

GRADES 9-12 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Many parishes combine 9th through 12th grade classes into a High School Class. This may be done, in part, because of the number of available students. Another reason for this grouping is that by now they have completed eight years of catechetical training and the emphasis should shift to a practical application of the faith in one's life and the significance of the faith in the world. This does not mean that there will no longer be didactic presentations. The vastness of Orthodox theology and Tradition requires us to present additional material to the high school student as needed

For this to happen, a high school program needs to:

1. Introduce our students to the issues and situations of the world.
2. Identify the unique Orthodox characteristics (monasticism, theology, worship, and role in the world, social issues).
3. Brings together the totality of Tradition that entails Scriptural ability and the skill of finding Patristic commentaries [Integrate Scripture, Church Fathers, Doctrine, Hymns, Icons, Church Services].
4. Present the Orthodox teaching and maintain the Orthodox Ethos.

High schoolers should:

1. Take an active participatory role in the liturgical year, becoming knowledgeable of its details and conversant with such events as the Triodion, the Pentecostarion and the balance of the ecclesiastical cycle. They could sing in the choir, be readers, and be actively a part of the charitable activities (collect, deliver things, etc.), and assume a stewardship role in the life of the parish.
2. Know and understand the unique Orthodox aspects of a religious life.
3. Be able to apply the teachings of the faith to everyday life and situations (drugs, sex, abortion, creation, worship, etc.).
4. Know the meanings of the words listed on the Vocabulary List.

*The following 6 Units for discussion can be rotated over the course of four years, and even returned to for another level of understanding. **Comparative Religions, Eschatology, Marriage & Family Life, Modern Ethical Issues, Service & Mission, Spiritual Life.***

I. COMPARATIVE RELIGIONS

- OTHER CHRISTIANS: Protestant, Roman Catholic, Episcopal
- Compare and contrast various teachings.
- Refer to Scriptographic booklets.
- Visit other churches: Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed, Baptist, Evangelical

- NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS
- Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism

II. ESCHATOLOGY

- CULTS & NEW AGE RELIGIONS

THE SPIRIT WORLD: angels, demons, spirits [Resource: Mother Alexandra's *The Holy Angels*]

- New age angels
- The influence of Satan on each of us and the limits God places.
- What does the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed say about it?
- Feast of the Archangels

THE END TIMES

- The Book of Revelation: Why was it written? For whom was it written? [Refer to *Orthodox Study Bible*.]
- The Second Coming of Christ. What does the Orthodox Church teach about it?
- What is the Rapture? Do we believe in it?
- What does the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed say about it?

HEAVEN & HELL

- Are they real places?
- What does the Orthodox Church teach about these?

AN ORTHODOX UNDERSTANDING OF DEATH: Soul, Body, Mind

- Examine the hymns of the funeral service.
- What is the function of Memorial Services?
- The psychological benefit of the way the Orthodox Church deals with the dead.

III. MARRIAGE & FAMILY LIFE [Resources: Greek Archdiocese's Interfaith Marriage website.]

- Dating: Orthodox, Christians, non-Christians.
- Choosing a mate.
- The Orthodox understanding of marriage. [See St. John Chrysostom]
- If I love him/her enough, can I change him/her?
- Interfaith marriages: Christian and non-Christian. What are the consequences?
- Children – do we have to have them?
- What is the Orthodox understanding of the role of godparents?
- Celebrating Namedays.

DIVORCE & BLENDED FAMILIES

- What does the Orthodox Church teach about divorce?
- What does the Orthodox Church teach about remarriage?
- Parental issues of discipline and parenting styles.

DUTIES OF AN ORTHODOX PARENT [Refer to St. John Chrysostom & St. Theophan the Recluse.]

- What is expected?
- How does interfaith marriage affect this?

THE MANY FACES OF LOVE

- Erotic love, filial love, storge love, agape.
- Can we choose to fall in love? Can we choose not to fall in love?

IV. MODERN ETHICAL ISSUES [Resource: Harakas' *Toward a Transfigured Life*, especially chapter 2]

CREATION & EVOLUTION

- Refer to St. Basil's *Hexameron*.
- Refer to *Creationism Versus Evolution* by Fr. George Nicozisin (out of print)
- Refer to *The Orthodox Idea of Creation* by John Boojamra, Ph.D., *The Word*, June 1999, pp.31-34, available on <http://home.neo.rr.com/pmonest> under Spring 2000 Packet.
- What does the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed say about it?
- Did it really occur in 6 days?
- What does the Orthodox Church teach about it?

WHEN DOES LIFE BEGIN? END?

