**



**St. Mark**



**Mother Doulagy  
and her children**

**Julie:** Of course, their icons are in all the churches. I also have some small pictures of them here. These are St. Mary, Archangel Michael, St. Mark, Mother Doulagy and her children. We also go to the church to celebrate their feasts because we love them. The Church also honours them in many ways.

1. When we build a Church, we call it after their names.
2. In the Church, we can also light a candle in front of their icons and the priest mentions their names in the liturgy during the commemoration of the saints.
3. We also have different hymns in the Church that tell us about their lives and their love to God. One of those hymns is "Through the intercession of the Mother of God Saint Mary". In this hymn we ask for the intercession of St. Mary on our behalf.

**C:** That's amazing how you honour them and love them. Thank you for introducing them to me. Now I'm sure that my friends won't forget me. But I really miss them.

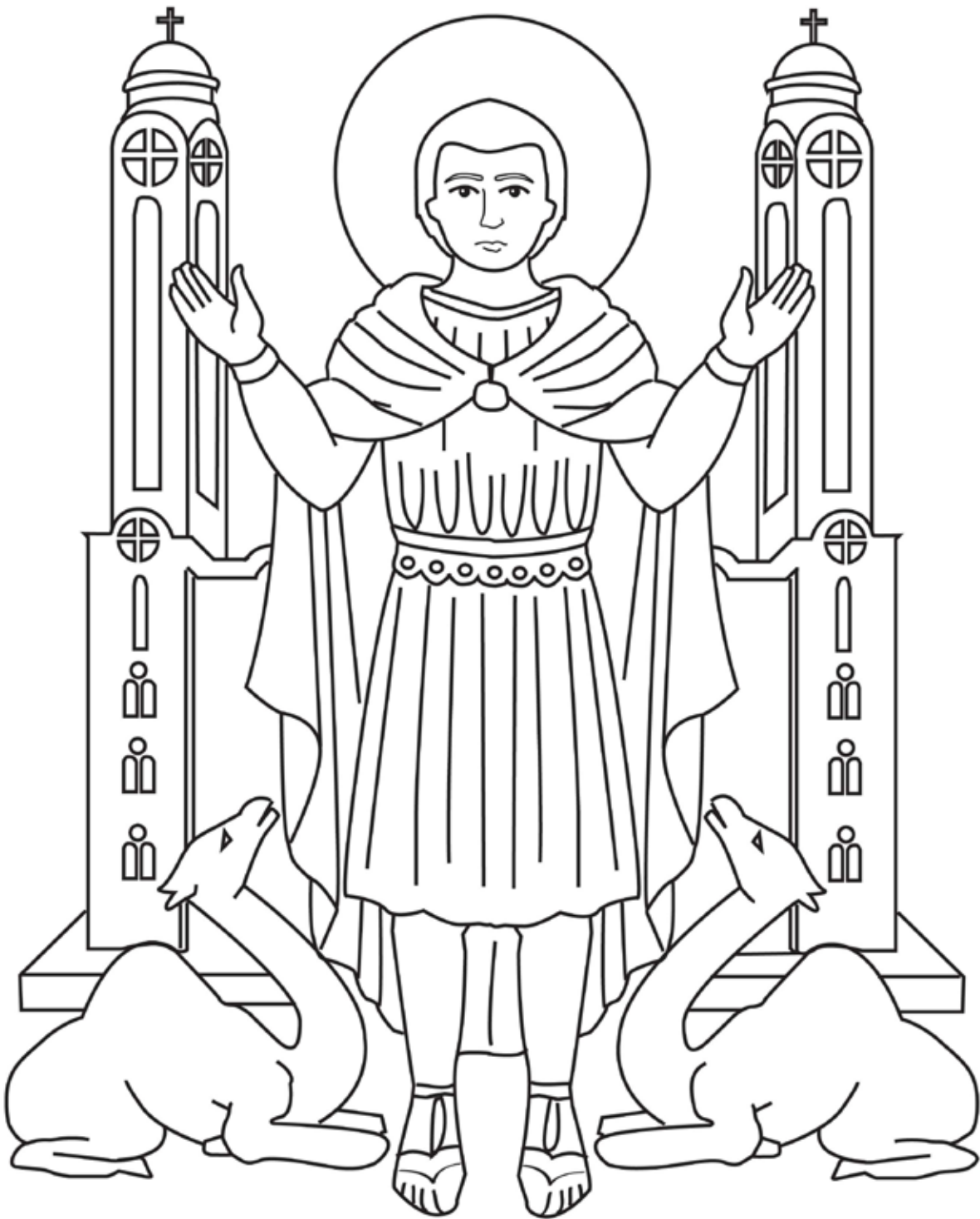
ACTIVITY

## OUR HEAVENLY FRIENDS



ACTIVITY

# ST. MINA



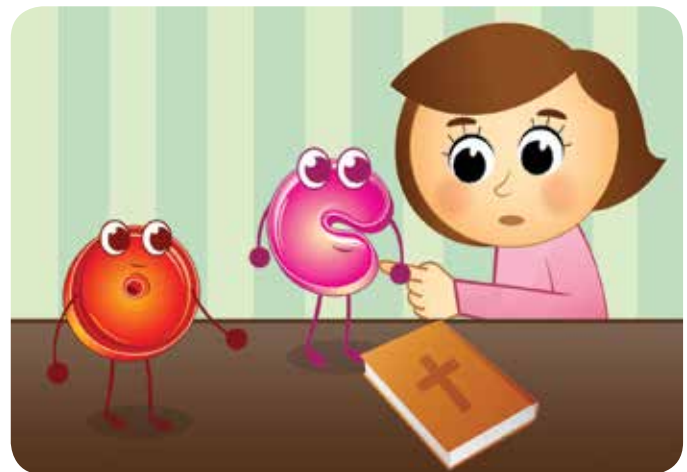
## MY BOOK IS PRECIOUS TO ME

*Julie decides to help C find his friends. She takes him in her hand and goes over to John's desk. Thankfully, they find O.*

**O:** C! Is that you?? Oh how we've missed you so much! I'm so happy you found us!

**C:** Yes it's me! O! I've missed you so much. Thanks Julie. She's the one who helped me find you.

**O:** Thanks a lot Julie! We looked for you everywhere! We went into every single book; there was just this one book left. This one here...



**Julie:** Oh! Good thing we found you then. You can't go in this book in particular...

**C & O:** Huh? Why not?

**Julie:** This is the Holy Bible, we can't add or remove a single letter.

**O:** What do you mean? Why not?

