

Lesson #2

Lesson Plan

Topic: The Life of St. Simeon the Stylite

Grade Level: 5th & 6th (Ages 11-12)

Lesson Duration: 45-60 minutes

Lesson Objectives:

- Students will study the life of St. Simeon the Stylite.
- Students will learn about his unique ascetic lifestyle and what it teaches us regarding devotion to God.

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

- Begin with prayer.
- Ask: *"What are some unusual ways people have demonstrated love or dedication to God?"*
- Introduction: St. Simeon the Stylite is one of the most unique saints in the Orthodox Church—he lived on top of a pillar!

2. The Life of St. Simeon (Storytelling – 10 minutes) * See attached storyboard

- St. Simeon was born in Syria around the year 390.
- From a young age, he wanted to serve God with all his heart.
- He became a monk, devoting himself to constant prayer and fasting.
- To live in complete prayer and avoid distractions, he climbed on top of a tall pillar (stylos in Greek).
- He lived there for many years—some say almost **37 years**—praying, preaching to visitors, and giving advice to people who came to see him.
- Even emperors asked for his prayers!
- He became a great example of faith, self-denial, and closeness to God.
- He died in 459, and the Church commemorates him on **September 14/1**.

3. Key Teaching Points

- Asceticism refers to the practice of training ourselves spiritually through fasting, prayer, and self-control.
- St. Simeon's life may seem extreme, but it reveals how deeply he loved God above all else.
- Even if we don't live on a pillar, we can live faithfully by:
 - Praying daily
 - Controlling our desires and habits
 - Putting God first in our lives

4. Activities (15 minutes)

1. Discussion Questions

- Why do you think St. Simeon chose to live on a pillar?
- What do you think people's reactions were when they first saw him?
- What lessons can we take from him for our lives today?

2. Creative Activity

- Have students draw St. Simeon standing on his pillar while people come to him for blessings.

5. Take-Home Message

- St. Simeon showed us that nothing is more important than loving God.
- His unusual way of life teaches us about prayer, sacrifice, and helping others.
- We, too, can become closer to God by living faithfully every day.

6. Closing Prayer

"Through the prayers of St. Simeon, the Stylite, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us. Amen."

The Life of St. Simeon Stylite

Long ago, around the year 390, a boy named Simeon was born in Syria. From the very beginning, Simeon loved God with all his heart. He wanted to serve God in every way he could.

As he grew older, Simeon became a monk. He spent his days praying, fasting, and focusing only on God. But he wanted to get even closer to God and avoid any distractions from the world. So, he did something very unusual—he climbed to the top of a tall pillar. In Greek, a pillar is called a *stylos*, which is why he is called “Stylite.”

For many years—some say nearly 37—St. Simeon lived atop that pillar. From up there, he prayed all the time. People traveled from near and far to hear him preach, seek his advice, and receive his blessings. Even emperors wrote to him and asked him to pray for them!

St. Simeon demonstrated the power of faith, self-control, and a life fully dedicated to God. He died in the year 459, and the Church commemorates him each year on September 14/1. His life teaches us that with faith and commitment, we can grow closer to God no matter where we are.

WORKSHEET – ST. SIMEON THE STYLITE

Part A: Fill in the Blanks

Fill in the missing words.

1. St. Simeon was born in _____ around the year 390.
2. He wanted to serve _____ with all his heart.
3. To live in prayer and avoid distractions, St. Simeon climbed on top of a tall _____.
4. The word *Stylite* comes from the Greek word *stylos*, which means _____.
5. The Church celebrates St. Simeon on _____ 14/1st.

Part B: Matching

Draw a line to match the description with the correct phrase.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1. Stylite | a. The date commemorates St. Simeon. |
| 2. Asceticism | b. Spiritual training through fasting, prayer, and self-control. |
| 3. 37 years | c. The length of time Simeon is believed to have lived on the pillar. |
| 4. Emperors | d. Means "pillar" in Greek. |
| 5. September 14/1 | e. Even they came to ask for St. Simeon's prayers. |

WORKSHEET – ST. SIMEON THE STYLITE

Part C: Multiple Choice

Circle the correct answer.


1. Why did St. Simeon live on a pillar?
 - a) To be closer to the sun
 - b) To avoid distractions and pray to God
 - c) Because he liked heights
2. What was special about St. Simeon's way of life?
 - a) He was the first bishop of Antioch
 - b) He lived alone in the desert
 - c) He prayed and preached while living on a pillar
3. What can we learn from St. Simeon?
 - a) To put God first in our lives
 - b) That we should all live on pillars
 - c) To avoid talking to people

Part D: Short Answer

Answer in 1–2 sentences.

1. Why do you think people traveled from far away to see St. Simeon?

2. How can we follow St. Simeon's example in our daily lives, even without living on a pillar?

 **Teacher Note:** This worksheet can be completed in class or used as homework to reinforce the lesson.

WORKSHEET

Major Feasts of the Mother of God

PART A: FILL IN THE BLANKS

Fill in the missing words.

1. St. Simeon was born in _____ around the year 390.
2. He wanted to serve _____ with all his heart.
3. To live in prayer and avoid distractions, St. Simeon climbed on top of a tall _____.
4. The word Stylite comes from the Greek word stylos, which means _____.
5. The Church celebrates St. Simeon on _____ 14/1st.

PART B: MATCHING

Draw a line to match each feast with its meaning.

1. STYLITE

2. ASCETICISM

3. 37 YEARS

4. EMPERORS

5. SEPTEMBER 14/1

a. The date commemorates St. Simeon.

b. Spiritual training through fasting, prayer, and self-control.

c. The length of time Simeon is believed to have lived on the pillar.

d. Means “pillar” in Greek.

e. Even they came to ask for St. Simeon's prayers.

WORKSHEET



What do you imagine St. Symeon's pillar looked like?
Create a drawing to illustrate your vision.

