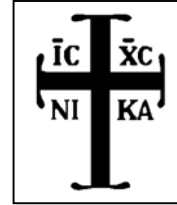


RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh

Vol. XI, No. 2, Spring 2005

Phyllis Meshel Onest, M.Div., Director



2005 ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM ORATORICAL FESTIVAL

Theme: *"The Triodion"*

Eastern District	Saturday, April 2 Annunciation, Lancaster, PA
Central District	Saturday, March 26 Holy Dormition, Oakmont, PA
Western District	Saturday, April 23 St. Demetrios, Rocky River
Metropolis	Saturday, May 14, Metropolis, Pittsburgh
Archdiocese	Fri.-Sat., June 3-5, Holy Trinity, Camp Hill, PA

NEWS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2005 Tri-Level Summer Institute

June 16-18 at Hellenic College/Holy Cross

Theme: *"Ministering to the Orthodox Family"*

Check <http://religioused.goarch.org> for more info. Clergy & Parish Religious Education Directors will receive brochures by mail.

WWW.PHYLLISONEST.COM

Check the website for **updated projects & articles**. UPDATES will be listed on the CONTENTS PAGE.



NEW RESOURCES

Our textbooks, together with additional resources make our ministry of teaching and our lessons more exciting and appealing to our students.

From Conciliar Press:

1. *Ella's Story: the Duchess Who Became a Saint* by Maria Tobias, illustrated by Bonnie

Gillis. I could not put down this book once I started reading it! How often do we read about a princess who learns about charity and philanthropy from her mother the Queen. Not Snow White. Not Cinderella. Nor do we read about princesses who desire to become Orthodox Christians! Elizabeth – Ella – does both. When she is widowed, she commits her life to monastic life and service (like a female deacon) to the poor of Moscow. While others would have fled the city to save themselves, Ella stayed to do God's work. It cost her, her life, but has given us a martyr heroine to emulate. This is a wonderful story written for young adults, i.e. teens and pre-teens. \$8.95.

2. *Walking in Wonder: Nurturing Orthodox Christian Virtues in Your Children* by Elizabeth White. In the Fall 2004 Newsletter, I wrote that I was looking forward to reading this book, and I was right! The author hopes to "assist the caregiver and educator in finding practical ways to instill in our children the desire to 'walk toward God on the path of Christ' in the ordinary experiences of daily life." Each of the 7 chapters has Objectives at the beginning and Activities at the end. It's a great book for parents and teachers who both need to learn how to teach specific concepts such as Compassion, Faith and Wonder.

From New Life Publications

Our Worship, a companion to *Our Faith*, focuses on the most commonly celebrated liturgical services: the Divine Liturgy, Vespers, Matins/Orthros, Compline and Nocturns /Midnight Service and the Hours – 1st, 3rd, 6th & 9th. Next is a concise outline of each of the Mysteries/Sacraments, a brief explanation of the Major Feasts, the listing of the dates of some of the major saints, and ends with a teaching on the Fasting in general, followed by an overview of the Pre-Lenten and Lenten Sundays and the Holy Week. Like *Our Faith*, *Our Worship* is well laid

out to make it interesting, easy to find specific information and to quickly focus on a topic if the book was used in a classroom setting.

If our students go onto college with this basic information about *Our Worship*, they will have met some of the goals I have set for them. Consider using it in the Jr. & Sr. High Classes. *If anyone writes lesson plans for either book, please send them to me and they can be shared on my website.*

New Life Publications / \$1.25 @ / SH \$7.00
285 French Hill Road/ Wayne, NJ 07470-3976
FAX: 973-305-1478
Email: pkucynda@optonline.ent

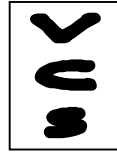
Light & Life Publishing Company - \$2.00
4808 Park Glen Rd. / Minneapolis, MN 55416
952-925-3888 / FAX 888-925-3918
Email: info@light-n-life.com /
<http://www.light-n-life.com>



In each Newsletter, I have encouraged readers to attend a Children Ministry's workshop based on how great my experience has been, as well as those of the teachers I have taken. My question is, "Have any of you attended one of the Workshops?" Let me know. The Spring workshops in our Metropolis are:

1. **Canton, OH** / February 19
North Industry Christian Church
425 45th St. S.W.
2. **Columbus, OH** / March 12
New Beginnings Church
333 N. Maple St., Marysville, OH
3. **Pittsburgh, PA** / February 19
South Hills Bible Chapel
300 Gallery Dr., McMurray, PA
4. **Erie, PA** / March 05
Grace Baptist Church
3902 W. 38th St.
5. **Lancaster, PA** / March 05
New Life Assembly of God
1991 Old Philadelphia Pike
6. **Camp Hill, PA** / March 12
Camp Hill United Methodist Church
417 S. 22nd St.