**Julie:** Of course, because this is the Word of God which we received from our fathers the saints. We kept it as we received it and never changed anything in it. The saints went through lots of hardships to keep it for us. Also, one of the saints invented a special language for us so we can understand it.

**O:** Really? Which saint and what's his story?

## Saint Pantaeenus and the translation of the Holy Bible

**Julie:** Saint Pantaeenus was born more than 100 years after the birth of Christ. He studied the Holy Bible and the Church teachings. He used to speak and teach the Word of God to everyone. Because of his knowledge about the Christians teachings, St. Pantaeenus became the dean of the Catechetical School of Alexandria, a very famous Christian school. People from all over the world joined this school to learn all about Christianity.

*St. Pantaeenus loved the Holy Bible very much. He followed the Bible teachings and commandments, and wanted everyone to do the same. He wanted everyone to be able to read and understand the Bible as well.*



**C:** What do you mean? The people did not know how to read?

**Julie:** Yes, because at that time, the Bible and all the Church books in the Churches of Egypt were written in Greek. Many people did not know how to read or understand Greek, that's why they couldn't read the Bible

**C:** Well that's a big problem! What did St. Pantaeenus do?

**Julie:** St. Pantaeenus, took 25 letters from the Greek language and 7 letters from the old Egyptian language and formed a new language called "The Coptic language"; that was read the same way as the spoken language at this time. St. Pantaeenus used this language to translate the entire Holy Bible from Genesis to Revelation, the same way as he received it from the previous fathers.

That's why the Coptic language is very important. It was made especially to translate the Bible (the Word of God) from its original Hebrew and Greek to Coptic. Many of our Church hymns are also in Coptic.

