

St. George Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Western Massachusetts



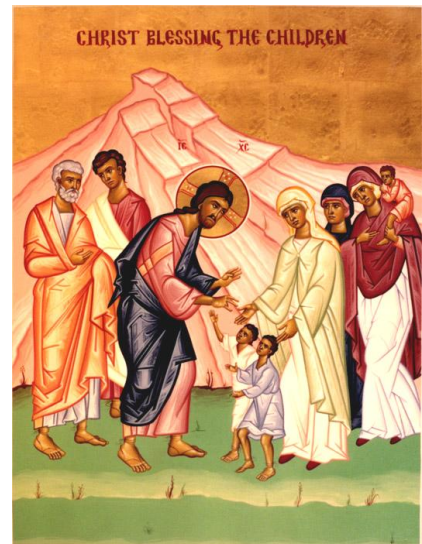
SUNDAY SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION HANDBOOK 2010– 2011

22 Saint George Road, Springfield, MA 01104
Rev. Fr. Christopher H. Stamas, Pastor
www.stgeorgecath.org



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Dear Parents,

We have prepared this handbook for your use to provide you with highlights of our Sunday School program and curriculum, to address frequently asked questions, and provide our school year calendar to you for planning purposes. We welcome any feedback you would like to share with us on this handbook and its contents because we want this to be a useful reference to you and the families of St. George. Year after year, we are working together to grow our Sunday School enrollment, to raise the commitment and attendance of our students and, most importantly, to provide an effective religious education program where the students practice and witness their faith in an atmosphere that is wholesome and fully Orthodox.

We hope and pray that you, the parents, will also commit yourselves to these goals and assist us in any way you can to make them a reality.

In Christ,

Fr. Chris



PHILOSOPHY OF OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRAM

The basic philosophy of our Sunday School Program is to build a solid foundation of both the Teachings and Worship Practices of the Greek Orthodox Faith, and to benefit the children and families of our church.

GOALS OF OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRAM

1. To encourage and prepare all students from nursery to seniors in high school to actively participate in the sacramental life of the church and to lead an active personal life of prayer.
2. To provide well-rounded and theologically-based lessons on the Bible, Liturgical Worship, Prayer Life, Sacramental Life, and Mission Awareness to enable our students to translate Orthodox principles into their personal lives.
3. To establish a stable, non-threatening educational environment and, in the case of our young adults, a forum at which open discussions can be facilitated about the contemporary moral and religious issues facing them.
4. To have a dependable volunteer staff, who because of their personal commitment to Christ, serve His Church as teachers and assistants.
5. To provide our teachers with continuing education and opportunities to learn about and witness their faith at Bible Study, at Archdiocesan seminars, at adult retreats and through various service projects administered by the adults of St. George.
6. To provide the staff and students with textbooks and other resources (i.e., craft supplies, videos, library and research materials) which inspire learning in a Sunday School program that is also spiritually enriching for our children.

STUDENT COMMITMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Equally as important in achieving the goals of our Sunday School program is **the commitment and participation of the children**. In this coming year, we will be focused on increasing student participation in the weekly Divine Liturgy, as greeters, assisting members of the Parish Council, participating in the weekly procession or even reading the Epistle for some of the older students. In connection with this focus, we have implemented another award, **St. Sophia Church Service Award**, for Grades 1 to 6 that will recognize students that achieve not only a 75% attendance, but also participate in the whole life of the Church. A similar award, **St. Basil's Youth Service Award**, has already been in place for Grades 7 to 12 and has been very rewarding to both our community and the students. See pages 11 and 12 for further details about the award requirements. For this reason and based on recent attendance experience in the past few years, **we have set as a goal of achieving 75% attendance across our Sunday School program**. The teachers closely track the attendance on a weekly basis and can provide a child's status at any time. For your reference, in February, which approximates the midyear mark, you will receive a letter from the teacher, informing you of your child's attendance status at that point in time. In the 2010-2011 school year, there are 38 Sundays of scheduled classes as listed on the Sunday School Liturgical Calendar in the back of this handbook. This includes registration day, but does not include June 19th, Sunday School Awards Recognition Luncheon. **If there are no snow days in the 2010-2011 school year, your child must attend at least twenty-eight (28) of the 38 scheduled classes in order to meet the 75% requirement.**

