

Following St. Bartholomew by Reaching Out

This weekly bulletin insert complements the curriculum published by the Department of Christian Education of the Orthodox Church in America. This and many other Christian Education resources are available at <http://dce.oca.org>.



On June 11 we celebrate Saint Bartholomew, also called Nathaniel, one of the twelve apostles and a man who "reached out" further than most. Bartholomew made quite a spiritual journey, beginning by cynically asking about Jesus, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" (John 1: 46). But his understanding deepened in the Lord's company, and after receiving the Holy Spirit at Pentecost he was ready to go and preach in Asia, Phrygia, and remote places whose names we don't know. In India he translated Matthew's Gospel into the people's language. He died a martyr, and his relics, now in Rome, are a source of miraculous healing.

We also are called to reach out. From June 27-30 of this month, at Baldwin Wallace College in Berea (Cleveland) Ohio, a Parish Ministries Conference, "Equipping the Saints", will offer an array of workshops to help participants reach out in many ways.

The Department of Christian Education is hosting one track of this 3-track conference. Among the speakers in the DCE track, called Living an Orthodox Life, will be His Beatitude Metropolitan Jonah, who will speak on "Discerning the Spiritual Gifts We Have to Offer." His Beatitude will give guidance in discerning our gifts, and the needs of our communities, by working with spiritual fathers and mothers.

Father John Behr, dean of St. Vladimir's Seminary, will address "Male and Female Created He Them," looking at Biblical, patristic, and liturgical texts that describe relations between the sexes. The goal will be to come to a deeper understanding of this fundamental feature of our existence, in response to the world's challenges.

Other workshops, offered by DCE members, will include:

Meeting Muslims: Presenting our Orthodox faith , with truth and love, in a multifaith world.

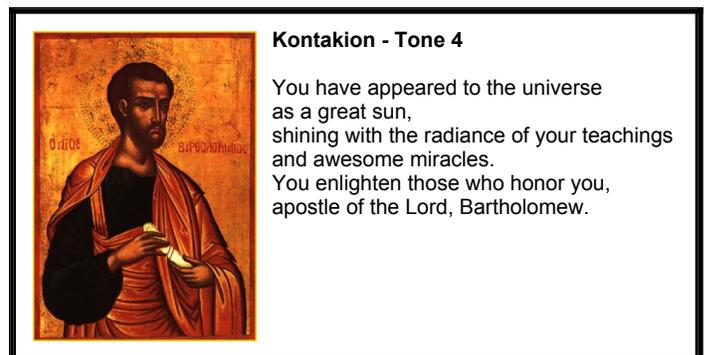
Youth in Crisis: Identifying the warning signs of depression and suicide, and the stages and manifestations of grief. Discussion of the Church's role in counseling and spiritual support.

The Welcoming Parish--Coming Together as One: Assisting the aging, the ill, widows and those with cognitive and physical disabilities in our parishes. Discussion of the challenges faced by families of exceptional children and ways in which lessons can be modified for those children.

Abortion: The Discussion, The Tragedy, the Alternatives: An Orthodox response to abortion from Scripture and Tradition, presented by Orthodox Christians working in the field.

Being Disciples by Making Disciples: Engaging parish members in international missions initiatives, and developing a deeper understanding of our call to international missions by making "disciples of all nations" (Mt. 28:19). Presented by an officer of OCMC.

For registration and more information on this track and the "Liturgical Music" and "Building Vibrant Parishes" tracks, as well as the concurrent Young Adult Rally, please go to the OCA website. Click on the box in the center with the "Equipping the Saints Conference 2010" logo.



Kontakion - Tone 4

You have appeared to the universe
as a great sun,
shining with the radiance of your teachings
and awesome miracles.
You enlighten those who honor you,
apostle of the Lord, Bartholomew.