St. Pantaeenus also wrote many Bible explanation and commentaries in Coptic. That's why the



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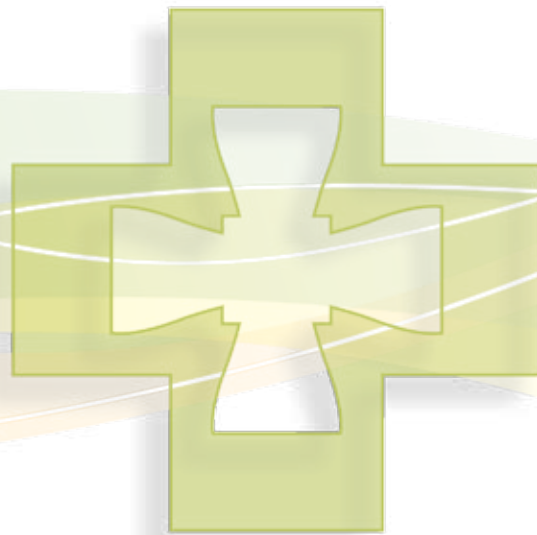
people called him “the Explainer of the Word of God”.

Because of his love for the Holy Bible, St. Pantaeus used to teach it in other countries too, like India.

St. Pantaeus used his knowledge and understanding of the Holy Bible to pass it down to us the exact same way he received it.

And now it’s our responsibility to read, love and understand the Holy Bible. That’s why we should read parts of it everyday with our families.

