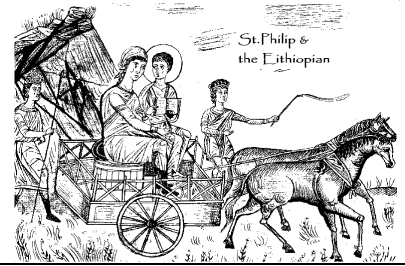


RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh

Vol. XII, No. 1, Fall 2005

Phyllis Meshel Onest, M.Div., Director



Dear Readers,

❖ This year's Fall Packet contains the usual updated **"YELLOW PAGES for Religious Education,"** information on new books and a CD of children's music by GiGi Shadid, Cliff's Notes for the **Guidebook for the Oratorical Festival** by Presbytera Margaret Orfanakos, National Co-chairman, an **Advent Activity**, along with a new websites (check them out!).

❖ Then there 3 exceptional websites - a *virtual tour* of **St Nicholas Church in Finland** developed by Sonja Tammivuori, **The Orthodox Church & Its Icons**, and **Pascha Polyglotta – Christ is Risen!** spoken in 250 languages including Klingon!

❖ Remember to check back to www.phyllisonest.com periodically for Updates.

❖ **FALL WORKSHOPS: Lancaster, PA Teacher Training Workshop on October 8.** Workshops are planned for **Youngstown, OH** and **E. Pittsburgh, PA**; dates TBA. Anyone desiring to set up a workshop or speaking engagement, please contact me soon. I am also working as a **Staff Writer for the Greek Archdiocese Center for Family Life** now, so don't be surprised to see my work elsewhere.

Wishing you a Blessed School Year,

Phyllis

ONGOING TEACHER ENRICHMENT

2005 ORTHODOX INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION - November 3-6

Antiochian Village in Ligonier, PA

- ◆ Sponsored by the Departments of Christian Education of the Antiochian Archdiocese.
- ◆ Courses for Teachers, Church School Directors, and those wanting to learn more about Orthodoxy.

Information available at

<http://www.antiochian.org/christianeducation>

INTERNET SCHOOL OF ORTHODOX STUDIES (ISOS)

ISOS On-Line Lecture Series begins again in the Fall. Live viewing on Tuesdays 7:00-8:30 PM. Previous Lecture Series are archived. For more Information go to www.religioused.org or call 800-566-1088.



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY Magazine WORKSHOPS

Non-Orthodox

Theme: Families

For the dates and cities of this year's workshops

Go to: <http://www.cmmag.com/cmml2005/>



2006 ORATORICAL FESTIVAL

At the 2004 Archdiocese Clergy-Laity Congress in New York City, National Oratorical Festival Co-Chairman, Presbytera Margaret Orfanakos, presented a workshop - **"Conducting a Successful Oratorical Festival."** She has given permission to distribute the handout, which I have nicknamed **"Cliff's Notes" for the Oratorical Festival Manual.** Good News! The

ORATORICAL FESTIVAL MANUAL IS ONLINE!

2006 Theme -The FESTAL MENAION For Topics, Tips & Bibliography

1. The Department of Religious Education's website www.religioused.goarch.org, or
2. Purchase the **2006 ARC - Annual Resource Companion.** Cost: \$5.00.

MUSIC IN THE CHURCH SCHOOL

Dr. Vicki Pappas has much to share!

At this summer's Tri-Level Institute Dr. Vicki Pappas, President of the National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians, presented *Our Hymnology Program*. She described the Hymnology Program at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in Indianapolis, IN. With her permission, it is included in this packet. **It's a "How To" and a "WOW" and "We can do at least part of this" article.**

NEW RESOURCES

STUDY QUESTIONS FOR SUNDAY GOSPELS, & MAJOR FEASTS

<http://www.orthodox.net/questions/index.html>

Wish you had questions for the weekly Gospel lesson or to ask the students about a Feast Day? Check out this site and you will! Great for weekly lessons and VCS lesson preparations.



A VIRTUAL CHURCH TOUR

<http://www.pyykkonen.net/ortodoksit/kirkko/>



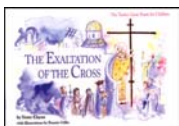
takes us to a St. Nicholas Orthodox Church in Finland, developed by Sonja Tammivuori. Click the British flag to hear the explanation in English, rather than Finnish, then

enter the Church for the Tour.

