TEACHER'S REFERENCE

Delivery & Differentiation

SAINT SERGIUS SCHOOL

Lesson Purpose: Students learn why the Orthodox Church celebrates the Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos and understand the protecting veil as a sign of the Mother of God's intercession for Christ's Church.

Core Teaching: The Theotokos prays for Christ's Church and always directs us toward her Son. The Feast of the Protection teaches Christians to ask for her intercession while placing their trust in God.

Early Learner Emphasis: Mary is the Mother of Jesus. She loves Christ, prays for us, and the veil reminds us of her prayers and care. We can also pray for others.

Elementary Emphasis: Introduce Protection/Pokrov, St. Andrew and Epiphanius, the protecting veil, intercession, Cana, and the difference between honouring the Theotokos and worshipping God.

Older Student Extension: Discuss intercessory prayer, the communion of saints, veneration and worship, and why Orthodox devotion to the Theotokos remains Christ-centred.

Theological Safeguard: Do not describe the protecting veil as a magical object or imply that the Theotokos possesses saving or protecting power independently of God. The feast presents the Mother of God at prayer. Worship belongs to the Holy Trinity alone.

Main Point to Remember
"The Theotokos prays for Christ's Church and always leads us toward her Son."

Liturgical-Language Note
If students know "Most Holy Theotokos, save us," explain that save can mean help, rescue, or deliver through prayer. The Theotokos does not replace Christ as Saviour.

Icon Guidance
Use A01 as the principal identifying icon. Reserve A02 for enlarged presentation study.

Activity Guidance
A. Early Learners: Draw or dictate one person to pray for or one way to help.
B. Elementary: Complete all three prompts and choose one action for the week.
C. Older Students: Explain how prayer for someone can lead to loving action.

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Answer Key & Resource Control

Discussion Questions — Teacher Answer Key

1. Where were the people gathered?
Answer: In the Church of Blachernae in Constantinople.

2. Who saw the Theotokos praying?
Answer: St. Andrew the Fool-for-Christ and his disciple Epiphanius.

3. What did she extend over the faithful?
Answer: Her protecting veil.

4. What does the veil represent?
Answer: Her prayers and intercession for Christ's Church.

5. What does intercession mean?
Answer: Praying to God for another person.

6. To whom is the Theotokos praying?
Answer: To God; she intercedes before her Son, Jesus Christ.

7. What did Mary do at Cana?
Answer: She noticed the need and brought it to Jesus.

8. What did Mary tell the servants?
Answer: "Whatever He says to you, do it." — John 2:5 NKJV

9. Why do Orthodox Christians honour the Mother of God without worshipping her?
Answer: We honour her because she is the Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ and has a unique place in God's plan of salvation. Worship belongs to God alone.

10. Who or what can you remember in prayer this week?
Answer: Answers vary. Encourage a specific person or genuine need and, where appropriate, one practical act of care.

The Law of God
Supporting Reading: Part IV, Chapter 6, feast-calendar section listing the Protection of the Mother of God (PDF p. 923 / book p. 496); Part I, Chapter 13, Icons (PDF pp. 91–110 / book pp. 37–47).

Scripture: John 2:1–5; Memory Verse: John 2:5 NKJV.

Image/icon Provenance: See lesson Sources & Rights record.
A01 — 1399 Novgorod Pokrov icon — primary.
A02 — Novgorod school, early 15th c. — presentation study.
A03 — Russian, 16th c., MET — approved reserve.

Optional Early Learner Resource: Protection/Pokrov colouring resource — external-link delivery only.