There is an often-told story of how Russia came to embrace the Orthodox Christian Faith. At the end of the 10th century, Prince Vladimir sent envoys out to various countries of the world in search of the true faith. When the envoys returned, they offered various reports of the traditions they had visited. But when describing Orthodox worship, they told the Czar:

“We knew not whether we were in heaven or on earth, for surely there is no such splendor or beauty anywhere upon earth. We cannot describe it to you: only this we know, that God dwells there among men, and that their service surpasses the worship of all other places. For we cannot forget that beauty.”
Searching through the Gospels, we find Jesus Christ addressed as or referred to as “teacher” forty-five times. To the disciples, to the people of Israel, Jesus was a teacher. Teaching was a central aspect of his ministry. For example, upon entering Capernaum, the Gospel of Mark reports that Jesus “entered the synagogue and taught” (Mark 1:21). And apparently Jesus as an exceptional teacher, both in terms of content and popularity. Even when the Gospels do not record the contents of Jesus’s teachings, which is often, His message was powerful and influential. The Gospel of Mark states, “And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes” (Mark 1:22).

This made Jesus an attractive speaker, someone you “had to hear.” Many of the great teachings of Jesus were delivered as lectures to large crowds. The Sermon on the Mount – the Beatitudes – was delivered when Jesus saw a great crowd of people (Matthew 5:1). But this was not the only time a large crowd assembled to hear Jesus. The Gospel of Luke reports that so many people came to hear Jesus at the Lake of Gennesaret that He “taught the people from a boat” (Luke 5:3). He was so popular as a teacher that the crowds would forget about food and drink, so that Jesus had to provide it, by multiplying loaves and fish!

At the tomb of Christ, Mary encounters the resurrected Jesus and addresses Him as *rabboni*, which is Hebrew for “teacher” (John 20:11).

But Jesus also confounded His audience as a teacher. His hearers did not understand the messenger, and rejected Him and His message. He didn’t fit the mold of a teacher of His day. We would say that He wasn’t “certified” or hadn’t attended the “right schools.” For example, in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus teaches in His hometown of Nazareth, and the people ask, “Where did this man get this wisdom… Is not this the carpenter’s son?…And they took offense at him” (Matthew 13:53-58).

We can teach as Jesus taught. By taking a closer look at Jesus’s teachings, we can begin to discern a distinct “style of teaching” that we can imitate in our own ministry of teaching. Jesus frequently uses metaphors and similes. Remember that metaphors connect and compare two unlike things in a suggestive or open manner, rather than in a direct or closed manner. The best example of a metaphor might be the “I am” statements of Jesus, as found throughout the Gospel of John. For example, Jesus says, “I am the true vine” (John 15:1-9). If this were a “closed” statement, Jesus would be saying that He was a plant, but obviously this is not the case. The metaphor points to the relationship between Jesus and His Father, and Jesus and His disciples. Reading the entire passage, we can see that life comes from the vine and goes to the branches; to be attached to the vine is to have life, to be cut off is to die, and to bear fruit – love – one must remain on the branch through obedience to Jesus’s commands. Jesus also teaches with similes, using “like” or “as” to make a comparison, as in, “The kingdom of heaven is like…” He gives us open invitations to think about how God’s kingdom resembles a marriage feast (Matthew 22:1-14), a mustard seed (Matthew 13:31-32), or a pearl of great value (Matthew 13:44-46).

Jesus asks really good questions, and He allows those He asked to arrive at the correct answer themselves. Perhaps the best example is Jesus asking the disciples, “Who do men say that I am?” and then asking them, “Who do you say that I am?” (Matthew 16:13-17). The question is open-ended, and those who knew the answer could reply as did Peter. To gauge how effective this style of questioning
was, try changing or reversing the phrasing. What if Jesus had asked, “Do any of you think I am the Messiah?” Was Jesus unsure of Himself, thus sowing doubt among His followers? Was Jesus checking the pulse of the disciples? Where would this have gone if they had said no? So by allowing the disciples, in this case Peter, to figure it out for themselves and proclaim their faith in Jesus, they would be blessed as Peter was – as the rock (petros) of faith.

Jesus also answers questions with more questions. In Luke 10:25-37, the young lawyer asks Jesus, “What must I do…” Jesus responds, “How do you read the Law?” This dynamic creates a situation in which Jesus puts the questioner to divulge what he already knows from the Law and to begin to reflect on it, which the lawyer does, and then asks Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Jesus does not answer the question directly, but follows up with His most distinctive teaching device: the parable.

Parables make up about one-third of Jesus’s teachings in Matthew, Mark and Luke. The parables are unique to Jesus. The Scriptures do not contain other parables in the same way as Jesus taught them. The parables should be seen as open-ended symbols, extended metaphors or similes. Using examples from nature or daily life, the parables tease the hearer into active thought. Their open-endedness leads to many possibilities. It become impossible, it seems, to draw only one interpretation from a parable.

The parables have an everyday quality about them. Their characters are often “a certain man,” “a king” or “a landowner.” In the parables, Jesus does not seem to distinguish between religious and secular life – they are contiguous and point to one another. Issues of faith were part of life and life issues were faith issues. There is usually an element of the “unclean” in them: a Samaritan rescues the traveler; the prodigal works with swine. These would have caught the hearer off guard, requiring rethinking of prejudices and stereotypes. There is almost always a miraculous turn of events, a surprise ending and an element of grace being bestowed. The father restores the prodigal despite having every right not to; the sower has a bountiful harvest despite abandoning his field. Finally, the parables invite the hearer to respond with action and initiate the principles of the kingdom of God. After Jesus tells the lawyer the parable of the Good Samaritan, He asks, “Who proved to be the neighbor?” He then challenges the lawyer to “go and do likewise.”

We can do likewise and learn from this teaching style! We can focus on asking really good questions. At a workshop, a teacher revealed that during Great Lent his high school class was studying the question “Why did Jesus have to die?” Christians have been wrestling with this question since the time of Christ (just read St. Paul). In the discussion, we moved on to “Why did He have to rise from the dead? And “What is implication of the Resurrection for the world?”

Use metaphors and similes. In a class just after the Super Bowl at Holy Cross School of Theology, I posed the question, “How might the Super Bowl be used in a Christian education class? The conversation went on for more than half an hour and could have gone for much longer. The discussion ranged from athletic activity and spiritual discipline to the extremes of capitalism that the Super Bowl demonstrates. Tell stories, whether parables or stories from history and everyday life. We are born, it seems, to love stories, remember them, and learn from them.

Anton C. Vrame, PhD, Director
Department of Religious Education

During a parish council meeting, at a particular parish, a man shot back at the youth director, “It’s people like you who make it so difficult for us parents! You are responsible for teaching our kids about the faith. Isn’t that why we pay you anyway?” The youth director had simply suggested that the parish try to find ways to support and equip parents to practice the Orthodox Faith in the home with their children. This dad would have none of it.

A scene like this isn’t too difficult to imagine. But decades of research have proven that families – especially parents – are the primary moral and spiritual teachers of young people. In 1990, the Search Institute conducted a national study asking seventh to twelfth graders to identify the key faith-shaping influences in their lives. The results showed that both mothers and fathers topped the list for talking about faith with their children (“Effective Christian Education: A National Study of Protestant Congregations,” Search Institute, 1990).

Going back to the frustrated father, though, many parents are too busy, too tired or too intimidated to seriously live out their faith at home with their children. Many of us still believe that faith formation is the sole responsibility of the priest or Sunday school teachers. If parents are the primary influence on faith development, however, we need to take the responsibility seriously and equip ourselves for it.

The “Orthodox Family in America in Home and at Church” study, conducted in 2010 by the Center for Family Care of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, investigated the needs that parents and priests identified as necessary to equip families to take the lead in the moral and faith development of children. Results suggested the following topics: religious education for families; adult classes on parenting; raising children with strong morals; praying as a family at home and at church. As we deepen our own faith and love of Christ – through involvement in the Church and at home with programs like these – we can better understand this to be our primary role in the home.

Rev. Fr. George Morelli succinctly summarizes the role of parents in a family’s faith formation: The family as the domestic church cannot foreclose on its obligation to be Christ-centered. Parents cannot assign their obligation to others, be it the parish priest, teachers or youth workers. Christ must be present in the home from marriage, conception, birth, growth, until all fall asleep unto the Lord in the hope of eternal salvation. (“Orthodox Marriage and Parenting in the Domestic Church: Ladder of Divine Ascent for Marriage,” Orthodoxy Today.org)

Marriage as the Foundation of Family

The crowns received by the bride and groom on their wedding day signify that the couple is called to be the king and queen of their new home, and that together with their children, they are to become a prophetic witness to god. The cornerstone of this little kingdom is the marital bond between husband and wife.

How, then, does the strength of the marital relationship affect parenting and teaching our children? The “Building Strong Families” study in 2002, correlating strong families
and parenting, came up with the following instructive finding:

A key – but often lacking – resource for parents is a strong relationship with their spouse or partner. The parents we interviewed who experience an excellent partner relationship…are more likely to feel successful and up to the challenges of parenting. (“Building Strong Families,” a collaborative study by the YMCA and Search Institute, 2002) A strong and successful marriage, therefore, is the foundation of healthy parenting. What does such a marriage look like? How does it build a strong basis for the raising of children? Let’s take a look at some of its key traits:

1. Sanctifying. Allow Christ to enter into the marital bond and sanctify it with His presence. He will then transform and purify the couple’s love for one another, and together they will create an atmosphere of holiness in the family. This teaches our children the importance of piety and worship in the home.

2. Sacrificial. “Be subject to one another out of reverence of Christ” (Ephesians 5:21). There must be mutuality in love between the husband and the wife as shown by self-sacrifice and obedience to one another and, together, by obedience to Christ. This will model sacrificial love and obedience to our children.

3. Caring. We all have a primary “love language.” Learning what this is for our spouse, be it physical touch, words of affirmation or something else, is critical in showing that we care. Learning to share our time, our attention and our affection are also important ways to express that we are thinking about our spouse. By doing these, we teach our children to be caring and compassionate.