**Memory Verse: “And that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures.” 2 Timothy 3:15**

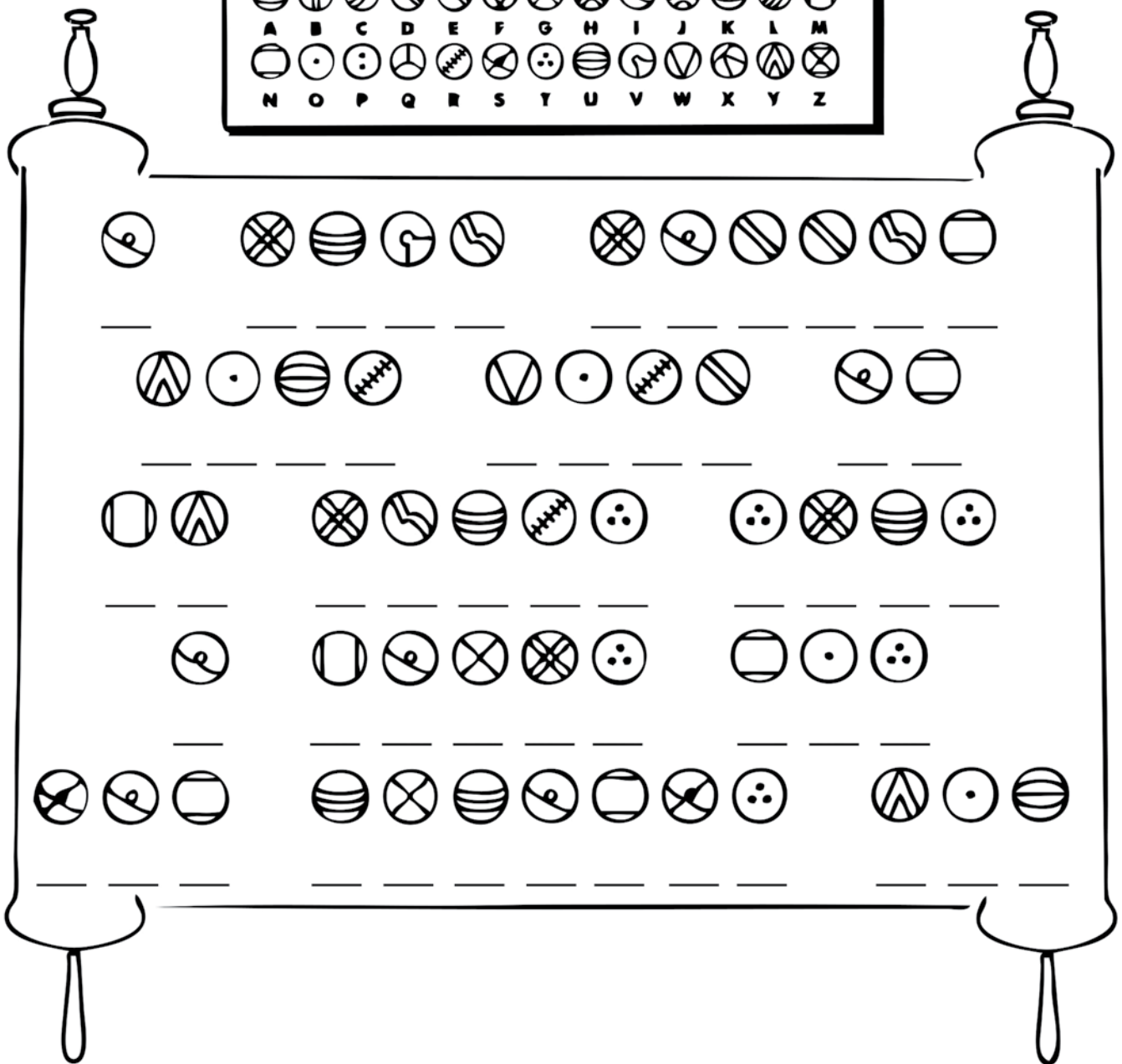


ACTIVITY

## THE WORD OF GOD

The words of Psalm 119:11 are hidden in the cryptogram.  
Use the code to decipher the message.

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



## LET US BE FAITHFUL TO OUR GOD

*While Julie is talking to C & O, the rest of the letters join them. Overjoyed that their friend C is back, they quickly get back to their mission.*



**N:** Since we're all together now, what are we going to do about our problem?

**Julie:** Tell me about your problem, and maybe I could help.

**W:** So you see, your brother John isn't using his crayons properly. Everyday, instead of reading the words that we make up, he scribbles all over us. We've decided that we're going to talk to him so we can explain that what he's doing isn't right, and to try to help our friends which have already been crossed out.

**Julie:** Yeah, he probably doesn't know that what he's doing is wrong, let's go talk to him.

*As they enter John's room, they hear...*

**John:** In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit one God, amen. Our God make us worthy to pray with thanksgiving, Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name...

**N:** Hmm. Julie, why is John standing with his eyes closed and speaking with a soft voice?

**Julie:** He's praying. Let's stand over there quietly until he's done praying so we don't disturb him.

**N:** Okay, but what is prayer?



**Julie:** Prayer is the time that we spend with our Lord Jesus Christ. It's actually the best time ever. During prayer, I can talk to God about anything because He's my Father and loves me very much. He loves each and every one of us. He listens to our prayers and He knows all our needs.



*As the verse says:*

**Memory verse:** “ I love the Lord, because He has heard My voice and my supplications.” Psalm 116:1

*During prayer, I like to understand and focus on the words that I’m saying, not just repeat them mindlessly.*

**W:** That’s why John didn’t hear us coming in?

**Julie:** That is right. He’s focusing on his prayer to God.

**W:** And when exactly do you pray?

**Julie:** We pray “Our Father…” in the beginning and the end of each prayer. This is the prayer that we learned from our Lord Jesus Himself when His disciples asked Him to teach them how to pray.

*And we can pray any time! I pray:*

- When I wake up, to thank God because He kept me during the night, and to ask Him to help me during the day.
- Before and after each meal, to thank God for the food He is giving us, and to ask Him to give to the needy.
- Before doing anything to ask God to help me and be at my side.
- At the end of the day, before I go to bed, to thank God that the day has passed in peace, to talk to Him about everything that happened during the day, and ask Him to protect me during the night while I’m sleeping.



**N:** So you can pray anytime and nothing prevents you?

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**Julie:** Absolutely! We pray no matter what happens:

- When I'm happy: I ask Him so we can rejoice together
- When I'm sad: I ask Him to help me and make me happy
- When I'm afraid: I ask Him to be with me and reassure me
- When I do something wrong: I ask Him to forgive me and I promise Him not to do it again

Even if I don't have anything in particular to pray for, I pray because I like to talk to God.

**N:** You're very lucky Julie, that's the first time I hear about prayer. Do you have to stand in a certain place to pray?

**Julie:** God is everywhere and can hear us wherever and whenever we speak to Him. I have a fixed place in my house where I like to pray because it has a beautiful icon of our Lord Jesus Christ towards the East. I also pray in the church and in Sunday School.

