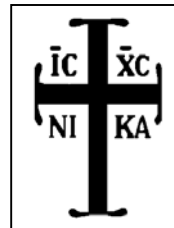


RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh

Vol. XIII, No. 2, Spring 2007, 3rd Edition

Phyllis Meshel Onest, M.Div., Director



Dear Clergy, Directors, Teachers, and Friends,

I realize the spring issue is very late. Usually it is ready by February. I never did catch up after a bout of pneumonia in August & September. March brought illness and more delays. I regret that the Holy Week information will be late for everyone except those on my listserv who received it on March 29.

In my fourteen years as the part-time DRE for the Metropolis of Pittsburgh, Religious Education has become my ministry.

In addition to the Newsletters & Packets, seminars, resources, developing materials, I also

- ✓ Advise individual parish church schools throughout the Archdiocese.
- ✓ Seek out resources for those who request.
- ✓ Answer emails from individuals from New Zealand to Zimbabwe.
- ✓ Help individuals develop VCS programs.
- ✓ Speak on Orthodox Family Life & lead Teacher Training Seminars - U.S. & Canada.
- ✓ Grant permission to parishes, monasteries and non-Orthodox schools to reprint my *Orthodox Family Life* articles
- ✓ Write for *PRAXIS* magazine.
- ✓ Maintain a website.

When I worked two part-time jobs for the Orthodox Church, the overlapping deadlines were more difficult with my health problems.

[New since March: 2008 brings a life change requiring that I work full-time or creatively earning full-time wages. I am praying for the first choice, and it can happen.

Other good news is that I know why I have been ill. Just knowing I can be treated "made a world of difference."] *PMO*

ATTENTION PITTSBURGH CLERGY & CHURCH SCHOOL DIRECTORS:

All the communication I do with you is by email, except for also mailing hard copies of the Newsletter & Packets. It is the best means for updates, reminders, and requests. For you and I to be connected: [1] I need the correct email addresses for the Clergy and Director, and [2] You to check your email at least weekly, especially near the end of the week. *PMO*

HOLY WEEK HANDOUTS

THESE ARE EDITED MARCH 29 VERSIONS.

1. **Icons & Hymns of Holy Week** - for teachers & parents
2. **A Young Person's Guide to the Lenten & Holy Week Services** - for students
3. **Preparing Our Children for Holy Week Services & Pascha** - for teachers & parents

Icons & Hymns of Holy Week - for teachers



& parents - is a compilation of the theme, hymn and icon for each service of Holy Week. It seems to me that we need to connect these 4 pieces in order to know what occurs during the most important week of our liturgical cycle. I do not know if anyone has tried to help our youth learn this connection. If not, they learn random pieces of information. This is a process requiring parental reinforcement by preparation and attendance of the services.

Preparing Our Children for Holy Week Services & Pascha - for teachers & parents

- is a guide on what to say or how to direct the lessons or conversations. Although these can be Church School lessons, parents will have the most impact by talking with their children before attending each service. If the family does not attend a service, then the parents should read from that service's Gospel. Tailor all talks to the children's age. (This handout needs more scripture verses listed. Time does not permit me to do so now.) Using a Holy Week service book would be of assistance.

A Young Person's Guide to the Lenten & Holy Week Services - for students.

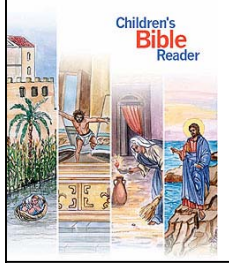
Our young people need their own description of what is happening during Holy Week. I tried to link the Icons, Hymns, and Themes of each Service. Parents can use this handout during talks.



NEW RESOURCES

CHILDREN'S BIBLE READER

His Eminence Archbishop DEMETRIOS of America has this to say about the *Children's Bible Reader*:



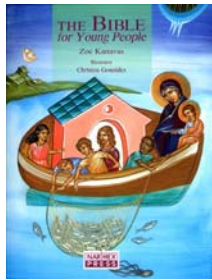
"This *Children's Bible Reader* handsomely brings to life the central stories of the Old Testament and the New Testament and makes them accessible to children. Translated from the Greek Bible Society's acclaimed work, this English edition with its easy-to-understand text and excellent iconographic illustrations will certainly illumine the hearts and minds of our children and strengthen their faith as they read these inspiring stories from our sacred scriptures."