4. Forgiveness. Learning how to forgive each other is one of the most important and difficult lessons in marriage. As a result, when our children hear us say, “I’m sorry,” after an argument, they feel safe and learn that their parents love each other in spite of their differences.

Elder Porphyrios has very powerful words that exhort the married couple to become holy for the sake of their salvation and that of their children: What saves and makes for good children is the life of the parents in the home. The parents need to devote themselves to the love of God. They need to become saints in the relation to [each other and to] their children…And the joy that will come to them, the holiness that will visit them, will shower grace

WAYS PARENTS CAN HELP STRENGTHEN THE FOUNDATION OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1. Plan to be in Church prior to the beginning of Sunday School - which begins at 9:45 am.

2. Be consistent. Attend Church regularly.

3. Visit the classroom and meet with the teacher to see what lessons your child is learning so that lesson material can be re-enforced at home; ask your child if they have any special handouts from the teacher.

4. See that your child comes to class prepared with books, homework assignments etc.

5. Practice the faith at home, observe fast days and schedule family prayer time. Children are great imitators; what they see you do, you will see them do.

6. Be realistic in setting your goals as you grow in the Faith. God will always provide more than you will ever need, but you need to be willing and ready to be called and to follow Him in every aspect of your life.

7. Do not feel alone, or overwhelmed, but turn to God in prayer at all times. Stand Firm in Holy Tradition and Be Well In Faith.
Parenting as Stewardship

For parents, the upbringing of children is the most important and sacred stewardship in life. It begins with conception, in the womb, wherein the mother is called to lead a full sacramental life during the months of her pregnancy and the expecting parents are to maintain a life of prayer and sanctity in the home. Sister Magdalen instructs, “If we pray...we create an atmosphere in which children taste prayer and God's presence. If we dwell in this spirit, even without words, even before children can speak, they can acquire a natural taste for prayer, and the desire to know God” (Children in the Church Today, St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1997).

My wife and I have always strived to be good stewards. Yet it never seems to be a linear process. For instance, even though we have carved out time for family evening prayers at our altar, we often end up doing them in the bedroom after our daughters are all tucked in bed. This is either due to our own lack of discipline or because getting them to stay still is more effort than we want to exert! But when we do get all settled and prayerful, it can be very rewarding. Our older daughter loves to read prayers from our little prayer book, and our younger one recites Psalm 23 (“The Lord is my shepherd...”) over and over again.

Striving to become good stewards of our children requires work, commitment and patience. Children are inclined to imitate both the good and the bad, so parents must become good models of Christ-like behavior. We need to guide them in internalizing Godly values and virtues, and in developing skills that will help them become mature, caring adults. We must equip them for living moral lives in an increasingly immoral and impious society. This isn’t easy, but if our efforts begin in our marriage and in our home, God will bless our families so that we become a little church of the home.

St. John Chrysostom eloquently captures this awesome stewardship of raising godly children in our church of the home: Let us raise children in such a way that they can face any trouble, and not be surprised when difficulties come. Let us bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. When we teach our children to be good, to be gentle, to be forgiving, to be generous, to love their fellow men, to regard this present age as nothing, we instill virtue in their souls, and reveal the image of God within them. This, then, is our first task: to educate both ourselves and our children in godliness, otherwise what answer will we have before Christ’s judgment seat? (Homily 21 on Ephesians)

by: Panayiotis Sakellariou

THE PHILOSOPHY OF OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL

The philosophy of our Sunday School program is based on a Christocentric approach, which prepares the students with principles of the Orthodox faith, encouraging them to grow in God’s service. Our program builds a solid foundation for the children of our community through exemplary lessons in the teaching and worship practices of the Greek Orthodox Christian faith.

SUNDAY SCHOOL STAFF

The Teachers and Supervisors of the Sunday School Program are fellow parishioners who love children and show a desire to serve our Lord through the stewardship of teaching. They stand as role models for our children. The following are the names of all our Sunday School Staff:

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<tr>
<th>Spiritual Advisor</th>
<th>Second Grade</th>
<th>High School Study Group</th>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Peter Orfanakos</td>
<td>Violet Sakoulas</td>
<td>Steven Yates</td>
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<th>Third Grade</th>
<th>Children’s Choir</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Maria Diamantis</td>
<td>Tina Valouras Berner</td>
<td>Stacey Schinas Grimaldi</td>
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<td>Clio Nicolakis, Assistant</td>
<td>Shaun Berner</td>
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<td>Steven Yates, Curriculum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anastasia Ganim</td>
<td>Stacey Ference</td>
<td>Evgenia Mays</td>
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<td>Samantha Mendoza</td>
<td>Tony Delos</td>
<td>Anthony Alessio</td>
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<td>Paige Bullock</td>
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<td>Donna Antonellis</td>
<td>Anna Albanis</td>
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<td>Donna Kokenos</td>
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<td>Jeannie Daniel</td>
<td>Kristin Esares Dwyer</td>
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<td>Eleni Sarigianis</td>
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<td>Christina Komninakos</td>
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<td>Kathy Zikos</td>
<td>Michele Papadimitriou</td>
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<td>Calliope Vlandis</td>
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<td>Christina Zikos</td>
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<td>Elpida Lolis</td>
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<td>Adrianna Papadimitriou</td>
<td>Jim Sarigianis</td>
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Learning Objectives: Living Our Orthodox Faith

A frequent question that the Department receives from teachers and parents is “What should children know about their faith by the time they are “X” years old?” This question is fueled by a number of influences. First, schools have expectations that their students should reach certain milestones at various stages in their education. Teachers are expected to prepare their students to meet those points in the course of the year, usually because there will be some kind of test. Second, education itself is goal-oriented. Educational progress is measured by the acquisition of certain objectives. Teachers and students want to know their level of progress. Third, parents want to be able to assist their children in the learning process. Knowing the expectations and what the program hopes to accomplish is beneficial.

The aim of education in the Orthodox Church is “to nurture, instruct, and direct each member of the community of faith—the Church—in Christian living, or as Orthodox writers typically call it, the life in Christ, so that each person grows “in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18) and become “a partaker of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4). Alternately stated, the goal of ... catechesis is for each person to become an icon, a living image of God, a person who lives in continual fellowship—communion—with God, reflecting a particular way—the Christ-like way—of knowing and living in the world.” (A. Vrame, The Educating Icon, 1999, p. 63). This vision of

Goals of Our Sunday School Program

1. To encourage all students from nursery age to seniors in high school to participate in our Sunday School Program.

2. To make our Sunday School spiritually enriching for our children.

3. To establish a stable Christian educational environment.

4. To provide Christian awareness and education for inclusive classrooms and learning format / geared for all children of all abilities.

5. To provide well rounded and theologically based lessons on the Bible, Liturgical Worship, Prayer Life, Sacramental Life, and Mission Awareness.

6. To have a dependable volunteer staff, who because of their personal commitment to Christ, serve His Church as teachers.

7. To provide the staff and students with text books and other resources (i.e. craft supplies, videos...) which inspire and enhance Christian learning.

8. To provide Sunday School students the opportunity to learn about Stewardship and caring for our Church, community center and grounds.

9. To learn how to work together with one another in the House of God.

10. To encourage respect and Christian agape among all children of our church.
education involves acquiring information but also involves living according to the precepts of that information.

Thus, an Orthodox Christian ought to be well-informed about the rich content of the Orthodox Tradition. Being able to name, to retell, to identify, to list, and more are dimensions of what it means “to know” one’s faith. A Church school program should be able to transmit these concepts to its students. But “knowing the Faith” also involves being able to appreciate its content, to consider how it influences one’s life, to participate in it, and to respond to its call of commitment to faith in Jesus Christ and His Church. For example, what is the benefit of reciting the Lord’s Prayer in a classroom setting, and a teacher’s assessment that the student has memorized it, without praying the Lord’s Prayer at home and reflecting on the words themselves?

The real curriculum for learning the Orthodox Faith is the life of the Church as experienced in a dynamic, faith-filled parish. Our education in faith is a lifelong journey. No Church school curriculum can include or teach everything. Any series of published textbooks is merely the first step of learning.

What follows is a summary of the concepts that we strive to teach in each grade. Please note that at the end of each grade, the Bible stories, lives of saints, and hymns covered in the lessons of each grade are listed. It should be noted that Bible stories are frequently summarized in the textbooks to present the main point of the lesson or the story as well as to meet the developing reading skills of a student. When appropriate, based on reading ability, a student should begin using the Bible directly and learning Bible skills.

The concepts become more involved and the number of stories increases as the learner progresses. You will notice how certain concepts and topics, e.g., the Divine Liturgy, repeat themselves from year to year and are presented in new ways based on the theme of the book. The goal of the Sunday school program is not to present all of the information on a single topic in one year, never to return to it, but to revisit key topics in an unfolding pattern of discovery for the learner.

Of course, individual teachers add material, information (lives of saints, feast days, Sunday scripture readings), and activities, which will add to this list. Finally, the following list assumes that a child attends Church school faithfully, has a well-prepared teacher, and a family that is involved in the life of the Church, involved in the learning process, and reinforces the concepts at home.

Prepared by Stephanie Gianulis
Additional material by Rev. Anton C. Vrame, PhD


SAINT JOHN OF KRONSTADT
MY LIFE IN CHRIST
SAINT BARBARA SUNDAY SCHOOL: CURRICULUM AND SYLLABUS

The curriculum in use is from the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Department of Religious Education and is supplemented with other materials and activities obtained from other Orthodox Christian sources. All outside materials are reviewed and approved by Father Peter.

NURSERY:

GOD LOVES US:
WHAT WE SEE AND DO IN CHURCH

Joy is the main theme of the Nursery program. God’s love is the source of our joy. The Nursery student experiences joy through family activities, and through Church worship and life. Aspects of worship and stories from Scripture highlight specific examples of and reasons for joy in living a life centered on Christ. The Nursery Student learns to celebrate God’s gift of joy and thus feels a sense of trust and well-being.

