

# News & Notes for the Orthodox Christian Educator

Vol. XV No. 1, Fall 2008

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

" And Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, & do not forbid them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven. And He laid His hands on them." Matt 19:14



## **For the Churches of the Metropolis of Pittsburgh ONLY BEFORE YOU READ ANYTHING ELSE PLEASE READ THIS!**

During several recent parish visits, I learned that in some parishes the teachers DID NOT KNOW I had a Website! They had never seen the Newsletter! An overwhelming sense of sadness came over me as I realized that (a) over ten years of work was not shared with the people for whom I wrote it, and (b) the teachers who were asking for material at that moment, did not know it was a few clicks away. Their Church School Supervisor must not have known that his/her job included distributing copies of the Newsletter to the parish's Teaching Staff. The Supervisor is the lifeline between the Staff and the Metropolis Office of Religious Education and thereby the Metropolitan. The ideas, articles, resources, websites, family activities, etc. are tools to help our volunteer teachers do the best job they can.

Since clergy also receive a Newsletter & Packet, I would appreciate follow-up.

**Supervisors please inform all teachers** (a) in addition to the Newsletter, there is a Packet with additional pages, and (b) you will copy and distribute all articles relating to specific grades or departments. For example, a "Teaching Preschoolers" article would be given to all teachers of the Preschool classes. Once the Staff has a Newsletter, please **point out the website address at the bottom of the page**. Teachers can search the website and download additional resources.

## **2008 is a special year!**

September 2008 begins my 17<sup>th</sup> year of service to Metropolitan Maximos and the Pittsburgh Metropolis, the 15<sup>th</sup> year of providing a Newsletter and Packet to the Clergy and Church School Supervisors of the Metropolis, and the 1<sup>st</sup> year as the first full-time Director of the Office of Religious Education for any of the Metropolises. Like the Metropolis Youth Directors, the Archdiocese and the Metropolis share in funding this new position.

I thank Metropolitan Maximos, the first and only bishop of the Archdiocese to have a paid Director of Religious Education (part-time) for the past 16 years ago; Dr. Tony Vrame, Archdiocese Religious Education Director, who envisions full-time, paid Religious Education Directors in each Metropolis; and the members of the Pittsburgh Metropolis Council for their vision of education.



## **2008 ORTHODOX INSTITUTE**

Sponsor: Department of  
Christian Education,  
Antiochian Archdiocese

**Keynote Speaker**  
**Dr. Maria Kouremenou  
Khoury**

Author of the "*Christina*"  
Children's books series

**The Institute offers Courses** for Teachers, Church School Directors, and those wanting to learn more about Orthodoxy. *Cost to take three courses is only \$25.00 per day. (Meals & lodging extra.)*

- *Brochure and Registration form available at <http://www.antiochian.org/christianeducation>*
- *To learn about the Housing Project in Taybeh with which Maria is involved, go to <http://www.saintgeorgetaybeh.org/>*

*CHURCH SCHOOL SUPERVISORS & CLERGY:*  
Please copy and distribute this Newsletter to your Teaching Staff.

*Each Teacher needs a copy of*  
(1) "WHAT YOUR CHILD SHOULD KNOW" and  
(2) The "PLANNING CALENDAR" with your additions. (This calendar is online as a WORD document to which you can add information.) *Each Middle & High School Teacher needs a copy of "LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL & HIGH SCHOOL."*

## ORATORICAL FESTIVAL DATES



### **NEW!** ORATORICAL FESTIVAL WORKSHOPS **NEW!**

- **October 18, 2008** *Metropolis Center- Pittsburgh See Below!*
- **October 25, 2008** *Ss Constantine Helen, Reading, PA*

