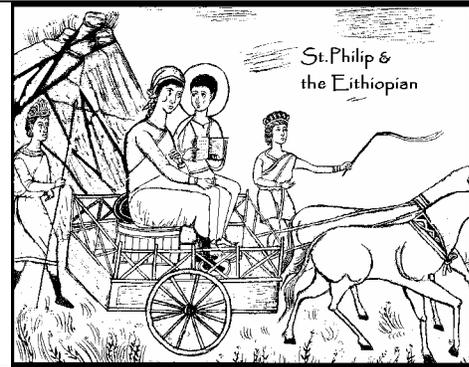


# NEWS & NOTES FOR THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN EDUCATOR

Vol. XVIII No. 1, Fall 2011

Phyllis Meshel Onest, M.Div., Editor

Director of the Office of Religious Education,  
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh



**Church School Directors: Please distribute copies of this Newsletter to your teachers.  
Regarding the Learning Objectives, print out the ones relative to the book each teaches.**

## Contents of the Fall 2011 Newsletter & Packet

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- ❖ *2011-2012 Yellow Pages* (4 pages)
- ❖ Learning Objectives: Grades 1-5 Textbooks (40 pages) Keep 1 set Teacher's Reference
- ❖ Learning Objectives: Middle/Jr & Sr High Textbooks (14 pgs) Teachers' Reference Set
- ☐ 2011-2012 Church School Planning Calendar is online at [www.phyllisonest.com](http://www.phyllisonest.com)

## EDITORIAL FROM THE METROPOLIS DIRECTOR...

### When do we have Church School Classes? How long are they to be?

The answers for these two questions have not changed in over 20 years. They are also answers that are not acceptable to some parents, and therefore some parishes!

The answers were reiterated by Dr. Anton Vrame, the Archdiocese Religious Education Director, at the 2010 Clergy-Laity Plenary Session and in his published Report.

✧ **Children [are to] attend as much of the Sunday Divine Liturgy as possible, at least through Holy Communion.**

✧ **Every Parish [is to] set aside between 45 minutes to one hour, per week for Sunday Church School.**



Thus, regardless of what time the children get to their classes, they are to have 45-60 minutes of class time with their teachers!

The Metropolitans and Bishops agree. One of their main tasks is teaching the Faithful. They want our young people to stay in the Orthodox Church because the young people want to do so. The youth are more apt to do

so if worship and education have been a priority in their family.

Parents are the first line of education when it comes to teaching the faith because the faith is lived out in the home.

Here is a scary thought. When Parents demote the value of worship and religious education, does this mean their children could do so as well?! Doing nothing is really doing something big in the negative direction!

*What is our PRIORITY* assuming we want our pews filled with our children?

### **What is not important, correct thinking or our choice?**

*Sunday morning sports* –Do we really think our children will be professional sports stars? Even then, will Sunday sports help them in their spiritual development?

Sleeping in... unless as a parent you are not concerned about where you will be for eternity.

*Permitting our children to decide for themselves...* Ah, we promised Christ at their baptism to rear them in the Orthodox Church. As Orthodox parents, we do have an obligation to God, but it should really be seen as a joy. We are to do all we can to nurture our children in the Orthodox faith.

Our Lord is loving, patient and kind. What is our response?

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVE FOR TEXTBOOKS GRADES 1-5 & Middle/Jr and Sr High**



*“What Your Child Should Know... after X Grade”* was a project of our Department of Religious Education that has expanded and now refers to as **Learning Objectives: “Living Our Orthodox Faith” Elementary School Textbook Series - What Your Child Should Know**. Stephania Gianulis prepared this document, with additional material by Anton C. Vrame, PhD.

In 2000 Annunciation Church in Akron, OH worked on Learning Objectives and Tasks in an attempt to identify what students are to be taught, what topics may be missing and how to help teachers use the textbooks more effectively. To that end, the Prayers, Hymns, Songs, bible Stories, Memory Verses, Saints, Sacraments, Services and Vocabulary of each textbook were listed for each book and then

cross-referenced by topic. In addition, the development in five categories was noted.

That work has been added to **Learning Objectives: “Living Our Orthodox Faith” Elementary School Textbook Series - What Your Child Should Know** to offer a type of check sheet of information in each textbook.