KINDERGARTEN:

HAPPY WITH GOD

The Kindergarten class seeks to introduce the students to basic Church teachings, events in the liturgical calendar, Bible stories and hymns. The Kindergartner is provided with an opportunity to learn more about what they witness and experience in Church every Sunday.

FIRST GRADE:

ME AND MY WORLD

The focus of the First Grade is on creation as God’s gift. God has made the world and everything in it as an example of His love and goodness. As the child discovers the world around him, the child understands that family, friends, church, school and all things come from God. Through the daily experience of God’s world, the child understands that God is real, loving and caring. The child’s faith in God is awakened and is expressed through prayer, worship and thanksgiving.

What students will learn in the first grade class:
Unit 1—About Me
God made every person to be a special and unique individual. Jesus is the Son of God. Learning is a gift from God; one thing we learn is how to make the sign of the cross. The Bible helps to guide our lives. God cares about our feelings, and He wants us to help and share with others. We should be thankful to God for the talents He gives us. Our priests teach us about God.

Unit 2—About the Orthodox faith
Orthodox Christians light candles in church, venerate icons, and make the sign of the cross in a special way. We receive Holy Communion, the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. This brings us close to Him and to each other. When we
are baptized, we are born into God's family. Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist. At our baptism, we receive our name. Many of us are named after saints - holy people who fully lived God's way. At our baptism, we also receive the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is a gift from God working within us, to guide us toward doing the right thing in life. Jesus teaches us to love all people and to forgive others. Jesus Himself was once a child, and He loves children very much. Jesus Himself prayed alone and with others. He teaches us the Lord's Prayer. When we pray, we talk to and listen to God. We can pray in the morning, at meals, at night, or any time.

Unit 3—About your family
We are all part of a special group of people called a family. Families are different - some are large, some are small, some don't have a mother or a father. Families love each other and share with each other. An Orthodox Christian family does special things. When a baby is forty days old, his or her parents bring him or her to church to be blessed. All Orthodox Christian families make up the church family. The church family celebrates special days like baptism and marriage.

Unit 4—About your church
The church is a special place where we come together to pray. When we light candles in the church, we remember that Jesus Christ is the light of the world. We kiss icons in the church to remember the saints on them. In our church, the priest stands at the altar during our services. Long ago, Jesus was arrested and put to death in the city of Jerusalem, and then He rose from the dead. The church started with Jesus’ twelve Apostles. After His resurrection, they traveled all over the world to teach people about Christ. During church, we pray by singing “Lord have mercy.” In the Divine Liturgy, receiving Communion joins us with Jesus. The first Liturgy was the Mystical Supper. In our Liturgy, the priest repeats the words of Jesus. We should offer our time, talents, and treasures to the church in any way that we can.

Unit 5—About people
Jesus came to earth for all people in the world. We should love and respect all people no matter who they are or how different they are from us. Jesus taught that we should even love and pray for those who do harm to us. Some Christians are not Orthodox—they are Catholic or Protestant. Our leaders sometimes meet with their leaders to discuss our differences and similarities. Not all people are Christian. We should respect all people and their religions.

Unit 6—About your world
God created everything in the earth, as a gift for us to take care of.

Unit 7—About Church holy days
On March 25, we remember that the Annunciation is the day when the Angel Gabriel came to Mary and told her she would be Jesus’ mother. We call her the Theotokos—the one who gave birth to God. On December 25, we celebrate the birth of Jesus, Christmas. Giving each other gifts reminds us that Jesus Christ is our greatest gift. On January 6, we celebrate the baptism of Jesus, which we call the Theophany or Epiphany. The priest blesses us with holy water. The Sunday before Easter is called Palm Sunday, when Jesus entered into Jerusalem and the people welcomed Him as a king. They waved palm branches. We also use palm branches and welcome Jesus as our King. On Easter Sunday, or Pascha, we celebrate the resurrection of Christ from the dead. We proclaim “Christ is risen!”

Hymns
By the Prayers of the Theotokos (Ταίς πρεσβείαις)
Save Us O Son of God (Σώσον ημᾶς)
Holy God (Αγιος ο Θεός)
Blessed Be the Name of the Lord (Είη το όνομα Κυρίου)
Christ is Risen (Χριστός ανέστη)

Bible Stories
The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)
Zechariah and Elizabeth (Luke 1:5-25, 57-63)
Jesus Heals the Paralytic (John 5:1-9)
Noah and the Ark (Genesis 6-9)
Jesus Gives the Holy Spirit after His Resurrection (John 20:19-23)
Joseph and His Brothers (Genesis 37:23-28, 45)
Jesus and the Children (Mark 10:13-16)
The Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32)
Adam and Eve (Genesis 2:4-25)
The Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38)
The Nativity of Christ (Luke 2:8-20, Matthew 2:1-12)
The Baptism of Christ (Matthew 3:13-17)
SECOND GRADE:

LOVING GOD

Second Grade concentrates on the theme of loving God as the child's obedient response to God. Through the examples of men and women of the Old and New Testaments, as well as the examples of the Orthodox Saints, the second grader begins to understand sin and forgiveness in the light of God's love. Through such examples, and through acts of worship and life, the child learns to respond to God with love and obedience – the foundations of morality.

What students will learn in the second grade class:

Unit 1—We all need love
All people need love in order to live. God loves us and gives us gifts in our life, such as our talents. He wants us to take care of all these gifts from Him. God gave us His son, Jesus, to save us from sin. In Jerusalem, Jesus taught people, healed people, and was baptized in the Jordan River. He died on the cross and rose from the dead. Jesus taught that the most important rule is to love God with your whole self. Jesus wants us to love others. People will know you are a Christian when you treat others with love.

Unit 2—Love at home
God wants parents to love their children, and children should obey their loving parents. There are many ways to show love for your parents. The Church has seven sacraments, which help us to be close to God. Marriage is the sacrament of love. Icons show Jesus and the saints. They may tell stories about the Church. They remind us of God and the saints. When we burn incense, the smoke rises like our prayers rise to God. The Jesus Prayer is, “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.” We should forgive each other and ask for forgiveness from others.

Unit 3—Love in Church
Our church is a family and we show each other love in many ways. At Divine Liturgy, we receive the sacrament of Holy Communion, a sacrament of love. To prepare, we pray, forgive each other, and fast from certain foods. Our church has many symbols, such as the Cross, the altar table, the chalice, the baptismal font, icons, and the incense censer. When we hurt ourselves or others, we sin. We should ask God for forgiveness of our sins in the sacrament of Confession. When we decide to confess our sins to God, we sit with a priest and he helps us and blesses us. Even when it is not easy to be loving, the Holy Spirit helps us to love.

Unit 4—Love means serving others
To serve means to do something good for someone, out of our love for them and for God. When we care for others, we are caring for Jesus. We should remember this whenever we see a person in need. God made people the same in many ways, and different in many ways. We should love and serve people, even if we don't know them. People in the church can join together to help others who are in need.

Unit 5—Love means being respectful
Respecting other people is a way of telling them that they are important. All people deserve respect. We should respect leaders such as our teachers, coaches, priests, and our president. Our church's leaders are bishops and priests. A bishop takes care of priests and the people in parishes. Our priests celebrate sacraments, teach us, and visit people in the hospital. Deacons are helpers to the priests and bishops. We also respect the saints, who were people who lived God's way. We remember the day the saint died. This is a feast day, because on that day the saint went to heaven. The night before a saint's feast day, we have Great Vespers to honor the saint and ask for him or her to pray for us. The next morning, we celebrate Divine Liturgy. We celebrate a person's name day on the feast day of a saint. We must treat our world with respect so that all people can enjoy it.

Unit 6—Love means obeying the rules
Rules help us to live together. When we obey them, it shows that we care about ourselves and about each other. We follow rules in our church because we love and respect God and others there. God gave us rules in the form of
In the Third Grade the emphasis shifts to the theme of sharing based on the life of the Church. As the Third Grader becomes open to the outside world and peer group relationships, he or she learns about God’s people and their relationships in the Old and New Testaments, as well as in the history of the Church. Through study of the life of the Church, the child experiences sharing, giving, dialogue, and dealing with relational difficulties in a positive manner.

What students will learn in the third grade class:

**Unit 1—God wants us to share**

Hospitality means sharing our food and gifts with others. We also share our feelings, thoughts, and talents with others. We can share with God by going to church, singing the hymns, and giving to the poor; we should do this out of love. God made a covenant (promise) to Abraham, who became the father of the Hebrew people. Many years later Jesus was born among the Hebrew people, so all of His followers can share in Abraham’s blessings. All Christians share God’s gift of the Law to Moses, the Ten Commandments. Jesus taught us to follow these commandments, and that the greatest commandment is to love God and to love others. The Holy Cross is a symbol of love, because Jesus died on the cross to save us. We celebrate this feast day on September 14. We show our respect for the cross by making the sign of the cross, putting it up on our walls, or wearing it on a chain around our necks. Seeing a cross should remind us of Jesus’ love for us. We love and respect Mary, the Theotokos, which means the Mother of God. When Mary was three years old, her parents brought her to the Temple in Jerusalem, where the Jewish people prayed. She lived there her whole life, praying and following God’s way. On November 21, the Church celebrates the day that Mary entered the Temple. When the baby Jesus was forty days old, Mary and Joseph brought him to the Temple to be blessed by God. A very old man named Simeon held Jesus in his arms, and knew that it was the Savior. After he did, he told God that his life was complete. This feast day is called the Presentation of Jesus, and we celebrate it on February 2. Just like Jesus, your parents brought you to be blessed when you were forty days old. We believe that after Jesus died, He rose from the dead after three days. This is the greatest miracle of our faith. We proclaim, “Christ is risen!”

