

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWSLETTER
Greek Orthodox Diocese of Pittsburgh
Fall 1999
Phyllis Meshel Onest, M.Div., Director

Attention Clergy & Church School Directors: Please make copies of this Newsletter for your staff members. We need to share what's happening in Religious Education. Any ideas, plays, & projects that you send me will be appreciated & shared.

Welcome back to another Church School year! This issue of the Pittsburgh Diocese's *Religious Education Newsletter* contains a short review of the Summer Institute and of new resources, plus the listing of the Fall Religious Education Workshops and a number of enclosures. The "Yellow Pages" for *Religious Education* has grown to 23 pages. I have again included several lesson plans for the high school class, plus information and samples of *Talksheets* that I have found useful. Brochures from IOCC and Project Mexico are included to assist you in the ongoing development of outreach and mission programs for our students and parishes. To assist Directors and Teachers at the beginning of the year, there are student information and parent volunteer sheets which were originally done by Adam Chongris, former Church School Director of SS. Constantine & Helen Cathedral, Cleveland, Ohio. I hope to see you at one of the workshops and wish each of you a blessed year in your ministry as Catechists!

1999 Archdiocese Summer Institute of Religious Education was held from July 29 – August 1 at Hellenic College/Holy Cross School of Theology. Fr. Anthony Coniaris' keynote address on Thursday evening, "Sacred Tradition: A Treasure Trove for Religious Education," set the tone for the next two full days of worship, speakers, and sharing. Fifteen speakers offered 24 presentations in keeping with the theme of Holy Tradition. This year's "Institute format" offered the 125 plus participants a choice of two presenters for each of the six daily sessions, plus three single presentations on Friday evening. Each presentation was videotaped and will be available for purchase from the Department.

Topics ranged from "The Gospels: A Crash Course" to "Cloning and Orthodox Anthropology" to "What Our Hymns Can Teach Us" to "Seeing is Believing: Exploring Icons." I am especially excited about the CD-ROM presenta-

tion offered by program developer Bradley Borch. "The Royal Road," which centers on the Tridion period, includes music and icons and much, much more as it takes us from the 'Pulcherrimum and the Pharisee' to Pascha! It should be available for purchase before Christmas.

Three parishes of our Diocese sent participants. Each parish needs to budget funds to send at least one teacher to the Summer Institute, which will be held at Holy Cross on alternate years from the Archdiocese Clergy-Laity Congress. The cost includes the registration fee (\$175), which includes dormitory accommodations and meals, plus travel expenses (\$210-\$250 if you're flying from the western region).

Oratorical Festival 2000 Topics and Topic Tips are found in the **1999-2000 Annual Resource Companion (ARC)** published by the Department of Religious Education. This year's theme is "Holy Tradition." Cost: \$5.00.

Orthodox Family Life has a new editor. After four years of editing *Orthodox Family Life* I have turned over the editing and production to Niki Toda Krause, co-founder and technical editor. One can see her personal and innovative touch in the current issue. If your parish wishes to subscribe, the cost is \$40 for four issues. Contact Niki at 330-929-9126 or niki@cuadra.com

Little Falcons Publications continues to produce a wonderful quarterly magazine for children, teachers, parents, and families. Each issue adds another volume (12 thus far: Candles, Incense, the Cross, Bells, Oil, Water, Bread, Wine, Icons, the Gospel, Vestments, the Church) to what will become a "Children's Orthodox Encyclopedia." *Little Falcons* Publication PO Box 371, Grayslake, IL 60030. \$15.00 a year. Ask about back issues at \$5.00 each.

New Materials for the High School Class are Coming! – Fr. Frank Marangos, Archdiocese

DRE, announced that the Department has received a \$170,000 grant to develop materials for this age group. This was the most important need identified in the climate survey conducted two years ago.

“Sharing Corner” – Many ideas were shared at this year’s Summer Institute of Religious Education. We have individuals [a] developing their own Preschool/ Kindergarten curriculum, [b] coordinating and providing the resource materials for the High School Class taught weekly by various adults of the parish, [c] making vestments for 20” high dolls, [d] decoupageing icons on flat rocks that become Prayer Rocks, and more. Other ideas are shared at workshops and parish visits. The goal of this section is to examine, edit (if needed), enhance, and reformat those ideas and projects, then distribute them throughout the Diocese. Submissions are welcome. This issue includes the Student and Volunteer Information sheets submitted by Adam Chongris, Chardon, Ohio, a lesson plan for teaching Holy Tradition by Paul Seiben of Holy Trinity, Toledo, Ohio, Fr. Irinej Dobrijevic’s “IOCC Children’s Lenten Project.”

NEW RESOURCE MATERIALS

The long-awaited **EIKONA cassette tape** to accompany the National Forum’s **HYMNS OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH** Series is now available

- Tape alone: \$12.00 per tape
- Classroom Packets (20 copies of any one hymn): \$9.00 per packet
- Classroom Special (All 12 hymns/20 booklets each and 1 tape): \$110.00
- Family Special (1 booklet of each hymn and 1 tape): \$15.00
- Shipping & Handling: \$3.20 for orders under \$20; 15% for orders over \$20

For orders & further information about other National Forum materials for youth, contact Vicki Pappas, 1700 North Walnut St. Apt. #302, Bloomington, IN 47404 / 812-855-8248 / FAX: 812-855-9630 / E-mail: PAPPAS@indiana.edu

The ARC-Annual Resource Companion, Volume 2, Holy Tradition, edited by Fr. Frank Marangos, is available for \$5.00 from the Department of Religious Education. It contains 47 articles on various aspects of Holy Tradition and on teaching Holy Tradition, plus the 2000 St. John

Chrysostom Oratorical Festival Topics and Topic Tips. The ARC is a must for each Priest, Church School Staff Member, as well as other adults and teens of the parish. [50 Goddard Ave. Brookline, MA 02445-7415 / 800-566-1088] Order a copy for everyone on your staff today!