It is a joint venture between the Greek Bible Society and the American Bible Society, under the leadership of Metropolitan Nicholas of Detroit.

Includes more than 150 stories from the Old and New Testament. \$19.99 Greek & English Versions. Available by the book or by case lots of 10 from the *Orthodox Marketplace* of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

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

THE BIBLE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, by



Zoe Kanavas, illustrated by Christos Gousides, translated by Fr. Spencer Kezios. Ages pre-K to 14, Hard cover, 162 pages, \$17.50.

Wonderful illustrations are in iconographic style. Bible contains stories from both the Old and the New Testaments.

The stories include Orthodox theology and elements of Tradition, such as Joseph's children from his first marriage.

Whether the stories are read to the children or they do the reading, I believe they will enjoy these more than the Christian Bible stories we have had to use.

The New Testament stories appear to be compilations of several gospel writers, thus giving a more complete story of any occasion. Insights and comments are included that stimulate delving into a story beyond the surface, thus getting a better understanding of the people who lived in Jesus' time.

A great addition to any Orthodox parish or children's home library. A wonderful gift for our children and godchildren. Order from the Department of Religious Education 800-566-1088/

www.religioused.goarch.org pmo

Windows Into Heaven
For Young Eyes

Icon Flashcards



Card Size 5" by 8"
24 Cards Per Pack
A Different Image Per Card
Name of Icon & Description
on Back of Card

ICON FLASHCARDS

www.easterngiftshop.com

24 different icons, size 5"x8", name and description on the back. Retail \$9.95, Wholesale \$6.00. Anyone buying for a church school will get the wholesale price.

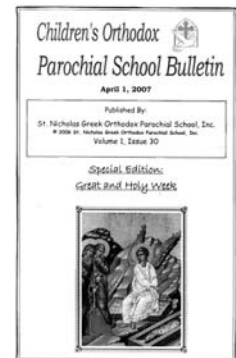
St. Joseph School for Boys Bookstore 716-683-0206.

This bookstore also carries items for branches of the Catholic Church: Maronites, Byzantine Catholics, Melkites. Please note the church affiliations that are noted.

Please do not buy icon puzzles, icon T-shirts, icon mouse pads, etc. His Eminence Metropolitan Maximos reminded us that icons are part of our worship and not something we use for decoration. Remember that one summer a large number of our campers received paper icons of an icon that was tearing. Their paper icons also began to weep.

CHILDREN'S ORTHODOX PAROCHIAL SCHOOL BULLETIN

I forwarded two issues of this weekly bulletin published by St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Parochial School in Tarpon Springs, FL. It is a great way to bring Orthodox literature



into the home and to continue our children's Orthodox education in a fun and exciting way.

- We talk about how much more our children need to learn than what we can give them on a Sunday morning.
- We talk about the need to get religious education materials in the home.
- We talk about getting children and parents talking about the Orthodox Faith.
- We talk about how, in many cases, our parents need to learn along with their children.
- This is IT!

If you have not subscribed to this free bulletin, you can still do so. Contact William, Planes at

WPlanes@southcapital.org

CHECK OUT THESE WEBSITES!

Metropolis of San Francisco Religious Education Page

Wow! Many links. Ideas, Lesson plans, games, articles. <http://www.Sanfran.Goarch.org/religious>

Department of Outreach & Evangelization

Check out the Resources, Nativity & Pascha Sections for materials to use in our Church Schools.

<http://www.goarch.org/en/archdiocese/departments/outreach/>

Department of Christian Education, Orthodox Church in America

Check out the **FOCUS** section with all its resources and lessons

<http://dce.oca.org/>

St. Catherine Greek Orthodox Church, Greenwood Village, CO

Educational Programs

<http://www.stcatherinechurch.org/educational-programs>



NEWS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEW DIRECTOR APPOINTED

We are fortunate to have Dr. Anton (Tony) Vrame as our new Archdiocese Director of Religious Education. Tony brings a variety of experiences to his new position (See below). I have known him for ten years or so and look forward to working with him. He is already planning a meeting with all the Metropolis Directors in May.