**Hymns**

- Only Begotten Son (Ο μονογενής Υιός)
- We Have Seen the Light (Είδομεν το φώς το αληθινόν)
- One is Holy (Είς άγιος)
- The Virgin on This Day (Η Παρθένος σήμερον)

**Bible Stories**

- Adam and Eve (Genesis 2-3)
- The Flight to Egypt (Matthew 2:1-23)
- The Miracle at Cana (John 2:1-11)
- The Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32)
- The Last Supper (1 Corinthians 11:23-25)
- The Denial of Peter (Matthew 26:31-35, 69-75; John 21:9-15)
- The Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-35)
- David and King Saul (1 Samuel 24:1-15)
- The Ten Commandments (Exodus 19, 24)
- The House Built on Rock (Matthew 7:24-27)
- The Nativity of Christ (Luke 2:8-20, Matthew 2:1-12)

**Saints**

- St. Demetrios and St. Nestor; St. John the Evangelist
- St. Basil the Great; St. Helen Finds the Cross

**Unit 2—Jesus teaches us to share**

When Christians “share the good news,” they tell others about how Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world. Jesus wants us to be His helpers by helping others. This makes us His disciples, people who bring the good news to others.
The service of the Blessing of the Five Loaves is based on the story of Jesus multiplying the five loaves of bread and four fish with the multitudes. This service reminds us that we should share our food with those who are hungry and have no food. Jesus made a sacrifice for us, and He teaches that sometimes doing the right thing is not easy, and we may have to make sacrifices, too.

Unit 3—The Holy Spirit helps us to share

We received the Holy Spirit at our baptism. The Holy Spirit fills our heart with love and increases our kindness and closeness to each other. The Holy Spirit helps us to be brave when we’re scared, to make good choices, and to say and do the right things, even when others around us do not.

Unit 4—Families share

People in families should treat each other with love and share with each other. Family mealtime can be a special time for families to share with each other. Families can pray together before meals, at bedtime, before traveling, or any time. They can pray in their own words or use a prayer book. Families make and share special memories together. When families remember a special person who has died, the Church has a Memorial Service to pray for the person. His or her memory lives on forever.

Unit 5—we share in Church

In the Divine Liturgy, we share special news about God. During the first part of the Liturgy, we learn through the Epistle and Gospel readings. These Gospels share stories about Jesus’ life. The Epistles are letters from the Apostles that help teach us how to live Christian lives. During the second part of the Divine Liturgy, we offer the gifts of bread and wine to God. The Holy Spirit changes the gifts to the Body and Blood of Christ, to be Holy Communion.

Before receiving, we say the Lord’s Prayer. After we receive, we joyfully sing, “We have seen the true light!” God gave us the gifts of bread and wine; we give them back to God, and He changes them into something life-giving for us. When we receive Holy Communion, we are joined to God and to each other as one Church family. The sacrament of Holy Unction is a special service of healing and forgiveness through God’s power. The priest anoints our faces and hands with blessed oil. The oil has special healing power, the same way that special lotion can help us heal after a bad sunburn. Being blessed with Holy Oil brings the Holy Spirit into our lives to help us live a healthy and good life.

Water is another wonderful gift from God. We need water to live, to grow, and to clean. Our Church has a special service called the Blessing of the Water. When God blesses the water, it becomes a holy gift for us. Being sprinkled with or drinking holy water reminds us to keep our lives clean and away from sin, and to live God’s way.

Unit 6—Sharing in the world

A missionary is a person who shares the Christian message with others. We can be missionaries anywhere by sharing our faith with others. God shared His love with us by sending His Son; we can share our love with others, too. We should share the things we have with others who don’t have as much. Justice means being fair to others and doing what is right. We can work for justice by standing up for people who are excluded and helping them to be treated fairly.

Feast Days

On Christmas, we remember that God shared His Son with us, and we should share what we have with others.

On the Sunday of Orthodoxy, the first Sunday of Lent, we celebrate the use of icons in the Church. We don’t worship icons; icons help us to worship God and Christ.

On Easter, we celebrate that Christ resurrected from the dead after three days.

Forty days after Easter, Christ went up to Heaven; this is the feast of the Ascension.

Fifty days after Easter, Christ sent the Holy Spirit to His disciples; this is the Feast of Pentecost. They were then able to share the good news with everyone in the world.

Hymns

The Wealthy Can Become Poor (Πλούσιοι επτώχευσαν)
Praise the Lord (Αινείτε τον Κύριον)
Your Birth O Christ (Η Γεννησίς σου)
Blessed Are You O Christ (Ευλογητός ει Χριστός ο Θεός)
We Venerate Your Holy Icon (Τήν άχραντον εικόνα σου)

Bible Stories

The Hospitality of Abraham (Genesis 18:1-15)
Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:1-16)
The Call of Abraham (Genesis 12)
The Hebrews Build the Tabernacle (Exodus 35-36)
Jesus Begins His Ministry in the Temple (Luke 4:14-22)
The theme of the Fourth Grade examines a period of deeper moral and spiritual growth in the life of the child. By concentrating on the prayers and Sacramental acts related to human growth (Pre-baptismal Services, Baptism, Chrismation, Liturgy and Confession), the children begin to gain a Sacramental vision of life. They come to understand the world, and their own spiritual growth in the light of their faith, prayer and Sacramental life.

What students will learn in the fourth grade class:

Unit 1—We grow as we worship God
When we see the beauty of the world God has made, we praise, thank, and worship Him. We worship the one God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, three persons: The Father is the Creator of everything we can see and cannot see. The Son is Jesus, who taught us how to live God’s way, died, and rose to save us. The Holy Spirit is the power of God, which came upon the Virgin Mary, filled the disciples, and helps us to love God and one another. The most important way we worship God is through the Divine Liturgy, which means “holy work of the people.” Our work is to praise and worship God. Part of this work is listening to the Epistle and Gospel readings, which teach us about Christ and guide us in living a Christian life. We offer the gifts of bread and wine to God in the Liturgy. God blesses, or consecrates them, making them the Body and Blood of Christ. When we come to Liturgy, we can bring many gifts: prosforo, wine, lighting a candle, contributing money to the church, and incense or olive oil to be used in the worship. When we receive Holy Communion, we are joined to Christ and to each other. Christ forgives us and helps us to forgive others.

Unit 2—We grow as we learn God’s word
Over many centuries, God inspired people to write books of God’s message, and they were put together as Holy Scripture, or the Holy Bible. Jesus read the Bible and taught people to follow its message. After He died and rose, His disciples wrote about Him, and these writings were added to the Bible. The Old Testament tells the history of the Hebrew people and has the Ten Commandments. The New Testament tells about Christ, the Apostles, and the first Christians. When we read the Old Testament, we believe that the promises of the prophets refer to Christ, and that the Passover lamb is a symbol of Christ. The New Testament is made up of several types of books: the four Gospels, which tell about the life of Christ; the Acts of the Apostles, which tell about the first Christians; the Epistles, which were letters written from Apostles to other Christians; and the book of Revelation, which tells about the coming of God’s kingdom. When we obey what we read in the Bible, we grow as Christians.

Unit 3—We grow through prayer and fasting
When we pray, we communicate with God, by thanking Him, praising Him, and asking for His help. Jesus prayed both by Himself and with His disciples. We also must pray alone and with others. God always answers our prayers, even if He does not give the answer we expect or want. When we don’t get something we ask for from Him, He may have other plans for us. When we fast, we do not eat
certain foods at certain times. We should also fast from doing and saying wrong things. This helps us control what we eat, say, and do. Fasting should help us focus more on prayer. Our Church tells us we should fast on Wednesdays and Fridays and before Feast Days. We should fast, but we must also be healthy; our priest, parents, and teachers can help us decide how we will fast in the best way. Great Lent is a journey that starts forty days before Easter. It is an important time for prayer, fasting, and doing good deeds, which prepares us to celebrate the great feast. On Wednesdays during Great Lent, our Churches celebrate the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. On Fridays, we celebrate the service of the Salutations to the Theotokos. We sing the Akathist hymn, which means “without sitting.”

Unit 4—We grow as an Orthodox family
A family begins when God unites a man and a woman in marriage. During the wedding service, the bride and groom wear rings that symbolize their commitment to each other. They wear crowns on their heads to symbolize God’s blessing upon them. God teaches that when two people get married, they are now like one person, and they must work together for their family to live God’s way, through both the easy and the hard times. Some marriages end in divorce. Sometimes one spouse dies. A person may marry again, and sometimes that forms a blended family. Some people never get married, but they are still part of a family. Children are a gift from God. They have qualities from their parents, and from God. God’s image is in every person. Some families adopt children. We become Christians through Holy Baptism and Chrismation. Parents ask close friends or relatives to be godparents to their child, to help raise him or her as a Christian. Blessed water and oil are important symbols in the sacrament. The new Christian is anointed with chrism, or special oil. These two sacraments mean the child has joined the Orthodox Church. We all sin. God forgives us through our repentance: we admit our wrong, ask God for forgiveness, and sincerely try not to do the same thing again. When we sin against each other as family or friends, we should ask them for forgiveness.

Unit 5—We grow as Orthodox Christians
No matter how old we are, we should honor our parents. Many people, like priests, teachers, doctors, and neighbors, help us to grow. God has given each of us different talents that we can use in our own ways to serve Him and each other. The Orthodox Church has many people who lead and serve: The bishop leads a diocese (metropolis), or a group of parishes in the same area. The priest is the leader of a parish. The parish council is a group of people who help make decisions to serve the people of the parish. The Philoptochos Society means “friends of the poor.” They raise money to help poor people and support the Church’s work.

Unit 6—The Church grows in the world
The saints of our Church have taught us, by their example, that having faith in Christ can bring great courage, generosity to the poor, and Christian unity. Missionaries in our Church travel to other lands and spread the Christian message. Different Orthodox churches may have different customs, but the faith is the same. At our Chrismation, we receive the Holy Spirit, which gives each of us different talents to serve the Church in our own ways.

Feast Days
Before the Virgin Mary was born, her parents Joachim and Anna prayed for many years to have a child, and God blessed them. The Church celebrates Mary’s birth on September 8, the Nativity of the Theotokos. On August 15, the Church
celebrates the Dormition of the Theotokos, when Mary fell asleep, died, and joined her Son, Jesus. From August 1 to 15, we prepare for this day with prayer and fasting. On June 29, our Church celebrates the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul. Peter was the leader of the twelve disciples, and was martyred in Rome. Paul was once a persecutor of Christians, but after he converted, he preached the Christian message in many lands and wrote letters to the Christians there to encourage them. Jesus chose twelve men to be His disciples. After Pentecost, they all traveled around the world. We remember all of them on June 30; we prepare for this feast day with prayer and fasting. On August 6, the Church celebrates the Transfiguration of Christ, when His divine light shone to show His glory, and that He is God as well as man.

