

CURRICULUM GUIDELINES



FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- Preschool to Senior High School -

THE AMERICAN CARPATHO-RUSSIAN

ORTHODOX DIOCESE OF THE U.S.A.

(ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE OF CONSTANTINOPLE)

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FORWARD

The education of the faithful in the Orthodox Christian Faith has always been a priority of the Church. Throughout the centuries, the manner in which she has done so has evolved. The principle source and methodology of education has always been liturgical, that is the faithful are exposed to and taught the theology of the Church through participation in Her divine services. Indeed if one were to participate in the daily cycle of services and truly observe the Church calendar, there would be little need for formal instruction. The crisis of religious education today is linked to the limited participation of our families and children in the liturgical life of the Church. This has necessitated the institution of formalized catechetical instruction.

Within the last 40 years much progress has been made in the development of religious education materials – most notably through the efforts of the Pan-Orthodox, Orthodox Education Commission (OCEC) which is endorsed by the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in America (SCOBA). Throughout the years other Orthodox dioceses, including our own have produced supplemental materials. The Very Rev. Protopresbyter Stephen Sedor of our American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese, of blessed memory, is well known for his authoring of countless materials for youth and adult education and for being a founding member of the OCEC. The Orthodox religious education materials which are available to us today are for the most part well written and easily used in the parish church school setting. However, the greatest challenge to the Church today in educating our children lies in the tendency to reduce our efforts to the mere teaching of facts about the Triune God and the Church, the *Ark of Salvation*, without demonstrating its connection to their lives.

Given the limited time allotted to religious education (45 minutes or less a week as opposed to 5 days a week our children are educated in secular studies) and the chronic problem of sporadic attendance, we face severe limitations as to the depth and breadth of material that can be covered. Also, the smaller parish faces the difficulty of teaching in a multi-age setting, which poses additional constraints. As such, it is necessary to clearly define our philosophical goals/vision for educating our youth in the 21st century, within the expression of Orthodoxy that we as members of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese have inherited from our forefathers. This vision by necessity must be holistic and have as its *goal* the fostering of our youth's deeply personal relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ and their active participation in the liturgical/ spiritual life of the Church.

With the Blessing of His Eminence, + METROPOLITAN NICHOLAS, the Diocesan Religious Education Commission, under the chairmanship of the Very Rev. Protopresbyter Kenneth Bachofsky, has compiled the following guidelines to assist our diocesan pastors, church school teachers and parents in the education of our parish youth. Enclosed you will find a *Vision Statement* which outlines the philosophy of religious education from an Orthodox perspective and a comprehensive outline of the specific curriculum goals/material that our youth are to be exposed to. Lastly there are specific guidelines for use of the text books published by the Orthodox Christian Education Commission, (OCEC) at each age/grade level. These guidelines include an outline of the content of each textbook which has been adapted from the *Scope and Sequence* curriculum chart published by OCEC as well as through a personal review of the text. There is also a list of prayers/hymns, prayer postures, etc that need to be taught/reinforced at

each grade level. In the appendix there is a partial list of supplementary resources that church school teachers may find useful along with guidelines reprinted from the OCEC catalogue for multi-age/combined grade instruction for those parishes with a limited amount of students or significant age variations.

Keeping in mind that this is a “working document” it is asked that the reader forward any suggestions for its improvement or embellishment to the Diocesan Religious Education Commission through the office of His Eminence, Metropolitan Nicholas. You may also send your comments via email to: religiused@acrod.org

This labor of love, for the benefit of the youth of our God-Saved Diocese, is dedicated to the Very Rev. Protopresbyter, Stephen Sedor, a zealous and visionary priest of our diocese, who was truly a pioneer in the establishment of curriculum standards and educational materials for the Orthodox faithful in America.

**Religious Education Commission
American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of the U.S.A**

AUGUST 2005

**EPISCOPAL AUTHORIZATION AND PERMISSION GRANTED BY
HIS EMINENCE, METROPOLITAN NICHOLAS
FOR USE IN ALL DIOCESAN PARISH CHURCH (SUNDAY) SCHOOLS
AUGUST 2005**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Metropolitan Nicholas". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

His Eminence, Most Reverend Metropolitan Nicholas

VISION STATEMENT

We Desire To:

- Teach our youth by example and personal conviction.
- Open their minds and hearts to the reality of the Kingdom of God.
- Help foster a dynamic relationship with God.
- Help them develop an *Orthodox Conscience*.
- Help them discover their God-given vocation in life.
- Stimulate their desire for further study of the faith on their own.

We Wish To Avoid:

- Teaching facts *about* the Orthodox Faith without demonstrating their connection to the daily lives/struggles of our youth.
- Being a substitute for parental instruction in the day to day living of the faith.

NEED FOR FOUNDATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR LEARNING:

In order for our youth to process and recall the information imparted to them in the classroom setting, it is essential that we provide them with a foundational structure to do so. Such a foundational structure does exist and has been well articulated by the Orthodox Christian Education Commission (OCEC). The foundation and unifying principle of their curriculum is: ***The History of Salvation- Man's Life With God***. This foundational structure will form the basis of our Diocesan Religious Education Initiative. A clear understanding of this principle by both teacher and student is key to the dissemination, reception and application of instructional material.

FOUNDATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION INITIATIVE: **THE HISTORY OF SALVATION – MAN'S LIFE WITH GOD.**

1. Creation – In the Beginning only God (As Trinity) existed. Man was created in *Image and Likeness* of God.
2. Fall of Man – Adam and Eve disobeyed God and were cast out of the Garden of Eden and the gates of Heaven were closed.
3. Promise of New Life – God responds through Noah and Abraham
4. Preparation to Return to God. – The prophets speak – “Return to God, await the coming of the Messiah.”
5. Incarnation – God comes to man – the birth of Christ.
6. Redemption – God's Son gives His life for man - He dies on the Cross, conquers death, and rises from the dead on the third day.
7. Church – the new time with God - The Holy Spirit was sent down on the day of Pentecost.
8. Kingdom of God – Salvation – The Second Coming.

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF HISTORY OF SALVATION - MAN'S LIFE WITH GOD -

The Holy Fathers of the Church teach us the fundamental truth that there was never a time when God did not exist. The hymns of the Church, which we sing on the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord, echo this understanding in referring to Christ as the *Pre-Eternal God*. We know from Sacred Scripture that *In the Beginning* God created out of nothing the heavens and earth, the sea and all that is in it. He also created man (Adam) out of the dust of the earth and woman, (Eve) from the rib of Adam and placed them into a Paradise of delight, the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve were truly blessed in the Garden of Eden, for there was no pain, sickness or death – they instead enjoyed true peace, walking with God in the coolness of the night. Adam was given dominion over creation and was allowed to name the animals. They were given one restriction: not to eat of the fruit of the *Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*. Tempted by Satan in the form of a serpent, Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate the forbidden fruit. Immediately, their eyes were opened and they became aware of their nakedness and hid. As a consequence of their sin, God cast them out of the garden, closing its gates and left an angel with a fiery sword to guard its entrance. He did so to prevent them from eating the fruit of the *Tree of Life* and live forever in their fallen state.

From this time on, Adam and Eve and their descendants began to experience sickness, pain, physical death and separation from God. Indeed from the time of the Fall of Adam and Eve until our Lord's Death on the Cross and Third-Day Resurrection, all who died, even the Righteous, were not permitted to enter Heaven, but instead awaited the Lord's Descent into Hades and conquering Death by death. The only exceptions were Enoch and Elijah who were taken directly to Heaven upon their deaths.

