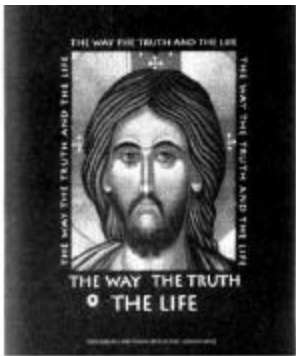


RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWSLETTER
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh
Vol. X, No. 2, Spring 2004
Phyllis Meshel Onest, M.Div., Director

The Lenten season is upon us! The Triodion begins February 1! The Spring 2004 Packet contains a variety of articles and activities to use in class and at home during Lent... and don't forget to check pp. 27-28 of the 2003-2004 Yellow Pages for Religious Education for additional Lenten resources. The Shamrock Bag Activity and the Pascha Egg Hunt/Activity should be lots of fun for the students of your Church School. To help you teach and review the Feast Days, I offer "Feast Day Game Cards" plus several games to use them. Is it too soon to begin thinking about Fall 2004? Yes, but after Pascha, and before the End-of-the-Year festivities, Directors will be thinking about Fall 2004. Faith Kuharsky and Carol Stoica share from their experience. Have a Blessed Lenten Season and a Joyous Pascha! Phyllis

Directors: Please distribute copies of this Newsletter & relevant articles to your Teachers.

NEW RESOURCES



We have been waiting for **THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE** - published by the Orthodox Christian Education Commission * - and it is **now available!** Cost: Student \$15.95. Teacher \$19.95 +SH

If our students are regularly physically and spiritually present in class, they have an opportunity to gain a firm knowledge of their Orthodox faith plus develop and explore their own spiritual awareness, maturity. **THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIVE** offers the "basics" of Orthodoxy for students in eighth grade and

above. (*OCEC is an agency of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in America (SCOBA) of which the Greek Archdiocese is a member.)

DONATIONS TO THE DISPLAY

Of the requests that were sent to Light & Life, St. Vladimir's Press, Conciliar Press, and Ellinas Multimedia the following were received. I wish to thank Light & Life Publishing for its continual support and generous donations.

Light & Life Publishing

- **Nicholas Meets His Guardian Angel** by Helen Iakovos-Dalalakis, \$13.95
- **Nicholas Wins the Prize: Young Nicholas Experiences the Sacrament of Confession** by Helen Iakovos-Dalalakis, \$13.95
- **More Challenge Questions on Orthodoxy for Students, Volume 2** by Gayle Woloschak & Tatijana Paunesko, \$10.95
- **The Treasured Traditions and Customs of the Orthodox Church** by Mary Hallick, \$14.95
- **Catechetical Handbook of the Eastern Orthodox Church** by D.H. Stamatis, Ph.D., \$26.95 (I'm sorry to report that I cannot recommend this book. The first chapter alone had at least eight errors in Orthodox theology.)

Personal Note: On occasion I comment on a book. Usually my concern is with theological errors in children's books as well as adult books. Most books have no reference to an editor with an Orthodox theological degree, or even a theological reviewer. (I realize that this may not be a guarantee because it has happened.) When I train teachers at workshops, I remind them that our responsibility as Catechists is to "pass on the Faith that has been handed down from the ages," not our opinions, nor our disagreements, nor what we don't do... but what the Holy Orthodox Church has taught and continues to teach. The same goes with authors. I urge them to seek editors/reviewers who are well versed in the Faith. Anyone interested in discussing my concerns or thoughts on Orthodox writing is welcome to contact me.

PURCHASES FOR THE DISPLAY

- ***A Boy, A Kitchen and His Cave: A Tale of St. Euphrosynos the Cook*** by Catherine Contopoulos
- ***My Little Orthodox Christian Activity Book***
- ***Nativity Shrink Plastic Icon Ornaments***
- ***International Children's Bible***
- ***The Gospel Reloaded*** (NavPress, re. Matrix)
- ***Every Picture Tells a Story***(Youth Specialties)
- ***Videos that Teach 1& 2*** (Youth Specialties)
- ***Bible Time Crafts & Your Kids*** (Group)
- ***High School Talksheets Updated*** (Youth Specialties)
- ***Awesome Volunteers*** (Group)
- ***Groups' Blockbuster Movie Illustrations***
- ***Sunday School Attention Boosters*** (Group)
- ***OCEC Middle School Curriculum***
- ***St. Simeon the Stylite***
- ***St. Nectarios of Aegina***
- ***St. Anthony the Great: Angel of the Desert***
- ***The Way, The Truth and The Life*** (OCEC)

