

## **IDEA CORNER: A FATHER'S DAY PROJECT**

Linda Biando of St. John Chrysostom Orthodox Church in Philadelphia, and Religious Education Coordinator of the Albanian Orthodox Archdiocese [OCA] used the following poem as part of a Father's Day present along with a basil plant that the students had grown from seed.

The basil plants can also be purchased at local garden centers and nurtured by Dad and his children during the summer in anticipation of bringing the plant to Church for the Feast of the Elevation of the Cross on September 14.

St. Helena found the Cross of our Lord buried under a field of sweet-smelling basil. The Orthodox Churches of the world that are in warm climates use sweet basil to decorate the Church and even decorate the tray on which the cross is carried in procession on this Feast Day. In some churches, stocks of dried basil are tied together and used by the priest for the blessing of water at Theophany. [Reprinted from Orthodox Family Life, Summer 1998.]

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### **For Dad**

Here's my Father's Day present,  
Especially for you,  
It's a plant called basil,  
And basiliko, too.  
We can plant it in our garden,  
It will be a lot of fun.  
We will give it water,  
And God will give it sun.  
Through the summer it will grow,  
To become a plant so tall.  
We will keep it until September,  
And cut some in the fall.  
We will bring some stalks to  
Church,  
As the Cross we elevate,  
Then with the stalks of basil,  
The Church we'll decorate!