Consider for a moment what that means. Since many children watch four hours of television a day or twenty-eight hours per week, we are asking for fewer hours per year of Sunday School training. Another way to look at it is to consider how much time they spend in sports or any other activity they may pursue like music lessons or the scouts. In nearly any other facet of life, a 75% level participation would be a minimum to still be considered a player a learner or a contributor. **Our real goal, then, is to have you and your family in church every week – September through August – arriving to church on time at 9:30 a.m. and faithfully participating in the liturgy and your child(ren) attending Sunday School until 11:30 am. Parents, please make a commitment to bring your child to church regularly.**

WAYS PARENTS CAN HELP

BEING A GOOD STEWARD

Parents and children need to discuss how they can offer their own time, talent, and treasure to insure the growth and more importantly, stability of our St. George Cathedral for generations to come. From an early age, a child can learn to be a good Steward of the Church. Part of being a good Steward of the gifts God has blessed us with is to take good care of them. Parents must reinforce and demonstrate by their own actions that the Church, the people and all of its facilities always be treated with RESPECT.

On Sundays, upon entering the Cathedral, your child should be ready to make an offering for lighting a candle, and, at times outside of the school year, when the offering tray is passed. As the child grows older, they can offer their talents and time by joining other children and adults in serving the Church through the various programs and organizations (JOY and GOYA) of the Church. This includes serving in the Altar for our young boys, the junior choir, and various other groups. See page 12 for a complete list of complimentary youth programs. Every Sunday during the Sunday School year, as our children arrive to their classrooms, they should place their weekly offering inside our miniature model church before proceeding to their class.

God has given us ABILITIES and TALENTS that are unique. We should use these abilities and talents to serve God. A Christian steward serves God out of love and gratitude for these gifts knowing that it's not how much we have but what we do with what we have that is important. In St. Peter's first Epistle letter (4:10) , he tells us , "Each of you has received a gift to use to serve others. Be good servants of God's various gifts of grace." Each year, our Sunday School sponsors a variety of outreach programs where the children and young adults in our community have the opportunity to be good stewards. See page 10 for a description of our current outreach programs. While we have initiated two service awards, the St. Sophia's Church Service Award, and the St. Basil's Youth Service Award, to recognize our young stewards, we are most encouraged by the participation of all of our students in the various outreach programs, separate from the award requirements. Our Sunday lessons and readings continue to remind our students that we seek "no" rewards for our stewardship – we offer our stewardship, whether it is time, talent, or treasure with the joy of serving God. We also communicate to our students that God does reward stewards by fulfilling their needs in life and by giving them new opportunities to care, share and participate in the wholeness of life. After all, stewardship is the responsibility of every Orthodox Christian – it reinforces the sincerity of our prayers, worship, and actions and our faith in Orthodoxy.

Come and See



“

“Witness our Faith in Christ Through Works”



STRENGTHEN THE FOUNDATION OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1. Plan to be in church at the beginning of the Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m. Arriving at church late is sending a message to our children that it is not necessary to be on time. Just as we must be on time for school, work, and social events, we should also be on time for church each week. Sunday School will conclude at 11:30 a.m.
2. Be consistent. Attend church *regularly*. Coming to church only when it is convenient is very disruptive not only to a child's sense of routine and tradition but it is also disruptive for teachers and students who need to prepare their lessons and their activities for a specific number of students.
3. Visit the classroom frequently, **especially during the Open House on October 31, 2010**, and meet with the teacher(s) to see what lessons your child is learning so they can be re-enforced at home; ask your child if they have any special handouts from teacher. Discuss the lesson in the car or at home and let them know that the lesson is an important one that needs to be remembered.
4. See that your child comes to class prepared with books, homework and reading assignments, etc. Also, if your child plans to receive Holy Communion and is at least seven years of age, be sure they have not eaten breakfast. Discuss how to approach the Holy Chalice – with reverence and prayer.

NEW NURSERY PROGRAM LAUNCHED IN JANUARY, 2010

Due to the noticeable increase in young families in our St. George community, early in 2010, we launched a nursery program. It is important for parents to attend church often with their infants and toddlers- this helps the child become more comfortable being in Church, receiving Communion, and participating in the worship service. There is no doubt that attending Church regularly with an infant or toddler takes commitment and sacrifice. It's also fair to say that, as a parent, you might not get as much out of the worship service because of the distractions from your child. Nevertheless, it is very important to have these youngsters attend church on a regular basis because attending the Divine Liturgy and receiving Holy Communion is a vital part of their young spiritual lives. **Our Nursery program** is for infants and children who are under the age of 2.9, not yet toilet trained or who are not yet ready for our Preschool program. The Nursery program provides some activities for the children that are centered around our faith, and an environment where they will hear the songs, words and other prayers that are recited during the Divine Liturgy. We keep to a very flexible environment and with little structure. The only requirement is that at least one parent accompany the child during the program. **Our Preschool program** then follows for the next age groups until the child enters Kindergarten. In this program, there are short lessons about Jesus, Bible stories and related craft activities to supplement the lesson. We offer a fun activity every week where the children also have a chance to talk about their day to day lives and family and friends.



**GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS OF
YOUNGER CHILDREN from preschool to Grade 3**

For the safety of all children who attend the Preschool class up to the third grade, it is important for parents to go to the class and pick up their child personally at 11:30 a.m. Please do not let your child wander the halls looking for you at the Coffee Hour. Picking up your child personally will prevent them from becoming anxious when a parent cannot be found.

GUIDELINES FOR CHURCH ATTIRE

Being in the presence of Christ as we are every Sunday, it is important that we dress appropriately for the situation. Young men and boys should consider wearing a suit or sport coat and tie to Church – especially those serving in any way. Young ladies and girls should wear dresses or blouses with skirts or conservative pantsuits. Some **inappropriate** attire includes flip-flops, T-shirts, shorts, spaghetti strap blouses, mini-skirts, anything denim (blue jeans), sneakers and shirts that bare the midriff. It is important that our children learn how to dress from the earliest ages. Your cooperation in maintaining the respect and reverence that we hold for our God, our Church and our Worship is critical.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

For both a most effective learning environment and consistency with grade school skill progressions, children should be registered in the same grade as they are enrolled in grade school.

SUNDAY SCHOOL VOLUNTEER STAFF

The Teachers, Assistants and Directors 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 willing role models for our children. They are well aware that Christianity cannot really be *taught*, it must be *caught*. In other words, while Bible lessons may be taught throughout the year, the greater effects they are having on the children are through their witnessing and love for their faith.

At the same time, parents should be aware that teachers are not superhuman. They share the same stresses that we all do in our daily lives. Occasionally, they may need to take a Sunday off or they may fail to meet your expectations every Sunday. If you have a question or a concern about your child's Christian education, please discuss the issue first with the teacher and then with the Sunday School directors.

Our teachers depend on you to provide your children with a basic understanding of God, the Church and some of the traditions that we hold dear as Orthodox Christians. Sunday School is meant to be a supplement to the education taking place in the home. Together, we know our children will thrive as faithful Orthodox.



SUNDAY SCHOOL VOLUNTEER STAFF

The following are the names and phone numbers of all our dedicated Sunday School Staff:

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

Rev. Fr. Christopher Stamas

KINDERGARTEN

Thamy Grogan
567-8969

Stephanie Giannakopoulos
525-2190

FIFTH GRADE

Eleni Hogan
860-758-7046
Aristea Fenney
455-2818

SUNDAY SCHOOL DIRECTORS

Despina Costa
789-3764

Debbie Ciejek
567-3126

FIRST GRADE

Penny Stamas
567-7379

Angelica Harakas
582-7076

SIXTH GRADE

Antonia Kamyk
596-2453
Elizabeth Frogameni
786-8110

CURRICULUM ADVISOR

Elayne Gumlaw
263-3381

SECOND GRADE

Leslie Moutafis
567-3990
Shari Patrakis
596-8238

SEVENTH GRADE

Penny Goncalves
583-3207
Mary Perakis
734-5671

**OFFICE HELP &
FLOATING TEACHER**

ASSISTANT
Peter Demetriou
736-7322

THIRD GRADE

Sheila Joseph
786-3121

EIGHTH GRADE

Bob Schmidt
782-5600
Kathy Mouneimneh
786-4425

NURSERY

Jenny Nicholson
301-8597
Nancy Suchak
XXX XXXX

FOURTH GRADE

Leila Haddad
455-7959
Sandra Fiore
533-1637

GRADES 9 & 10

Jim Papadimitriou
562-5391
Nikki Lipp
567-6897

PRESCHOOL

Stephanie Gumlaw
821-8811
Jennifer Nicosia
786-8566

GRADES 11 & 12

Susan Alvanos
789-0157
John Moutafis
567-3990

Note: If any parent or adult is interested in joining our Sunday School Staff, please contact the Sunday School Directors or Father Chris.



