

Lesson Plan: *Sasha and the Dragon*: Displacement and Helping Others

Appropriate for mid- to upper elementary.

Objective: Students will use *Sasha and the Dragon* as a springboard to talk about global Christian persecution and caring for our neighbors.

Materials: *Sasha and the Dragon*, by Laura E. Wolfe,
Index cards and markers

Optional activity: [Assemble Emergency Kits for IOCC](#)

Note: This activity is not appropriate for small children, as kits must be packed accurately and some items might not be appropriate for small children to handle.

References: The International Orthodox Christian Charities, IOCC, is a top-rated Christian charity. Where IOCC is active: <https://www.iocc.org/where-we-work>
What IOCC does: <https://www.iocc.org/how-we-serve>

Procedure:

1. Open with Prayer: *Our Father, Heavenly King, or prayer of your choice.*
2. Ask students what they know about Christian persecution in the world. Have they heard the word “refugee”? What does that mean? How about displacement? Write answers on whiteboard.
3. Introduce *Sasha and the Dragon* as a story about a boy who has had to leave his home.
Author’s note: *Sasha is not necessarily a refugee-- he’s just a boy who has had to move to a different country-- but the feelings he has can help us cultivate compassion for all displaced people.*

4. Read *Sasha and the Dragon*.

5. Talk about the book. Ask age-appropriate questions and lead age-appropriate discussion according to the students’ needs.

This will vary depending on your students and your circumstances! This story can be used as a springboard for some pretty deep issues—be sure to address these with your students, as these are the meat and potatoes of their spiritual education. Review other available lesson plans for ideas.

6. Ask students:

- What parts of the world are suffering? (Refer to IOCC website for ideas; make sure to address everything that the students themselves bring up.)
- What is the most important thing we can remember to do for displaced people and people suffering persecution? (Answer: Pray!)
- How can we remember to pray for others? (Take ideas; then introduce project.)

7. One way is to write ourselves notes to place in our prayer corner. It can be a simple note: “Pray for Haiti.” Or a picture of a house underwater that reminds us to pray for flood victims. Or it can be an entire prayer copied out, like the prayer for those in need:

O Christ, Who alone art our Defender: Be mindful, O Lord, of the young and the old; orphans and widows; the sick and the suffering, the sorrowing and the afflicted, all captives, and the needy poor; upon them all send forth thy mercies, for thou art the Giver of all good things.

8. Have students choose ONE situation to pray for—you may have students who feel like making cards for every single item on the list! Emphasize that their job is to remember to pray for one thing. At the elementary level, it is important to not accidentally make them feel like they are responsible for the world, just that they are part of it and contributing in a spiritually important way.

9. Give students an index card and markers, preferably fine-tip for the writing. Have them write or draw a prayer reminder for their chosen situation. Encourage them to decorate their reminder cards, adding elements that will help them remember to pray.

10. Review students’ discussion responses on the whiteboard.

11. Optional service project for upper elementary: [Assemble IOCC Emergency Kits](#).

There are several ways to do this project. You can have students volunteer to purchase certain items, then bring them to class the following week for group assembly. Or you can have the items already purchased and ready to assemble— if you need money, consider the Sunday School budget or talking with parents prior to the lesson.

11. Close with prayer: *Our Father* or *Prayer for Those in Need*.

Thank you for using Sasha and the Dragon in your lesson plans. I pray that it is edifying for your soul and the souls of your students. Pray for me, as well!