- [Resources: *Sacred Gift of Life* by John Breck, *Garment of Skin* by Mantzarides]
- Abortion
- Euthanasia

GENETIC ENGINEERING

- Cloning
- Souls
- Fertility issues

ECOLOGY [Resource: Chrissavgis' *Beyond the Shattered Image*]

- Abuse of the Environment

ADDICTION [Resource: *Videos that Teach, "When A Man Loves A Woman"*

- Virtues vs. vices
- Materialism & possessions [Resource: *Videos that Teach, "Death Becomes Her"*, St. John Chrysostom]

SEXUALITY/HOMOSEXUALITY/ABSTINENCE

- [Resources: Family Research Council, MISH: Medical Institute for Sexual Health, Orthodox Christian Publication Center]
- Value systems & lifestyles
- Peer pressure

V. SERVICE & MISSION

STEWARDSHIP

- What does God expect from us?
- What does it take to become a merciful person?
- Getting out of our "comfort zone."
- Volunteering at a Soup Kitchen, Tutoring disadvantaged youth, IOCC, OCMC, Habitat for Humanity.

MISSIONS

- Domestic
- Foreign
- Historical overview

CAREERS & COLLEGE

- The importance of the Church in the life of the young adult.
- Should we choose a school that has no Orthodox presence in the vicinity?
- Should we choose a job that has no Orthodox presence in the vicinity?
- Today's choices may have a greater consequence than we realize.
- Dealing with the responsibilities of part time jobs.

VI. SPIRITUAL LIFE

THEOSIS

- Becoming Christ-like
- Define
- How does living in the secular world affect this?
- A different outlook on life.
- Analysis of choice of music, TV, videos, magazines, entertainment & Internet as sources of spiritual growth or temptation and sin.

- Power of the Media.
- Making the Orthodox Christian life one's not Mom or Dad's
- Synergia – cooperating with God
- Image & Likeness, Personhood
- Free Will/Determinism/Pre-Destination/Synergia

PRAYER LIFE [Resource: Coniaris' *Introduction to Orthodoxy*]

- From the Scriptures: ex. Psalm 50/51.
- Jesus Prayer.
- Lord's Prayer.
- Study of the Doxology.

SIN IN TODAY'S WORLD

- How is it manifested?
- How does it affect you and me?
- The seduction of the world
- Today's idols (Check out Balaam)

THE SACRAMENTAL LIFE

- How does this help us in our journey?
- Where does Fasting fit in?

PAIN, SUFFERING & LOSS

- The Book of Job [Refer to *Wisdom Let Us Attend: Job, the Holy Fathers and the Old Testament* by Johanna Manley.]
- Death: an Orthodox understanding
- Suicide [Video: Hot Talk Starters, Suicide]
- Broken relationships
- Forgiveness

ASCETICISM & MONASTICISM

- We are all called to lead an ascetical life. How can we do this "in the world"?
- Visit a monastery.
- Mt. Athos/ Mt. Sinai

REPENTANCE & CONFESSION

- What does the Lord's Prayer say about it?

MIRACLES

- Define
- Stories of miracles
- Within our families

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE UNDER PERSECUTION - THE PAST & TODAY

- Life in the Church until the Emperor Constantine.
- Compare the early persecution and martyrs with what occurred in the former Soviet block countries in the 1900's.
- What is happening now in Indonesia, Ethiopia, elsewhere?
- Refer to the lives of Fr. Arseny and Mother Maria

VII. THEOTOKOS & THE SAINTS [Refer to the *Prologue of Ochrid*.]

- Could she have said, "No"?
- How many are there?
- Compare and contrast the Orthodox, Protestant and Roman Catholic understandings.
- The Church Fathers today. Are they relevant? (ex. Theophan the Recluse wrote *Raising Them Right*.)
- St. Seraphim of Sarov
- Relics of saints
- Church Militant and Triumphant.
- Identify and relate the life of one's patron saint.

Additional Topics listed on the Detroit 1998-99 and 1999-2000 listings.

Some of these have been dealt with in grades 7 & 8.

Does God Exist?

New Testament - How It Came to Be

Lord's Prayer

Holy Trinity

Baptism

Hierarchy & Authority: Bishops, Priests,

Deacons, Laity

Old Testament / Septuagint

Church Calendar

Great Lent

Liturgical Music

Crusades

St. Paul

St. Ignatius

Byzantine Hymnology

Icons

Seven Imperial/Ecumenical Councils

Overview of each Gospel

Overview of Genesis, Exodus, Isaiah

Transfiguration