For more information go to
<http://www.cmmag.com/cmml2005/register.asp>



EVENING VCS

Kimisis Church in Erie, PA has offered a *Family Summer Retreat* rather than the traditional half-day Vacation Church School the last two years, in the month of June. Three days, 2-hour sessions. Theme: Iconography. The Church has all new iconography. What a great way to get families together for learning and fellowship.



50 Goddard Ave, Brookline, MA 02445
617-480-5885 / Email: sales@vscardbox.com
<http://www.vscardbox.com>

Our former Youth Director, Vassi Macris Haros, has developed her own card & magnet business while her husband Tom is a student at Holy Cross and she is at home with their son, 19-month-old Harry. Visit her website to see the newest cards and assorted collections. A Free Magnet comes with an order of \$20 or more and FREE SHIPPING with online purchases.



CENTER FOR FAMILY CARE

At the 2002 Clergy-Laity Congress in Los Angeles, Archbishop Demetrios announced that the Archdiocese would focus on the needs of families and create a **Center for Family Care**. Two objectives would be to develop programs and resources related to the various aspects of marriage and family life and development. In addition, all these resources would be available and easily deliverable to our parishes.

The initial step is the Archdiocese observance in 2005 of the **Year of the Family**. Resources are available for families to use in their homes and for clergy and lay leaders to conduct monthly parish family night.

The **Year of the Family Website** is the place where most of the **Year of the Family** resources will be available, along with articles, and links to other sites to assist the parish in family ministry.

www.familyaschurch.org

ORTHODOX INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION 2004 -

Antiochian Village, Ligonier, PA, November 4-7
Sponsored by the Departments of Christian
Education of the Antiochian Archdiocese



Report By Karen Lazoren of St. Haralambos Church, Canton, OH

It was not an accident that I attended this educator's conference. I had read the poster at the OCEC Teacher Training Workshop in September—I was familiar with Sister (Sr.) Magdalen from my St. Macrina's Bible Study—I knew I had to be in her presence for me to discover more "gems" of Orthodoxy. Our Lord worked out every detail from the financing of the trip through the generosity of the St. Haralambos Parish Council, the timing of the conference (it was Youth Sunday, no HS class to teach), to providing transportation. ALL I had to do was "HIS WILL - BE IN HIS PRESENCE" and open my heart. I was privileged and blessed by my experience.

How do you explain a dynamic weekend of discovery, excitement, encouragement, inspiration, spiritual growth, discernment, joy, journey, and LOVE! DISCOVERY: Jewels & treasures of Orthodoxy. EXCITEMENT: Fellowship with other Orthodox educators. ENCOURAGEMENT: Moral support to write that unwritten book or moral support to promote that newly written book. INSPIRATION: The more Orthodox gems we cultivated, the more we hungered and thirst for HIS WORD. JOURNEY: Following God's path. SPIRITUAL GROWTH: One's faith rising to the next level. JOY: Allowing the Holy Spirit to fill one with HIS presence. DYNAMIC: Teaching the intellect and nourishing one's heart. DISCERNMENT: Learning the differences between EASTERN & WESTERN theology.

"Where 2 or 3 are gathered in my name"—I am present... YOU could FEEL God's presence. Orthodoxy is a relationship of LOVE with our God and our fellow man, and a way of life itself. Orthodoxy involves every aspect of life.

Of the many educational conferences I have attended, this one far exceeded all expectations. Since I had attended the OCEC's Teacher Training Workshop in September, I had already taken "Introduction to Teaching," "Overview of Orthodoxy," and "Orientation to Curriculum," so I attended the Orthodoxy Track: (1) *Reading & Writing Icons*, (2) *Orthodox Family Life*, (3) *Saints*, (4) *Liturgical Terms*, (5) *Orthodoxy & Judaism*, and (6) *Moral Issues Overview*. I was able to obtain the handouts for (1) *Orthodox Children's Music*, (2) *Positive Discipline*, (3) *Arts and Crafts for All Grade Levels*, (4) *Basic Church School Directors Seminar*, and (5) *Enriching the Classroom Experience* to distribute at a teachers meeting.

His Grace Bishop Basil, Antiochian Diocese of Wichita, presented two talks on "Cultivating a Generous Spirit." The essence of his talk was that as we cultivate more of God's likeness in our lives (Theosis), we acquire more of God's attributes, such as generosity, in our lives. God, being our perfect example of generosity, gives abundantly and freely. He created us to relate to Him. Because God desires the same intimacy with us as between a bride and a groom, Christ was born, lived, crucified, and resurrected for each one of us, giving us the supreme example of totally giving of oneself (Christ) for another (us), so that intimacy could be renewed.