In addition, if a parish wants to show the parents the areas their children have studied and missed, **Progress Reports** were developed using the check sheet information. Then the responsibility falls on them to fill in the gaps.

**Included in this Newsletter is the combined Learning Objectives of the DRE, the check sheet information, Progress Reports and an Attendance Sheet for this school year.**

Consider sharing the portion developed by the DRE with the parents in the beginning of the year. This is a concrete means of showing parents what will be taught in their children’s classroom. When they miss a class, the children miss a lesson that builds on the previous lesson; and each year builds on the previous year.

One value of the **Progress Reports** is to point out what lessons or topics were missed when their children were absent. It is up to the parent to make up the lesson.

**Learning Objectives: Middle School / Junior High and High School Textbooks (in progress) - What Your Child Should Know** was recently added. Stephania Gianulis and Aimee Cox Ehlers prepared this second major task, with additional material by Anton C. Vrame, PhD. This, too, is included in this Packet.

**FOR PARENTS:** At each seminar, I suggest distributing the words to the prayers, hymns, memory verses, etc. to the parents so they can be part of their children’s education.

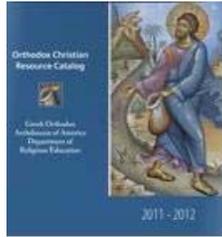
## **PARISH TEACHERS LISTS**

- ☑ **If your parish did not submit** a list of Church School Teachers and the requested information, please do as soon as you can. 
- ☑ **If your parish did submit a list**, I will send your list to review and update.
- ☑ **Dr. Vrame’s goal** is to be able to contact Teachers directly, as do I. He emails articles throughout the school year.

# RESOURCES

## Department Of Religious Education, Greek Archdiocese

**NEW 2011-2012 Orthodox Christian Resource Catalog** was sent to all Directors and Clergy of the Archdiocese. [Anyone may order a catalog & it is available online.]



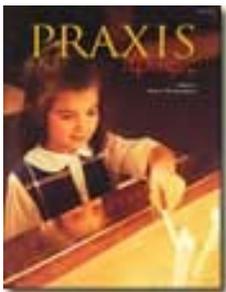
DO YOURSELF A FAVOR. Take a break! Get a cup of coffee or tea, get comfortable, with pen in hand, leaf through the new Catalog and mark the resources that catch your attention or for which you have a need.

## LET US LIVE ORTHODOXY, Vol. 1 by Georget Photos



Using crafts, recipes and projects, the first volume of *Let Us Live Orthodoxy* helps youth directors, religious educators, and clergy illuminate youth groups, retreats and classrooms with the joy of the Christmas season. The 10 activities in this book include making incense, baking Christopsomo, and exploring the symbolism of Theophany, in addition to unique extensions of favorite activities.

But this is not a mere craft book: *Let Us Live Orthodoxy* is a hands-on approach that leads young people to understand and respect the traditions of the Church, enabling them to actively include these traditions in their lives. These sessions include discussions to prompt questions that might otherwise lie dormant.



**PRAXIS** magazine archives for 1999-2010 are online.

[www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/religious/used/praxistest](http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/religious/used/praxistest)

## IOCC – International Orthodox Christian Charities



Do not forget to order the **2011 IOCC PRAYER BOOK** from the Department of Religious Education. It helps our youth learn to pray for people around the world.

The only charge is shipping and handling. The books are free.

## Department of Christian Education, Antiochian Archdiocese

### THE HOLY LAND POSTER PROJECT

by Carole Buleza, Chair, Department of Christian Education, Antiochian Archdiocese

### CONNECTING US TO JESUS CHRIST

“When I was young, I found a book about the Holy Land; the images of the holy sites fascinated me—Bethlehem, Golgotha, Cana—these were the places where Jesus walked and lived! *He was real!*”

Images of all sorts surround us today. If your children text, tweet, and Facebook, they live in a world of distraction—is Jesus even on their radar? *Let’s get back to basics—our faith, and our life itself, rests in a person who lived 2,000 years ago and lives still.* Buy posters for the church school and begin to surround your students with **images that remind them of the reality of Jesus!** “

### ORTHODOX INSPIRATIONAL POSTER PROGRAM

The Department of Christian Education [of the Antiochian Archdiocese] plans to offer a few posters each summer for homes, classrooms, church hallways, and offices. A limited amount has been printed. They are available for a donation of \$5, and come safely to you in a mailing tube. The smaller 5" x 7" photo prints will be sent in a cardboard mailing envelope for a donation of \$2 each. These are ideal for personal use—framed for an icon corner, a bedside, for bookmarks, for gifts. When you pray, meditate upon the image and be drawn into the reality of Jesus.