FROM CONCILIAR PRESS

The *Twelve Great Feasts for Children Series* by Sister Elayne is now complete. (\$5.95 each)

- [1] *The Entry of Our Lord into Jerusalem*
- [2] *The Dormition of the Theotokos*
- [3] *The Exaltation of the Cross*



What makes this series special is that the reader comes to realize the celebration of each Feast Day is not an event of the past, but is in the NOW, and we participate in it Today. Wonderful watercolor illustrations by Bonnie Gillis!

ANTIOCHIAN GOSPEL PROGRAM

<http://www.antiochian.org/christianeducation>

Click onto *Antiochian Gospel Program*

Each Sunday's Gospel, plus discussion questions, is on a single page. 5 grade levels - **Preschool, K-2, Grades 3-5, Middle School and High School**. Pages for younger students feature a line icon to color and paraphrase of the Gospel. Grades 3-5 are presented with the Gospel as it will be heard.

How can we use these?

[1] They are designed for parents to use on the Saturday before or Sunday morning before Liturgy, with the hope that the resource will help the children listen more attentively to the Gospel and aid their understanding. [2] For those who have small Church Schools and need a lesson for all the students, here are five graded, ready-to-use handouts of the Gospel with appropriate discussion questions. [3] Mail the week's Gospel sheet to absent students along with a note letting them know you missed them. They know you cared enough to mail the handout and they have something to do at home with their Parents.

FREE ONLINE RESOURCE

Children's Ministry magazine

<http://www.cmmag.com/index.asp>

Non-Orthodox Source. This site is so full of ideas & activities that are great or adaptable, but the theology is not Orthodox & sometimes anti-Orthodox, so please use with care. Let you Parish Priest see what you use.

- [1] **Photocopiable pages** [scroll down to "OK to Copy"]
 - [a] For Parents Only & [b] Teacher Telegram
- [2] **Web Extras Tab**
 - a) Craft Plans - from "Leading Volunteers"
 - b) 10 Active Bible Stories --"Age-Level Insights: 0-2"
 - c) Web Connects from Previous Issues

FROM GIZELLE – GiGi - SHADID

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT CD



GiGi Shadid has produced a **GREAT CD** of children's sing-a-long music. A Teacher's Resource is available and sheet music is coming soon. To hear a song from the CD, go to

<http://www.gsquareproductions.com/>

Email: gigishadid@yahoo.com

A VERY LARGE LIST OF SAINTS

<http://www.zeta.org.au/~aofosm/msaints.htm>

FESTAL FLAGS & BANNERS

New from Festal Creations

Large (24"x36" / \$6.95) / Small (13"x18" / \$3.95)



www.festalcreations.com

festalc@juno.com / 800-747-9245

Ask about Banner Dowels, Flag Poles,
Flag Brackets & Black Garden Poles.

ANCIENT FAITH RADIO

This 24 hour Internet based Orthodox radio ministry of All Saints Orthodox Church in Chicago offers a worldwide pan Orthodox radio ministry featuring the teachings and music of the historic Orthodox faith.

<http://www.ancientfaithradio.com/aboutus.htm>

MY PRAYER JOURNAL

encourages children ages 7 - 12 to consider the needs of children living in countries where IOCC works, as they pray. Full-color 12-month booklet.

<https://www.iocc.org/news/prayerjournal.shtml>



To order more than one copy, contact the *Department of Religious Education of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese* [800-566-1088] The prayer journal is free, but shipping charges may apply.

At <https://www.iocc.org/kidspage/schoolkit1.html> is an interactive activity of assembling school kits for children in need; also in the Journal. For more info: IOCC at 410-243-9820/ FAX: 410-243-9824 / <http://www.iocc.org> Email: relief@iocc.org

VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The emails began in May asking for VCS programs on the Theotokos, Miracles, Parables, and Major Feasts. As a result, pages on the **Miracles of Christ Teaching Resources** and **Parables of Christ Teaching Resources** have been added to the YELLOW PAGES. *Little Falcons Magazine* has Miracles and Parables issues, as well as other topics for VCS. Has your

parish worked on a VCS program? Are you willing to share it? If yes, send it to me. I know people are doing work all around the country. They tell me, but it's kept a secret. I'm offering to help and I don't expect it to be in final form; it was done for one summer. **Share your work and talents.** Credit goes to all involved.