Hymns
The Doxology (Ἡ Δοξολογία)
O Champion Leader (Τή Υπερμάχω)
Those Who Have Been Baptized (Οσοι εἰς Χριστόν)

Bible Stories
The Passover Story (Exodus 1, 5, 11-12)
Jesus Cleanses the Temple (John 2:13-16)
The Parable of the Sower (Luke 8:4-8)
The Temptation of Jesus in the Wilderness (Mt. 4:1-11)
Moses Draws Water from the Rock (Exodus 17)
The Life of John the Baptist (Luke 1:5-23; Mt. 3:1-15)
Repentance of David (2 Samuel 11; 12:1-17)
The Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-9)
Ruth and Naomi (Ruth 1:1-18)

Saints
St. Ephraim the Syrian, St. Timothy, St. Romanos
St. Katherine, St. Andrew, St. Ignatios, St. Innocent
St. John the Merciful, Sts. Cyril and Methodios

FIFTH GRADE: GOD CALLS US

The Fifth Grade concentrates on the stories of the heroes of the faith in Scripture and Tradition as examples of faith, loyalty, self-sacrifice, obedience, love, justice and social responsibility. Through the study of these great figures the student learns to respond to God in terms of personal faith and the basics of Christian morality, the Ten Commandments and the teachings of Christ.

What students will learn in the fifth grade class:
Unit 1—God calls us to faith
When we put our trust in God even when we are afraid, we have faith. The Bible has many stories about people with strong faith in God. We all struggle with our faith, to know what God wants for our lives. Faith helps us to improve at the things we do and to try without fear. Faith gives us courage to use our strengths and to help other people. God has always been faithful to His people. He gave us the gift of the Ten Commandments to show His love and care for how we live our lives.

Unit 2—God calls us to holiness
Since we are all created in the image and likeness of God, we should be pure and holy. We can do things to remind ourselves of God’s presence and holiness, such as lighting
candles, venerating icons, and censing our homes. To help us make choices, we should ask ourselves what God would want us to do. Ethics are rules that help us know the difference between right and wrong. People who are righteous do what is right, and they obey what God tells them. God calls us to speak the truth and live honestly. God’s prophets spoke the truth, even if it was hard for others to hear. Even if many other things in our lives change, God will always love us. When we sin, we break our relationship with God. We can restore this in the sacrament of Confession, by asking for forgiveness and repenting from our sins. The books of Psalms and Proverbs teach us holiness.

Unit 4—God calls us to His Church

St. Peter called the Christians to be “living stones” to build the Church. We can work together to keep our Church strong. St. Paul taught that the Church is the Body of Christ, and each person is an important part. Jesus has given each of us special “Gifts of Service” to do Christ’s work. Everyone in the Church has special talents. Monastics are God’s spiritual athletes because they dedicate all of their time and energy to Christ through a simple life of prayer. The fathers of the early Church, such as St. Athanasios, St. Basil, and St. Gregory the Theologian, taught about the faith.

Unit 5—God calls us to serve

You can be a witness to Christ by standing up for your beliefs and living according to your Orthodox faith. Working for justice means helping those who are in need or who are treated unfairly. We are called to sacrifice for others, to give unselfishly. We are called to encourage others who are struggling.

Unit 6—God calls us to new life

Every year, the Lenten journey prepares us for Christ’s Resurrection, through fasting and prayer. The four Sundays before Great Lent help to prepare us: Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee; Sunday of the Prodigal Son; Meat-Fare Sunday (Sunday of the Last Judgment); Cheese-Fare Sunday (Sunday of Forgiveness). Each Sunday during the forty days of Lent, we remember the holy cross and many holy people whose lives teach us the way of prayer and repentance. Jesus teaches us to bear our cross, or our hardships, with faith in God, and that freedom means doing what God wants. Lent is also a time to think about how we can better live up to God’s way. During Lent, we celebrate Presanctified Liturgies and the Akathist Hymn, which praises the Theotokos. The Prayer of St. Ephraim is a humble prayer that helps us to be more loving in our relationships with others and with God. Setting aside a
daily time and place for prayer is important for spiritual growth. During Holy Week, we remember the last earthly days of Christ. Our services remind us that Christ loves us, suffered for us, died, and rose from the dead for us.

**Hymns**
Lord Save Your People (Σώσον, Κύριε)
Holy, Holy, Holy (Αγιος, Αγιος, Αγιος)
We Praise You (Σέ υμνούμεν)
Eternal Memory (Αιωνία η μνήμη)
Christ is Risen (Χριστός ανέστη)

**Bible Stories**
The Sacrifice of Isaac (Genesis 22:1-19)
The Story of Jacob (Genesis 25, 27, 32, 33)
Joseph and His Brothers (Genesis 37, 39-46)
Moses and the Burning Bush (Exodus 1-5)
The Exodus (Exodus 7-12, 14, 19-20)
Joshua and the Promised Land (Numbers 13-14, Joshua 3-4)
The Story of Gideon (Judges 6-7)
The Story of Solomon’s Wisdom (1 Kings 3)
The Story of Elijah (1 Kings 16-18, 2 Kings 2)
The Story of Ezra and Nehemiah
The Book of Psalms
The Book of Proverbs
The Annunciation (Luke 1:26-56, 2:1-20)
The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)
Jesus Heals the Blind Man (John 9:1-38)
The Parable of the Last Judgment (Matthew 25:31-46)
The Parable of the Publican and the Pharisee (Luke 18:9-14)
The Passion of Christ and the Resurrection

**Saints**
St. Peter; St. Paul; St. Philip the Deacon; St. Anthony
St. Basil; St. Athanasios; St. Gregory the Theologian
St. Maximos the Confessor; St. Philothei of Athens
St. Herman of Alaska; St. Nektarios

**SIXTH GRADE:**
**THE CHRISTIAN WAY OF LIFE**
The Sixth Grade reviews the pathway to happy Christian living through Scripture, Tradition, Doctrine, Church History and Liturgical Life. Students learn about the Church Fathers, the Divine Liturgy and other Services, and the First Christian Writers.

**Heaven On Earth: The Divine Liturgy:** "We knew not whether we were in heaven or on earth... We knew only that God dwells there among men." As St. Vladimir’s emissaries found, heaven and earth meet in the Church through the Divine Liturgy. This booklet begins with a brief history of worship in the Orthodox Church and then details each section of the Divine Liturgy. The students will also gain a better understanding of Church architecture and explore the Creed’s scriptural foundations.

**A Lamp To My Feet: An Introduction to the Bible:**
In this booklet, students will develop the attitudes and confidence needed to light their path with the lamp of Scripture. Students will learn to access God’s message to the world by asking how each lesson relates to them: “What does this text say about Christ, and how does it apply to my life?” This section begins by exploring general motivations for and goals of Bible study. It then suggests study habits and methods, and explains various formats and translations of the Bible. Students will be introduced to the Old and New Testaments, the kinds of books they contain, and how the books came to be there.

**First Among Equals: The Ecumenical Patriarchate:**
In this booklet, students will explore the history of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the current work of His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. They
will learn about other topics as well, including Church leadership, global Orthodoxy, Christian unity, religious freedom and caring for God's creation.

What students will learn in the sixth grade class:

Heaven on Earth: The Divine Liturgy
Lesson 1: Liturgy Is Worship
Distinguish among worship, veneration, and idolatry. Develop a working definition of worship. Describe the aspects of worship.

Lesson 2: Liturgy Is Unity
Understand that the Church constantly recognizes the two realities that are joined in the world—earthly (temporal) and heavenly (eternal). Apply this understanding to church architecture. See how the divine reality is accessible to us and can indeed help us in life’s struggles.

Lesson 3: Liturgy Is Prayer
Approach the Divine Liturgy prayerfully and peacefully. Examine the petitions to discover the Church’s approach to earthly needs. Describe liturgical prayer and private prayer.

Lesson 4: Liturgy Is Scriptural
Explain that the Bible and the Divine Liturgy are products of the Church. Demonstrate that the roots of liturgical practices and items are found in the Old Testament. Connect the statements of the Creed to scripture. Integrate daily Bible study and weekly worship by following a lectionary.

Lesson 5: Liturgy Is Forgiveness
Recognize the difficulty of repentance and forgiveness in daily life. Understand that forgiveness is central in the lives of Orthodox Christians. Explain the abundance and depth of forgiveness that is in the liturgy, and especially the type of forgiveness before communion.

Lesson 6: After the Liturgy
Connect the Sunday Divine Liturgy to weekly life—heaven and earth. Understand that becoming God-centered is a lifelong process. Look for ways to do God’s work through daily life.

Lamp to my Feet: An Introduction to the Bible
Lesson 1: Making Scripture Important in Our Lives
Identify motivations for Bible study. Develop the discipline to actively incorporate Scripture into daily life. Anticipate the rewards of the discipline. Embrace attitudes that promote a habit of Bible study.

Lesson 2: Studying Scripture
Survey study techniques and methods. Establish a Bible study plan for the coming week. Compare Bible translations. Practice using the tools of a study Bible, including study notes, cross-references, and a concordance.

Lesson 3: The Old Testament
Discern two types of meaning in the Old Testament, literal and revelatory. Familiarize themselves with the types of books the Old Testament contains: Law (the Pentateuch), History, Wisdom, and Prophecy.

Lesson 4: The New Testament
Describe the types of books in the New Testament. Understand that the Gospels give four authors’ perspectives of the same events.

Lesson 5: Finding Truth & Salvation in Scripture
Explore the role of faith in believing and accepting the truth of the Biblical texts. Describe the development of the canons of the Old and New Testaments. Evaluate the roles of human beings in recording, interpreting, and receiving Scripture. Identify uses of Scripture in the services of the Church.
First among Equals: The Ecumenical Patriarchate

Lesson 1: Leading Orthodox Christians, Part I
Describe the work of the Apostles. State the Great Commission. Explain the position and role of a bishop. Describe the relationship between clergy and laity. Define Apostolic succession. Identify characteristics of leaders. Understand that we serve Christ by following His example.