SUNDAY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The primary curriculum is from the Orthodox Christian Education Commission (OCEC), an agency of the Standing Conference of Orthodox Bishops in America. The most important function of the OCEC is the development and production of a graded curriculum for church school. This curriculum is supplemented by various other materials developed year after year by the Archdiocese Religious Department of Education, and other resources available in the Saint George Library, along with a supply of Bibles available for use by our children during class time. The highlights of topics covered and the titles of the class books are as follows:

NURSERY AND PRESCHOOL- “GOD LOVES US”

The Nursery and Pre-School programs concentrate on the theme and the experience of love. God loves these children, their family, and the world. The children begin to recognize God’s love through seeing his family, others and all things around him as God’s gifts. They experience God’s love in playing with others, family relationships and activities, and participation in Church worship and life. **Reaching for Jesus**, a pictorial introduction to Christ, with large drawings reinforces prayer, the observance of feast days and the love of Jesus.

KINDERGARTEN- “HAPPY WITH GOD”

Joy is the main theme of the Kindergarten program. God’s love is the source of our joy. The Kindergartener 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 centered on Christ. The Kindergartener learns to celebrate God’s gift of joy and thus feels a sense of trust and well-being.

FIRST GRADE-“ME AND MY WORLD”

The focus of grade one 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 thanks.



SECOND GRADE-“LOVING GOD”

Grade Two 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.

THIRD GRADE- “SHARING GOD’S WORLD”

In grade three, 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.

FOURTH GRADE- “GROWING WITH GOD”

The theme of the fourth grade, Growing with God, explores 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 growth in the light of their faith, prayer, and sacramental life.

FIFTH GRADE-“GOD CALLS US” AND “PARABLES OF OUR LORD”

The fifth grade theme, Responding to God, 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 child learns to respond to God in terms of personal faith and the basics of Christian morality, the Ten Commandments and the teaching of Christ.

SIXTH GRADE- “ THE CHRISTIAN WAY OF LIFE”

The focus of the sixth Grade is on the importance and consequences of choices in the light of the Christian faith. The sixth grader, as a pre-adolescent, becomes more aware of one’s personal freedom to make right and wrong choices. Friendships are very important and peer pressure increases. Through the many examples and teachings of Scripture and Tradition, the child is helped to recognize the basic Christian moral and spiritual values and to make the right choices for his or her life.



SEVENTH GRADE-“THE SACRAMENTS OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH” AND “THE TEENAGE TEN COMMANDMENTS”

In Grade 7 the emphasis is on the sacred mysteries, also call sacraments. The seventh grader, as an early adolescent, is moving beyond the security of the late childhood. They begin to search for a personal identity, show new reasoning abilities, seek to be oneself, while conforming to peer values. Through the study of the Sacraments, the seventh grader is challenged to form a conscious Christian identity, to pray for the sanctification of life by grace, and to have personal communion with God.

EIGHTH GRADE- “THE ORTHODOX STUDY BIBLE”

The Old and New testaments are the theme of the eighth grade. The eighth grader, as an adolescent continuing his or her search for identity, has sharper questions about religious teaching, childhood notions of God, and the interplay of good and evil in life. Through the study of the experiences of ancient Israel and how spiritual pilgrims in Scripture and Tradition searched for and found God, the eighth grader is able to clarify questions and find answers in his own pilgrimage.

GRADES 9 & 10- “EASTERN ORTHODOXY, A WAY OF LIFE” AND “CONTEMPORARY MORAL ISSUES”

The books used for this two-year class are “Eastern Orthodoxy, A Way of Life” by Fr. Anthony Coniaris, and “Contemporary Moral Issues” and “455 Questions and Answers” by Fr. Stanley Harakas. Each of these books covers a large variety of issues that our young people are facing but they do it from an Orthodox Christian perspective. Some of the topics include: pride and humility, the meaning of the Cross, repentance, the sacramental life, prayerful meditation, sexual issues, and the meaning of life.

GRADES 11 & 12- “INTRODUCING THE ORTHODOX CHURCH: ITS FAITH AND LIFE”

This two-year class will use the well-known and inspirational book, “Introducing the Orthodox Church: Its Faith and Life”. This is a genuinely different and practical book for the student of Orthodox Christianity. Chapters include: What We Believe about the One, Apostolic Church; the Nicene Creed; Jesus; the Holy Trinity; the Divine Liturgy; Salvation; the Church Fathers; the Church Year; Symbols; the Sacraments; the Saints and the Theotokos; Life After Death; the Bible; Icons; Prayers for the Dead; and Prayer. We will use this book to introduce, review, and reinforce key themes and dogmas of the Orthodox faith.