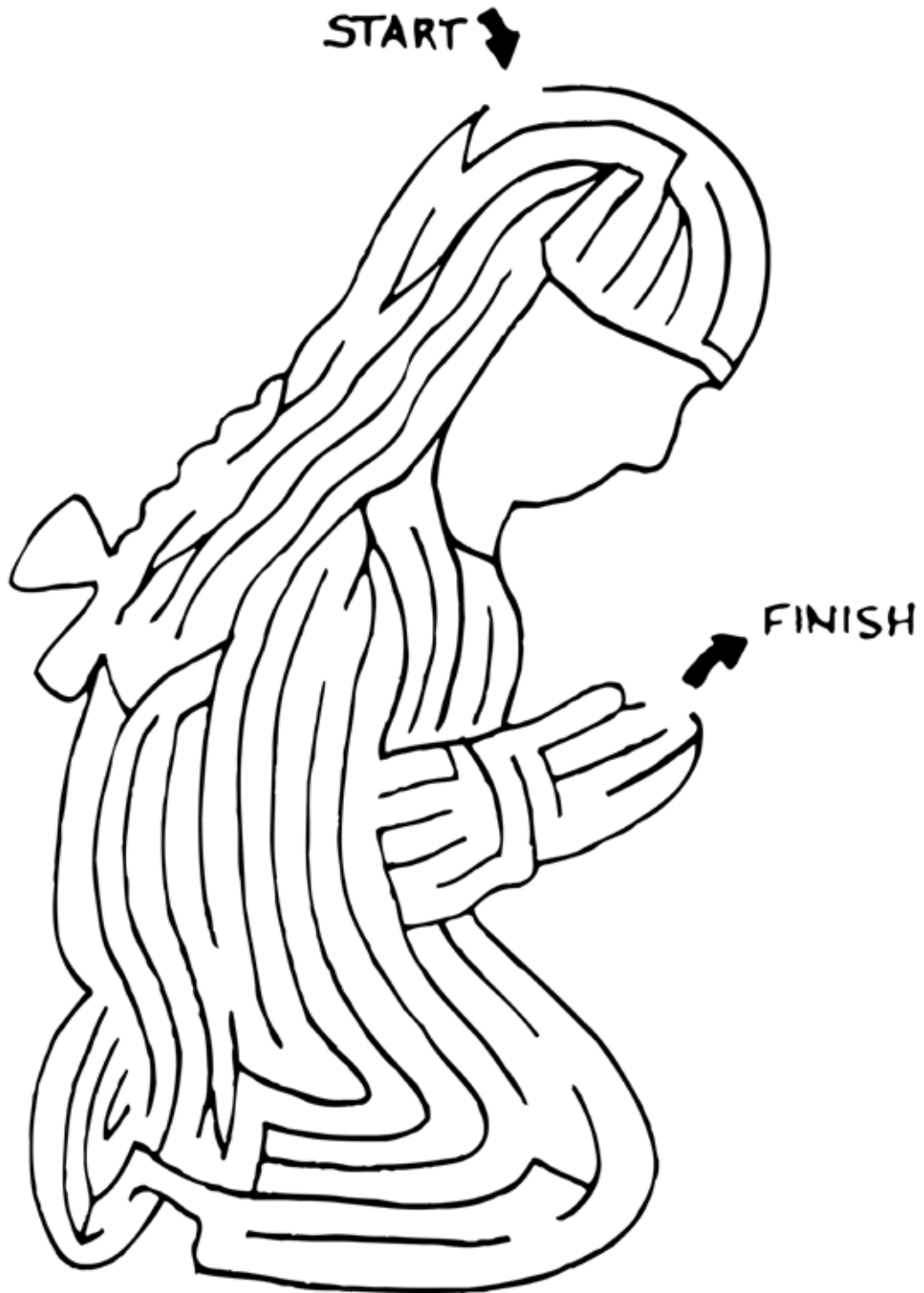
**N:** Can you teach me how to pray?

**Julie:** Sure! It's fairly simple:

1. I do the sign of the cross and say "Our Father..."
2. I thank God for everything
3. I tell Him about everything that happened during the day
4. I ask Him to forgive me for anything wrong I did
5. I ask Him for anything that I need
6. I ask Him for the sick and for the people who have problems
7. At the end I ask for the intercession of my friends the saints and then I say "Our Father..." and do the sign of the cross

ACTIVITY

# PRAYER MAZE



## THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

**FATHER  
HALLOWED  
KINGDOM  
WILL**

**DAILY BREAD  
FORGIVE  
SINS  
TEMPTATION**

**EVIL  
GLORY  
POWER**

## LET US BE SUCCESSFUL

*When John finishes his prayer...*

**Julie:** Hi John, we would like to talk to you...

**John:** We? It's only us in the room!

**Julie:** No, we're not by ourselves. I have here my friends the letters N, W, C and O.

**John:** Huh? I don't know what you're talking about.

**W:** That's the problem John, you never took the time to know who we are. Every time you open your book, you just scribble all over us. You never even try to read the words we make up.