The history of Adam and Eve and their descendants was a difficult one – a time of lament and longing for a return to full communion with God, yet many misused their God-given gift of free will and lived an evil life – so evil that God caused a great flood on the earth to destroy all of mankind except the righteous Noah and his family as well as two of each species of animal who were safely aboard the Ark. After the Flood, God caused a great Rainbow to form in the skies as a sign of His promise to never again destroy creation. Seeking to restore communion with mankind, God worked with a faithful remnant, the People of Israel, to bring this about. He worked patiently to teach humility and obedience by sending them the Law through the Prophet Moses. He sent His special messengers, the Prophets, to encourage those who had fallen away to return to the worship of the *One, True God* and to announce the coming of Christ, the Messiah who would save them.

The History of the People of Israel was a difficult one and involved slavery in Egypt and deliverance and captivity by many other hostile nations. They experienced the triumphal building of the Temple in Jerusalem, under King Solomon, and its destruction during the Babylonian Captivity and rebuilding thereafter. Following the death of King Solomon, the twelve tribes of Israel became separated leaving a division between the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF THE HISTORY OF SALVATION (CONT)

In the fullness of time God the Father sent His Only-Begotten Son, Jesus Christ into the world to teach and preach and lead those who had *ears to hear* to return to the Kingdom of Heaven, through the faithful living of the spirit of the Law which is love, mercy, forgiveness, and repentance. Having completed His three year public ministry Christ, whom the Church refers to as the *New Adam*, gave His life on the Cross, for the life and salvation of the world. Upon His death, while His body rested in the Tomb, His soul descended to Hell where He loosed the bonds of those that had been held captive there. He opened the gates of Paradise that had been closed since the Fall of Adam. Through his Third-Day Resurrection and appearance to the Apostles, Christ demonstrated the power of love, over darkness and the triumph of good over evil. Upon His Ascension to Heaven on the fortieth day, Our Lord sent the Most-Holy Spirit down upon the Apostles on the Day of Pentecost to embolden them to fearlessly preach the Gospel to all nations. On this day the New Testament Church, was born to be the *Ark of Salvation* for those who wish to journey to the Kingdom of Heaven. The Fathers of the Church, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, met in Councils during the first eight centuries to formulate the dogmas and teachings of the Church. In the twenty centuries since the establishment of the Church, the Holy Spirit has led her from the expression of the faith of the apostles to what we experience today in the beauty of our Church and the richness of Her Divine Services. We await, as we proclaim in the Creed, our Symbol of Faith, the Second Coming of Christ at the end of the world to usher in the Kingdom of Heaven in its fullness. When we joyfully participate in the rich life of the Church, in her Iconography, Music and Liturgy, we foretaste the glory of the Kingdom of Heaven and commune with God Himself.

The life in Christ is a joyful struggle. It is in the Church that we seek and find Paradise which our first parents Adam and Eve enjoyed for only a short time. It is in the Church that we grow in the *Likeness of God*. Truly in the Church, we move, in the words of St. Paul from *Glory to Glory*.”

**CURRICULUM TO BE COVERED BY COMPLETION OF
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM**

Scripture – Biblical Knowledge

1. Old Testament
 - A. Creation – *Image and Likeness*
 - B. Adam and Eve in the Garden – The Fall
 - C. Noah and the Great Flood
 - D. The Tower of Babel
 - E. Abraham and Sarah – Hospitality of Abraham
 - F. Sacrifice of Isaac
 - G. Jacob/Israel and the 12 Tribes
 - H. Joseph’s Journey to Egypt
 - I. Birth of Moses
 - J. Moses and the Exodus from Egypt – Crossing of the Red Sea.
 - K. Israelites wandering in the desert for forty years
 - L. The Ten Commandments
 - M. Story of Joshua and the Battle of Jerico
 - N. Judges – Story of Deborah
 - O. Story of Ruth
 - P. Samuel – the last Judge
 - Q. Saul, David, and Solomon - First Kings – Building of the Temple
 - R. Division of United Kingdom – 10 Tribes of Israel, (North)
2 Tribes Judah (South)
 - S. Prophets and their purpose, especially Isaiah
 - T. Babylonian Captivity
 - U. Return to Jerusalem and rebuilding of the Temple
 - V. Maccabees

2. New Testament
 - A. Birth & Baptism of Jesus
 - B. Preaching in the Temple at Age 12
 - C. Temptation of Christ
 - D. Calling of the Apostles
 - E. Sermon on the Mount.
 - F. St. John the Baptist
 - G. Blessed Virgin Mary
 - H. Parables of Christ
 - I. Miracles of Christ
 - J. Palm Sunday to Pentecost
 - K. Book of Acts
 - L. Martyrdom of St. Stephen
 - M. St. Paul, His Conversion and Missionary Journeys
 - N. Purpose of the Epistles
 - O. Book of Revelation and its symbolism

CURRICULUM TO BE COVERED BY COMPLETION OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

Church History/Holy Tradition

1. Church History
 - A. Church of Acts – Missionary activity of the Early Church
 - B. Ecumenical Councils – Scope and Purpose – Dating of Pascha – Formulation of Nicean/Constantinopolitan Creed – Canons – Church Discipline
 - C. Great Schism of 1054 – Causes, differences between Orthodoxy and Catholicism
 - D. Protestant Reformation – Differences between Orthodoxy and Protestantism
 - E. History of Church 17-21st Centuries – Including the history of our Diocese – History of Uniate Church
 - F. Discussion of Orthodoxy in America
 - G. Discussion of World-wide Orthodoxy
 - H. Comparative Religions/Cults/Sects

2. Holy Tradition
 - A. Architecture of Church – Knowledge of 3 Parts of the Church- Symbolism of the Church Building – Liturgical Items in Church.
 - B. Iconography – Veneration vs. Worship.
 - C. Church Calendar – Old vs. New - Church Year
 - D. Feast Days of the Church
 - E. Fasting Seasons
 - F. Lives of the Saints
 1. St. Nicholas
 2. Sts Cyril and Methodius
 3. Patron Saint(s) of Parish
 4. St. Nectarios
 5. St. Euphemia (Relics are in diocesan altars & antimens)
 6. St. Mary of Egypt
 7. Saints of America
 8. Saints of Carpatho-Rus
 9. Knowledge of categories of Saints, ie Martyrs, Ascetics, Fools for Christ
Passion bearers, Confessors, etc.
 10. How saints are canonized

CURRICULUM TO BE COVERED BY COMPLETION OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

Doctrine/Dogma

1. What is Dogma – Why and how is it formulated - What is Heresy
2. Holy Trinity –(3 Persons, 1 God.)
3. Christology – (Christ)
4. Mariology (Teachings about the Birthgiver of God)
5. Theosis (Deification – becoming holy)
6. Eschatology (Death/Dying/Second Coming)
7. Ecclesiology – (The structure and nature of the Church)

Prayer – Liturgical/Personal

1. Private Prayer
 - A. Understanding of prayer as union with God
 - B. Importance of Prayer Rule – Use of prayerbook – Morning and Evening Prayers – Pre & Post Communion Prayers
 - C. Prayers to be memorized:
 1. Trisagion Prayers (Heavenly King to Our Father)
 2. Jesus Prayer
 3. Prayers to the Birth-giver-of-God
 4. Creed
 5. Select Prayers from morning and evening rules
 6. Prayers before and after Confession and Communion
 - D. Prayer Gestures
 1. Sign of the Cross
 2. Prostrations and Bows
 3. Kneeling and Standing
 4. Veneration of Icons and Cross
 5. Liturgical Greetings - Christ is in our Midst! Glory to Jesus Christ!
Pascha : Christ is Risen! Christmas. Christ is Born!
2. Liturgical Prayer – Structure/Order and Meaning of Divine Services
 - A. Knowledge and Awareness of Daily Cycle of Services
Vespers, Compline, Nocturnes, Matins, 1st, 3rd, 6th & 9th Hours.
 - B. Lenten /Holy Week Services
 - C. Services of Need – Moleben, Akathist, Paraklis, Funeral, Memorial Services
 - D. Plain Chant – History & proficiency in singing it.
3. Sacramental Life – Understanding of Meaning & Structure
Baptism, Chrismation, Eucharist, Penance (Confession) Marriage, Holy Orders, Holy Unction. Variations in customs from diocese to diocese.