To bridge the gap between learning about our faith and living our faith, the students are encouraged to participate in all of the “**St. Basil’s Youth Service Award**” recommended activities, some of which include serving at the Springfield Rescue Mission, involvement in G.O.Y.A., raising money for and walking in the “CROP Walk” in October, and participating in the Oratorical Festival in March. Pertinent information will be distributed to the students in September and throughout the school year, and family members are encouraged to support the students in achieving this prestigious award. See Page 14 for more details about the Award. Anyone who is in the 11/12 Grade in High School (as well as college students) is invited to join this dynamic class. New students and visitors are always welcome!

OUTREACH PROJECTS: We all have God given gifts. In the Gospel of Matthew 5:16, Jesus says, ... “Let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in Heaven.” This passage reminds us of how important and central it is for Christians to reach out and help those who are in need. We do this not to receive personal praise but rather that the person receiving assistance may offer up glory to God, for answering their prayer. In responding to this call, our Sunday School students participate in the following special projects:



CROP WALK: On October 17th this year, the older children, ages 12-18, are strongly encouraged to participate in the Crop Walk in Springfield to raise money for the less fortunate. While we encourage all of our families to participate to represent St. George, for our GOYA students, participation is a requirement to be considered for the St. Basil’s Youth Service Award by raising at least \$100. Church World Services coordinates this event in cities throughout the country to raise funds they later distribute to needy families. In past years, the children and families proudly represented St. George and earned the Gold Sneaker Award, collecting the second highest amount of money of any group in the surrounding communities for the Church World Services.

THANKSGIVING AND CHRISTMAS: During the holiday season, our Sunday School sponsors collections of used clothing for our local community and in the last year made over 125 kits (health and school kits) for the International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC). In the past it has also participated in gift giving by supporting our local programs including the Brightside Angels Program, and the children of the Gray House and the Ronald McDonald House. For this coming year, we have already planned a used clothes drive, that will also include winter coats, for November. Please set aside clothes that your children have outgrown for this outreach program. Our children’s participation in this outreach program has been so rewarding and so appreciated by the charities we choose to support.

GREAT LENT: The Lenten Missions boxes are distributed to Orthodox Churches throughout the country by the Orthodox Christian Missions Center, a Pan-Orthodox administrative body which coordinates the charitable activities for Orthodox throughout the world. A box will be given to each student at the beginning of Lent. It is hoped that during the Lenten period, the family will make the effort to talk about others who are less fortunate and need 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. During the Lenten season of 2010, the Sunday School collected and contributed \$510 to the OCMC. We hope this generous support continues.

COLLECTION OF ALUMINUM CAN CAPS AND OLD INK CARTRIDGES

This year for the benefit of all of our Saint George Youth Programs, our children are being asked to once again collect just the caps from aluminum cans and old, unusable ink cartridges. Please accumulate your donations in a plastic bag and bring to the Sunday School office. Once a substantial quantity has been collected, it will be redeemed for cash to be applied to Fund our Youth Programs. This is a great way to encourage our children to turn something disposable into something useful. In the past year, we have cashed in over \$100 worth of caps and ink and used these proceeds on the purchase of supplemental teaching material. Please help us increase this amount by savings these two items – tell your families and friends and together, we can double the proceeds that can be put to good use in our program. Additionally, the efforts are in line with a GREENER society that we are all caring for.

ANNUAL ST. GEORGE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT: This annual Sunday School event was started 17 years ago with the participation of 50 students at the time. Year after year, this pageant brings our families, their friends and relatives together to watch this annual event where 80 to 90 students participate. It is a great display their many talents. **Students who play an instrument, have experience in role-playing or acting, enjoy singing (solo) or enjoy public speaking are encouraged to stop by the Sunday School office and communicate your interests to the Sunday School Directors.** This year's pageant will take place on Sunday, December 19, 2010.



As we do with nearly every event in our program, we use this event as an opportunity for us to communicate the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Good News that God has become a human being in order to save us. This play, written and directed by local talent, takes the essential message of the Scriptures, the hymnology, and the Tradition of the Church and plays them out in a sort of drama that gives life to the events on the page. Many of the adults in the congregation, for example, had no idea that James, the Lord's Brother, traveled with Joseph and Mary to Egypt. In this way, we are able to take teach our children the full story of Christ's Nativity in a way that is uniquely Orthodox and uniquely ours. Please note that, despite our best efforts, there is a limitation to the number of speaking parts that we have. Not everyone is able to have a speaking role or to play one particular character. This year, **we have also created some new parts for the older students, a group whose participation we are working to increase to a higher level.** Whenever it is possible, we will do our best to accommodate everyone and use them to their fullest potential.



