

An Overview of:

I Am Orthodox — Who Am I?

Sessions & Themes	Level 1: PreKdgn- Grade 1	Level 2: Grades 2-4	Level 3: Grades 5-8	Level 4: Grades 9-12	Level 5: Young Adults, Parents 19-35	Level 6: Adults, Seniors
FOCUS →	We Are Family	It's About Us!	We Are God's People	Our Church and Our Neighbors	Shaping Our Future	Guiding New Generations
Session 1 <i>Every Family has a Story</i> [Origins, Events, Relationships]	Identify members of your family (immediate generations); tell how they are the same or different, what they do well, who looks like another relative, etc.	Help children explore family relationships through basic "family trees" with pictures, brief anecdotes or short stories about grandparents & other relatives.	Identify places on a North American or World map, where family/parish "ancestors" came from; add taped music, stories or traditions of their homelands.	Conduct an oral history project of your family or parish history, by interviewing/taping stories of family members or parishioners. Prepare questions in advance.	Conduct a "look into the future," making lists of things you hope to do or accomplish in 5, 10 and 20 years. To whom would you look as models or mentors?	Begin/add to a journal: stories, "wisdom" and pictures of favorite things you'd like to pass along to friends and relatives. Turn it into a coffee-table book.
Session 2 <i>Life Together As Family</i> [Values, Ethics, Belonging, Responsibility, Unity]	Tell what it means "to belong" to a family (group: class, church, etc.). Match photos, items, etc., that belong together. Name members of your family.	Talk with family members about "what makes families work"— list what rules, habits, daily tasks, favorite things, etc., help to make a real family.	Discuss where "rules," values & traditions come from (home, church, Bible, school, society, workplace, etc.). Why are they important? Who creates them?	List kinds of influences/people that provoke changes in our values, ethics or practices. Why do some behaviors become stronger or weaker in our lives?	List 3-5 attitudes, practices, or values that you would like to nurture in yourself or your children. Why are these important & how would you try to do this?	Examine relationships within your immediate/extended families, relatives, friends. List initiatives/responsibilities you can take to encourage unity/support.
Session 3 <i>God's Story and God's People</i> [History of Salvation, Jesus Our King and Lord, the Church]	Identify/ tell stories about some persons/families in the Bible (Adam & Eve, Noah, Abraham & Sarah, Moses & Aaron, David & Solomon, Hannah & Samuel, John the Baptist and Jesus.	Explore lives of Bible families, those that were faithful to God, those that had problems, examples of "sin" & "return to God," repentance/confession (Jacob & Esau, the Prodigal Son, etc.)	Illustrate events (Exo. 12-15; Deut. 6,11—Passover, the Red Sea, desert years) that helped the Hebrew people understand they were God's People, called to do His will & follow His ways.	Tell (or role-play for the parish) the story of Pentecost—when the Holy Spirit came down and the Church, the first community of Christians, was formed. (See Acts 2:1-24,36-47)	How did Jesus try to change the way people thought or behaved toward others. Give examples of how He challenged the relationships and customs of His time. Cf. Matthew, Chap. 5-7; 25	Reflect upon 1 Peter 2:4-10; 3:8-4:11 and its meaning for you. Keep a journal of thoughts, values, commitments, struggles, and faithfulness, as you try to fulfill God's will in your life.
Session 4 <i>Members of God's Family, the Church</i> [Baptism/Chrismation, Communion, Life]	Tell how you became a member of God's family, the Church. Look at pictures of your baptism and tell what happened when you were baptized, & anointed with the oil and the holy chrism.	Name things that separate or divide people & those that help bring people together. Role-play ways we can turn away from evil to do good (relate to the penance/confession).	Find verses of Holy Week and Pascha that connect events of the Old & New Testament Pascha (Passover) and the story of Jesus' passion, burial & Resurrection, with our life in Christ.	Compare Acts 2:41-47 with Rom. 12. Describe how St. Paul understands our life as Christians — as members of the Church and in our responsibilities to others in society.	(1 Cor. 3:10-17; 12:1-31) St. Paul describes the Church as a body and a temple. How do we measure up to his criteria. How can we, as persons, families, parishes set a good example?.	(1 Cor. 13) Reflect upon St. Paul's words on love with examples from your own life. In vs. 4-7, substitute your name where the word <i>love</i> appears. How well do you live up to these words?