Lesson 2: Leading Orthodox Christians, Part II
Locate the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the wider Orthodox world. Connect Greek Orthodox Christians in the United States to the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Explain the scope of the Ecumenical Patriarch’s authority. Describe some challenges of leadership. Consider the challenges of obedience.

Lesson 3: Gathering Bishops to Councils
List skills and virtues of five Patriarchs who taught the true Faith during controversy: St. Gregory the Theologian, St. John Chrysostom, St. Tarasios, St. Methodios, and St. Photios the Great. Explain that a council is a gathering of bishops that, guided by the Holy Spirit, works to standardize the teachings of the Church. Identify traits and virtues that help a person seek and stand up for Truth.

Lesson 4: The Hard Questions: The Seven Ecumenical Councils
Recall that a council is a gathering of bishops that, guided by the Holy Spirit, works to standardize the teachings of the Church. Summarize the issues and results of each Ecumenical Council. Propose some questions of faith and order that may be addressed by future synods. Consider how they might respond if a new council (or an existing one) clashes with their understanding and beliefs.

Lesson 5: Reconciling the Body of Christ
Explain how the Church is the Body of Christ. Distinguish among Christian Churches that are not in communion with the Orthodox Church, reasons for separation, and the efforts toward reunification. Describe the Sacrament of Chrismation. Briefly summarize the current status of Orthodox Christian unity in this country.

Lesson 6: Other Faiths
Compare and contrast several main practices and beliefs of other religious groups. Deconstruct how other Churches and faiths do not share the truth that we proclaim in the Nicene Creed. List universal concerns that Orthodox Christians can address in conjunction with people of other churches and faiths: care for the environment, working for peace and justice, and developing understanding and mutual respect between sexes and among races, nations, and religions.

Lesson 7: Byzantine Christianity, Part I
Identify the Byzantine Empire as one of the great civilizations in history. Consider how the Byzantine Empire offers a model for how the Gospel has been applied to an entire society. Recognize that two hallmarks of the Christian life are worship and philanthropy. Contrast the collaboration between the patriarch and the emperor with the modern concept of separation of church and state.

Lesson 8: Byzantine Christianity, Part II
Examine the relationship between East and West throughout history. Understand how the Great Schism, Crusades, and Fall of Constantinople were pivotal moments in history that shattered the medieval vision of a united Christendom. State the reasons for the Great Schism of 1054. Examine how the psychological effects of the Fourth Crusade on the people of Constantinople still affects relations between the East and West. Sing the Kontakion of the Annunciation of the Theotokos (Ὁ Χρυσόστομος Μητροπολίτης Αἰγίνης, Τῆ Ύπερμάχω).

Lesson 9: The Patriarchate in the Ottoman Empire & in Modern Turkey
Analyze the pros and cons, from both spiritual and practical perspectives, of staying in one’s ancestral land versus fleeing persecution. Examine the leadership of the patriarchs as ethnarchs. Recognize the challenges to religious freedom that the Patriarchate faces. Connect in some small way with His All-Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew. Discuss how the Ecumenical Patriarch is a witness of what it means to be crucified daily. Embrace the challenge of living an authentic Christian life.

Lesson 10: The Green Patriarch
Discuss the Orthodox Christian view on the environment. Describe the work of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the Green Patriarch. Develop a mature understanding of the role of a Christian in God’s creation.

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

Proverbs 22:6
SEVENTH GRADE:

WORSHIP IN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

In this class students learn that worship goes beyond the Divine Liturgy and is an important aspect to a Christ-centered life. The Curriculum is divided into the following four sections:

Facing Up to Peer Pressure: Just as dancing consists of various steps, turns and twists, so is life comprised of decisions, choices and responsibilities. From infancy to old age, the tempo of the dance varies. Adolescence is a time of excitement and vitality, during which we are often confronted with the challenge of peer pressure. This first booklet acknowledges that peer pressure is indeed a nagging challenge faced by our youth but that it also has its favorable side which is positive peer pressure.

Knowing Christ: Knowing Christ is Love. Knowing Christ is Truth. Knowing Christ is Peace. In past ages Christ blessed the lives of those who followed Him. Today, He walks beside us in the modern cities of our changing world. In future times Christ will continue to bless those who love and obey Him. In this second booklet, the teachings, miracles and parables of Christ are amply represented in the lessons and supplemental discussions concerning the Bible, Prayer and Church.

Stewardship: Serving in God’s World: All too often stewardship is equated with money, which is far too limited for a Christian perspective. The five lessons in this unit expand the vision of stewardship from the environment to our role of responsibility to each other, and focuses on the broad concepts of stewardship that will contribute toward spiritual growth.

Honesty: Honesty is a broad topic, but knowing the consequences of lying, cheating, and distinguishing right from wrong are essential for our youth and their spiritual welfare. The Bible and the teachings of Christ constitute a strong moral compass for such guidance and direction.

Supplementary Text – Teenage Ten Commandments: In this book the students are given an overview of the Ten Commandments and their relevance for our times.

What students will learn in the seventh grade class:

Facing up to Peer Pressure
Lesson 1: Pressure, Pressure Everywhere!
Recognize positive and negative peer pressures. Recognize the difference between a clique and a group of friends. Face up to peer pressures and cliques with confidence as Christians. Commit themselves to being sources of helpful pressures to their friends.

Lesson 2: Keeping the Pressure Down
Recognize what they can do to resist negative peer pressure. Recognize what their family, other adults, and their church can do to help them resist negative peer pressure.

Lesson 3: Blowing the Lid
Recognize the reasons why some teenagers join harmful pressure groups. Recognize the behaviors of teenagers in such pressure groups. Realize that the actions of such pressure groups can lead to violence and crime. Know what Christian love and understanding can do to turn harmful behaviors into positive ones.

Lesson 4: Keeping the Faith
Identify and use five specific ways the Church provides help to resist peer pressure (correct teaching, holy icons, fasting, prayer, Bible reading). Know how Jesus resisted Peter’s temptation. Identify the temptations Jesus faced in the desert and some that students face daily. Recognize Satan (the Devil) as a source of temptations. Learn how to use the words of Jesus in responding to Satan’s temptations.

Knowing Christ
Lesson 1: Who Is Christ?
Recognize that Christ is the greatest figure the world has ever known. Recognize that Christ’s birth marks a change in world history. Understand that in reciting the Creed, we pledge our belief in Christ and the Orthodox Faith. Recognize that the birth of Jesus was far from ordinary.
Understand the significance of Christ’s baptism by John the Baptist. Recognize that people disputed, and some still do, that Jesus is the Messiah. Understand that only faith in Christ’s words and actions can overcome questions about who He is.

Lesson 2: The Kingdom of God
Recognize that the Gospel means “Good News,” which comes from God. Understand that the Gospel teaches what is right, true, and good in the eyes of God. Realize that the Kingdom of God is God’s presence and power everywhere. Understand that the Kingdom of God comes through Christ.

Lesson 3: The Teachings of Jesus
Recognize the greatest rule of the Bible: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.” (Deuteronomy 6:5). Understand the “new commandment”: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” (Leviticus 19:18). Realize God’s Kingdom is a Kingdom of love. Memorize John 13:34–35: “I give you a new commandment—love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. If you have love for one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples.

Lesson 4: The World’s Most Famous Talk
Recognize the Sermon on the Mount as the “Law of Christ”. Understand that Christ used His authority to interpret the Law of Moses in a new way. Realize that we need God’s help to practice the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount. Recognize temptation and how to overcome it.

Lesson 5: Christ’s Miracles
Realize that it is God’s power that performs miracles. Recognize that the greatest miracle is that God became man in His Son, Jesus Christ. Recognize that Satan tempts people to lead their lives away from God. Understand that Jesus performed miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit. Understand the purpose of Christ’s miracles.

Lesson 6: I Am With You Always
Understand Christ’s mission to save the world. Understand the meaning of Holy Week. Recognize the greatest injustice ever committed. Recognize that Christ is always with us. Memorize John 3:16: “For God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not die but have eternal life.”

Stewardship: Serving in God’s World
Lesson 1: Our Gift from God
Explore the creation story. Recognize one’s responsibility to creation. Celebrate God’s creation in the Divine Liturgy. Praise and thank God for all His blessings.

Lesson 2: Our Responsibility to Each Other
Understand what stewardship requires. Recognize that each one has the capacity of stewardship. Recognize that Jesus is the Master Steward. Explore biblical passages dealing with stewardship.

Lesson 3: St. Symeon, Peacemaker and Translator
Recognize stewardship values. Recognize that each one has the capability of stewardship. Recognize the stewardship of St. Symeon.

Lesson 4: The Three Ts
Recognize our God-given gifts. Use our God-given gifts for the glory of God. Become involved in the stewardship of the Church. Recognize that giving of oneself through time, talent, and treasures can have many rewards.

Lesson 5: Putting It All Together
Recognize their opportunities to practice stewardship. Live the teachings of the Beatitudes.

Honesty
Lesson 1: Called to Honesty
Recognize the value of being an honest person. Realize that there are consequences to being honest or dishonest. Recognize honesty involves words and deeds.
**EIGHTH GRADE: REJOICING IN GOD**

This class will focus on the faith of the Church concerning Jesus Christ from both the Old and New Testament. The lessons center around the “I AM” statements of Christ. These statements provide a means for studying and reflecting upon the faith of the Church as the student explores the significance of each statement. The students will also have an opportunity to discover how Christians may experience the presence of Christ in various settings.

**For To Us A Child Is Born:** The Incarnation of Christ is the glorious foundation upon which Orthodox Christians celebrate Christmas. This booklet will allow students to unwrap the story of Christ's birth to reveal the fullness of the Incarnation, beginning with the Annunciation through the Feast of the Nativity. Students will examine the meaning of the Incarnation through iconography, scriptural readings and hymns.

