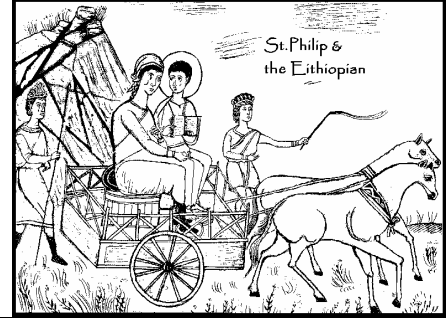


NEWS & NOTES FOR THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN EDUCATOR

Vol. XVIII, No. II, Spring 2012

Phyllis Meshel Onest, M.Div., Editor
Director of the Office of Religious Education
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh



Church School Directors: Please distribute copies of this Newsletter to your teachers.

Contents of the Spring 2012 Newsletter & Packet Handouts

- ❖ Spring 2012 Newsletter (3 pages)
 1. Oratorical Festival News & Notes
 2. Religious Education Commission
 3. Parish Profiles & Teachers' Lists
 4. Editorial: Learning Objectives
 5. The Latest Resources: Orthodox Christian Craft Supply, Orthodox Church in America, Gigi Shadid-Music CD
- ❖ *Lent, Holy Week & Pascha Resources* at www.phyllisonest.com - handout
- ❖ *Pascha vs. Easter, Eggs, Bunnies & Baskets* article 2012 edition - handout
- ❖ Lenten Calendar 2012 - handout
- ❖ *A Special Pascha Tree: The Triodion Sundays* - bulletin board handout
- ❖ *Fact-Finding Lesson on the Myrrhbearers* and *10 Q & A* from an Orthodox online source - 2 handouts

2012 ORATORICAL FESTIVAL

DISTRICT FESTIVAL - Saturday, April 28

- ❖ **West: SS Constantine-Helen, Cleveland, OH**
Caryn Cherpas, cherpfam@msn.com
- ❖ **Central: Holy Trinity, Ambridge, PA**
Stephanie Ramaley, sakapourales@gmail.com
- ❖ **East: St. Matthew, Blandon, PA**
Cheryl Tutella, ctutella@yahoo.com

METROPOLIS FESTIVAL-Saturday, May 18
St. Nicholas Cathedral, Pittsburgh, PA

ARCHDIOCESE FESTIVAL

June 8-10, 2012
St. George, Bethesda, MD

In order for a parish to participate, please complete the **PARISH REGISTRATION FORM** and send copies to the (1) Archdiocese Department of Religious Education (address on Form), (2) the respective District Chair and (3) the Metropolis Chair (Phyllis Meshel Onest, 174 Saint Clair Dr, Akron, OH 44305).

*This will insure your parish receives the emails with updated information and that your parish will be expected at the District Festival.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COMMISSION

The Religious Education Commission will be meeting soon with Metropolitan Savas via conference call. The Commission will introduce His Eminence to the Commission members and share how we can work together to support the needs of Religious Education within the Metropolis of Pittsburgh. We look forward to his input. Father Frank Milanese, REC Chairman

PARISH PROFILES

Thank you to all the parishes that submitted a **Parish Survey for the Metropolitan's Report**. The information will be useful to Metropolitan Savas, the Metropolis Council, the Religious Education Commission and of course, to me.

PARISH TEACHERS LISTS

Forms and Lists for updating were emailed in November.

- ☑ **If your parish did not submit a list of Church School Teachers** please do so now.
- ☑ **Dr. Vrame** Teachers emails articles directly to our Teachers throughout the school year.



EDITORIAL FROM THE METROPOLIS DIRECTOR...

LEARNING OBJECTIVE FOR TEXTBOOKS GRADES 1-5 Middle/Jr and Sr High

One of the concerns of the Director of Religious Education has to do with what is taught in our Church Schools. The Archdiocese Department of Religious Education offers textbooks for grades Preschool through Grade 12. These make up *THE CURRICULUM*.



Based on 25 of the 28 submitted Parish Profiles, only 7 Church Schools have one classroom per grade. The remaining church schools combine two or three grades to form one class and thus need to rotate books. [Note: 5 church schools have only 1 classroom each.] How can we be sure that the respective topics for each grade are taught?

We have tools! (a) **Learning Objectives: "Living Our Orthodox Faith" Elementary School Textbook Series - What Your Child Should Know.** This is an expanded version of "*What Your Child Should Know... after X Grade*" - a project of our Department of Religious Education. (b) **Learning Objectives: Middle School / Junior High and High School Textbooks - What Your Child Should Know.**

The Fall 2011 Newsletter included both sets of *Learning Objectives*, to which I had integrated the Prayers, Hymns, Songs, Bible Stories, Memory Verses, Saints, Sacraments, Services and Vocabulary of each textbook. The combination offers a type of check sheet of information for each textbook. *This is the tool.* THE *LEARNING OBJECTIVES* provide each teacher with the boundaries of what he/she is to teach. (The *Learning Objectives* are also on my website www.phyllisonest.com)

Church School Directors were asked to make copies for their teachers. PARISH VISITS revealed this was done at Annunciation Cathedral, Columbus, OH. They also revealed it did not occur in the parishes that teachers were teaching (a) concepts beyond the level of their students and/or (b) topics not included in that year's textbook!