COMPLIMENTARY YOUTH PROGRAMS

JOY: Junior Orthodox Youth is open to all children between the ages of 6 - 12 and meets once a month all year long. Some of the activities which are planned include bowling, playing games together, visiting a candle-making factory, religious discussions and much more. For more information about joining JOY, contact either Fr. Chris, or see our web site at www.stgeorgecath.org to learn more. Some of the scheduled meeting and event dates are in the Youth Ministry Calendar; other events will be announced during the year as scheduled.

GOYA: The Greek Orthodox Youth of America is open to all children between the ages of 13 - 18 and meets each month to plan events. GOYA members participate in many diverse activities at Saint George and with other local parishes including dances, retreats, Outreach Activities and much more. For more information about joining GOYA, contact one of the officers, Fr. Chris or see our web site. Some of the meeting and event dates are in the Youth Ministry Calendar; other events will be announced during the year as scheduled.

ALTAR BOYS: Beginning in Grade 5, young men who are at least ten years old are invited by Fr. Chris to assist him in serving our Lord as Altar Boys during the Divine Services. This experience allows them the unique opportunity to learn more about our faith and traditions and experience active participation in the Church liturgies. Parents, please contact Fr. Chris if you have any questions.

ST. GEORGE GLENDI DANCERS: This group, organized by Christine Tsandilas, learns traditional Greek dances and performs at GLENDI (Annual Festival) and other functions throughout the year. Currently we have over thirty children involved in our dance program, ranging between the ages of 4 and 20. Please call Christine Tsandilas at 746-5273 if interested in joining.

ORATORICAL FESTIVAL: This yearly Archdiocesan Project provides students with an opportunity to speak about their faith, their Church and their Orthodox heritage, as well as enhance their writing and oratorical skills. The competition is divided into two divisions: Junior (7 – 9 grades) and Senior (10 – 12 grades). The 2011 Oratorical Festival will again be coordinated by Mrs. Irene Collins. Literature including topic choices and deadlines will be distributed at the latest by the Sunday School teachers in the early January 2011 with enough time for the students to pick their topic and prepare their presentation for a mid-March 2011 competition. The teachers will also review and discuss the topics in class and suggest resource materials to the students as they prepare their presentation.

THE EASTERN ORTHODOX COMMITTEE ON SCOUTING- RELIGIOUS AWARD PROGRAM supports our youth through an extensive Religious Award program. They have designed the Religious Awards Program around a scout's spiritual life. It gives the scout a chance to work closely with their spiritual Father to earn their award. The unique bond formed at this age is a stepping stone for the rest of their spiritual life. We have three youth and one adult award: St. George Award - Grades 1 – 3, Chi-Rho Award - Grades 4 – 5, Alpha Omega - Grades 6 – 12, Prophet Elias Award - Adult Recognition Award

For more information on receiving one of these awards, please contact Fr. Chris directly or go onto their web site at: www.eocs.org



CHILDREN'S CHOIR (JUNIOR CHOIR): Encourages children, through the chanting of hymns, to become active participants during the Divine Liturgy and other Church services. Under the direction of Joan Marcil, the Children's Choir chants regularly with the Adult Choir during the Divine Liturgy. Depending on interest and maturity, the Junior Choir is open to children beginning at the age of 6.



Younger children are permitted if accompanied by a parent or sibling. The children depart to class after receiving Holy Communion with their Sunday School teacher. For more information about joining the Junior Choir, please contact Joan Marcil (786-8481) or Stavroulla Mavroudis Koetsch.

GREEK LANGUAGE SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS: Our children are provided with the opportunity to learn how to converse, read and write in Greek and learn more about Hellenic customs and traditions. Greek language school meets every Monday afternoon from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 pm from September to June.



Adult also have the opportunity to learn the language of their forefathers and mothers with two classes. One is for those who wish to read, write and speak Greek while a new second class for adults will focus on the liturgical and biblical language. This new class will be taught by Fr. Chris for the first time and it is for beginners.

Registration and first day of classes will take place on Monday, September 27, 2010.

Those who miss the first day are welcome to join us as soon as possible. For more information about the Greek Language School, please contact Liza Pappas, Greek School

Director at lizapappas@rcn.com or by leaving a message for Liza at the church office.