CURRICULUM TO BE COVERED BY COMPLETION OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

Ethics/Morality

1. Orthodox Morality as the acquisition of the *Mind of the Church*
 - A. Creation in the *Image of God* – Inherent Holiness of Body & Life
 - B. Struggle of each believer to develop the *Likeness of God*
 - C. *Who is God, Who am I, Who Are You* – Self –identity and the struggle with the passions.

2. Contemporary Moral Issues From an Orthodox Perspective
 - A. When does life begin?
 - B. Genetic Engineering, Cloning, Stem Cell Research,
 - C. In Vitro Fertilization, Fertility issues and how they are solved.
 - D. Addiction
 - E. Sexual Morality/Immorality – Adultery, Living together and unmarried,
 - F. “Alternate Life Styles”
 - G. Abortion Versus Adoption
 - H. Sexuality and Sexually Transmitted Diseases
 - I. Divorce and Marriage Counseling & Broken Families
 - J. Creation Versus Evolution
 - K. Euthanasia
 - L. Ecology – Our Stewardship of the Planet
 - M. Materialism Versus Poverty Throughout the World.

CURRICULUM TO BE COVERED BY COMPLETION OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

Vocation

Vocation – Personal Calling in Life – Discernment & Response

1. Personal Relationship With God

- A. Maturing in the Faith through the disciplines of prayer, fasting, active participation in the sacramental life of the Church and spiritual reading.
- B. Living the Faith - Mission and Evangelism – Contemporary Orthodox missionary work
 - 1. Parish -
 - 2. Community Outreach, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and shut-ins
 - 3. World-Wide - Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC) – Short term mission trips – summer vacation & spring break.
 - 4. International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC)

2. Communal/Family

- A. Marriage
- B. Monasticism

3. Church/Parish Diocese

A. Parish Leadership

- 1. Parish Council
- 2. Cantor/Choir Director
- 3. Church School Teacher/Catechist
- 4. Parish Outreach - Charitable work
- 5. Youth work

B. Diocesan Level

- 1. Holy Orders – Reader, Sub-Deacon, Deacon, Priest, Bishop
- 2. Monasticism
- 3. Lay Leadership
 - a. Diocesan Council (Board of Trustees)
 - b. Philanthropic work
 - c. Diocesan Commissions/ special projects

CURRICULUM GUIDELINES FOR EACH GRADE LEVEL

PRE-SCHOOL (AGES 3 -5)

CURRICULUM COVERED/TEXT BOOK

Text Book (Age 3-4): *The Wonder of It All* (OCEC)

Curriculum Covered: Text builds an awareness of the presence of God in the natural world and in the Life of the Church and our calling to have a prayer/faith relationship with Him.

Scripture – Biblical Knowledge

OT: Creation, Abraham & Sarah, Isaac.

NT: Annunciation, Nativity & Flight into Egypt, Jesus in Temple at 12, Epiphany, Presentation, Palm Sunday, (Concept of Pascha, Ascension & Pentecost)

Church History/Holy Tradition:

St. Nicholas, Church Setting and Icons

Doctrine/Dogma

One Church – The Body of Christ, Holy Trinity, Stewardship.

Prayer – Liturgical/Personal –

Introduced to the Sign of the Cross and Christmas and Paschal greetings. Exposure to the following prayers/hymns, *Our Father*, *O Heavenly King* and *Rejoice O Birthgiver, Come Let us Worship, Christ is Risen, As Many as Have Been Baptized, Alleluia, Blessed be the Name of the Lord*, and *Lord Have Mercy*

Ethics/Morality

Child is cherished as a unique individual made in the *Image of God*.

Concepts of sharing, respect, being thankful, helping others, sharing, trust in God, forgiveness are introduced.

Child is encouraged to sense the wonders of God's Works.

Vocation

Priest is introduced as one who cares for us. We are to give to the less fortunate, food bank.

Supplemental Materials: (See Appendix)

PRESCHOOL (AGES 3 -5) CONTINUED

Text Book (Age 4-5): *God, My Friends and Me* (OCEC)

Curriculum Covered: Introduction to the liturgical life of the Church in a simple manner

Scripture – Biblical Knowledge

OT: Creation, Noah, Samuel, Garden of Eden, Moses, Psalms,

NT: Miracles of Loves and fish, Prodigal Son, Annunciation, Nativity, Wisemen, Flight to Egypt, Epiphany, Palm Sunday, Resurrection, Ascension, Presentation, Martha and Mary, Zacchaeus, Centurian’s Son, Blind Man, Call of Disciples, Jesus and Children.

Church History/Holy Tradition Children are introduced to the liturgical life of the Church in a simple manner, as well as the Church setting (architecture of Church building, icons, etc) through the use of the senses. Feast days such as the Presentation of the Theotokos, angels as God’s special helpers that take care of us, saints, names day celebrations and house blessings are also touched upon.

Doctrine/Dogma

God is presented as being as a caring, loving God, who always listens and is always present. The understanding that angels are God’s helpers and messengers is also discussed.

Prayer – Liturgical/Personal

The *Lord’s Prayer* is reviewed, and students are introduced to mealtime prayers, prayers of thanksgiving, the *Jesus Prayer*, *Trisagion*, psalms as prayers, the Nativity troparion, and Christmas and Paschal Greetings.

Divine Liturgy as an act of worship or celebration is introduced as are the hymns: *Come Let us Worship*, *Christ is Risen*, *As Many as Have Been Baptized* and *Hosanna in the Highest*. The Sacraments of baptism as related to Theophany and Holy Communion as a special celebration are touched upon.

Ethics/Morality

The importance of relationship among friends, family and God in the homes and the Church and the Christian awareness of loving fellowship is discussed.

Vocation

Ministering to/caring for others.

Supplemental Materials: (See Appendix)

PRESCHOOL – AGES 3-5

AGE APPROPRIATE PRAYERS, HYMNS, RELIGIOUS EXPRESSIONS

Religious Expressions:

1. Sign of the Cross,
2. Veneration of Icons & Cross
3. Crossing of Hands, Kissing of Chalice
4. Posture in Church, Standing, Kneeling Sitting
5. Attentiveness in Prayer/Church
6. Bowing of Head
7. Prostrations

Prayers From Memory

1. *In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*
2. *Our Father.* (At age 2 can learn if part of daily routine)
3. *Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.*
4. *Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One Have Mercy on Us.*
5. Greetings: *Christ is in our Midst! Glory to Jesus Christ*

Hymns Sung:

1. *Lord Have Mercy*
2. *To You O Lord*
3. *Amen*

NOTE TO PARENTS AND TEACHERS

The role of parents in strengthening and reinforcing the curriculum that is being taught to their children is pivotal. Given the limited amount of time that can be spent in the classroom setting, it is crucial that parents help their children learn the Age Appropriate Prayers, Hymns and Religious Expressions that are outlined in this curriculum guide for each grade level. The text of prayers to be memorized can be found in our diocesan prayer book *Come To Me*. Texts for Liturgical Hymns may be found in our Diocesan Pew Book.

