Church School Reference File

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Questions: Are you frustrated with the back corner of the **Church School Storage Cabinet**? Do you wonder what to do with outdated and worn curriculum manuals, YOUNG LIFE magazines (if you were wise enough to keep them), or miscellaneous items like coloring books, calendars, newsletters, etc. that have accumulated over the years? And what about the items that are out of print?

Answer: Develop a **Church School Reference File**. By recycling the materials you will provide a wealth of new information for your Church School Staff. New teachers do not know what was once available, plus they need resources at their fingertips. The initial efforts will be time consuming, but in the end you and your team will derive satisfaction from knowing that the costly materials that were once no longer usable are now recycled and a valuable reference tool for the Church School.

[I have first-hand experience in such a project. Over the years I have collected Newsletters from the Antiochian Archdiocese, the Romanian Episcopate (OCA), and the Orthodox Church in America from the 1980's. I am in the process of organizing them into a **Reference File** so that I can share some great ideas and articles with you.]

1. **Organize the materials** needed to set up the filing system: color-coded labels, manila file folders, 8 ½" x 11" plain paper, 3"x5" or 4"x6" index cards, scissors, paper, tape/glue, pens, pencils, markers and a stapler. A hanging file is optional.
2. **Prepare a tentative index of topics** under which to file the materials. This can be done alphabetically as well as numerically. For example: Advent, Art, Baptism, Chrismation, Nativity of Christ, Great Lent, etc.
3. **Further sub-divide the index of topics** as you clip articles, pictures, drawings, lesson plans, and miscellaneous items related to the main topics, e.g. Great Lent: 1st Sunday — Sunday of Orthodoxy, 2nd Sunday, etc.
4. Consider **enlisting the help of other Church School Teachers, Parents or Young Adults**. This will lessen the work and hasten the time to completion. Brief everyone about what to look for, what should be clipped and saved, and what is to be discarded.
5. **To avoid losing small items**, glue, tape or staple them to 8 ½ " x 11" sheets of paper. Write the subject heading in the top right hand corner.
6. As the Reference File increases in size, consider **organizing large subject areas into different file drawers** - Church School Records, Arts and Crafts, Music, etc.
7. *Optional*: As the Reference File nears completion consider **indexing the collected information**. Write the Main Topic of the file drawer in the upper left or right-hand corner of 3"x5" or 4"x6" index cards. On the lines below, list the materials that have been placed in the file: e.g. Great Lent: 1st Sunday of Lent - Sunday of Orthodoxy / picture of priests carrying icons in procession, Troparion of the day, explanation from lesson, etc. Place the cards in an index card box that is readily accessible. (As much organizing as I do, this is too much for me, but you may find it useful. It would require updating the cards each time an item is added to the file.)