METROPOLIS OF BOSTON CAMP (MBC): Over the past 5 years, participation of St. George children and young adults at the MBC has continued to grow. This past summer, 19 children attended during St. George week along with Father Chris. Next year, St. George Week at MBC will be the week of July 18. Applications will be available in May 2011 in the church office or through the Sunday School office for those interested in attending. In addition, for the first time, we have scheduled a Family Camp for St. George families, parents and children, on Friday October 8, 2010 to Saturday October 9, 2010 .Contact Fr. Chris or the church office for more information. Special activities have been planned for all adults and children. Also, the GOYA Winter Camp will take place during the Winter School Vacation from Friday February 11 to Sunday February 13, 2011, as noted in the calendar. More information to follow.



SAINT GEORGE LIBRARY: Several years ago, a library was established with a wealth of resources and reading and audiovisual materials primarily about our faith and heritage among many other pertinent topics. The library continues to grow with the continued generous donations of our parishioners and fundraisers. Our Sunday School children frequent the library with their classes both to research topics discussed in class and/or check out books to take home. The books are due back in 3 weeks, and the return is the responsibility of the children. The assistance of our parents to assure timely return of the books is appreciated.



CHURCH SERVICE AWARDS

SAINT BASIL'S YOUTH SERVICE AWARD: This award was initiated several years ago to recognize GOYA-age boys and girls who participate actively in the life of the community. Requirements include Sunday worship and 75% Sunday School attendance, the annual Oratorical festival, GOYA events and other activities including serving in the local Springfield Rescue Mission and the Annual Crop Walk. Those who receive this annual award will be recognized for their accomplishment during the Awards Sunday at the end of the school year. Recipients of this award will also earn additional points for their involvement in the Church when applying for scholarships. The requirements to earn this award in the coming school year 2010 to 2011 are:

- 75% attendance in Sunday school
- At least 50% participation in GOYA events
- Help in the preparation/ serving of a meal at Springfield Rescue Mission or Ronald McDonald House
- Full participation in the Oratorical Festival (March)
- Participation in the October Crop Walk and collection of a minimum of \$100

ST. SOPHIA CHURCH SERVICE AWARD: Like the St. Basil Award for middle and high school students, the St. Sophia Church Service Award is meant to give elementary school age children (grades 1-6) the opportunity to make a difference in the community and in their own lives. It is, simply, good stewardship and a great lesson for children to learn at a very young age. Service to the community is critical for spiritual growth. Also like the St. Basil's Youth Service Award, all young people are eligible to participate in this program every year. Recognition will be given to all those who accomplish the requirements of the award.

The requirements to earn this award in the coming school year 2010 to 2011 are:

- * 75% attendance in Sunday School
- * 50% attendance in JOY events
- * 4 hours of work at Church/Center
- * 2 hours of visiting elderly people with the group

In addition, for children in Grades 5 and 6 , there are 2 additional requirements:

- Short paper and presentation in class (religious topic to be assigned in class)
- Help in the preparation of and serving of a meal at the Ronald McDonald House

Both of these new requirements will be worked out through the Sunday School program but students are responsible for fulfilling all requirements and for communicating to both their teachers and Fr. Chris of their completion.



2010-2011 SUNDAY SCHOOL CALENDAR

Over the course of the year, other events will be scheduled and announced to our parents and children in a separate communication as in the past.

2010

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|------------------|--|-------------------|--|
| Sunday, Sept. 19 | • Registration & First Day of classes | Sunday, Nov. 28 | • Sunday School Classes
• GOYA Christmas tree set-up after Church |
| Sunday, Sept. 26 | • Sunday School Classes | Sunday, Dec. 5 | • Sunday School Classes |
| Sunday, Oct. 3 | • Sunday School Classes | Saturday, Dec. 11 | • Christmas Pageant Rehearsal, 1:00PM to 3:00PM |
| Sunday, Oct. 10 | • Sunday School Classes | Sunday, Dec. 12 | • Sunday School Classes
Sunday School Communion Breakfast with Santa / Holiday Outreach project |
| Sunday, Oct. 17 | • Sunday School Classes
• St. George families , GOYA and JOY Participate in the CROP WALK | Saturday, Dec. 18 | • Christmas Pageant Rehearsal, 11:00AM to 1:00PM |
| Sunday, Oct. 24 | • Sunday School Classes
• Sunday School Teachers' Meeting | Sunday, Dec. 19 | • Sunday School Classes and Annual Christmas Pageant immediately following the Divine Liturgy |
| Sunday, Oct. 31 | • Sunday School Classes, Open House (Sunday School to host coffee hour) | Sunday, Dec. 26 | • Sunday School Classes |
| Sunday, Nov. 7 | • Sunday School Classes | | |
| Sunday, Nov. 14 | • Sunday School Classes | | |
| Sunday, Nov. 21 | • Sunday School Classes | | |