KINDERGARTEN (AGES 5-6)
CURRICULUM COVERED/TEXT BOOK

Text Book : *Together With God* (OCEC)

Curriculum Covered: Introduction to the liturgical life of the church with the understanding that the Church is God's Family.

Scripture – Biblical Knowledge

OT: N/A

NT: Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes, Ten Lepers, Annunciation, Nativity, Presentation, Epiphany, The Parable of the Banquet, Zacchaeus, Last Supper, Jesus and the Children, Prodigal Son, Good Samaritan, Crucifixion, Palm Sunday, Pascha, Ascension, Lazarus, Pentecost.

Church History/Holy Tradition

Church building – God's house is our home. Venerating icons, praying before them and putting them in our homes. The Church Sanctuary and its contents including the altar table, crosses, gospel book, tabernacle, censer, bread and wine. Making the sign of, venerating and wearing crosses. Iconography – pictures of God's family. Priest and Altarboys. Life of St. Nicholas. Church History through a discussion of the feasts of the Annunciation, Nativity of Our Lord, Presentation of our Lord in the Temple and Theophany, Palm Sunday, Holy Week, Pascha, Ascension and the beginning of the Church. Great Lent as a time of fasting and preparation.

Doctrine/Dogma

Jesus is God/ God is our Father. The Father sent His Son to be with us (Incarnation). Jesus died on the Cross to save us. The Passion, the Resurrection. Death/ Heaven and Hell.

Prayer – Liturgical/Personal

The *Lord's Prayer* – Prayer is a conversation with God. We meet in Church to pray, sing, listen, bring gifts, receive communion. How to bless one's self. Priest leads us in prayer, visits the sick, is our friend and is assisted by altar boys. Prayer as talking to God about how we feel, asking Him to watch over us and thanking Him. Prayer for whom and for what. Concept of *thanksgiving* in regard to the Liturgy and Thanksgiving Day Holiday. Remembering the dead in prayer and by visiting the cemetery. Remembering God/ praying during the summer. Reading of Scripture as related to the reading of the Gospel during liturgy and explained in the sermon. Holy Mystery (Sacrament) of Communion as being God's sharing His food with us. The Holy Mystery of Baptism and the Churching of mothers and children. Priest extends the prayers of the church to people in the form of personal blessings and the blessing of homes.

KINDERGARTEN (AGES 5-6) (Continued)

Prayer – Liturgical/Personal (Continued)

Children are exposed to the following prayers/hymns/liturgical greetings: *Hymn to the Virgin*, Christmas greeting, *Praise the Lord*, *Lord Have Mercy*, *Glory to You O Lord*, *St Ephraim's Prayer*, *Hosanna in the Highest*, *O Heavenly King*, *Before Your Cross*, *Christ is Risen*, *Holy God*, *As many As Have Been Baptized*, *Eternal Memory*

Ethics/Morality

The Church as a Family, praying/reading scripture as a family. We listen to preaching in the Church to learn how to be a good child of God. God gives us family and friends, through them we learn about sharing and loving. God makes us special guests and we share His Blessings. God gives us peace - we should not fight or be angry. We are to help others and do acts of charity such as visiting the sick and lonely.

Vocation

We are member of God's family. We are called to live in peace. Motherhood. Evangelism – telling people about God.

Supplemental Materials: (See Appendix)

AGE APPROPRIATE PRAYERS, HYMNS, RELIGIOUS EXPRESSIONS

Religious Expressions:

1. Repeat those of previous grade
2. Explain use of Icons, Incense, Candles and Holy Water.
3. Explain and Illustrate Priest's Vestments, Eucharistic Vessels, Sanctuary and its contents, Identity of Other Items in Church

Prayers From Memory

1. Repeat those of previous grade
2. *Hail Mary*
3. *O Heavenly King*
4. *Christ is Born! Glorify Him!*

Hymns Sung:

1. Repeat those of previous grade
2. *Holy God*,
3. *Our Father*

GRADES 1 & 2 (AGES 6-8)

CURRICULUM COVERED/TEXT BOOK

Text Book (Grade 1 – Ages 6-7) *God Loves Us. (OCEC)*

Curriculum Covered: A study of God’s love for mankind as revealed in Scripture, Holy Tradition (the life of the Church)

Scripture – Biblical Knowledge

OT: Creation - Psalm 92 - *O Give Thanks to the Lord* OT: Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Elias & Zarepath,

NT: Elizabeth, Zachariah & Archangel, Annunciation, Nativity of Christ, Magi, Jesus’ flight into Egypt; the finding of Jesus in the Temple, Christ’s Baptism, the Good Shepherd, Jesus and the children, the loaves and fishes, the New Commandment, the Prodigal Son.

Church History/Holy Tradition

St. Nicholas, Icons, Nativity Greeting: *Christ is Born!*

Doctrine/Dogma

The Holy Trinity. We are all God’s children and are branches of the Tree of the One Church, the Body of Christ.

Prayer – Liturgical/Personal

Sign of the Cross. Litany and responses. *Our Father*, Great Prokimenon, *Rejoice O Birthgiver*, Irmois 1, Christmas Canon, Vesper Stichera for Christmas, Baptism, Theophany Antiphon/Tropar.

Ethics/Morality

“I am special” sharing/respect, God cares for us – gives us caregivers such as the priest. We are to be thankful, to give to and help others. Concept of sharing, trust in God and forgiveness are discussed. The book *The Giving Tree* is used to illustrate self-sacrificial giving.

Vocation

We are all God’s children and are called to build-up the Kingdom of Heaven/Stewardship.

Supplemental Materials: (See Appendix)

Text Book (Grade 2 – Ages 7-8) *New Life in Jesus* (OCEC)

Curriculum Covered: Introduction to the Divine Liturgy and The Sacraments of Baptism, Chrismation, Eucharist and Confession.

Scripture – Biblical Knowledge

OT: Ruth, Psalms,

NT: The Good Samaritan, Dorcas, Parable of the House on the Rock, Pentecost, *Let Your Light Shine*, Last Supper, Christ's miracles of healing, the wedding at Cana, the miracle of the Loaves and Fish, Zacchaeus and the Prodigal Son.

Doctrine/Dogma

Children who are Baptized and Chrismated as infants and participate in Holy Communion share in faith/ and the Life of the Church. The Gift of the Holy Spirit is given in the Sacrament of Chrismation. The Holy Eucharist is our nourishment and the Body and Blood of Christ. God's love is constant and forgiving.

Church History/Holy Tradition:

Introduction to the Divine Liturgy, Church objects, Patron Saints.

Prayer – Liturgical/Personal

Review the Lord's Prayer, Introduce Communion Hymn, Creed, Trisagion, Cherubic Hymn, St. Ephraim's Prayer. Prayers of Thanksgiving.

Study of the basic parts of the Divine Liturgy. Sacraments: Study of Sacraments of Initiation - Baptism, Chrismation and the Eucharist. Sacrament of Confession is introduced. Exposure to hymns: *We have seen the true light... Let our mouths be filled...* and *The Cherubic Hymn*.