For questions about this project, please contact the Department of Christian Education, [aodce@aol.com](mailto:aodce@aol.com).

Order form included in this Fall Newsletter packet.

## ORTHODOX CRAFTS FOR CHURCH SCHOOLS OR CAMPS



- On a CD. \$10 per CD includes shipping & handling.
- Available under the auspices of the **Christian Education Department Antiochian Orthodox Church**
- 4 Craft CDs each year, with 20 crafts & activities covering a 3-month period.
- Each CD to focus on the Holy Days and the Season of the Church year.
- Intended for use in Orthodox programs.
- Currently available - Volume 1 for November-January; Volume 4 for August-October.
- Each craft includes an illustration, supply list, specific directions, age guidelines and patterns on 1-2 pages to be copied and distributed to teachers.
- For more information or to order, contact: [christianeducator@gmail.com](mailto:christianeducator@gmail.com)

**REVIEW:** Directions need to be more complete. Icons are integral to Orthodox worship vs. a decoration. We must help our youth understand this. Can whatever craft is made be part of a prayer corner or be used as a teaching tool?

## DRE, Metropolis of Pittsburgh



### TEACHER'S NOTEBOOKS ORGANIZING TEACHER HANDOUTS

How many years have you as a Director reprinted the same information? What a waste of your time and trees!

What about assigning each Grade a TEACHER'S NOTEBOOK containing those regularly reprinted handouts, i.e. feast day material, special saints, information on students' developmental stages, etc.

The **CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHER'S NOTEBOOK** guideline lists sections & subdivisions to make your job easier.

Included in the 2011 Fall Newsletter Packet.

### 55 MAXIMS FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

Many emails come my way daily. I share this one with teachers of the teen classes. Consider using one of the maxims at the beginning of class to get your young people thinking and reflecting on the Christian way of life. Or, use them when there is time at the end of class. What a way to leave them thinking!

Included in this Fall Newsletter Packet

### ONLINE RESOURCES – FALL 2011

An updated listing of websites and pod sites.

Included in this Fall Newsletter Packet

## Orthodox Institute

- ✘ Nov 3-6 (Thurs–Sun). Come when you can.
- ✘ Antiochian Village, Ligonier, PA
- ✘ “*Scripture through the Lens of the Holy Land*”
- ✘ Keynote: Fr Thomas Hopko
- ✘ Presenter: Dr Maria Khoury
- ✘ Sponsored by Antiochian and Greek Orthodox Archdioceses, the Orthodox Church in America & the Orthodox Christian Education Commission (O.C.E.C.)
- ✘ For further information & to download brochures & registration forms, please visit [www.antiochian.org/christianeducation/oi2011](http://www.antiochian.org/christianeducation/oi2011)

**DO NOT MISS OUT!**

## Children to Children: Emergency Health & School Kits for IOCC



My favorite charity is IOCC. It is pan-Orthodox in support and helps people of all backgrounds throughout the world. While examining [www.iocc.org](http://www.iocc.org) I learned about the unbelievable amount of good work IOCC has done in the U.S. with the hurricane & tornado victims, in Japan after the tsunami, in Greece after the fires, in NYC after 9/11 and more.

92% of each dollar goes directly to aid! IOCC also partners with other organizations such as CWS – Church World Service – to distribute the emergency health & school kits.

Each year I encourage ordering IOCC Prayer Journals so our youth can learn charity and love of humanity. One cannot look at the pictures of the children from the countries where IOCC works and not be affected.

If we want a project to reinforce this, one of these two projects will do it.

Description sheet in this Fall Packet.

## 2012 ORATORICAL FESTIVAL

### DISTRICT FESTIVAL - Saturday, April 28

West: SS Constantine-Helen, Cleveland, OH

Central: Holy Trinity, Ambridge, PA

East: St. Matthew, Blandon, PA

### METROPOLIS FESTIVAL-Saturday, May 18

St. Nicholas Cathedral, Pittsburgh, PA

### ARCHDIOCESE FESTIVAL

June 8-10, 2012

St. George, Bethesda, MD