2010 – 2011 YOUTH MINISTRY AND EVENT CALENDAR – CONTINUED
2011

Sunday, Jan. 2	• Sunday School Classes	Sunday, March 14	• Sunday School Classes – 1 st Sunday of Lent – Sunday of Orthodoxy (Procession of Holy Icons)
Sunday, Jan. 9	• Sunday School Classes		
Sunday, Jan. 16	• Sunday School Classes • Sunday School Teachers’ Meeting	Sunday, March 21	• Sunday School Classes – 2 nd Sunday of Lent – Saint Gregory Palamas • Sunday School Teachers’ Meeting
Sunday, Jan. 23	• Sunday School Classes	Sunday, March 28	• Sunday School Classes – 3 rd Sunday of Lent – Veneration of the Holy Cross (Flowers distributed to all)
Sunday, Jan. 30	• Sunday School Classes • GOYA Souper Bowl Sunday to benefit IOCC	Sunday, April 3	• Sunday School Classes 4 th Sunday of Lent – Saint John of the Ladder
Sunday, Feb. 6	• Sunday School Classes	Sunday, April 10	• Sunday School Classes – 5 th Sunday of Lent – Saint Mary of Egypt
Sunday, Feb. 13	• Sunday School Classes	Friday, April 15	• Pot Luck Lenten Supper for all youth and families followed by making of the Palm Crosses
Sunday, Feb. 20	• Sunday School Classes	Sunday, April 17	• Sunday School Classes – Palm Sunday
Sunday, Feb. 27	• Sunday School Classes – Meatfare Sunday	Sunday, April 24	• EASTER SUNDAY, PASCHA “CHRISTOS ANESTI!” – AGAPE VESPER SERVICE at 11:00 a.m. (No Sunday School)
Sunday, March 7	• Sunday School Classes – Cheesefare Sunday (Sunday of Forgiveness)	Sunday, May 1	• Sunday School Classes
Monday, March 8	• Great Lent and fasting begins (Clean Monday)	Sunday, May 8	• Sunday School Classes (Mother’s Day)



2010– 2011 YOUTH MINISTRY AND EVENT CALENDAR - CONTINUED

Sunday, May 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunday School Classes • Sunday School Teachers’ Meeting 	Sunday, June 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunday School Classes
Sunday, May 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunday School Classes 	Sunday, June 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunday School Classes - Pentecost
Sunday, May 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunday School Classes 	Sunday, June 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last Day of Sunday School – Grade Promotion Day / Awards Recognition Luncheon

INTERNET MINISTRIES

In addition to our own web site, www.stgeorgecath.org, the Archdiocese of America has an award-winning web site at www.goarch.org. Named the best spiritual web site on the entire Internet, the Archdiocese has invested a great deal of money and time in improving the site which receives 65,000 hits every day. The mission of Internet Ministries is to follow the commandment of our Lord Jesus Christ who said: “Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation” (Mark 16.15). Internet Ministries is dedicated to utilizing the medium of computers and the Internet for the proclamation of the Good News of the Gospel and for the advancement of Orthodox Christian ministry.

As most parents know, many children want to play games on the Internet. Why not let them play with words, pictures and puzzles from our Church? Go onto **games.goarch.org** to find a wonderful new resource for children ages 5 and up.

Our parish’s web site – www.stgeorgecath.org – is also growing on a weekly basis as more and more information is added to it. Be sure to take a look at it and see all of the amazing links we have to sites from throughout the world. You can find information not only about the Sunday School but about how to prepare for Baptisms, Weddings, Confession or Chrismation. You can also hear sermons or catch up with the news from one of our many parish ministries by reading *The Apostle*, our monthly newsletter. Please sign up today by going onto our web site and clicking *Subscribe to Mailings*.

Both Fr. Chris (FrChristopher Stamas) and St. George Cathedral are now on Facebook also. Be sure to send a message to either “friend” or “like” them and, if you have something to offer the community, be sure to add it for all St. George parishioners to see. We also have our weekly bulletin posted for everyone to see.

As you can see, there’s no shortage of work being done to make St. George the most helpful, inspirational and friendly community that it can be. The only thing missing is the participation of more people, especially our young families that really need the guidance and direction as their children are growing up in a sometimes-hostile environment. We hope that you and your family will join us for our **Family Nights beginning in November** as we share in a pot-luck meal and then enjoy a movie that focuses on family. Of course, more information will be in our monthly newsletter, *The Apostle*.