Ethics/Morality

Text stresses children identifying self and others as members of God's family, the Church. The children are taught to see that the Church helps us to live as God wants us to through the Holy Mysteries (Sacraments). Children become aware of their relationship with God and the people around them. They are taught to understand that *making things right* is about forgiving others and God's forgiveness of our sins.

Vocation

To live as members of God's family, loving and forgiving others.

Supplemental Materials: (See Appendix)

Supplement Text Book (Grade 2 – Ages 7-8) (First Confession) *Making Things Right – The Sacrament of Reconciliation* **OCEC**

Curriculum Covered: Preparation for Child's First Holy Confession.

Scripture – Biblical Knowledge

NT: Story of Zacchaeus

OT:N/A

Doctrine/Dogma

God is a Forgiving Father

Church History/Holy Tradition

Confession, Forgiveness, Reconciliation

Prayer – Liturgical/Personal

Praying quietly before going to Confession, prayers before/after Confession, making sign of the cross, priest offering the prayers of forgiveness

Ethics/Morality/Vocation

Being part of one big family – God's family. I am a special person. Jesus helps us. It is important for us to help/love others as Jesus did. Concepts of selfishness, making right/wrong choices and working together as a team are discussed.

Supplemental Materials: (See Appendix)

GRADES 1 & 2 (AGES 6-8)

AGE APPROPRIATE PRAYERS, HYMNS, RELIGIOUS EXPRESSIONS

- Religious Expressions:
1. Repeat all from previous grades.
 2. Procedure at Confession
 3. Proper Procedure for Veneration of Cross on 3rd Sunday of Lent and the Feast of Elevation of the Cross.
 4. Explain Processions of Holy Friday and Pascha
 5. Explain why there is no kneeling between Pascha and Pentecost
 6. Explain blessing of religious articles, pussy willows, fruits, flowers and paschal foods
- Prayers From Memory
1. Repeat those of previous grades
 2. Prayers before and after Confession
 3. *O Most-Holy Trinity Have Mercy on Us....*
 4. Prayer at Meals – *Christ our God Bless the Food and Drink of Your Servants For You are Holy Now and Ever and Forever.*
- Hymns Sung:
1. *O Heavenly King...*
 2. *You are Truly Deserving of Glory...*
 3. *Alleluia*

GRADES 3 & 4 (AGES 8-10)

CURRICULUM COVERED/TEXT BOOK

Text Book (Grade 3 Ages 8-9) *New Life in the Church* (OCEC)

Curriculum Covered: A study of the Sacraments of Baptism, Chrismation, Confession and Eucharist within the context of the life of the Church, enlivened by the Holy Spirit.

Scripture – Biblical Knowledge

OT: Psalms 103, 104, 148, Passages from Isaiah and Micah

NT: Call of Disciples, Epiphany, Zacchaeus, Ascension, Parables – Prodigal Son, Good Samaritan, Unforgiving Servant, Last Judgment, Passion of Christ.

Pentecost, Paul's Conversion, St. Stephen, St. Philip, Miracles of Peter and John.

Church History/Holy Tradition

Worship in the catacombs, Early Christians and Worship, Orthodoxy Sunday, Nativity Fast, Great Lent, Holy Week, Icons. Feasts of Nativity, Pascha and Pentecost.

Doctrine/Dogma

Children become aware that the New Life received from Christ through the Sacraments is shared with others within the community of the Church.

Sacraments. Idea of God's Presence in all we do, Creed as a statement of belief.

Prayer – Liturgical/Personal

Prayers Reviewed: Lord's Prayer, Creed (begin memorization) St. Ephraim's Prayer, traditional prayer introduced: O Heavenly King. Hymns: Bless the Lord, Christ is Risen, Vesper Stichera from Vespers, Types of prayers are introduced. Prayer is communication with God.

Liturgical: Divine Liturgy, its parts and encouragement of child's participation in the divine services. Vespers, Matins and Presanctified Liturgies are introduced.

Sacraments: Baptism, Chrismation – Gift of the Holy Spirit, Holy Communion – Sacrament of Unity and Love. Confession/Reconciliation – Sacrament of Forgiveness.

Ethics/Morality & Vocation

The children are helped to see that the church is a community of believers who are called by God: to pray, to worship, to serve and minister to others, to be forgiving, to share the Good News and teach the message of Jesus Christ, as Christians to make moral choices.

Supplemental Material: (See Appendix)

Text Book (Grade 4 – Ages 9-10) *Jesus the Promise of God (OCEC)*

Curriculum Covered: Study of the Promise of God (Salvation through Incarnation of Christ)

Scripture – Biblical Knowledge

OT: Exposure to the Ten Commandments

NT: Scriptures related to Feasts of our Lord, Nativity to Pentecost, Annunciation, Selected parables – Two Brothers (Matthew 21:28-32), miracles and healings of Christ, Zacchaeus, Martha and Mary, Ten Lepers, Raising of Lazarus to the Resurrection. The Sermon on the Mount.

Church History/Holy Tradition

Church setting- position of selected icons in church

Study of selected icons

Church symbolism during Pascha, Holy Week, Map study of the Holy Land.

The four evangelists, the feasts of Annunciation and all the feasts of the Lord.

Doctrine/Dogma

Angels and archangels

God's gift of *Free Will* to all

The fallen angel – Lies and Temptations

Prayer – Liturgical/Personal

Memorization of the Creed.

Hymns – Troparion of Christmas, St. Simeon's Prayer, Stichera from Christmas
What shall we offer You O Christ

Divine Liturgy – litanies, prayers and the Resurrection Service.

Sacraments: Holy Unction – through stories of Christ's healing of others. Holy Communion – through a discussion of the Mystical Supper, Confession – through discussion of growth and obedience to God's way. Baptism- through a discussion of John the Baptist and the feast of Epiphany.

Ethics/Morality

Making choices, facing temptations, responsibility for actions and concern for others who need help is discussed. Love neighbor as oneself, the distinction between the sin and the sinner and forgiveness as important to the spiritual life. Are stressed. Beatitudes are introduced as being rules to happiness.

Vocation

Text introduces the concept of vocation, by showing that just as God's people in the Old and New Testaments were *called*, we are also called to listen and follow Jesus.

Supplemental Materials: (See Appendix)

GRADES 3 & 4 (AGES 8-10)

AGE APPROPRIATE PRAYERS, HYMNS, RELIGIOUS EXPRESSIONS

- Religious Expressions:
1. Repeat all from previous grades.
 2. Proskomedia, Seal, Contents, Composition
 3. Demonstrate Service of Proskomedia
 4. Demonstrate Priestly Vestments and Meaning
 5. Demonstrate Externals of 7 Sacraments, Materials Used.
 6. Explain Blessing of Water and Homes at Theophany
- Prayers From Memory
1. Repeat those from previous grades.
 2. Creed
 3. *You are truly deserving of glory.*
 4. *Christ is Risen From the Dead.....* (Paschal Tropar)
- Hymns Sung:
1. Resurrectional Tropar – *Christ is Risen...*
 2. Antiphons from Liturgy
 3. *Only Begotten Son....*
 4. Beatitudes

GRADES 5 &6 (AGES 10-12)

CURRICULUM COVERED/TEXT BOOK

Text Book (Grade 5 – Ages 10-11) *Our Life in the Church – OCEC*

Curriculum Covered: The Sacraments of the Church

Scripture – Biblical Knowledge

OT: N/A

NT: The Great Banquet/Marriage Feast, Publican and Pharisee, the Lost Sheep, Prodigal Son, the Sower and the Seed.