Metropolitan Savas asked why there were so few Teacher Seminars listed in my report. It's been difficult to get parishes to host seminars, even for just their respective parishes. I am available for parish and regional levels where we review teaching techniques, what is age appropriate and the curriculum. There's no time to waste on a Sunday morning with material our students cannot understand or are not expected to learn.

CHURCH SCHOOL DIRECTORS AND CLERGY need to review the *LEARNING OBJECTIVES* with their Teaching Staff so that we are working together for the education of our Youth.

RESOURCES

PACKET INSERTS

- ❖ **Lent & Pascha Resources at www.phyllisonest.com** This index identifies the 40-day Lenten activities for the home, games, lesson plans, handouts and more on my website. Please refer to it as you plan your lessons this Triodion season and Holy Week.
- ❖ **Pascha vs. Easter, Eggs, Bunnies & Baskets** – I often receive requests for permission to reprint this article in parish bulletins. I offer an updated edition.
- ❖ **Lenten Calendar 2012** Fran Hourican Zappalla (Saint George Church, Media, PA) first developed this calendar. This is its second year in this Newsletter.
- ❖ **A Special Pascha Tree – Triodion Sundays** Thank you Fran Hourican Zappalla for this bulletin board display to teach the Sundays of the Triodion.
- ❖ **Q & A About the Myrrhbearers** 10 Q & A from the website <http://www.orthodox.net/questions/index.html>
- ❖ **Fact-Finding Lesson on the Myrrhbearers** - A lesson plan to use on the 3rd Sunday after Pascha, using *10 Q & A About the Myrrhbearers*.

Orthodox Christian Craft Supply

<http://www.orthodoxchristiancraftsupply.com>

How often have we wished for ready-to-go Orthodox craft kits? We finally have a source - Orthodox Christian Craft supply!

According to the website, "...it took a lot of time and work to adjust ideas to fit differences in [Protestant and Catholic] theology and tradition. Sometimes, I had the idea, but I couldn't find Orthodox-specific craft materials to make it a reality. After several years of frustration and not being able to find exactly what I was looking for, I set out to create it myself.

"Orthodox Christian Craft Supply does all the work for you. We've tracked down hard to find supplies. The ones we couldn't find, we found a way to produce. No need to think of a craft idea and how to adapt it to Orthodoxy. No need to go to the craft store and realize they don't manufacture the supply you need. We've done all the research and legwork for your family or parish.

"You don't have to be a crafty person to help your child make these projects. You don't have to own special supplies. All kits were designed to be constructed with basic craft supplies like markers and white glue."

Topics for the various craft kits include:

Nativity of the Theotokos

- Elevation of the Cross
- Entrance of the Theotokos
- Thanksgiving
- St. Nicholas Day
- Nativity of Christ
- Theophany
- Meeting of the Lord
- Great Lent
- Annunciation
- Pascha
- Ascension
- Pentecost
- Apostles' Fast
- Transfiguration
- Dormition
- Gifts/Devotional Items



Entrance of the Theotokos Learning Box Kit \$9

Department of Christian Education, Orthodox Church in America

Activities for Great Lent

Two Lenten activities for Grades 2-3, 4-6, 7-8. The "Teacher Pages," following the "Activity Pages," give answers to the questions, plus suggestions for discussion.

- **Saint Gerasim[os] and the Lion**
- **Scrambled Verses** - During Great Lent, we read many verses from the Book of Proverbs. Here are some verses from Proverbs, with one word missing, and a list of scrambled words...

Online Resources-Lessons on Line

A favorite site on my **ONLINE RESOURCES** list is the section "Lessons-on-Line." Five sites offer not only lessons, but also resources and supplemental material.

On such site, listed as **Scripture, Saints Great Feasts, Nicene Creed + Q&A for each Topic**, is the website of St Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church, McKinney, Texas.

<http://www.orthodox.net/questions/index.html> The Q & A Topics include:

- Scripture
- Scripture read on various Sundays, movable feasts and church days, in order, from Pascha [not complete]
- Lives of the Saints and the Menaion
- Great Lent and Pascha
- Great Feasts
- Liturgics
- The Symbol of Faith

Included in this Packet are the 10 Q & A for the 3rd Sunday of Pascha – *Myrrhbearers Sunday*. I offer the lesson plan *FACT-FINDING LESSON ON THE MYRRHBEARERS* based on the questions. The Answers include the related passages from Scripture.

CD: *The ABC's of Orthodoxy*

Once again, Gigi Baba Shadid offers us a lively CD of Orthodox Children's Music that also teaches about the Orthodox Faith. (\$15.00 + \$3.95 SH) 15 songs range from "Miracles of Jesus" to a rap about "Colors" in church. Use songs in programs and classes. For more information contact Gigi at

gigishadid@yahoo.com

Orthodox Christian Mission Center

Lessons on Missions

http://www.ocmc.org/resources/lesson_plans.aspx