### DISTRICT FESTIVALS: SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 2009

**Eastern District: Annunciation Church, Lancaster, PA**

Contact: Maria Koursaris ~ 717.394.1735

**Central District: Dormition of the Theotokos, Aliquippa, PA**

Contact: Stacie Lefes ~ 724.378.4246

**Western District: Annunciation Church, Akron, OH**

Contact: George Callos ~ 330.434.0000

### METROPOLIS FESTIVAL: SATURDAY, MAY 9, 2009 at the Metropolis Center

Contact Phyllis Meshel Onest ~ 330-376-0629 or Philip Yamalis ~ H: 412-343-8355 / C 412-606-0092

**ARCHDIOCESE FESTIVAL: JUNE 12-14, 2009** St. Mary's Church, Minneapolis, MN

## ORATORICAL FESTIVAL WORKSHOP

### Save Saturday, October 18 or October 25 (in the East)!

This is the first time our Metropolis will offer Workshops on the "how-to's" of the Oratorical Festival for Parish and District levels. Invited individuals from around the Metropolis, who have chaired Parish and/or District Festivals, will share their experiences – positive and negative. Handouts will be available.



We will meet at the Metropolis Center where the speakers come for the Metropolis Festival and in Reading, PA for the Eastern Region.

Although more information will be sent to all parishes, I am interested to know which parishes are interested. Please send me note buy by email [pmonest@neo.rr.com](mailto:pmonest@neo.rr.com)



## Jr ORATORICAL FESTIVAL

It's January. Attendance is down. What can you do to get [1] students enthused about coming back and [2] their parents excited enough to bring the children to Church

What activity will do it? An OPEN HOUSE, but not a regular OPEN HOUSE. Use a Jr Oratorical Festival as an Open House opportunity for parents, relatives, and other interested parish members.

However, to make this work and maximize the efforts, you will need 3 OPEN HOUSES. According to Irene Cassis of Annunciation

Cathedral in Houston, TX, this program has been part of their program for years.

1. In January, Kindergarten and Grades 1 & 2 give presentations from curricula topics covered first semester. Presentations may be individual or a question and answer session for the whole group by the teacher. Students who make short presentations can incorporate artwork to illustrate their presentations.
2. In February, Grades 3 & 4 [1] select (a) a topic from 1<sup>st</sup> semester, (b) their saint or (c) feast day, [2] do the research and [3] write a short presentation which they present orally.
3. In March, Grades 5 & 6 do the same.

*For details go to Elementary Oratorical Festival found elsewhere in this packet.*

Irene Cassis from the Annunciation Cathedral in Houston states that by starting the students talking about their faith at such a young age, (1) they get comfortable speaking before groups of people, (2) they understand that as they get older, more preparation is needed, and (3) they look forward to participating in the St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival.

Parents are amazed at what their children know and can do, and as the children get older, parents are more willing to cooperate with and be supportive of the Oratorical festival program.

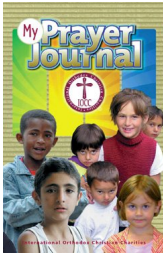
*CONGRATULATIONS to MANOLI MAGINAS who took FIRST PLACE in the Senior Division of the Archdiocese Oratorical Festival on June 7 in Lexington, MA. Manoli attends Dormition of the Theotokos Church in Aliquippa, PA. Manoli's parents are Spero and Irene Maginas.*

## YOUTH WEBSITES/PODCASTS

### 1) *The IOCC Kids Page*

- ♦ Prayer Journal
- ♦ Activities for Children
- ♦ Activities for High School Students
- ♦

<http://www.iocc.org/kidspage.aspx>



### 2) *Orthodox Teen Talk Online - OTTO – Podcasts for teens*

<http://www.myocn.net/index.php/Orthodox-Teen-Talk-Online/>

- ♦ An ongoing podcast features a pan-Orthodox group of teens from around the country.
- ♦ Real-life issues discussed with Orthodox clergy.
- ♦ Go to Orthodox Christian Network (OCN) to learn more [www.myocn.net](http://www.myocn.net).



### 3) *Get Wisdom* is a weekly **Bible Study** podcast for teens, young adults and families.

- ♦ Printable study guide for every episode.