Sr. Magdalen of the Monastery of St. John the Baptist, Essex, England and author of *Children in the Church Today* and *Conversations with Children* offered two talks. Summary points included: *Teachers* are to be approachable, adaptable, available, unshockable, sensitive to children's moods, and a good listener. Above all, teachers must "Be in the Holy Spirit" and "Be in Prayer" because *prayer shelters the one for whom we pray*. *Christian education* focuses on the mind, the heart and the body. Therefore, put as few obstacles as possible in the children's path, so that they *come to God as they are*, and *to pray to God as they are* (no false masks) which in turn, nourishes a free relationship with Christ. *Our classes need to foster a love for the Bible*, thus stimulating more questions from the students about their Faith. *We should be an example* of how Orthodoxy involves every aspect of life and that Orthodoxy is life itself. This enables the child to be more open to the grace of God and lets the grace of God lead each child to Christ.

We were eighty-nine attendees from across the vast United States and Canada who came together to learn. Some of us have come before. I know I'll be back next year and I invite anyone else who can to join me.

YELLOW PAGES - UPDATE

Under Book Publishers:

OCPC – Orthodox Christian Publication Center –
has a new address

4653 Memphis Villas S., Brooklyn, OH 44144
216-351-1838 / FAX: 216-351-1842

Email: ocpc@oca.org

http://www.oca.org/pages/min_orgs/units/OCPC.html

ADD - NEW LIFE PUBLICATIONS

285 French Hill Rd, Wayne, NJ, 07470-3976
973-696-6572 / FAX: 973-305-1478

Email: pkucynda@optonline.net

Under Icon Pins, Jewelry, ...Specialty Items

ADD - TROPHY BEARERS

162 Brehm Rd., Washington, PA 15301-9653
Phone/Fax: 724-745-8365

Email: info@trophybearers.com

<http://www.trophybearers.com>

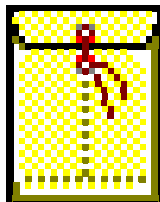
WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO USE THE SPRING 2005 PACKET?

1. **Make a copy of the Newsletter for each Teacher.**
2. Provide each teacher with **copies of articles** that pertain to him/her.
3. If you have not already done so, place the originals in a **Notebook** devoted to the Bi-Annual Newsletters/Packets. This is the 22nd Newsletter/Package I have published in the 11 years I have served as the Metropolitan Director of Religious Education. Packages kept in a Notebook provide whoever is the current Director a wealth of information at his/her fingertips.
4. If you have a **Reference File**, place a copy of each article in the appropriate folder. See "Church School Reference File" article "Fall 2003 Packet" at www.phyllisonest.com.
5. Please direct Staff members to my Website.

INCLUDED IN THE SPRING 2005 PACKET

DO YOU HAVE A PROCESSION FOR ORTHODOXY SUNDAY?

Here's a flyer to remind students to bring their icons from home. It will be on my website as a word document so that you can change the date next year and use it again. [1 page]



DON'T FORGET THE ORTHODOX PRISON MINISTRY PASCHA

CARD PROJECT. The *Spring 2003 Newsletter* (on my website) has details. Support **OCPM** with monetary donations for stamps and materials and by purchasing Icon Prayer Cards, Mounted Icons, and Icon Note Cards.



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

Please note the new address.

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN PRISON MINISTRY

V. Rev. Fr. David Ogan

PO Box 822169, Vicksburg, MS 39182

Phone/FAX 601-636-8392

Email: ogand@bellsouth.net

INCLUDED IS A PASCHA CARD TO USE [2 pp]

GREAT LENT by Fr. George Shalhoub is "food for thought" and the spiritual growth for our dedicated teachers. It can also be used with the Teen Class at the beginning of the Great Fast and talked about again after Pascha. **Lesson Plan included.** [3 pages]

40-DAY LENTEN ACTIVITIES -: *Lenten Treasure Chest & A Lenten Bouquet* for PS – First grade [6 pages & 1-11"x14" page]

BIBLE RESOURCES - a Holy Week Bible Study *Quotes to Remember* & an article for teachers of Teens *Five Tips for making Scripture Come Alive for Teens* [1 page & 2 pages]

TEACHERS' CORNER 3 resources - (a) *Create "Cutting-Edge" Lessons...with Scissors*, (b) *Teaching is an Offering*, (c) *Buddy, Can You Spare the Time?* [1 page]

Clergy & Church School Directors, Please inform me of changes in Director, addresses, phone numbers and emails for either of you. EMAIL is the fastest way to communicate the information from the Archdiocese and Metropolis. I need it and you need to, check it weekly.

Phyllis Meshel Onest, M.Div.
Director of Religious Education,
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh
174 St. Clair Drive, Akron, OH 44307
330-376-0629 / pmonest@neo.rr.com
www.phyllisonest.com