WANT TO LEARN ABOUT ICONS?

Go to <http://home.eg-gym.dk/fagene/religion/Ortodokse%20kirke/dox.html> (There are no spaces between the lines) **THE ORTHODOX CHURCH AND ITS ICONS** has 4 divisions: General, Orthodox Churches (including Monasteries), Audio, and Links to other sites. It offers a wealth of knowledge, then sends us off to learn more! *Developed in Denmark.*

HOME SCHOOLING RESOURCES

Due to frequent requests, I need recommendations for **Orthodox Home Schooling materials** and **Orthodox-friendly materials** [A list exists on www.theologic.com / World Wide Links]. I'm also collecting names of Families willing to help those just starting. Please share this information with interested families.

Has your Church School Director changed?



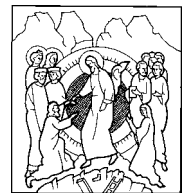
Was I informed so that the records could be changed? If necessary, please be sure that the former Director gives this packet to the New Director & that I am

contacted about the change of Director.

Thank you, Phyllis

IN HOW MANY LANGUAGES CAN YOU SAY "CHRIST IS RISEN"?

PASCHA POLYGLOTTA says it in 250 languages, including Klingon! Special thanks go to Fr. Stéphane Bigham of Saint-Eustache Québec, Canada for all the work that went into this project. <http://www.srbigham.com/>



LET'S KEEP THE COMMUNICATION LINES OPEN: The fastest & least costly means to contact Clergy & Directors is by Email. Please make sure I have yours. Don't have one, find a reliable Family or Staff member to receive email for you. *This is a Public Service Announcement.*

**ATTENTION
JR & SR HIGH SCHOOL
TEACHERS!**

The subject of what materials to use is asked at each workshop, and for the Pittsburgh Metropolis, the answer has been given. If we keep waiting for a complete 9-12 curriculum, this group of High School students will graduate without being prepared for college & for life.

[1] Use an existing program from the DRE of the GOA. The long-awaited *Teenage Curriculum, Grade 9, Unit 1* will be ready in September.

[2] Use an existing program from the OCEC, (Orthodox Christian Education Commission) of which the Greek Archdiocese is a member. (A list is at the end of the article.) Each parish receives a Catalog yearly.

[3] Develop lessons using topics from the “Jr & Sr. High Resources” pages in the 2005 YELLOW PAGES for Religious Education.

[4] Develop study questions for an Orthodox book, with the priest’s permission, such as *The Incarnate God*.



Meditate on these thoughts.

Please, if you are, do not continue teaching only “what the kids want.” The topics may be good ones, but is this what our young people need to know when they go out into the world? St. Paul wrote, “All things are lawful for me, *but all things are not helpful*“...all things are lawful for me, *but not all things edify.*” (1Co 6:12, 10:23) Do our teens understand why all life is sacred to Orthodox Christians, and the ramifications? What will our students do when faced with dating non-Christians? Is being an Orthodox Christian important enough that they do not want to experience the consequences of marrying outside the Orthodox Church and understand the consequences? Why is modesty important? What is a Steward of the Church or a Steward of the Environment? Why reach out to the homeless,

needy, hungry... Matthew 25? Most of all, do they love God? Do they know how to Worship God? Have they gone to Confession?

Here are several college scenarios involving our now Church School “Graduates.” [1] **They understand!** The Family, Family Worship, Church School, Summer Camp, and Diocese Retreats reinforced each other, and now they serve as Counselors. There still is no guarantee, but the probability is higher that they will marry in the Church. [2] **They are not secure in their faith.** The Non-Denominational Campus Ministry Group is there, ready to answer questions our young adults can’t, show them how to pray, how easy it is to worship and believe as they do, and our young adults are swept away. [3] While they are in college, there is **no Orthodox Church to attend or they put Church at the bottom of the priority list. They become lapsed members**, fall in love with some nice non-Orthodox young adult, and as Fr. Charles Joanides reports in his book *When You Intermarry*, cannot explain the Orthodox Faith to others. Since the boyfriend/girlfriend is more knowledgeable or stronger in his/her faith, they get married in his/her church.