<http://www.myocn.net/index.php/Get-Wisdom/>

### 4) *RE-Call - A Podcast for Orthodox Teens*

Produced by Jason Barker under the direction of the Department of Youth Ministry (Antiochian Archdiocese) & Ancient Faith Radio.

<http://www.orthodoxyouth.org/recall>



### 5) *SAINTS ALIVE*

- ♦ Interactive games and puzzles
- ♦ Kids ages 5 & up

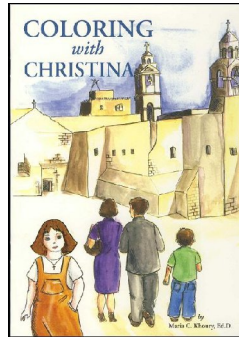
<http://games.goarch.org/>



Youth can access podcasts by computer. If the church school has Internet access, show your students how to access these sites. Place the links on your parish website and the bulletin.

## NEW RESOURCES

### *Coloring with Christina,*



The eighth book by Maria C. Khoury is based on ***Christina Goes to the Holy Land***. In the book, Christina takes a pilgrimage to the Holy Land with her brother Nicholas and their father. Children get to color the places Christina visited.

Scripture verses have been added. Educational for all, but created for the young. (Preschool and up) \$8.00

### *A Cloud of Witnesses: Saints & Martyrs from the Holy Land*

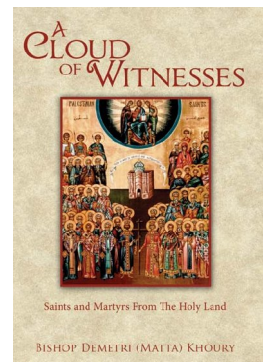
by Bishop Demetri (Matta) Khoury

This book includes the lives of over 575 Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Church Fathers & Hierarchs, Monastics and the Just. Each entry includes the saint's icon, life story, Apolytikion and Kontakion.

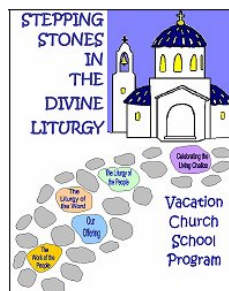
In addition, Bishop Demetri added a glossary, maps of the Holy Land, an index of names, a bibliography of references, illustrations and photographs of key landmarks. 665 pages. Hard cover (\$20.40) Paperback (\$15.40)

Go to the AuthorHouse website to order

<http://www.authorhouse.com/BookStore/ItemDetail~bookid~52673.aspx>



## VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL PROGRAM



***Stepping Stones in the Divine Liturgy*** is the culmination of several people's talent and work over five years. The 200-page manual, on a CD ready to download, offers 5 half-day sessions on the Divine Liturgy for Children K-6. All Lessons are together with

specific directions and classroom activities for two groups. Background information for teachers. Plus, "Everything a Director Needs to Know," "The Priest's Role," Crafts, Music, Daily Skits, Games, Nametags, a Theme Song & T-Shirt pattern. Distribution at Clergy-Laity November 12-14.





## RESOURCES FROM THE ANTIOCHIAN ARCHDIOCESE

Set aside a block of the time to familiarize yourself with the website of our sister Archdiocese.

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

The Department of Christian Education's website, under Director Carole Buleza, provides us with numerous resources. Here is an outline.

### 1) *Let Us Attend! Children's Weekly Gospel Program with Audio*

<http://www.antiochian.org/node/1448>

Produced by the Department of Christian Education and Ancient Faith Radio. Ideal for use as the curriculum for a small church school, or by parents who wish to read the gospel on Saturday night with their children.

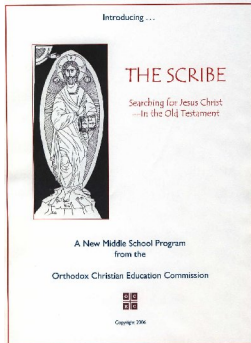
I have suggested using it in our classrooms since it offers questions at five [5] levels.