**Journey Through Holy Week:** This booklet will assist the students as they follow Christ and the Church through each stage of Holy Week - from the Saturday of Lazarus to the Agape Vespers Service. Students will examine the relevance and the meaning of the services, hymns and scripture readings.

**What students will learn in the eighth grade class:**

**For To Us A Child Is Born**

**Lesson 1: Preparing for the Incarnation**

Observe the elements of preparation for the coming of Christ in Scriptures and in the Nativity narrative. Connect the preparation that Mary, Joseph, Elizabeth, Zachariah and the whole world must undergo, to the ways that any Christian can personally prepare for the coming of Christ in His Nativity. Commit to a personal plan of preparation for Christmas.

**Lesson 2: The Miracle and Meaning of the Incarnation of Christ**

Observe elements and details of three Nativity icons in the text. Analyze nativity scenes for their use as aids in worship. Categorize elements along the theme of God’s incarnation in Jesus Christ. Connect the icons’ depictions to the fundamental truth that “God is with us.”

**Lesson 3: Character Traits of St. Basil: Emulating Christ**

Describe people who are positive examples. Connect...
these positive character traits to the character traits that distinguish St. Basil as a holy person. Identify ways in which these character traits reflect the life and person of Christ.

**Lesson 4: God Is Revealed in Christ, and the World Is Transformed through Him (Theophany and the Presentation of the Lord)**

Discern the theme of the incarnation in Christ’s manifestation as God, and of the transformation of the world, in the story of His Theophany. Interpret the significance of symbolic imagery—both visual and written—that conveys the fullness of Christ’s incarnation in His baptism and presentation. Connect Christ’s participation in traditions to their own participation in the sacraments and traditions of the Church.

**Journey Through Holy Week**

**Lesson 1: Saturday of Lazarus & Palm Sunday**

Identify the joy that Jesus brought people when He answered their greatest hopes. Connect with this joy and bring it into their present life.

**Lesson 2: The Bridegroom Services**

Interpret the meaning of the actions of characters and stories from Scripture, as symbolic of living a life in preparation for encountering Christ. Connect forgiveness, mercy, and love for others to love for Christ. Decide on specific ways to live in a preparation for Christ, based on the examples from Scripture.

**Lesson 3: Holy Wednesday & Holy Thursday**

Work together to experience the importance of unity and mutual dependence. Personalize their role as a member of the body of Christ. Connect the image of mutual dependence on the spiritual unity of the body of Christ. Focus understanding of unity in the direction of service to others.

**Lesson 4: Holy Thursday Evening & Holy Friday**

Identify with Christ’s suffering in His last days on earth. Interpret expressions of the paradox of Jesus’s full divinity and humanity. Invite Christ’s life-giving light into their own suffering and challenging moments.

**Lesson 5: Holy Saturday & Easter (Pascha)**

Identify with emotions of uncertainty, sadness, and joy related to Christ’s dwelling in the tomb and freeing humanity to life. Reflect on the mystery that Christ brought life to death and death to life. Personalize Christ’s resurrection as their own life-giving, joyous miracle. Commit to ways that they can share this joy with others in their lives.

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**Ninth Grade: The Way, The Truth, and The Life**

This class strives to provide a basic understanding of our faith in lessons that both inform and inspire. In doing so this class endeavors to plant the students firmly in the life-giving soil of Orthodox spiritual understanding and to guide them on the path to spiritual maturity.

**Of Your Mystical Supper: The Eucharist:** Through the themes of remembrance, thanksgiving, forgiveness, and community, students will explore the mystery of the Holy Eucharist. This text introduces the fullness of the Church’s teachings with Scripture and excerpts from the Fathers, such as St. Nicholas Cabasias and St. Justin Martyr.

**Journey Through Great Lent:** This nine week unit spans the Great Fast with clear, vivid introductions to the season’s scriptures, traditions, saints and services. These lessons include personal reflection and thoughtful discussion, but also interactive activities and projects to help students refuel. Journal assignments keep students focused all week long on the disciples of the Great Fast.
Holy Mysteries: The Sacraments of the Orthodox Church: For centuries, the Orthodox Church has named seven sacraments: Baptism, Chrismation, the Eucharist, Confession, Priesthood, Marriage and Unction. They unite us with God by bringing together the visible and the invisible, the physical and the spiritual.

Within this booklet each sacrament is first examined in terms of its significance and its connections to the actions of everyday life: bathing, eating, drinking, touching, being a family. Next, the text explores the rite for each sacrament, showing how the Church uses these ordinary activities and adds prayer, thanksgiving and the words of Christ to make them acts of extraordinary importance.

The Church: We are One in Christ Student Book: This booklet explores the formation and development of The Church from Apostolic times to the present day. It examines the worship of the Church (the Body of Christ) and describes its various manifestation in our world.

What students will learn in the ninth grade class: Journey Through Great Lent
Memorize the Lenten Prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian. Plan and complete a service project. Participate in the Sacrament of Confession. Attend Lenten services beyond the Divine Liturgy on Sundays.

Lesson 1: Sunday of the Publican & Pharisee
Introduction to Great Lent & the Triodion
Examine their attitudes toward the Lenten season and its disciplines. Identify the beginning and end of the Triodion and Great Lent. Compare and contrast pride and humility.

Lesson 2: Sunday of the Prodigal Son
Repentance & Confession
Recognize the traits of repentance. Desire reconciliation with God and other human beings. Describe the Sacrament of Confession. Apply the themes of the Parable of the Prodigal Son to the Sacrament of Confession. Evaluate various methods of personal preparation for confession.

Lesson 3: Judgment Sunday
Life, Eternal Life & Death
Describe the Orthodox Christian understanding of judgment and life after death. Define heaven, Hades, and hell. Distinguish between the physical and spiritual understandings of heaven and hell. Explain that “faith” is expressed and made visible through “works.” Plan a service project. Recognize opportunities for spontaneous acts of service, hospitality, and empathy.

Lesson 4: Forgiveness Sunday
Forgiveness, Mercy & Grace
Explain that asking for and granting forgiveness heals relationships. Understand that communion with God is salvation. Forgive others. Seek forgiveness from God and from others.

Lesson 5: The Sunday of Orthodoxy
Come and See
Inventory aspects of the Faith that they find hard to explain. Celebrate the Orthodox Christian Faith. Consider forms of and opportunities for evangelism.

Lesson 6: The Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas
Come Near Him
Examine interpersonal connection, concentration, and mindfulness. Practice silence. Compare the life of prayer to daily life and to Lenten disciplines.

Lesson 7: The Sunday of the Holy Cross
Take Up the Cross
Examine spiritual struggles as crosses to be borne. Recognize that God does not want His people to suffer. Create a visual reminder of the cross’s victory over death and suffering.

Lesson 8: The Sunday of St. John Climacus
Help My Unbelief
Discuss virtues and the fruit of the Spirit. Discuss vices and the passions. Analyze the symbolism of the Ladder of Divine Ascent. Propose other symbols that also represent life in the Orthodox Christian Faith. Compare the Ladder of Divine Ascent with the “greatest commandments.” (Matthew 22:36–40) Examine the paradox of the statement “Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!” (Mark 9:24)

Lesson 9: The Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt
Drink the Cup
Review the themes of Great Lent, as they are found in the life of St. Mary of Egypt: sin, the cross, repentance, confession, discipline, and drawing near to God through the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Assess their Lenten efforts in light of St. John Chrysostom’s Paschal Homily.
TENTH GRADE:

During the Tenth Grade we try to instill in each student that Orthodoxy and the teachings of Jesus Christ are a way of life that should be incorporated in our everyday interactions with our fellow human beings, whether at school, in the workplace, or socially. The class tries to help each student understand that our number one goal in this earthly life is to prepare ourselves to be found worthy to attain eternal salvation. The objectives of this class are:

1. To read and discuss the Sunday Gospel lesson, and understand how it specifically relates to our everyday lives.

2. To instill a sense of thankfulness to each student for all things in life, such as parents, shelter, food, transportation, money, work, health, and religious freedom (that is, to count our blessings and to not take anything for granted).

3. To discuss contemporary issues and to instill a sense of morality in each student through discussions based on the bible and the teachings of Orthodox Church Fathers on each of the following topics:
   a. Gambling (casino and sports), bingo, and lotteries
   b. Death and dying
   c. Psychics and fortune-telling
   d. Sex and marriage (including fornication, adultery, and “living together”)
   e. Homosexuality and same-sex unions.

4. To instill the fact that satan and evil are everywhere present, and the need to constantly defend ourselves from these influences through Christian thought and prayer.

5. To instill in each student to accept ourselves as we are (in terms of our physical make up, as well as our mental capabilities), as this is how God has created us.

Topics which are covered during the Church School Year Include:

1. Major Orthodox Holy Days (feasts and fasts), their meaning and importance.

2. The lives of specific Orthodox saints, including saints whose names can be correlated with each student's name, with an emphasis on the importance of celebrating the “name day” of one's patron saint (just as a birthday is celebrated).

3. A review of the different parts of the Bible, with an emphasis on the differences between the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles.

4. Confession, repentance, and forgiveness.

5. Lent, Holy Week, and Pascha, with an emphasis on what this period and these holy days mean, why we have them, and why there is a concentration on repentance, prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

6. Prayer; what it is, how to pray, and when to pray.

7. Advent and Christmas.

8. The symbolism of the Orthodox Baptismal service.

9. Epiphany and the role of Saint John the Baptist as the forerunner.

10. American customs, traditions, and holidays, and how they fit into our Orthodox Christian way of life.

11. How to understand people of other religions and faiths.
SUNDAY SCHOOL STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship is the opportunity to offer time, talents and treasures to our Church. At the community of Saint Barbara, we introduce Stewardship to our children as an integral part of our Sunday School Program. In this way our youth learn at a young age about the importance and value of Stewardship. As parents, we can teach our children how to set aside part of their allowance for their Church. While the monetary side of the Stewardship program is important, we should also encourage our children to become involved and supportive of other Church related activities and events. On the following page you will note some of the annual Outreach Projects in which our Sunday School participates.

