

Suggested Bibliography

for

"The Season of Christmas"

Basic Introductory Resources

Anderson, David and Erickson, John, ed. **The Services of Christmas: The Nativity of Our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ**. Department of Religious Education, Orthodox Church in America. NY.1981. Liturgical texts with an Introduction by Fr. Alexander Schmemmann..

Tarasar, Constance J., **Feasts and Families: The Season of Christmas**. Department of Religious Education, Orthodox Church in America. NY. 1980. A Set including Text & Activity Book for Families

Tarasar, Constance J., **Jesus: The Word, Studies on the Gospels, Part I**. A Bible Study for adults and teens, introducing the Gospels and the life of Christ from His birth to His baptism and the beginning of His teaching ministry. Includes biblical texts, patristic commentaries, maps, icons (black and white) and illustrations in a 7 x 9" workbook format. 10 sessions. 56pp. Orthodox Christian Education Commission. **Bible Studies – Levels 3-6**

Hopko, Thomas, **The Winter Pascha**, 40 very readable meditations for Advent, Christmas and Epiphany, drawing on biblical readings, liturgical hymns, and verses of the season. **Levels 4-6** SVS Press, ISBN 0-88141-025-X

Schmemmann, Alexander, **The Church Year**, Vol. II of the *Celebration of Faith* series. Focuses on the Orthodox Christian church year, with special emphasis on the Christmas and Easter cycles. SVS Press, ISBN 0-88141-128-8 **Levels 4-6**

Schmemmann, Alexander, **The Virgin Mary**, Vol. III of the *Celebration of Faith* series. Focuses on the place of the Virgin Mary in the liturgy and life of the Orthodox Church. SVS Press, ISBN 0-88141-144-8 **Levels 4-6**

The Living God. A 2-volume Catechism for the Christian Faith, which integrates scripture, theology, the liturgical year, iconography and hymnography to explain basic Christian teachings. For parents, catechists, teachers, pastors. Full-color icon plates and liturgical music examples. SVS Press. 2 vol. Set (472 pp.) ISBN 0-88141-040-3. **Levels 4-6** (with application for lower levels)

The Incarnate God. The Feasts of Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary. 2 Vol. Set. A multi-level catechism intended for use in study groups or for individual study. Over 110 iconographic illustrations. SVS Press. 2 vol. Set 475 pp.) ISBN 0-88141-130-2

Barrois, Georges A., **Scripture Readings in Orthodox Worship**. An excellent introduction to the scriptural lessons of the Orthodox Church through the course of its liturgical seasons and feasts, interpreted within the context of the church's worship and prayer. SVS Press, ISBN 0-913836-41-9. **Levels 4-6**

Barrois, Georges A. **Jesus Christ and the Temple**. A description of the life of Christ and His relationship to the Temple, from both Old and New Testament sources. A good reference for the feast of the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple, as well as the week of Christ's Passion. SVS Press, ISBN 0-913836-73-7 **Levels 4-6**

A Monk of the Eastern Church, **The Year of the Grace of the Lord**. St. Vladimir's Seminary Press. Crestwood, NY. 1980. A scriptural and liturgical commentary on the Calendar of the Orthodox Church. SVS Press, **Levels 4-6**.

Braga, Roman. **On the Way of Faith: Faith, Freedom and Love**. HDM Press, Inc. 1997. Of particular interest is Chapter 1, which deals with the Incarnation of the Logos. **Levels 4-6**.

Mary, Mother and Ware, Kallistos, translators. **The Festal Menaion** with an introduction to the cycle of feasts. Faber and Faber. London. 1969. **Liturgical texts**.

Books for Children and Families

Chocheli, Niko (Illustrator). **Prepare, O Bethlehem: The Feast of the Nativity**. SVS Press. 32pp. Large size hardcover book. ISBN 0-88141-208-2 **Levels 1-3**.

Papademetriou, Dorrie. **The Story of Mary**, The Mother of God. The story of the Virgin Mary's childhood as it is told in Church Tradition and apocryphal texts. This brilliantly-illustrated children's book was inspired by the famous mosaics in the Monastery of Chora (the Kariye Djami) in Istanbul, Turkey. SVS Press. 32pp. Hardback. ISBN 0-88141-205-8

Speir, Kurt and Finley, John. **How about Advent: November 15-December 25. A Book for Orthodox Families**. Orthodox Christian Education Commission. Yonkers, NY. 1991. **All levels**.

Engleman, Dennis. E. **The Saint Nicholas Secret: A Story of Childhood Faith Reborn in the Heart of a Father**. Conciliar Press. Ben Lomand, CA. 1999. Some portions are appropriate for all of the levels.

Gidus-Mecera, Ann Marie. **A Way of Life: Introducing Your Child to the Orthodox Faith**. Religious Education Pre-School Program for Parents. Orthodox Christian Publications Center. Wayne, NJ. 1991. **Levels 1-2**.

Lives of Saints

Kesich, Lydia. **They Walked With God: The Lives of Saints for Children**. Metropolitan Council Publications Committee. Bridgeport, Conn. 1960. **Levels 2-4**. (For this study unit, see Introduction, plus St. Roman (Romanos), St. John of Damascus, St. Juliana the Merciful, St. Seraphim of Sarov, St. Barbara) *Note: This out-of-print book will be included soon on the oca.org website.*

Saints for All Ages (A Series of 10 volumes for Family and Adult reading) DRE, Orthodox Church in America. Full Set: ISBN 0-86642-010-X, available from OCPC, the sales office of the OCA.)