**John:** Yeah, I hate reading! Every time I open my book, I just colour everywhere, even over the words. But I had no idea that this upsets you, I'm so sorry.

**Julie:** See guys! I told you he didn't know that he was doing something wrong. I knew that if we told him that this upsets you, he wouldn't do it anymore. Thanks for apologizing John. Now let's go fix the book and get rid of all the scribbles.

**C:** Well that sounds great, except...

**John:** Except what?

**C:** Do you know how many pages you scribbled on?

**John:** No I can't remember.

**O:** More than half the book! Are you gonna be able to erase all this?



**John:** You're right, it is too much, I can't erase this all by myself.

**Julie:** No, we'll work together, just like the people of God who rebuilt the temple. Let me tell you this amazing story!

## The rebuilding of the temple after the captivity - Ezra 1-3

The people of God, the Israelites, lived in Jerusalem, but the king of Babylon came and took them captive in his country. God had promised His people that they will return to Jerusalem again. After 70 years of exile, God fulfilled His promise to the Israelites. Many people were happy that they were returning back to the city they loved, so they took all their belongings and started their journey back to Jerusalem.

The king of Babylon King Cyrus, also returned of the Israelites all the articles of the house of the Lord that were taken from the temple. When they had arrived at their beloved city, Jerusalem, they were very sad to see that the city was in very bad shape. The city walls, their houses and the temple of God were all destroyed.



**John:** Oh no!

**Julie:** Yes they were all very sad but they decided to rebuild the city again. What do you think they started to rebuild first?

**John:** Their houses of course!

**Julie:** Actually, no! Although they needed houses to live in, they decided to build the house of God first. All they wanted to do was to pray to God and to thank Him for taking them out of the captivity. They also wanted to offer sacrifices to God. The first thing they built was the altar, then

they laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord.

**John:** Wow! That's amazing. So what did they do to rebuild the temple?

**Julie:** First, they gathered to discuss their problem. They knew that the temple is very important to them and has to be rebuilt in the same place.

They also knew they needed money to pay the builders and to buy the wood.



Second, they distributed the roles. Joshua and Zerubbabel were in charge of the rebuilding of the temple. Everyone did their best. Some people offered silver and gold. Other people bought the wood. There were builders, sculptors and carpenters. There were also leaders to make sure that the work is being done. Everyone had a share and did his job.

Finally, they all worked with full honesty and felt responsible for the tasks they were assigned. Because they worked together and helped each other, they were able to rebuild the temple.