ATTENDANCE ACHIEVEMENT

At the end of the school year, children who achieve perfect or excellent attendance are given special recognition. Those children who have no absences will be presented a Perfect Attendance Certificate and certificate recognizing this achievement.

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE BEFORE OTHERS SO THAT THEY MAY SEE YOUR GOOD WORKS AND GIVE GLORY TO YOUR FATHER IN HEAVEN.
MATTHEW 5:16

HIGH SCHOOL STUDY GROUP

This course aims to familiarize students with the Gospel teachings that have a direct bearing on relationships, daily behavior and decision making, when individuals, or groups, are faced with issues and problems that require personal initiative. At the end of the course, students guided by the words of Christ, should be better prepared to make choices among different paths leading to the resolution of ethical problems involving their own person, or their social group.

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE BEFORE OTHERS SO THAT THEY MAY SEE YOUR GOOD WORKS AND GIVE GLORY TO YOUR FATHER IN HEAVEN.
MATTHEW 5:16

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE BEFORE OTHERS SO THAT THEY MAY SEE YOUR GOOD WORKS AND GIVE GLORY TO YOUR FATHER IN HEAVEN.
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MATTHEW 5:16
SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTREACH PROJECTS

YEARLY PROJECTS: Our Sunday School students actively participate in the Support-A-Priest Mission Program by designating two of the monthly stewardship collections to support the ministry of over 160 Missionary Orthodox Priests.

MISSIONS WALK: Each October, Sunday School students are asked to actively participate in a Walk-A-Thon that benefits Orthodox missions work throughout the world.

THANKSGIVING: Students are asked to bring a brown grocery bag of non-perishable foods for the Thanksgiving Food Drive. These items are then collected from home, from friends and relatives or can be purchased. The items are then donated to families in need of assistance and to various food pantries in the Greater New Haven area.

CHRISTMAS: Our Sunday School has also undertaken the special mission of assisting the YALE Children’s Hospital. Each child is asked to bring in a new unwrapped toy which is then brought to the Guilford Pediatric Hematology and Oncology Center. The toys are placed in the Center's Toy Chest. After undergoing different and sometimes painful treatments at the center, children being treated at the center, are given the opportunity to choose one of the gifts from the Toy Box to keep as their own and take home.

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING: The students of our Sunday School participate in the Souper Bowl of Caring each year on Super Bowl Sunday. The Souper Bowl of Caring is a youth-led, grass roots movement of caring, that utilizes Super Bowl weekend to mobilize youth of all backgrounds to fight hunger and poverty in their local communities. Each year thousands of participating groups from throughout the country donate millions of dollars in cash and food items were donated to charities across the United States of America.

GREAT LENT: Each year during Great Lent, the Orthodox Christian Missions Center distributes Lenten Missions Boxes to Orthodox Churches throughout the country. The Orthodox Christian Missions Center is a Pan-Orthodox administrative body which coordinates the charitable activities for Orthodox throughout the world. A box is given to each student at the beginning of Lent. It is hoped that during the Lenten period, the student will make the effort to fill the box with monies earned through chores or allowances and in doing so assist others who are in need of our financial assistance. The sacrifice of a few coins a day could then accumulate to a substantial amount by the time the boxes are collected on Palm Sunday.

PRAXIS MAGAZINE

PRAXIS magazine is a publication of the Department of Religious Education. It is published three times a year: fall, winter and spring.

The magazine addresses topics within religious education, spiritual formation, cultural criticism and practical applications of our faith.

Every issue covers a particular theme and presents several feature articles on that theme.

Each issue also includes articles within recurring sections, such as material offered by the Center for Family Care.

Visit: www.goarch.org/-/praxis-magazine for more information

Annual Subscription: $15.00
Orthodoxy Live
Orthodoxy Live with Fr. Evan Armatas offers listeners an opportunity to ask pointed questions about the Orthodox Church. Perfect for seekers, converts, and cradle Orthodox Christian alike, this program is your chance to ask the tough questions about the Orthodox faith. Fr. Evan is a great communicator and well versed in all aspects of Orthodox theology. First and Third Sundays every month.

Faith Encouraged Live
Faith Encouraged Live features interviews with prominent Orthodox individuals on contemporary topics. It also includes reflections and commentary by host Fr. Barnabas Powell, as well as readings from Scripture and the Church Fathers. Fr. Barnabas Powell is priest at Sts. Raphael, Nicholas, and Irene Greek Orthodox Church in Cumming, Georgia. Second and Fourth Sundays every month.

Stewardship Calling
Why are you here and Why does your Parish exist? Explore God’s personal calling for you and your Parish. Learn the latest research, best practices and creative ideas to improve the operations of your Parish and the quality of your life with Stewardship Evangelist and host Bill Marianes and co-host Fr. Barnabas Powell. Live on the Fifth Sunday of the month.

Healthy Minds - Healthy Souls
Healthy Minds, Healthy Souls is hosted by Fr. Nicholas and Pres. Roxanne Louh. He’s a priest, she’s a psychologist, and this husband-and-wife team love working together to care for people. Fr. Nicholas is the priest at St. John the Divine Greek Orthodox Church in Jacksonville, Florida, and Dr. Roxanne is a licensed clinical Psychologist who uses her extensive training in private practice. The second and fourth Tuesday of every month.

Everyday Orthodox
Everyday Orthodox is hosted by Elissa Bjeletich. She seeks to share the personal stories of everyday Orthodox people — from the movers and shakers to the prosphora bakers! We’re connecting the members of the Body of Christ, by exploring the stories of the Everyday Orthodox, and we hope you’ll join us by listening, and by calling in with questions. First and Third Thursdays of every month.
The Path

Daily Scripture Readings
Listen to the daily scripture readings and thoughtful commentary with quotes from the Fathers and the lives of the Saints. It's strength for the journey, heard three times a day or whenever you wish from your computer or portable device. Hosted by Fr. Tom Soroka.
www.ancientfaith.com/podcasts/thepath

Saint of the Day

The Saint of the Day briefly tells the story of one of our venerable Saints we are commemorating for each day. It is heard eight times daily Monday—Friday, and is also available as a podcast. Our reader is a professional actor and an ordained Deacon in the Orthodox Church, Dn. Jerome Atherholt.
www.ancientfaith.com/podcasts/saintoftheday

The Morning Offering

Commentary on Orthodox Living
The Very Rev. Fr. Tryphon, Abbot of All-Merciful Saviour Monastery on Vashon Island in the Puget Sound near Seattle, Washington, provides meaningful support and authoritative guidance for a profitable spiritual life in today’s world.
www.ancientfaith.com/podcasts/morningoffering

Faith Encouraged Daily

Living a Purposeful Life in Jesus Christ Day by Day
This is the daily ministry of Fr. Barnabas Powell, priest at Sts. Raphael,Nicholas, and Irene Greek Orthodox Church in Cumming, GA, and the host of Faith Encouraged Live on the 2nd and 4th Sunday nights of each month. Each day provides a short reflection to encourage you in your Orthodox Christian faith.
www.ancientfaith.com/podcasts/faithencourageddaily

Glorificando a Dios Diariamente

Santoral Diario con Una Mirada de una Vida Santa
Padre Antonio Perdomo comparte el Santoral y las vidas de los santos diarios en español. Escuchen todos los días! (Padre Antonio Perdomo shares the daily calendar of Saints and the lives of the Saints in Spanish. Listen seven days a week!)
http://www.ancientfaith.com/podcasts/glorificando
SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM ORATORICAL FESTIVAL

Introduced in 1983, the Saint John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival provides Greek Orthodox teenagers the opportunity to write and talk about their faith. The National Oratorical Festival Program begins at the parish level and is divided into three divisions:

- Elementary Division for students in grades 4–6 (Parish festival only)
- Junior Division for students in grades 7–9
- Senior Division for students in grades 10–12

The top speakers in the Junior and Senior Divisions advance to the district level. Two finalists in each district division represent the district at the Metropolis Oratorical Festival. The top speaker in each Metropolis division is then selected to participate in the Archdiocese Finals, which is hosted by a different Metropolis each year.

All eighteen finalists at the Archdiocese Finals participate in a weekend of activities, the highlight of which is the delivery of their speeches on Saturday morning. The Oratorical Festival Scholarship Fund provides college scholarships to the top speakers.

Steven Yates serves as the Saint Barbara Parish Chairman of the Oratorical Festival and works closely with the teachers and students of our Sunday School Program promoting and organizing our parish festival. Steven can be reached by e-mail at syates59@hotmail.com

THE ORTHODOX STUDY BIBLE

The second edition of the Orthodox Study Bible was published in 2008. Unlike the first Orthodox Study Bible published in 1993, that contained only the New Testament and the Book of Psalms, this version contains the complete Bible, both the Old Testament and New Testament.

The Old Testament is an original and scholarly translation of the Greek Septuagint that includes the Apocrypha; the text of the New Testament is taken from the New King James translation. The Orthodox Study Bible is available only in English, contains 1,830 pages and was published by Conciliar Press.

The Orthodox Study Bible is the very first of its kind for Orthodox Christians available in English. It contains both the scripture text and explanations of the texts in the form of annotations or footnotes on the bottom of each page from noted Orthodox Biblical Scholars and Church Fathers.

The Orthodox Study Bible contains forty-seven “articles” on a wide variety of religious topics. The essays are each one page in length and cover such topics as Creation, Christology, Baptism, Eucharist, Deification and Life after Death.

The Orthodox Study Bible contains a beautiful prologue presenting the history of the Faith under the title: “Introducing the Orthodox Church.” Each of the 76 books of the Bible starts with a description of the author (when known), date that the book was thought to have been written, major theme, background material for that book, and an outline of the actual text. Metropolitan Kallistos Ware has also contributed an essay on “How to Read the Bible.” The Orthodox Study Bible also contains a glossary, lectionary, Icons and Biblical maps to assist the reader in their understanding of the Biblical Text.

The Orthodox Study Bible is available at the Saint Barbara Book and Icon Store