All Levels. *Note: Saints listed are primarily those commemorated during the period of Advent-Epiphany, Nov. 15-Jan. 6; or those whose content is related to the theme. Check the suitability of the language level for your particular group level.*

Vol. 1 – Women Martyrs of the Lord (cf. St. Barbara, St. Eugenia)

Vol. 2 – Enlighteners of Ancient Kingdoms (cf. St. Isaac of Armenia, St. Frumentius of Ethiopia)

Vol. 3 – New Apostles of Christ (cf. St. Innocent of Irkutsk)

Vol. 5 – Pillars of the Church (cf. St. Ignatius of Antioch)

Vol. 7 – Founders of Russian Monasticism (St. Seraphim of Sarov,)

Vol. 8 – Great Monks of the Desert (St. Sabbas the Sanctified and St. Theodosius the Cenobiarch)

Vol. 9 – Poets and Hymnographers of the Church (St. Romanos the Melodist, St. Andrew of Crete and St. John of Damascus,)

Vol.10– Fighters for the Faith (St. Athanasius the Great and St. Cyril of Alexandria. *Note: These lives are included for their relation to the theology of Christ: the God-man, and are for levels 4-6*)

Papademetriou, Dorrie. **North Star: Saint Herman of Alaska**. A charming story for children in which the world of Apa Herman and his care for the Aleut people comes alive in illustrations of northern lights, Kodiak bears, giant cabbages and angel's wings. SVS Press, Crestwood, NY. **All Levels**

Whelan, Gloria. **The Miracle of Saint Nicholas**. Conciliar Press. Ben Lomond, CA. **Levels 1-3**.

Gray, George A. and Bear, Jan V., **Portraits of American Saints.** Diocese of the West, Orthodox Church in America. Los Angeles, CA. 5th Ed. 2001. A vastly improved and expanded edition of the lives of 12 canonized American saints, plus 3 who, not yet canonized, represent the same spiritual and historical tradition (includes Metropolitan Leonty). ISBN 0-9715363-0-9 **All Levels.**

Saint Herman of Alaska. Orthodox Church in America. 1970. Original paperback booklet issued at the time of the canonization of St. Herman. Contains the story of the saint's life, icons, and liturgical texts of the canonization. **All Levels.**

Payne, Robert. **The Holy Fire.** A reprint of a very readable and exciting volume of saints' lives, woven through the story of the early centuries of the Christian Church in the Near East. Includes a brief introduction by Fr. Thomas Hopko, which should be read first, to clarify any over-simplifications or errors in the text. SVS Press, ISBN 0-913836-61-3 **Levels 4-6.**

O'Henry. **The Gift of the Magi.**

Biblical and Liturgical Aids

Kesich, Veselin and Lydia. **Treasures of the Holy Land.** A visit to historical places in the Holy Land, with scriptural and historical descriptions. SVS Press. ISBN 0-88141-045-4. **Levels 3-6**

May, Herbert G. **Oxford Bible Atlas.** 2nd ed. Oxford University Press. New York. 1974. Contains maps of the Holy Land. (Check bookstores for most recent editions. **Levels 3-6.**

What the Bible is All About *for Young Explorers.* Frances Blankenbaker, Author and General Editor. Regal Books, A division of GL Publications, Ventura, CA 1975. ISBN 0-8307-1162-7. A youth version of the adult text of the same title by Dr. Henrietta Mears. A simple and well-organized 6 x 9" paperback with outlines and summaries of each book of the Bible, illustrated story lines, maps, charts and selected color photos of Bible lands. A useful quick reference for parents and teachers also. Includes an illustrated dictionary of Bible words. 364 pages. **Levels 2-6**

The BIBLE VISUAL Resource Book. Regal Books, Ventura, California. 1989. (9 x 12") Maps, picture time lines, outlines and graphics of places and events in each book of the Bible. **Levels 3-6**

Orthodox Hymns for Children, Vol. 1. Teacher's Manual. Department of Liturgical Music. Orthodox Church in America. 1986. See pg. 29, Hymn for Greeting of a Bishop. **Levels 1-3.**

OCEC supplementary materials

The Biggest Birthday Party

Birth of Jesus-pictograph

Praise the Lord: Christmas Workbook

Playing it up for Christmas

Arch Books selections related to Christmas and Epiphany.

The Story of Christmas: An Arch Books Gift Collection. Inspiration Press.1998.

Note: Parents should keep in mind that these creatively-written stories are not paraphrases of the biblical story, but fictional extensions of it for young children. At some point, the actual biblical text (or a good Bible paraphrase) should be read together so that children will become aware of the difference.)

Additional Titles: *Note: Some titles may no longer be in print, but have been replaced by other stories on the same subjects.*

A Garden and a Promise
Mary's Story
Daniel in the Lion's Den
Little Benjamin and the First Christmas
The Good Samaritan
Three Men Who Walked in Fire
The Great Promise
The Boy Who Saved His Family
The Secret of the Arrows
The Boy With a Sling
The Angry King
The Baby Born in a Stable
The Secret of the Star
Donkey Daniel in Bethlehem
The Happiest Search
The Innkeeper's Daughter
Clem the Clumsy Camel
The Night the Angels Sang
The Man Who Didn't Have Time
The Secret Journey
The Strange Young Man in the Desert
The Princess and the Baby
The Great Escape
The Day God Made It Rain
The Water That Caught on Fire
The Man Who Took Seven Baths
A Ring of Fiery Horses
Simeon's Secret
The Boy Who Was Lost