POINTS OF INTEREST

*A well-known Orthodox specialist in Christian Education.

*Degrees - DePaul University & University of Chicago; Masters of Divinity from Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, 1989; Ph.D. in Theology and Education from Boston College, 1997.

Highlights of his career include:

*Associate Director of the Department of Religious Education actively involved in the development of the *Living Our Orthodox Faith* curriculum series.

*Authored *The Educating Icon: Teaching Wisdom and Holiness in the Orthodox Way* (Holy Cross Press).

*1996 to 2002, managing editor of Holy Cross Orthodox Press producing 60 new titles.

*Adjunct Assistant professor in Christian Education at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology; Lecturer in Religious Education at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary.

*2002-2007, Director of the Patriarch Athenagoras Orthodox Institute in Berkley, California.

- Oversaw the creation of the Masters of Arts in Orthodox Christian Studies, the Annual Institute of PAOI, Inter-Orthodox Press, the Parish Life project, the Orthodox Christian Fellowship.

- Associate Professor of Orthodox Christian Studies at the Graduate Theological Union.

*Board of Directors of the Religious Education Association, Vice-President of the Orthodox Theology Society in America, represents the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese on the *Faith and Order Commission* of the National Council of Churches.

CENTER FOR FAMILY CARE WEBSITE

The Archdiocese Center for Family Care "develops programs and provides resources aimed at bringing Orthodox Christianity into the everyday life of our families. These are a means to instill an Orthodox Christian ethos within our homes, while inspiring greater participation in the life of the Church. The website supports the mission by making the resources available to the faithful. www.familyaschurch.org

The website is a clearinghouse of information on raising our families in the Orthodox Church. It includes resources created by **The Center** such as the *Table Top Prayer Guide*, and a host of articles, recommended books, and other information to assist families to grow in the faith. Expect to see monthly additions. "

PS. In 2005-2006 I was on staff of the **Center for Family Care** and worked extensively on this website. pmo



2007 ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM ORATORICAL FESTIVAL Theme: *The Menaia*

DISTRICT FESTIVALS

All on Saturday, April 21

Eastern Annunciation, York
Central - Holy Trinity, Pittsburgh
Western District

SS. Constantine & Helen, Cleveland

METROPOLIS FESTIVAL

Saturday, May 12 Metropolis Center

ARCHDIOCESE FESTIVAL

June 15-17, Metropolis of Atlanta
St. Sophia Cathedral of Miami, FL

HELP ME REACH THE TEACHERS

1. Give each Teacher a copy of the Newsletter & copies of articles that pertain them.
2. Direct them to Phyllis' Website for additional materials & resources.

3. Add the originals to the previously suggested *Notebook of Newsletters & Packets*, making it a reference for the entire Church School. For a *Reference File*, go to www.phyllisonest.com / "Fall 2003 Packet"/ "Church School Reference File"

ARTICLES OF INTEREST

The following two articles are reprints from a weekly **Archdiocese Youth Worker Plus** email. The Youth Department offers excellent resources for adults working with young people in both youth groups and church school. To join the ListServ or read archived articles, go to <http://www.goarch.org/en/archdiocese/departments/youth/>

Are You a Self-Confident Teacher?

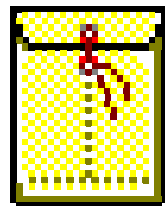
Why is self-confidence important to a teacher? What are some tips for developing confidence in teaching? This short article offers answers.

Helping Our Children Accept Themselves as Worthy Persons

examines how Sin, Success & Failure, Parents, and God are involved in developing self-worth. It is a condensed chapter from ***Making God Real in the Orthodox Christian Home*** by Fr. Anthony Coniaris.

INCLUDED IN THIS PACKET

- Spring 2007 Newsletter
- Helping Our Children Accept Themselves as Worthy Persons [2 pgs]
- Are You a Self-Confident Teacher? [2 pgs]
- Icons & Hymns of Holy Week [2 pgs]
- Preparing Our Children for Holy Week Services & Pascha [5 pgs]
- A Young Person's Guide to the Lenten & Holy Week Services [2 pgs]



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