Help? I’m a Sunday School Teacher! - *50 Ways to Make Sunday School Come Alive* by Ray Johnston does just that! It focuses on four elements of effective church school classes: Content, Action, Relationships, and Experience. \$7.99 +SH per copy from Youth Specialties, PO Box 688 Holmes, PA 19043-0668 / 800-776-8008.

Would You Rather...? - *465 Provocative Questions to Get Teenagers Talking* by Doug Fields. Great for discussion starters. \$7.99 from Youth Specialties.

What If...? - *450 Thought Provoking Questions to Get Teenagers Talking, Laughing, and Thinking* by Les Christie. Some questions are designed to make teens uncomfortable, some to make them laugh, and some to cause them to make difficult decisions. \$7.99 from Youth Specialties

Keep ‘Em Talking! - *Real-Life Dilemmas that Teach* by Mike Yaconelli. 60 reproducible discussion starters for high school students on ethical predicaments they face now. \$14.99 from Youth Specialties.

Let’s Take a Walk through Our Orthodox Church by Fr. Anthony Coniaris. 45 colorfully illustrated sections on various parts of the interior of an Orthodox Church. Pictures, coupled with the teacher’s paraphrase of the written sections, can be used for lessons with Preschoolers and early elementary grade students. It is geared for children in grades 3 to 6. There’s something for everyone, teacher and student, to learn from this excellent resource for both the classroom and the home! \$15.95+SH from Light & Life [4818 Park Glen Rd. Minneapolis, MN 55416 / 612-925-3888] and the Department of Religious Education.

Children’s Orthodox Prayer Book Hardcover, large type. Contains basic daily prayers. \$12+SH

from the Department of Religious Education. Makes a wonderful gift.

PRAXIS Magazine is hot off the press and newly received. Edited by Fr. Frank Marangos, Archdiocese Director of Religious Education, *PRAXIS* is a quarterly publication that will be mailed directly to each teacher of the Greek Archdiocese gratis the first year. (Each parish needs to submit an updated roster of teachers' names and addresses each Fall to the Department.) Beginning the second year, *PRAXIS* will be distributed by subscription at \$15.00 per year. Volume 1, Number 1 contains 20 articles related to the period from Pentecost to the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, plus large colored icons. Contact the Department of Religious Education if you did not receive a copy.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

Saturday, September 18: St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church, Charleston, WV (All Orthodox parishes of the area are invited.)

Friday, October 1: Diocese Clergy-Laity Assembly, DoubleTree Hotel, Pittsburgh, 10:30 AM, Fr. Frank Marangos, Archdiocese Director of Religious Education

Saturday, October 9: Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church, Akron, OH+

October 14 - 17: Antiochian Village, Ligonier, PA (brochure enclosed)

Saturday, October 23: St. Paul Greek Orthodox Church, N. Royalton, OH+

Saturday, October 30: Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church, York, PA+

Saturday, November 20: Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, Pittsburgh, PA+

+ Regional Diocesan Workshop flyers will be sent under separate cover. Please mark the date of the workshop nearest you on your parish and personal calendars. Many new books have been added to the Display. One session will be devoted to materials available for High School students.

Fr. Frank Marangos, Archdiocese DRE, will be the keynote speaker at the Clergy-Laity Assembly Dinner on **Thursday, September 30** at the DoubleTree Hotel in Pittsburgh. The dinner is open to all. Tickets are \$50. Contact the Diocese

for more information (412-621-5529). Fr. Frank will also offer a workshop for the delegates on **Friday, October 1 from 10:30AM-12:30 PM.** Others interested in attending Fr. Frank's workshop are requested to contact me in order that a room of sufficient size is reserved.

ENCLOSURES IN THIS PACKET

"Change of Director" form: To be completed if the parish has a new Church School Director
Registration Form for the "Reading & Cooperating Workshop" sponsored by the Department of Christian Education of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese

IOCC- International Orthodox Christian Charities (brochure)

Project Mexico / St. Innocent Orthodox Orphanage (brochure & more)

"Yellow Pages" for Religious Education

1999-2000 Church School Planning Calendar

Lesson Plan: Teaching Holy Tradition in the Classroom by Paul G. Seiben

Lesson Plan: StartingPoint "Getting Teens Thinking about Orthodox Marriage" reprinted with permission from *Orthodox Family Life, Volume 5, Issue 1, Fall 1999.*

IOCC Children's Lenten Project by Fr. Irinej Dobrijevic

"Super Bowl Sunday" Project information and Lesson Plan

How to Use Talksheets, plus 2 lessons from *More Sr. High Talksheets*

Preparing to Receive the Body & Blood of Our Lord God & Savior Jesus Christ pamphlet masters

Lesson Resource: Christians and Popular Culture

Handouts for the new the Church School Year: Getting to Know You: to be completed by the student

Student Information Sheet: to be completed by the parent

Church School Volunteers

Church School Volunteer Information Form

For additional information or questions, contact Phyllis Meshel Onest at 2507 Nedra Ave., Akron, OH 44305-3929 / 330-733-5391 / phyllisonest@excite.com