**Memory verse:** "The people gathered together as one man." Ezra 3:1

**O:** What a beautiful story!

**John:** Okay perfect, so let's follow their example and divide the work amongst us.

**N:** Alright! Let's begin.

## JOSHUA WORDSEARCH

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

ALTAR

JESHUA

SHOUTED

CEDAR LOGS

LORD

TEMPLE

FOUNDATION

MERCY

THANKS

JERUSALEM

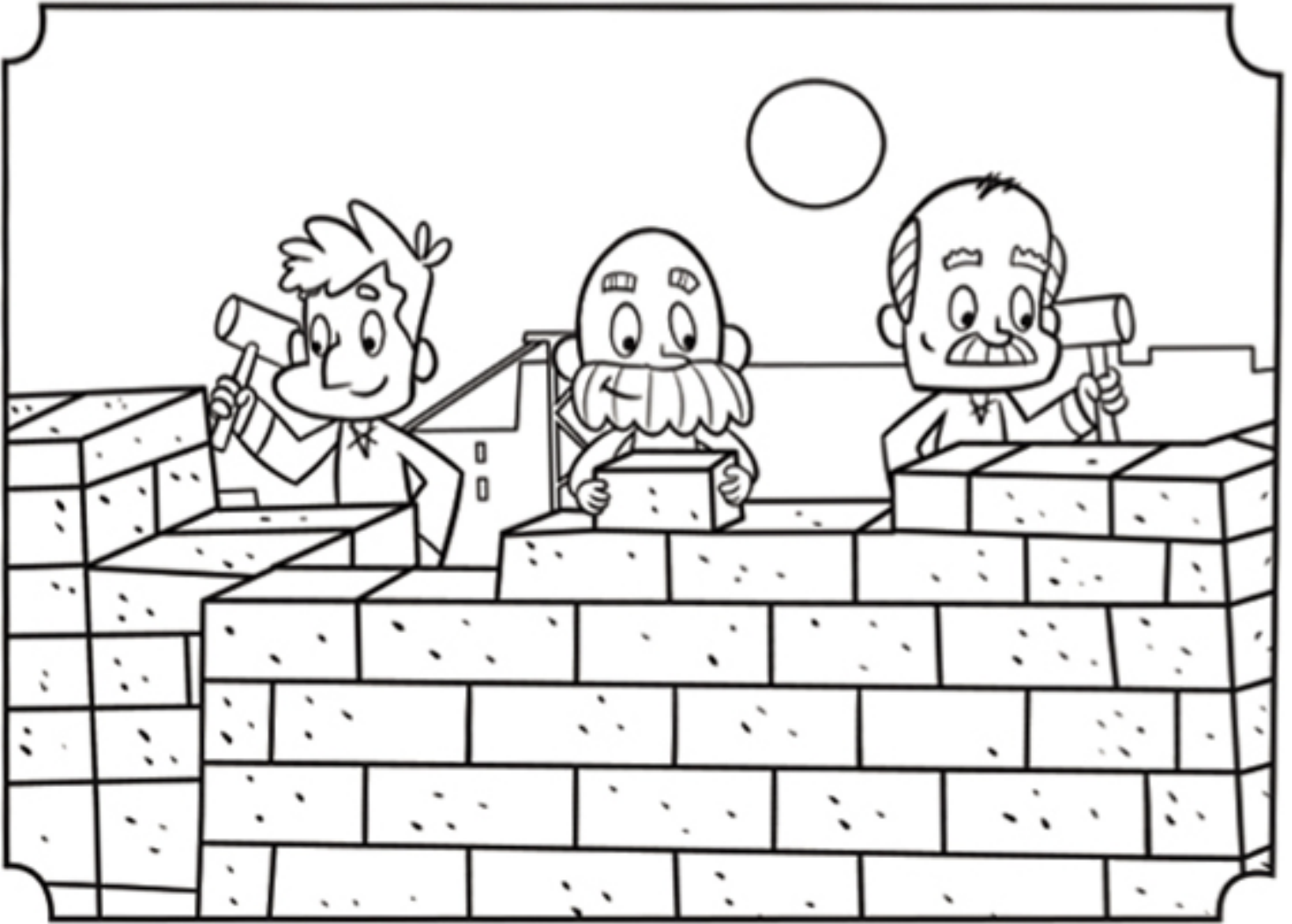
PRAISE

ZERUBBABEL



ACTIVITY

## REBUILDING THE TEMPLE



Joshua and Zerubbabel led the Israelites to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem which was finished in 516 B.B. - Ezra 3

## LET US HONOUR OUR HOME

**John:** Here's the book. Let me grab an eraser.

**Julie:** I'll get my eraser too, that way we can work at the same time.

W: We'll help too.

**C:** N, come and see what we found!

**N:** That's R! What is she doing here?

**C:** Let's go see what she's up to. She looks lost.

**Julie:** R! What are you doing here? Which book are you from?

**R:** I'm lost. Can you help me? I left John's book because he was about to scribble all over me!

**John:** I'm so sorry R! Now I know not to do that anymore and I'm trying to fix what I've already done.

**R:** No! I don't want to go back to this book!

**N:** But this book is our home!

**Julie:** Let me tell you a story that might change your mind...

### The prayer of Hezekiah (2 Kings 18, 19)

**Julie:** There was a king named Hezekiah whose name means the "strength of God." He was the king of Judah. He loved God very much and relied on God in everything he did.

One day, the bad king Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, came with a huge army to attack Jerusalem. They surrounded the city. King Sennacherib sent some of his men to threaten the

people in Jerusalem. One of them stood and said to the Israelites not to listen to their king when he says that God will deliver them. He also deceived them and told them that if they listen to King Sennacherib and leave Jerusalem, he will take them to a better land, and if they don't listen, King Sennacherib would defeat them like he defeated the other countries.