Sometimes the Greek and Antiochian Gospel readings do not match. Go to the Archdiocese site to double check. All Major Feast Days and the period between Triodion and Pentecost match.

<http://www.goarch.org/en/resources/dailyreadings/>

### 2) *THE SCRIBE ~ Searching for Jesus Christ in the Old Testament*

#### Middle school curriculum.



In this series of news articles written during the time of Jesus, the *Scribe, the scripture scholar*, begins to see relationships with the past for Jesus' words and actions. There are two Bible Skills lessons followed by 22 articles. Additional information is

found on the first pages of the Teacher's Manual.

Download Teacher's Units and Student's Units gratis. <http://www.antiochian.org/thescribe>

### 3) *Learning Opportunities for Middle School and High School*

A 5-page TABLE for HS (High School) or MS (Middle School) places programs & materials under 4 categories:

1. Theology, Scripture, History
2. Liturgy, Spirituality/Morality
3. Service, Witness, Saint
4. Other ideas

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

### 4) *Resource & Ideas*

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

- Resource Reviews (Books & more)
- "Cross and Quill" Articles for Teens
- Orthodox Christian Mission Center Lesson Plans - OCMC
- Resource Directory - **Very useful**
- Saints Festival
- Celebrate the Feast Days
- Out of the Box

### 5) *"To Tithe Is To Share, To Tithe is to Care - A Stewardship program for Orthodox children."* Overview below

<http://www.antiochian.org/tithing2007>

- Preparation Checklist
- Letters, Bulletins, Articles
- Teacher Notes, Collection Box Covers
- "How I served God" Strips
- 5-Grade Level Booklets
- Saints Posters
- Access Resources Designed for Priests
- Tithing Bookmarks

### 6) *Church School Director's Manual*

Five Sections make up the 70-page document:

1. The Church School Director
  - Role, Planning, Recruiting
2. The Church School Year (Opening)
  - Materials, Parents, Preschoolers
  - Behavior, Decisions
3. During the Church School Year (During)
  - Liturgical Year, Making It Special
4. Closing the Church School Year (Closing)
  - Closing Day, Evaluations
5. Appendices
  - Calendar, Registration form
  - Roster, Attendance Record
  - Supplies, Newsletter

## NEED A SPEAKER...READ ON

### Hieromonk Nicholas (Hughes)

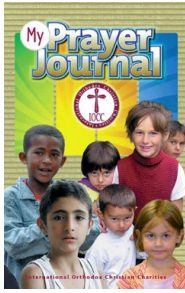
has many talents and serves God in many ways: Monk, Parish priest, Father Confessor, Calligrapher, and Iconographer.



Among the areas in which he is knowledgeable are both Eastern and Western History & Art; Iconography; Saints; and Hymnography. He brings aspects of Orthodox teachings and practices together so that it makes sense.

Topics for the Fall season: "Orthodoxy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," "Celebrating Christmas as an Orthodox Christian," "How to Keep Christmas Holy," "Swimming Against the Current" Contact Fr. Nicholas at [fr\\_nicholas@yahoo.com](mailto:fr_nicholas@yahoo.com) or St. Theodore House: 419-468-8880

## SUBSCRIPTIONS - NEW ISSUES



### IOCC Prayer Journal

International Orthodox Christian Charities This highly successful free resource for Orthodox children ages 7-12 helps students learn [1] about Orthodox youth in countries IOCC assists, [2] to pray for others, plus [3] to thank God for their blessings.

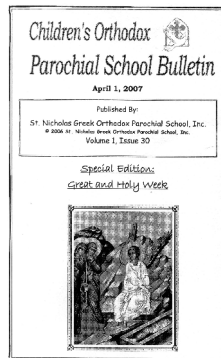
To order more than one copy, contact the Department of Religious Education of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, which distributes the journal to parishes of all jurisdictions. Toll-free 800-566-1088. Shipping charges may apply.

### SCHOOL KITS FOR CHILDREN IN NEED

The interactive activity of assembling school kits for children in need featured in the prayer journal can be done with or without the journal and makes an excellent project for youth groups, Church school classes or families.