Session 5 <i>Every Parish has a Story</i> [Origins, Founders, Events, Life, Mission]	Identify/draw pictures of members of your church family. Tell stories about things your church family does together, and what you like best about "church."	Make a mural or scrapbook using (xeroxed) copies of photos, news articles, stories of founders and events that tell the story of the life of your parish.	Outline with pictures and titles the main events or actions in the Baptismal Service. Describe what each says about you as a member of the Church.	Collect anniversary books, articles & photos, about your parish (check <u>Orthodox America</u> or <u>oca.org</u>). Update your parish history with new articles/photos.	On a map, draw concentric circles in radii of 1, 5, 10 & 25 miles from your parish. Locate homes of parish families. Discuss ways to know one another better.	Swap stories about personalities, leaders/events in the church that made an impression on you. What example or legacy might <i>you</i> leave to others?
Session 6 <i>Being Christian and Being Orthodox</i> [Identity, Unity, and Difference among Neighbors]	Tell how other families or neighbors are alike or different from your family (customs, church traditions, rules, feasts & celebrations, etc.) Tell what you like best about your family. or about a neighbor family?	Describe 3-4 of your best friends in your school or neighborhood. How are you the same, yet different as persons, families, racial or religious identity? What good things have you learned from each other?	List ways you can better know your classmates who come from different backgrounds. What do you do together? Do you help those who are picked on by others? Do you stand up for your beliefs and values?	Describe what it means for you to be an Orthodox Christian in today's world. How does your Orthodox faith/practice shape your identity? Name problems you sometimes face and tell how you deal with them.	Evaluate relationships: how well do you know your neighbors, co-workers; how well do they know you? Do you converse? help when needed? cooperate in raising children? watch their property, share similar values?	Do something to make newcomers welcome in your local neighborhood. Put together a packet with a basic map, neighbors, names/phone no's for emergencies, churches, doctors, dentists, shopping advice, etc.
Session 7 <i>The Work of God's People</i> [Ministry, Outreach, Service and Witness]	Prepare gifts for others, visit or assist people who need help: a family member or neighbor, etc. Bring flowers or a gift to a neighbor who lives alone.	Keep a weekly class journal; write what your parish has done as a family for one another, or neighbors in your town. Share stories of people in need.	Compare Acts 2:41-47 with your parish today. How did this first community influence the people around them? How does your parish witness to others today?	Plan/organize in teams an ongoing community service project (for regular visits, shopping) to help senior citizens in the parish or neighborhood.	Acquaint yourself with schools in the neighborhood. Talk with neighbors of school-age children; join parent groups; share concerns, build community spirit.	Give a few hours of your time each week to community service. Participate in a group to help the elderly, provide transportation to church, doctors, etc.
Session 8 <i>Following God in Our Lives</i> [Faithful, Responsible and Accountable]	Name & practice ways you can be kind and helpful to members of your family, neighborhood, school, parish, etc. List things you can do to help at home.	Discuss jobs and responsibilities in your family, school, or as a member of the church. What do we learn from having to do something that helps everyone?	Give an example of a way that you have helped someone else by being faithful, responsible or trustworthy. How did you feel about what you did?	Find synonyms and/or provide examples in your life of what it means to be faithful, responsible, accountable, trustworthy, in family, school, church, society.	Describe ways you are responsible or accountable to your family (children, parents, friends or extended family), your parish (diocese/etc.), and community.	Plan ways to be responsible & accountable for yourself, family church, & wisely managing your finances, insurances, health & bequests. Be faithful in spiritual life.