

CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS YOUTH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM 2008-2009

A Guide to our 2008 - 2009

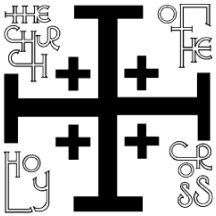
Youth Religious Education Program

Church of the Holy Cross
900 Alameda de las Pulgas
Belmont, CA 94002-1604



*"Grow in the Grace and Knowledge
of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."*

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September 2008

Dear Stewards of Holy Cross,

Welcome back! After a somewhat restful summer I know that you are eager to roll up your sleeves and join in the important work of our Lord Jesus Christ here at Holy Cross.

I have missed you all and am very excited about your return to our liturgical and youth ministries which are so important for your spiritual growth and maturity. As you begin your Religious Academic Year here at Holy Cross, I ask you to keep 'who you are' in mind. A Greek Orthodox Christian is someone whose decisions each day hold closely to the tradition of our Holy Orthodox faith and culture. It is not enough to say that you are a Greek Orthodox Christian; I hope that you also say, with confidence, that you live your life as an Orthodox Christian.

As we come together as an Orthodox family on Sunday mornings, let your greetings to one another reflect a deep faith and commitment to our Lord.

We are blessed to have a new priest and his wife join our parish family. Father Panagiotis and Presbytera Angie look forward to meeting each of you. Please take the time to introduce yourself to them as you welcome them to our community.

I pray that we will enjoy many more blessings from our Lord In the weeks and months to come as we grow to the measure and stature of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Faithfully,

Pastor and Spiritual Father

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A Letter from Fr. Pete Sotiras

Hello everyone, my name is Fr. Pete and I am so excited to be at Holy Cross in Belmont. I am honored at the opportunity to be assisting Fr. Peter. Presvytera Angie and I can't wait to meet and get to know all of you. I also want to thank you for being at my ordination to the Priesthood on September 14th. It was one of the most important days of my life and your presence there meant so much to me.

I'm not sure what you got out of that day but I hope you got out of it this one thing: God calls all of us to something great, something bigger than ourselves. We all have a purpose. God has plans for all of us--BIG plans. It may not be the priesthood but that doesn't matter. We are heirs of the kingdom of God, and more valuable to God than anything else. God wants us to reach our potential and experience the joy and happiness that comes from being His sons and daughters. God wants us to accept His plan for us. What is that plan? That's something we all have to discover for ourselves but rest assured that whatever it is for you, it will be the most fulfilling and rewarding experience you'll ever have.

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Time of Instruction

The religious instruction of our youth has always centered in the liturgical life of the church. For whatever reason, though, church youth religious education programs have been most commonly scheduled during the celebration of the Divine Liturgy; limiting the liturgical experience of our youth and separating them from their families in worship. Realizing the importance of participation by our youth in Divine Services, and responding to the spiritual needs of our youth, their families, as well as their instructors, Holy Cross Religious Education instruction begins following Holy Communion.

This approach to Religious Education has proven to be of great value for our young people and their instructors who are able to attend the majority of the Divine Liturgy, and worship with their families.

Because the Holy Cross Youth & Young Adult Council requires participants in our youth programs to have an attendance of 80% or better we ask that students who attend divine services with their families pick up an OTEC (Orthodox Traditions, Etiquette and Customs) on time card from the Narthex. These cards remain available until 10:15 AM. If a student arrives after this time she/he is considered tardy (3 tardies equals one absence). Each colored on time card is worth one dollar in the Three Hierarch Bookstore and the first opportunity to redeem these cards will be the first Sunday in December.

Every week your child will be given a copy of the Sunday's on time card to review with you at home. It is our hope that this will provide a time of discussion and learning for you and your child.

Tithing Program

Religious Education is starting to integrate a tithing unit into its curriculum. We are very happy to present "Following our Saints to God"...more information on our webpage.

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TODDLER & NURSERY CLASS

Teacher :

Elaine Breeze

Goals :

To introduce children to God, the Church, and love, through brief stories and discussions, art projects and music; We provide a structured program in a relaxed atmosphere suited to young preschoolers.

Texts :

*The Wonder of it all
God, My Friends, and Me.
Reaching For Jesus*

KINDERGARTEN

Teachers :

Alexandra Nemchik, Gabrielle Nemchik

Goals :

To introduce students to the liturgical life of the church, basic concepts of the Holy Trinity and the church as God's family

Texts:

*Together with God
What we see and do in Church*

FIRST GRADE

Teachers :

Gina Schmidt and Olivia Bagis

Goals :

To lead the children to experience God as our living, caring and forgiving Father, Who is ever-present, and Whose love is life-giving. The lessons build on the child's own experiences and lead him/her to an increased awareness of his/her relationships with God and with others.

Texts :

God Loves Us

SECOND GRADE

Teacher :

Adrienne Roberts, Marianne Cheatham

Goals : To show that passages from scripture reinforce the Sacraments of Baptism, Chrismation and Eucharist. To introduce the students to the Holy Sacrament of Confession.

Texts :

New Life in Jesus/Making Things Right

THIRD GRADE

Teacher :

George Chechopoulos, Cathy Pereira

Goal :

To develop the child's awareness that the New Life received from Christ, through the Sacraments, is shared with others within the Church, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Text :

New Life in the Church

FOURTH GRADE

Teacher :

Kathy & Don Craighead

Goal :

To teach the structure, use and content of the Bible and events and teachings in the life of Christ

Text: *Jesus, The Promise of God*

FIFTH GRADE

Teacher : Krystyna DeFerrari

Goal : To teach the description, meaning, and practices of the Sacraments, focusing primarily on the student's participation in the Sacraments

Text : *Our Life in the Church*

SIXTH GRADE

Teachers :

Nadia Elliott

Goals :

The students will become familiar with history and traditions of our faith so that they will recognize that the Christian way of life is God's way of life.

Texts:

SEVENTH GRADE / EIGHTH GRADE

Teacher :

Athena Kozar

Goal :

To teach the students the book of Acts of the Apostles, with all lessons emphasizing application to Modern Life.

At this stage of their religious education, most students are acquainted with the Seven Sacraments and the Ten Commandments. The eighth grade course of study:

- 1) Gives students a more adult perspective on the Sacraments and the Commandments
- 2) Helps students make personal commitments to Christ and His Church, and follow through on those commitments in their daily lives by drawing strength from God through His Sacraments and Commandments.
- 3) Biblical studies are presented to reinforce historical concepts, including the development of the Bible.

Texts:

*The Young Church
Journey with the Apostles
The Sacraments
The Teenage Ten Commandments*

SENIOR HIGH

Teachers :

9th and 10th grades: Louis Busta
11th and 12th grades: Konstantine Salmas, Nicole Davis

Theme :

Faith..."Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous but sinners." Matthew 9:13

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A Prayer for our children

O Lord, with deep humility and thanksgiving we pray to You: help us by Your grace always to fulfill our duties as parents in bringing up our children well.

O God of mercies, have mercy on us and on our home, and in Your greatness, pour out Your abundant grace over all our children whom You have given us.

Help us, O Savior, to plant in their souls what is good and useful for the Holy Church and the nation, and what is well pleasing to You, that Your holy name may be exalted through them. Fill them, O Lord, with the enlightened wisdom and holy understanding which comes down from you. Protect them from all the snares of enemies both visible and invisible. Command Your Angels as always to be their enlightened guides and counselors in all good works.

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