### CHILDREN'S ORTHODOX PAROCHIAL SCHOOL BULLETIN

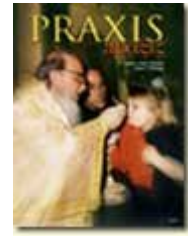
- **Distribute the Bulletin** to the Church School students each week.
- Mail it to the students who missed class!
- **The Bulletin categories**
  1. The Gospel Under the Microscope
  2. Focus on a Feast
  3. Did You Know? Facts About the Feast
  4. Fun and Games
- St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Parochial School in Tarpon Springs, FL publishes the **CHILDREN'S BULLETIN**. It is a free publication. On Tuesdays, Registered Subscribers receive an email directing them to a website for the upcoming Sunday's Bulletin.
- To Register, go to [http://www.StNicholasOrthodoxChristianSchool.org/html/childrens\\_bulletin.asp](http://www.StNicholasOrthodoxChristianSchool.org/html/childrens_bulletin.asp)
- Although it is a free publication, it is good for each parish to offer a donation to the school.



For Additional ways to use this publication, go to the Fall 2008 Newsletter.

## PRAXIS MAGAZINE

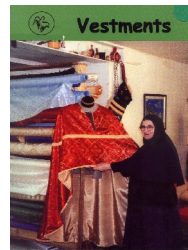
Is it time to renew your subscription?



- **Single subscription**, 3 issues [Fall, Winter, Spring] \$15.00.
- **Group Subscription Rates**, i.e. a number of issues sent to one address:
  1. 10-19 subscribers, \$12.00 per subscription.
  2. 20 or more subscribers, \$10 per subscription.

<http://www.goarch.org/erchdiocese/departments/religious/praxis.asp>

### LITTLE FALCONS Magazine



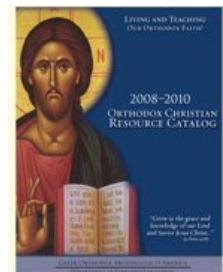
Editor, Fr. Thomas Kazich, will send a new ORDER FORM with the new topics soon. Check my website.

The posted order form is missing *Science, Senses, Fire, Hands, Candlelight, Holy Icons, The Precious Cross, and Bread.*

Remember, each issue focuses on one topic and can be the basis for a lesson or supplementary information. Forty-seven (47) issues have been published; 46 still available at \$5.00 each. If you have them all as I do, you, too, would have "A Children's Encyclopedia of the Orthodox Faith." Check my website for the updated *Little Falcons* Order Form [www.phyllisonest.com](http://www.phyllisonest.com). Subscription - 4 issues for \$15.00.

## DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### 2008-2010 Orthodox Christian Resource Catalog



includes a variety of new supplemental resources, as well as the curriculum. A "Must-Have" for all Church School Supervisors. Also online at [www.religioused.goarch.org](http://www.religioused.goarch.org)

## YEARLY PROJECTS TO DO

1. **Souper Bowl for Caring - February 9, 2009**  
Participate in **Souper Bowl for Caring on Super Bowl Sunday**. A local charity benefits from the canned food collection and IOCC (International Orthodox Christian Charities) To learn more, go to <http://souperbowl.org/> now, and later in the fall, check <http://www.iocc.org>
2. **ADVENT ACTIVITIES** - go to on my website.
3. **CHRISTMAS PLAYS** - go to my website.



## **“WHAT YOUR CHILDREN SHOULD KNOW”**

### **WHAT SHOULD MY CHILD KNOW BY THE \_\_\_ GRADE?”**

How often do parents ask this question? “The Archdiocese Department of Religious Education, under the direction of Dr. Anton Vrame, recently added a tool to the *Supervisor’s Section* of the DRE’s website to help answer the question. “WHAT YOUR CHILD SHOULD KNOW” is a summary of the concepts in each textbook from Grades 1-5.