Church History/Holy Tradition

The Origin of the Sacraments/Mysteries of the Church are studied as found in Scripture and in the Tradition of the Church

Extensive study of the services of each sacrament which includes quotes from the Church Fathers. Lives of St. Athanasius the Great, St. Roman

Doctrine/Dogma

Introduction to Salvation History; Holy Trinity, Creation and the Fall, Incarnation, Redemption & Church Salvation.

Prayer – Liturgical/Personal

Student is acquainted with the sacraments of the Church and the privileges and responsibilities of church membership. Sacraments are the means by which the Church lives and grows.

Divine Liturgy – Studied at a more intense level than earlier grades – 12 lessons are devoted to this.

The Creed is reviewed and students are introduced to selected liturgy prayers: Anaphora/Eucharist Prayers, Prayer before the Gospel and the final prayers of the priest- Prayer at the Ambon. Hymns studied include: Antiphons, Troparia and Kontakia, Prokimenon, *As Many as Have Been Baptized*, *Cherubic Hymn*, and the *Trisagion*.

Ethics/Morality

Students are shown that the goal of the sacramental life is to unite them to the Lord and to the members of the Church

Vocation

Various vocations are open to members of the Church above and beyond their responsibilities as church members.

Supplemental Materials: (See Appendix)

Text Book (Grade 6 – Ages 11-12) *In the Beginning* - OCEC

Curriculum Covered: The Old Testament and its relationship to the New Testament and Church Services. -

Scripture – Biblical Knowledge

Text focus on the Old Testament and its relationship to the New Testament and Church Services. Text is comprised of six units: Why the Old Testament? The Law. History, The Prophets, The Wisdom Literature and The Old Testament Lives in the Church.

Church History/Holy Tradition

Addresses how Old Testament prayers and customs are still used in various services today, including, church concepts, symbols and practices such as censuring and processions. Biblical symbolism of hymns and prayers as well as a study of maps is also discussed

Doctrine/Dogma

The world God created is good, God is creator and ruler over all creation, Man is made in the image and likeness of God, Man was created to rule, to care for and be in charge over all creation, Man's sin is choosing to live without God. Sin comes from man, not God, Prophecy of Messiah in Old Testament fulfilled in New.

Prayer – Liturgical/Personal

Students study the prayers, hymns and readings of the church services in light of the Old Testament. Students study the psalms and are exposed to their quality as prayers and hymns and the habit of prayer is instilled through opening and closing prayers.

Church Services – the following services are discussed to show the Old Testament prayers, and in particular the psalms are used in the following services of the Church: Vespers, Matins, Divine Liturgy, Hours, Nocturne, Complines.

Ethics/Morality

Students are exposed to the faith, wisdom, hope and love of various Old Testament figures; most notably: growth in faith and trust in God as did Abraham; recognizing God's law in the commandments given to Moses; and the virtue and blessings which come from requesting wisdom from God as King Solomon did. Students gain an appreciate for the inspiration of the wisdom writings (Psalms, Proverbs, etc) and how they can be applied to life now.

Vocation

Vocations are discerned through faith and trust in God.

Supplemental Materials: (See Appendix)

GRADES 5&6 (AGES 10-12)

AGE APPROPRIATE PRAYERS, HYMNS, RELIGIOUS EXPRESSIONS

Religious Expressions

1. Repeat from previous grades
2. Structure of Vespers on Great Feasts
3. Blessing of Wheat, Wine & Oil
4. Veneration of Icons – Procedure/Purpose/History
5. Explain the Order of Icons on Iconostasis

Prayers From Memory

1. Repeat from previous grades
2. Prayer Before Communion
3. Christmas Tropar
4. Theophany Tropar

Hymns Sung:

1. Repeat from previous grades
2. Tropar to Patronal Saint/Feast Day of Parish
3. Christmas Tropar
4. Theophany Tropar

GRADES 7 & 8 (AGES 12-14)

CURRICULUM COVERED/TEXT BOOK

Text Book (Grade 7 – Ages 12-13) *The Young Church* OCEC

Curriculum Covered: The history of the Early Church.

Scripture – Biblical Knowledge

OT: N/A

NT: Acts of the Apostles – Christ’s appearance after the Resurrection, Pentecost, miracles of healing in the Early Church, the persecution of Christians and martyrs, the conversion of Saul, the growth of the Church through conviction and evangelizing by the Apostles, the journeys of St. Paul, the Council of Jerusalem and the imprisonment of Paul.

Church History/Holy Tradition

Principle of conciliatory of the Church as seen in the Council of Jerusalem – the origin of the Ecumenical Councils. Christian Persecution.

Doctrine/Dogma

The history of the Church begins with Pentecost. Christ gave the apostles and their successors the command to make disciples of all nations baptizing them and teaching them all that Christ commanded. Salvation is a process requiring faith in Christ and living a life in His image.

Prayer – Liturgical/Personal

Students learn through a study of the Book of Acts that the early Christians lived a life of prayer. Students are asked to relate the importance of prayer in their own lives. Teachers are encouraged to relate opening and closing prayers to the theme being taught such as *O Heavenly King* when studying Pentecost., St. Ephraim’s Prayer during Lent.

Worship – The purpose and content of Epistles, fellowship and communion of early Christians – Eucharistic gatherings.

Sacraments: Baptism of first Christians at Pentecost. Chrismation as a personal Pentecost that must be renewed and activated.

Ethics/Morality

Importance of spiritual growth and prayer.

Vocation

Stewardship – using gifts wisely to continue the work of Jesus Christ, evangelization, ministry and Christian Action

Supplemental Materials: (See Appendix)

**Text Book 1 (Grade 8 – Ages 13-14) *The First 800 Years* (Interim Curriculum 8 Lessons)
OCEC**

Curriculum Covered: The History of the Church From the First to Ninth Centuries.

Scripture – Biblical Knowledge

OT: N/A

NT: Acts 2: Pentecost, Acts 16:9-10,14-15 ; Scripture related to the Creed.

Doctrine/Dogma

Witness/Martyrdom & Salvation

The Church as being Conciliar in nature.

Formulation of the Nicean/Constantinopolitan Creed

Iconoclasm

Church History/Holy Tradition

Missionary journeys of St Paul and the Apostles, Peter, Andrew, Thomas and Matthew.

The persecution of the Church in the 2-4th centuries.

The conversion of Constantine and Edict of Milan.

Rise of monasticism in the 4th century.

Ecumenical Councils – 4-8th centuries. Formulation of the Creed

Missionary Labors of Sts Cyril and Methodius in the 8th Century.

Lives of Saints: Saints Peter & Paul, St. Lydia, St. Stephen the Protomartyr, St. Catherine of Alexandria, St. Ignatius of Antioch, St. Thekla, Equal to the Apostles, Sts Constantine and Helen. , St. Anthony the Great, St. Irene of Chrysavolantos, St. Gregory Palamas, St. Andrei Rublev, St. Athanasius of Alexandria, St. Basil the Great, Righteous Empress Theodora, Sts Cyril and Methodius and Saint Herman of Alaska.

Prayer – Liturgical/Personal

Exposure to the Following Prayers/Hymns: *O Heavenly King*, a Prayer of Saint. Constantine, Tropars for Pentecost, the Holy Cross, Saint Anthony the Great and Saints Cyril and Methodius.

Ethics/Morality

Students are reminded of the power of personal holiness and its impact on the lives of others in discussing the quote from Sts. Seraphim of Sarov, *Save your own soul and thousands around you will be saved.*

Vocation

Students learn about the Christian's vocation to take up one's Cross in life, especially in the monastic vocation and the calling to be modern day evangelists and witnesses of the faith.

