

Report of Holy Trinity Church School
2012-2013 School Year

Holy Trinity began a formal Church School this year. Our sincere thanks go out to Angie Bull who devoted much time over the past ten years to maintaining a schedule of Christian instruction for the children of the parish. Her efforts laid a solid base for the formal program inaugurated this year.

On September 15, 2012 Reader Stephen Bradford, newly appointed Director of Holy Trinity Church School, completed his certification by St. Tikhon's Seminary and the Orthodox Christian Education Commission as a director of religious education. The following weekend, on Sunday, September 23, 2012 the parish inaugurated a full schedule of classes. Classes were held on that Sunday with the formal opening of School at the end of Divine Liturgy by a prayer service and blessing. For two weeks the classes met after communion in various places in the church building. Classes then went to a bi-weekly schedule.

Presently we have twenty eligible children for the school, however only 16 have actually been active in the program. We pray for 100% enrollment before the year is out. We thank those parents who have cooperated so far.

Originally, due to the possible full enrollment, classes were divided into 4 levels. However, since attendance has been less than optimal, the three lower levels have combined and this combined class is being team-taught by Mila Zadrozny, Katrina Fetzko and Christina Carmon, with Bonnie Morrison serving as aide. These ladies are to be commended for the outstanding job they do. They coordinate and plan for bi-weekly classes by conference calls. Bonnie, Katrina and Angie Bull developed an outstanding Christmas play, presented on Sunday December 23, 2012 with costumes and all! Many Years to all of them for their service!

In the meantime the teens have been whispering away in the choir loft during and after Divine Liturgy as they pursue their work that includes the Scouting Awards Program of Study. Madegan Morrison and Amadeo Ruiu are well on their way to completing the requirements for their awards. Others are partly there. We would like to have a presentation ceremony sometime before Pascha, depending on Archbishop Nikon's visitation schedule. One week, when I had to be away, Evelyn Reynolds graciously served as substitute teacher for me and she couldn't compliment the students enough for their hard work and dedication that day.

All classes are using the OCA Department of Religious Education FOCUS Program that uses various topics developed around what is age/developmentally appropriate presentations. Due to our unique bi-weekly format, the teachers adapt much of this to the schedule by combining lessons, but keep the program essentially intact. So far we have completed units of "The Orthodox Family" about church life and "The Nativity Season," discussing the mystery of the Incarnation and the Christmas Season. The next unit to be explored will be "Journey to Pascha," which will take the students through the liturgical preparation for the Feast of Feasts.

It has been an interesting start. We look forward to completing the year and planning for next year's program. We have had two teacher meetings so far, with possibly one or two more before we finish this school year, then a major planning day to set up for next year's program.

A Church School wish-list would be a line-item budget to cover costs of materials and preparation, since there are no longer any books for any of the available Orthodox programs, but on-line resources to print and distribute. Possibly an internet connection and a lap-top computer and printer/copier would be great, so that teachers can use common time at church to view and develop curriculum. There is space in the old choir loft to set this up, using the old desk now located in the church hall. This desk has several drawers that can be used to keep files, too.

Thank-you to everyone who has supported our efforts this year. Our program is being used as a model for other small parishes as they work on their own schools. That speaks to the fine job we are doing here at Holy Trinity.

Respectfully submitted,
Reader Stephen Bradford
School Director