**“ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR PRESCHOOL – HIGH SCHOOL”** was completed in 2000, by the Curriculum Committee of Annunciation - Akron, OH. (This is on my website.) The reviewers listed specific information in predetermined categories, and Vocabulary for the books in the main curriculum [Preschool-Grade 6], plus added vocabulary at each grade as needed.

The **“GOALS & OBJECTIVES”** also includes [1] a curriculum for Grades 7 and 8 and [2] topics High School students need to know, or hear about, before graduation.

### **HOW CAN WE USE “WHAT YOUR CHILD...”**

To facilitate distribution to teachers and parents as one double-sided sheet, I reformatted **“WHAT YOUR CHILD SHOULD KNOW,”** added the 2000 Vocabulary, and integrated grades Preschool, Kindergarten and Grade 6 from the 2000 Project.

*Teachers* have an overview of the year with key points listed. When *Parents* view previous years’ information, they can compare what their children know against what was taught.

This assumes their children used the specific books in the past, or the Church school teachers used similar basic material. I am aware of only one parish that informs Parents of what information the Teacher has presented in class compared to the children’s attendance to show parents the consequences of regular vs. irregular attendance. Absence means missed opportunity, and Parents control Regular Attendance.

### **IS KNOWLEDGE ENOUGH?**

We must also continue to make the point that *Education coupled with Experience is cumulative* and that *Knowledge of things about God and about worship* are not enough. *Children must experience Him in worship.* Parents need to come to Liturgy with their children and on time.

Our task as teachers is to present the teachings of the Orthodox Faith in an engaging manner. Our content will not change, but the manner in which we present it does change. My

seminars focus on providing volunteer teachers new ways to teach and resources to enhance their lessons. I am told, that so far, everyone leaves with both, plus a new enthusiasm.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY**

As I travel, I come across parishes that do “their own thing” [1] in grades where they think Orthodox books and materials do not exist, or [2] when they believe the existing curriculum is weak, or [3] when they believe it is too much work to update lesson plans for existing Orthodox material.

No Curriculum is perfect. By the time an entire series is written, it is time to start again. Dr. Anton Vrame has taken the first step in editing Grades 1-5 by creating **“WHAT YOUR CHILD SHOULD KNOW.”**

What about enhancing lessons rather than “tossing out” the Curriculum that guides us in **what** to teach, **when** in a child’s development, **how much** to teach at each level, to what depth, repeats selective information several times over the years, and covers all Sacraments/Mysteries, Feast Days, the major hymns, prayers, saints, the Divine Liturgy, the Lenten Services, other services and more, in lessons geared for 40-50 minute time frames for 30 Sundays?

The textbooks from the OCEC – *Orthodox Christian Education Commission*, an agency of SCOBA to which the Greek Archdiocese belongs—can be used as supplements to the Greek Archdiocese curriculum. The Preschool textbooks and the Middle School and High School curriculum units are good to use.

If your High School Class has not used **The Way The Truth The Life**, do not let them miss out! All parishes in our Metropolis that have used the **WTL** have been pleased. *The Way The Truth The Life* contains **all a student should know through the eighth grade**. There are two types of lesson plans and it offers Certificates and Medals for students who participate in a series of Mastery Tests. Students get to say that they have accomplished a specific task.

### **MASTERY OF INFORMATION / CONCEPTS**

When Teachers and Parents have the same information before them, Parents know what needs to be learned and can help with hymns, prayers, and reading Bible Stories just as they would in secular circumstances.

Joint effort in the spiritual formation of a child will be stronger if we work together; Home (Parents), Church School (Teacher + Parents), and Worship (Church + Parents). Let us begin with the **“WHAT YOUR CHILD SHOULD KNOW”** <http://www.goarch.org/en/archdiocese/departments/religious/resources/>

## Sunday Church School: When & How Long are Classes To Be?



Almost all of our parishes in the Pittsburgh Metropolis now begin Church School classes after Communion. (Read Metropolitan Maximos' 1995 letter below to learn what he anticipated the situation to be by now.)