DIOCESAN WORKSHOPS



A "SPECIAL THANKS" goes out to **Annunciation/Cleveland** for hosting a workshop on Saturday, November 22 for the parishes of the Greater Cleveland area, and **St. Haralambos/Canton** for hosting an evening workshop on **Monday, January 26** for the Canton-Massillon-Akron parishes. A Workshop is tentatively scheduled at **Holy**

Trinity/Steubenville on **Saturday, February 21.**

CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS

2nd Annual Orthodox Institute for Church School & Youth Workers was a great success!

- Sponsored by Antiochian Archdiocese Christian Education & Youth Ministries Departments.
- Held at Antiochian Village in Ligonier, PA November 6-9.
- Professional educators & clergy from across the country offered 18 sessions for Church School Directors, Church School Teachers, plus additional sessions for Parish Youth Workers.
- Check out <http://www.antiochian.org/> next Fall for information on the 2004 Institute.

This year Presbytera Becky Touloumes and two teachers from Holy Trinity Pittsburgh attended the Church School section and Spero and Irene Maginas attended the Youth section. I taught two sessions.

ARCHDIOCESE DRE NEWS

A REQUEST FOR STAFF NAMES & ADDRESSES went out in December 2003. Please make sure your parish's list was sent.

BE ON THE LOOK OUT! 2004 CLIMATE SURVEY – Before each Clergy-Laity, Fr. Frank Marangos, sends a Climate Survey to each parish that is tabulated, printed and distributed at the Archdiocese Clergy-Laity. Let's make sure our Metropolis is well represented.



ORATORICAL FESTIVAL 2004 - "The Pentecostarion"

Parish – March – Determined by the Parish

District – Saturday, April 17 / Annunciation Cathedral, Columbus, OH

Diocese – Saturday, May 8 / Diocese Center, Pittsburgh, PA

National – June 3-5 / Friday – Sunday / Metropolis of Detroit, St. George Church, Southgate, MI

PERSONAL COMMENTS BASED ON OBSERVATIONS AT DISTRICT FESTIVALS:

(1) Make sure that the speaker answers the question. A speaker's presentation may be so good that it overtakes the content. (2) If a speaker did not have to compete at the parish level due to lack of participants, please make sure that he/she does present his/her talk before a group. He/she needs practice before a group (it does make a difference) to make sure of pronunciation of unusual words, and to deal with nervousness. (3) Please check for theological content in the very final text. We can be surprised!

LENTEN RESOURCES



Pages 27-28 of the **2003-2004 Yellow Pages for Religious Education**.

Additional Resources included in this mailing are:

- ✘ *Planning for Great Lent in the Church School* by Dr. John Boojamra
- ✘ Shamrock Collecting Bag – Lenten Project
- ✘ Pascha Egg Hunt with a Message – Activity
- ✘ Can You Tell I'm A Christian? – Activity

REMINDERS

ORTHODOX VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL PROGRAMS are listed on pages 23-24 of the *2003-2004 Yellow Pages for Religious Education*. If anyone knows of other Orthodox programs, please contact me. When I complete the one on the Liturgy that I have been working on, I will place it on the website and inform those of you on my email list serve. FYI: Koimisis Tis Theotokou Church in Erie, PA has modified its children's VCS program to a week-long *Family Summer Retreat* held from 6:00 – 8:00 PM. Last summer they focused on the iconography of their newly consecrated church.

DOES YOUR PARISH HAVE A NEW CHURCH SCHOOL DIRECTOR? Yes, then please let me know who that person is by phone, mail or email. **If the recipient of this Packet is no longer the Director, please be sure the New Director gets this packet.** I depend on the goodwill of each of you to keep the information flowing.

ENCLOSURES

- Three Hierarchs - Leaflet Master
- Planning for Great Lent in the Church School* by Dr. John Boojamra
- Shamrock Collecting Bag – Lenten Project
- Pascha Egg Hunt with a Message – Activity
- Feast Day Game Cards – Masters to make a card game
- Feast Day Game Options – Directions for a variety of games
- Reviewing Lesson with Preschoolers - Activity
- Can You Tell I'm A Christian? – Activity
- Ethical Decision-Making – Lesson Plan
- 'NOW' is the Time! Preparing for the Coming School Year* by Faith Kuharsky & Carol Stoica

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