Supplemental Materials: (See Appendix)

Text Book 2 (Grade 8 – Ages 13-14) My Body, My Spirit
(Interim Curriculum OCEC –7 Lessons)

Curriculum Covered: This text deals with human sexuality from an Orthodox perspective.

Scripture – Biblical Knowledge

OT: Creation of Adam and Eve (Genesis 1:26-28); Temptation of Joseph, (Genesis 39: 6-18) Story of David and Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11:1-27)

NT: St Paul’s epistles relating to youth, temptations, purity and holiness: excerpts from 1 & 2 Timothy, 1 Corinthians, Titus, Ephesians, Galatians, Romans, 1 Thessalonians. Excerpts from the Epistle of the Apostle Peter and chapter 5 of the Gospel of St. Matthew.

Doctrine/Dogma

The Fall of Adam and Eve

Church History/Holy Tradition

Immorality in first century Corinth as compared to the 21st Century.

Life of St. Mary of Egypt.

Prayer – Liturgical/Personal

Exposure to the Following Prayers/Hymns: Kontakion of The Righteous Joseph From Holy Week, Psalms 46 and 51, Tropars of the Apostle Timothy and St. Mary of Egypt.

Students discuss in the seventh lesson the Holy Sacrament of Marriage, and are exposed to writings of St. John Chrysostom on marriage and sexuality.

Ethics/Morality

Textbook focuses on the pivotal understanding that the human body is a temple of the Holy Spirit and that humanity was created to be perpetually united with God. Sin and evil are by-products of the fall of Adam and Eve. Significant emphasis is placed on understanding the beauty of human sexuality and its holiness when exercised within the community of marriage. Topics such as avoiding temptation, and why pornography and lust, which arouse the passions are harmful to the spiritual life. The four classifications of love are also explored, *agape, philia, eros* and *storge*.

Vocation

Students learn about the vocation of marriage and the Christian family as constituting the *Little Church*

Supplemental Materials: (See Appendix)

GRADES 7 & 8 (AGES 12-14)
AGE APPROPRIATE PRAYERS, HYMNS, RELIGIOUS EXPRESSIONS

Religious Expressions:

1. Review where necessary previous grades.
2. Paschanitsa (Winding Sheet) Content & Symbolism
3. Antimens – Content and meaning
4. Altar table – Construction, Dimensions, Symbolism, Relics
5. Relics of Saints – Life of St Euphemia – Her Relics are found in most diocesan churches.

Prayers From Memory

1. Review from previous grades as necessary.
2. Selections from Morning and Evening Prayers

Hymns Sung:

1. Encourage Singing in Church Choir and Plain Chant
2. Encourage Reading of Epistle/Psalms/Hours

GRADES 9 & 10 (AGES 14-16)

CURRICULUM COVERED/TEXT BOOK

Text Book (Grade 9 – Ages 14-15) *The Way and the Truth and the Life* - OCEC

Curriculum Covered: Comprehensive text that reviews the many facets of the Orthodox Way of Life including, doctrine, history, liturgics, feast days and lives of saints, ethics and morality.

Scripture – Biblical Knowledge

Students are given an overview of the Old and New Testament as being divine revelation. The necessity of understanding and applying the 10 Commandments and the teachings of Christ in one's daily life is also stressed.

Doctrine/Dogma

The text stresses an understanding of living the *Orthodox Way* and stresses five vital components: (1) The Life in the Holy Spirit – Conversion, (2) Repentance, (3) Struggle, (4) Liturgy –living a life of prayer, work and thanksgiving, and (5) Wisdom – understanding and living the dogmas and teachings of the Church – Nicene Creed.

Church History/Holy Tradition

An overview of church history is presented which includes, Pentecost and the early Church, including the persecution of the 2-4th centuries and the freedom of the Church at the time of the conversion of St. Constantine. The rise of the Pentarchy - the five ancient patriarchates, is also discussed. A brief overview of the seven ecumenical councils is also given.

The understanding of the Church being guided by the Holy Spirit as witnessed in the formulation of Holy Tradition is emphasized in the text. In particular, the veneration of saints and icons as well as the architecture of the Church is discussed.

The following Lives of the Saints are presented: Saints Abraham, Alexis Toth, Basil the Great, Constantine, Ephraim of Syria, George the Trophy-bearer, Gregory the Theologian, Helen, Innocent of Alaska, John the Baptist, John the Evangelist, John Chrysostom, Luke the Evangelist, Macrina, Mark the Evangelist, Mary Magdalene, Mary of Egypt, Matthew the Evangelist, Moses the Prophet, Nectarios of Aegina, Nicholas the Wonderworker, Nina Equal to the Apostles, Paul the Apostle, Peter the Apostle, Raphael of Brooklyn, Sabbas of Serbia, Stephen the Proto-Martyr, Thekla, Equal to the Apostles, the Theotokos, and the Three Holy Hierarchs.

Text Book (Grade 9 – Ages 14-15) *The Way and the Truth and the Life* – OCEC (Continued)

Prayer – Liturgical/Personal

Feast days explained include: the 12 Great Feast Days and Holy Week. the glossary includes an explanation of select icons of the Lord and the Theotokos, Holy Week, the Winding Sheet (Plaschanitsa), Ascension and Pentecost.

The Holy Sacraments of Baptism, Chrismation, Confession/Repentance and Marriage are reviewed. The Liturgical Year and Festal/Fastings Seasons are also discussed. Topics which include the two types of fasting (total vs ascetical) and prostrations are covered. The daily cycle of services/liturgical day is reviewed as is the significance of Holy Week and Paschal Services and St. Ephraim's Prayer. Attention is also given to the Divine Liturgy.

Ethics/Morality

The following topics are discussed: Forgiveness, love for God and fellow man, freedom and responsibility, humility, acquiring the fruits of the Holy Spirit, making moral decisions, suicide, euthanasia, abortion, the sanctity of life, materialism and human sexuality.

Vocation:

Marriage and monasticism as ways of living out one's salvation are discussed.

Supplemental Materials: (See Appendix)

Text Book (Grade 10 – Ages 15-16) *New Frontiers* Grade 10

Curriculum Covered: This text covers the history of the Church from the 9th century to the 20th century. (Text is outdated and stops in the 1960's)

Scripture – Biblical Knowledge – N/A

Doctrine/Dogma – N/A

Church History/Holy Tradition

The following material relative to Church History is covered:

Birth of the Slavic Christian States in the 9th Century – Bulgaria, Russia, Serbia,
Baptism of Kievan Rus.

Great Schism of 1054 between the Church of the East and the West, and the five
ancient patriarchates.

12th-14th Century – West: Crusades, East: Council of Florence (1438), the fall of
Byzantium (1453) and the Invasion of Russia by Mongolians

16-18th Centuries - the Orthodox Churches under Turkish rule, Protestant
Reformation. Russia becomes a patriarchate in 1589. The forced Unions of Brest
Litovsk & Uzhorod, the Old Believers Schism in Russia, the emergence of national
churches as Turkish influence decreases: Greece, Romania, Serbia, Bulgaria, Albania.