Their city was surrounded, and it would have been a good excuse for them to leave their city and go with King Sennacherib to avoid going to war. However, they didn't answer king Sennacherib's messenger as King Hezekiah had instructed them.

After a short period, other messengers came to King Hezekiah with a letter from King Sennacherib that said that God can't deliver them because none of the other gods could deliver their people from the hands of the Assyrian kings.

**John:** So he threatened them and said bad things about their God too? What did King Hezekiah do?

**Julie:** King Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers. As soon as he read it, he went up to the house of the Lord, and put it before the Lord. King Hezekiah prayed before the Lord, and said: "O Lord God of Israel, You are God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. Incline Your ear, O Lord, and hear the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to reproach the living God. Truly, Lord, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands, and have cast their gods into the fire; for they were not gods.



Therefore they destroyed them. Now therefore, O

Lord our God, I pray, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You are the Lord God, You alone."

After Hezekiah's prayer, God sent him the answer with the great prophet Isaiah who told him: "The Lord has heard your prayer concerning the king of Assyria. He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there." Afterwards, God sent His

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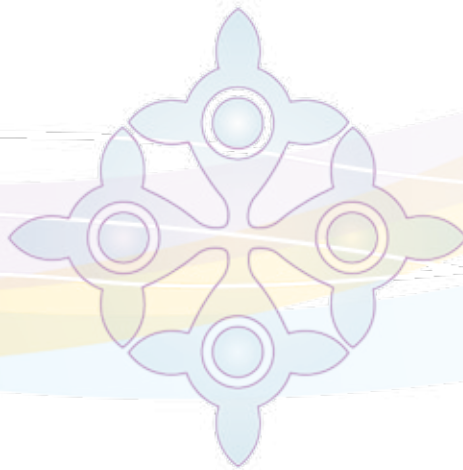
*what you have*

angel who killed one hundred and eighty five thousand in the camp of the Assyrians. So king Sennacherib fled back to his home. God fulfilled His promise as always, and saved them from king Sennacherib. Thanks to King Hezekiah's prayer, the people did not have to go to war nor leave their homes.

**Memory Verse:** "Unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain."  
**Psalm 127:1**

**R:** You're right Julie! I'm not gonna leave my book anymore. Come on! I'll help you guys fix the book.

*They all work hard at erasing all the scribbles. Finally, all the letters return to the book and Julie helps John put the letters together.*



ACTIVITY

## KING HEZEKIAH PRAYS



## Memorization

# BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

### Gospels

1. Matthew
2. Mark
3. Luke
4. John

### Acts

5. Acts

### St. Paul's Epistles:

6. Romans
7. 1 Corinthians
8. 2 Corinthians
9. Galatians
10. Ephesians
11. Philippians
12. Colossians
13. 1 Thessalonians

14. 2 Thessalonians

15. 1 Timothy

16. 2 Timothy

17. Titus

18. Philemon

19. Hebrews

### Catholic Epistles

20. James

21. 1 Peter

22. 2 Peter

23. 1 John

24. 2 John

25. 3 John

26. Jude

### Revelation

27. Revelation

## Memorization

## PSALM 1 (AGPEYA)

Blessed is the man who has not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, and has not stood in the way of the sinners, and has not sat in the seat of the evil men. But his will is in the law of the Lord; and in His law he shall meditate day and night. He shall be like the tree which is planted by the streams of water, which shall yield its fruit in its due season, and its leaf shall not scatter, and in everything he does he prospers.

Not so are the ungodly, not so; but rather they are like the chaff which the wind scatters upon the face of the earth. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in judgment, nor the sinners in the council of the righteous. For the Lord knows the way of the righteous; but the way of the ungodly shall perish. ALLELUIA.





**HOLD FAST**  
*what you have*

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing.



# HOLD FAST

*what you have*

Series of horizontal dotted lines for writing.

# ACTIVITIES

**Hymns & Tasbeha**

**Coptic Language**

**Arts**

**Creative Writing**

**Sports**

**Drama & Mime**

**Praise & Music**

For more information about Mahragan activities please visit the Mahragan website at: [www.mahragan.ca](http://www.mahragan.ca)



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