What I did not anticipate as parishes changed models, was the short amount of time for class. Some of the parishes end class when Liturgy ended - about 15-20 minutes later. That is not enough time.

**At the 2008 Archdiocese Clergy-Laity Assembly in Washington, DC in July of this year, Archdiocese Religious Education Director Dr. Anton Vrame gave both a Department Report and the Religious Education Committee Report. Two recommendations in the Religious Education Department Report (p.7, [www.goarch.org](http://www.goarch.org))**  
[1] **"That every parish set aside 45 minutes to one hour per week for Sunday Church School"**  
[2] **"Children should attend as much of the Sunday Divine Liturgy as possible, ideally through Holy Communion."**

**PARENTS' "PEP TALK"** - Now would be a good time for all our parishes to reflect on the time allotted for Church School. Certain Parents need the "pep talk" about not signing up for Sunday sports and other activities that pull their family away from worship and their children from catechism. This would also reinforce the good choices other parents made to be present on Sundays.

**PARISH COUNCIL** - Where needed, the Priest and Church School Supervisor need to bring the recommendations to the attention of the Parish Council, and then make a presentation to the parents and the parish as a whole about the available time we have on Sunday mornings to learn about Christ and His church.

Count the number of Sundays you will have class, multiply that by the number of minutes of the current class time, divide that number by 60 and then report the number of hours your children would be in class. It will be less than 24 hours. I hope that the meager amount of time will be the "reality check" they need when you compare it to the amount of time our children spend entertaining themselves.

**THE "GOOD OLD DAYS"?** - If anyone speaks about the "good old days," when church school occurred during the Liturgy, remind them that

those who grew up with this model learned that "drive-thru communion" was acceptable. Ask if their adult children and their children's friends are still in church, or are they **MIA's - Missing in Action**? Is there a missing age group? If they still attend, do they come from the beginning or just in time for "drive-thru" communion and Sunday church school for their children?

### WHEN THE ARCHDIOCESE BEGAN TO CORRECT PRACTICE?

**1992, 31<sup>st</sup> Clergy-Laity Congress adopted Recommendation 11-A:** "Religious Education should not hinder or conflict with the Sunday Eucharistic Experience of the local community."

*Reiterated in 1996 and other years in between.*

### In a letter to the Clergy dated August 16, 1995, Metropolitan Maximos wrote:

"I believe that the greater problem for our young people ... is one of understanding the act of liturgical worship. Incorporating all of the community into the liturgical worship of the Church is of primary importance; but this will not be fully effective unless we instruct and teach our people - young and old alike - the meaning and understanding of our Divine Liturgy. What is the Divine Liturgy about? What do the prayers mean? What is the priest doing? ... What are the people to do?"

**He goes on to say:** "Yet, I must ask that in every parish we now move to incorporate our young people into the regular Sunday worship of our parishes. Sunday [Church] School classes need to be structured to allow the students to participate in as much of the Divine Liturgy as is possible according to your local circumstances. [His Eminence is referring to parishes of our Metropolis that do not have the actual classroom space.]

*Certainly, the very least, the students should attend from the Doxology through the reading of the Gospel...Cherubic Hymn...Communion... The ideal situation would be to conduct the Sunday [Church] School classes after the Divine Liturgy so that everyone could worship together. While that is our eventual goal, I must ask that all of us take immediate steps to assure that every young person worships every Sunday in every one of our communities... (Thirteen years have passed. I do not know of any parishes that have reached this point.)*

We are in a new millennium, with a new Archdiocese Director who gave us new recommendations. It is up to us to move forward.

**ACCOUNTABILITY** - Parents, Teachers, Priests, must be accountable for our children if we want them to love the Orthodox Church and to stay.

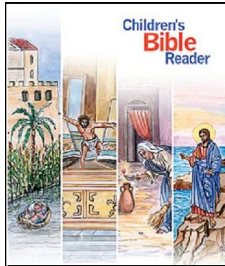


## BOOK REVIEW

### Orthodox Children's Bible Reader

Greek Bible Society, 2006  
Illustrations by Martha Kapetanakou-Xinopoulou,  
Editorial team leader, Presbytera Katherine Chapekis  
Sietsema.