20th Century – Orthodox Church under Communist Rule. Orthodoxy in America to
the 1960s

The lives of the following Saints are touched upon:

St. Sabba of Serbia, St. Alexander Nevsky, St. Gregory Palamas, St. Mark of
Ephesus, St. Sergius of Radonesz, St. Seraphim of Sarov, St. Herman of Alaska, St.
Innocent of America, St. Alexis Toth, St. Tikhon of Moscow

Prayer – Liturgical/Personal – N/A

Ethics/Morality – N/A

Vocation – N/A

Supplemental Texts: (See Appendix)

GRADES 11 & 12 (AGES 17-18)

CURRICULUM COVERED/TEXT BOOK

At the present time, the OCEC does not have suitable textbooks available in print for 11th and 12th grades. It is recommended that if a weekly church school class can not be put together given the hectic schedules and the availability of this age group that the religious education take the form of seminars, mini retreats or a youth group *rap session*.

Recommended Texts for Group Discussions/Formal Church School Classes.

Who is God, Who are You, Who Am I, - Dee Pennock, (Available from Light and Life Publishing) – an excellent discussion about understanding and controlling the human passions, and discovering one’s vocation of love for God and humanity.

Contemporary Moral Issues – Fr. Stanley Harakas (Available from Light and Life Publishing)

God is calling You! Exploring God’s Purpose For Your Life- Department of Religious Education Orthodox Church In America (Available from OCEC) –An excellent 7 part study unit that can be used at all age levels regarding discerning one’s life vocation

Celebrations: Feasts and Holy Days – OCEC. An excellent book with lessons on the holy days of the liturgical year as well as the Advent and Lenten Seasons.

God Is With Us – (Ethical Issues) – Fr. John Breck. No lesson plans, but great references and short articles that students can react to.

AGE APPROPRIATE PRAYERS, HYMNS, RELIGIOUS EXPRESSIONS

Senior High

Encourage more active participation in the liturgical life of the Church, Reading Epistle, Hours, Prayers before and after Communion. Encourage development of talent for cantoring divine services, and choral conducting. Encourage involvement with parish duties of taking collections, cleaning the church, assisting with maintenance, etc

APPENDIX 1

Supplimentary Materials - Pre-School/Primary Grades:

Icon Coloring Book: 5 Volume Series of (1) Old Testament (2) The Nativity of Our Lord (3) The Miracles of Christ (4) Special Edition – Misc. Icons of Our Lord (5) Journey to Pascha Available From OCEC

The Icon Book – Fr. John Matusiak Gives explanation of icon/holy day/saint depicted. Suitable for older children and an invaluable resource for the teacher. Available From OCEC.

Videos of the Old Testament & New Testament Bible Stories are a great way of reinforcing students knowledge and memory of the pivotal biblical stories/events in our Lord's life.

Beginners' Bible Series that can be found in most Christian Bookstores is recommended. *Veggie Tales and Davy and Goliath*, while entertaining, tend to be adaptations.

Grades 2 -8

God is With Us – Sophie Koulomzin Bible Stories for Children with Orthodox Illustrations. Available From OCEC

How About Advent (OCEC) A workbook for home use during the Nativity Fast. Has daily family activities and readings and creates and Advent Calendar.

My Lenten Journey – Antiochian Archdiocese – Poster/daily calendar & activities to reinforce spirit and theme of Great Lent. Available From OCEC

Lenten Lotto (OCEC) – Game that reinforces the themes of Great Lent/Holy Week.

Lenten Workbook (OCEC) – Activities and resource materials which stress Pre-Lenten & Tridion Period, Lenten Worship Services & Holy Week.

Grandmother's Spiritual Stories – Georgia Hronas – Stories of the lives of the saints/ Orthodox holy days/customs that are excellent for home use as bedtime stories and/or family story time. Available from Light and Life Publishing.

All Grades/Teacher Resources

Total Parish Education: Curriculum and Scope and Sequence of the OCEC – Complete description and explanation of the philosophy and implementation of the materials and scope and sequence of the OCEC. Includes a Scope and Sequence Chart with a detailed explanation of the OCEC text books. This is a **must** for every Church School Teacher.

APPENDIX 2

Contacts to Order Church School Materials/Catalogue

Orthodox Christian Education Commission (OCEC)
P.O. Box 1051
Syracuse, New York 13201
1-800-464-2744
Monday through Friday. 2pm - 7 pm (eastern time),
Order On-Line 24/7 @
<http://www.orthodoxed.org>

Light and Life Publishing
4818 Park Glen Road
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55416
612-925-3888
<http://www.light-n-life.com>

Some Internet Resources

Home Page of ACROD Religious Education Commission

<http://www.acrod.org/education>

Website of the Director of Religious Education
Greek Orthodox Diocese of Pittsburgh, PA

<http://www.phyllisonest.com>

Excellent source of church school teacher's resource material, project ideas, family life articles and an excellent "Yellow Pages" of contacts for countless Orthodox educational resources from all jurisdictions in America and elsewhere.

APPENDIX 3

Coordinating a Program For the Size of Your School – (Reprinted From OCEC Catalogue)

Not all churches have enough children to allow for separate grades in the church school. Several grades must be combined together in the same classroom. The open classroom concept is hardly new and has been developed in the public schools for years. It helps for us to think of those small schools as a small family living and learning about God together.

A basic lesson can be taught to the whole group and then children divide up into small groups or individually, according to age, work abilities and interests. Projects all play a great part in such situations, and these activities must be worked out in advance and student-initiated. Older students need more challenge to understand and study the theme or concepts on their own level, at their own speed. Younger students need more teacher guidance and involvement.

Here are a few ways to organize this using the OCEC materials.

ONE CLASSROOM SCHOOL

Although one class is possible, it is better to divide up into at least two groups for lessons. Where this is not possible, the home study book *Way of Life: Introducing Your Child to the Orthodox Faith* can be used as an umbrella program for all ages. The material can be divided to cover two years. The themes are the section headings from the book. The books in italics are OCEC manuals that can be used.

First year: Church – *New Life in Jesus/New Life in the Church*; Advent/Nativity – *In the Beginning*; Lent/Pascha – *Making Things Right/Jesus, the Promise of God*.

Second year: Feast- *Together with God*; Home- *The wonder of it All/God, My Friends and Me*; Major Saints- *God Loves Us/Our Life in the Church*

Note: In the following sections the first book mentioned should be used this year. Other books can be used in succeeding years. Pre-school children have such unique needs that no matter the number, they should be placed in a separate area, using pre-school manuals.

TWO CLASSROOM SCHOOL

Kindergarten-Second Grade–

Use *Together With God*;
Then *God Loves Us, New Life in Jesus/Making Things Right*

Third – Sixth Grade

Use *New Life in the Church*;
Then *Jesus, the Promise of God, Our Life in the Church, In the Beginning*.

THREE CLASSROOM SCHOOL

Pre-School-First Grade

Use *The Wonder of it All/God, My Friends and Me*;
Then *Together with God*; Then *God Loves Us*

Second-Third Grade

Use *New Life in Jesus/Making Things Right*;
Then *New Life in the Church*

Fourth – Sixth Grade

Use *Jesus, The Promise of God*;
Then *Our Life in the Church, In the Beginning*

FOUR CLASSROOM SCHOOL

Pre-School – First Grade

Use *The Wonder of it All/God, My Friends and Me*;
Then *Together with God*; Then *God Loves Us*

Second-Third Grade

Use *New Life in Jesus/Making Things Right*;
Then *New Life in the Church*

Fourth–Fifth Grade

Use *Jesus, The Promise of God*;
Then *Our Life in the Church*,

Sixth-Seventh Grade

Use *In the Beginning*, Then *The Young Church*

Teens –Separate programs and classes should be arranged. Where numbers are very low, youth could serve as junior teachers with responsibility of helping and mastering the content.