It really does take a whole Village to form an Orthodox Christian - Parents, Extended Family, Church Family, Metropolis Family, Church School, Summer Camp, Metropolis Retreats, GOYA, weekly Worship, & Liturgical Year. The 45-50 minutes of Church School is important time to deal with issues, subjects, concerns, worries and joys they can fall back on when they need to - AFTER they leave us. Let us make sure they have lots to fall back on. Don’t waste a minute, but don’t make the class overbearing.

From OCEC –

1. ***The Way, The Truth and The Life*** - grades 8-12, Excellent Textbook / Reference book! Optional ***Content Mastery Tests***. Traditional and Co-operative Learning Lesson Plans.
2. ***Focus on You*** by John Boojamra – grades 7-12; 6 topics, 30 lessons; EXCELLENT!
3. ***Him Again*** supplement to *Focus on You*, **focuses on Prayer** by John Boojamra; EXCELLENT!
4. Check out the **INTERIM CURRICULA** for Middle and High School
5. ***Celebration: Feasts and Holy Days*** – All Orthodox Christians need to know the basic Liturgical Calendar!

TO DIRECTORS & CLERGY

Maximizing The Use of This Packet

1. Make a copy of the Newsletter for each Teacher.
2. Provide each teacher with copies of articles that pertain to his/her grade.
3. Place the originals in a Notebook devoted to the Semi-Annual Newsletters/Packets. The Notebook belongs to the Church School. Any Director or Teacher should have access to this past information..
4. If you have a Reference File, place a copy of each article in the appropriate folder. See the "Church School Reference File" article "Fall 2003 Packet."
5. Direct Staff members to www.phyllisonest.com.



2005-2006 PLANNING CALENDAR

DIRECTORS: The Calendar is on the Website as a Word file so you can modify it for your parish. Consider adding the following:

1. Scheduled Teachers' Meetings
2. The Parish, District, Metropolitan, and National Oratorical Festival Dates
3. The dates of Lenten or Mission Projects
4. The dates for the Christmas Program rehearsals
5. The End-of-the-Year Awards Program.
6. Social gatherings or Recognition Day for the Staff
7. Teacher Training Sessions

TEACHERS: The Calendar lets you know whether a Sunday is for a lesson or another activity such as the Procession of Icons on Orthodoxy Sunday, etc. You can write in Lesson numbers or other notes as you plan the year. For GOA Texts, check the back of the Teacher's Manual for Saints, Hymns, and Feast Days that need to be worked in and add those to the Calendar.

2005-2006 Church School Planning Calendar Sept 11 _____ Sept 18 _____ Sept 25 _____
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LITTLE FALCONS Magazine

Enclosed is an *Order Form* including all 36 Back Issues. Does the Church School have a subscription? 4 issues/\$15.00 is a great buy! Consider making copies of the Form for the Church School Parents & posting one on the Bulletin Board. A complete set would be an *Orthodox Children Encyclopedia of the Faith*.

REMINDERS OF YEARLY PROJECTS

1. ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN PRISON MINISTRY- Christmas Cards

Information Sheet Enclosed

2. IOCC SOUPER BOWL

Participate in *Souper Bowl for Caring* on Super Bowl Sunday - February 6, 2006. A local charity benefits from the canned food collection and IOCC benefits from the \$1.00 per person collection. For 2005, 11,167 Organizations benefited \$ 4,001,000. For information, go to <http://www.souperbowl.org/> now, and later in the Fall, <http://www.iocc.org>



ADVENT ACTIVITY 2005

"What Can I Give to Jesus?" involves filling a Manger with Shekels. (Judas received 30 pieces of silver - *Shekels* - when he betrayed Jesus.) Each Shekel has a task written on it. Once the task is done, it goes in the Manger. By Christmas, each student will have 40 Shekels to give Jesus, representing the good deeds and actions of love because they love Jesus. Grades 1-6:

INCLUDED IN THE FALL 2005 PACKET

- ❑ 2005-2006 Yellow Pages for Religious Education
- ❑ 2005-2006 Church School Planning Calendar
- ❑ Planning Calendar -Julian
- ❑ Conducting a Successful Oratorical Festival Article by Presbyteria Margaret Orfanakos
- ❑ Our Hymnology Program Article by Dr. Vicki Pappas
- ❑ Hymnology Materials for Youth Order Form
- ❑ Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry Info Sheet
- ❑ What Can I Give Jesus? Advent Activity