Alleluia! We finally have an Orthodox Children's Bible Reader in full-color, and wonderful quality. The **Old Testament** selections number 75 and include seven of the stories of redemption heard on Holy Saturday. I was pleased to see these as they form the context for understanding Christ's death and resurrection. Many of the "types" of the Old Testament, fulfilled in the New, also have a place in this Reader.



The three "pillars" of the Old Testament, the law, the prophets, and the wisdom writings are all included in the selections, with excerpts from the Psalms and the Proverbs of Solomon comprising the Wisdom segment. In addition to Sarah, Rebecca, and Leah and Rachel, we have Deborah, Ruth and Naomi representing the women of the Old Testament.

The icon-like illustrations are lovely, and the Trinity icon illustrates the story of the angels visit to Abraham and Sarah. You will not find that in a Protestant children's Bible!

On the **New Testament** side, we have all the stories that became the 12 Great Feasts of the Church, with the exception of those pertaining to Mary. When chronological ordering is not important, such as for the teachings, and the healing stories, they are grouped so a thematic lesson can be easily planned. Beyond the gospels, we have several episodes from Acts of the Apostles, and finally two selections from the epistles and a selection from Revelation.

All selections are at a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading level; however, they are so well written, that when read aloud, pre-Schoolers could understand them.

The table of contents has not only the name of the story, but also the citation. Finally, several simple and valuable maps are appended.

At \$19.99 each, or \$159.99 for a case of ten, the *Children's Bible Reader* should be in every home, and every classroom. Available through the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, "Orthodox Marketplace" ([www.store.goarch.org](http://www.store.goarch.org)).

*Reviewed by Carole Buleza, Director of the Department of Christian Education, Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese*

## 2008-2009 Church School Planning Calendar

The Gregorian [New Calendar] is included with this packet. Both Gregorian and Julian calendars are online at [www.phyllisonest.com](http://www.phyllisonest.com)

Supervisors: **BEFORE** making photocopies, remember to add events that affect classes whether there is a class on a Sunday or if the class is shortened, or occurs in your parish that teachers need to know. Ex. Basketball Tournaments, Christmas play practice, Processions, Metropolitan's visit.

### CHALLENGE QUESTION

#### Can you answer this question?

Can you explain Orthodox Christianity without using the words Catholic, Protestant and Jewish? How about telling people who we are rather than whom we are not!

What is your answer? Send it in to me at [pmonest@neo.rr.com](mailto:pmonest@neo.rr.com). Hint: Go to the Fall 2007 issue for ideas.

### NEW ADDRESS

#### Feast Day Tract Master Sets

published by the Orthodox Christian Publication Center – OCPC. \$15.00 per set. Order by email at [ocpc@oca.org](mailto:ocpc@oca.org), fax 216-351-1842 or phone 216-351-1838.

### PARISH VISITATIONS

His Eminence, Metropolitan Maximos asked me to visit as many parishes as I can this school year. He wants me to meet with the priest and church school supervisor to discuss the curriculum used, number of students in our Church Schools, names of Teachers, etc. I want to meet you and help wherever I can. Seminars will be on the parish level this year.

My plans do not include traveling outside the Metropolis this year. If you have questions or need suggestions, contact me anytime. My email is below. My phone is 330-376-0629 and on my website. Feel free to contact me to set up a visit before I contact you.

Have a Blessed Church School Year!

*Phyllis*

### INCLUDED IN THIS PACKET

- ✓ 2008-2009 Church School Planning Calendar [Julian Calendar at [www.phyllisonest.com](http://www.phyllisonest.com)]
- ✓ "What Your Child Should Know"
- ✓ "Learning Opportunities for Middle School and High School"
- ✓ Metropolis Oratorical Festival Flyer **Edition 2**