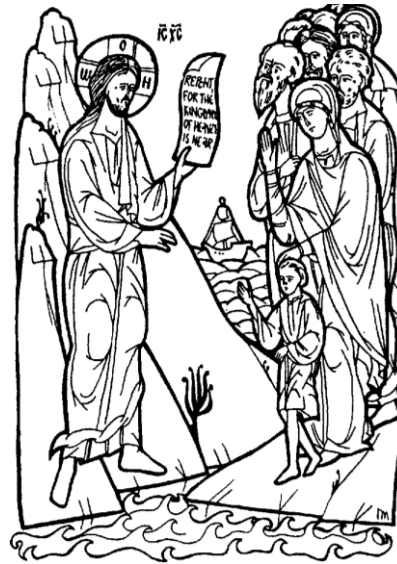


# Catechism and Evangelization



An examination into the issues and process of receiving converts into the Orthodox Church.

# What is Catechism?



“O Lord our God, who dwells on high and regards the humble of heart, who has sent forth as the salvation of the race of men, Thine only-begotten Son and God our Lord Jesus Christ: look down upon Thy servants the catechumens, who have bowed their necks before Thee; make them worthy in due time of the laver of regeneration, the remission of sins, and the robe of incorruption. Unite them to Thy Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, and number them with Thy chosen flock.”

*From Litany of Catechumens*



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# True Catechism is

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- ◆ Being joined to the fullness of the Church
- ◆ Transmits and receives the Truth of the Faith
- ◆ Not fleeing *from* but rather *to* Truth
- ◆ Accepts the Faith with humility
- ◆ Full of joy, hope and love

# False Catechism

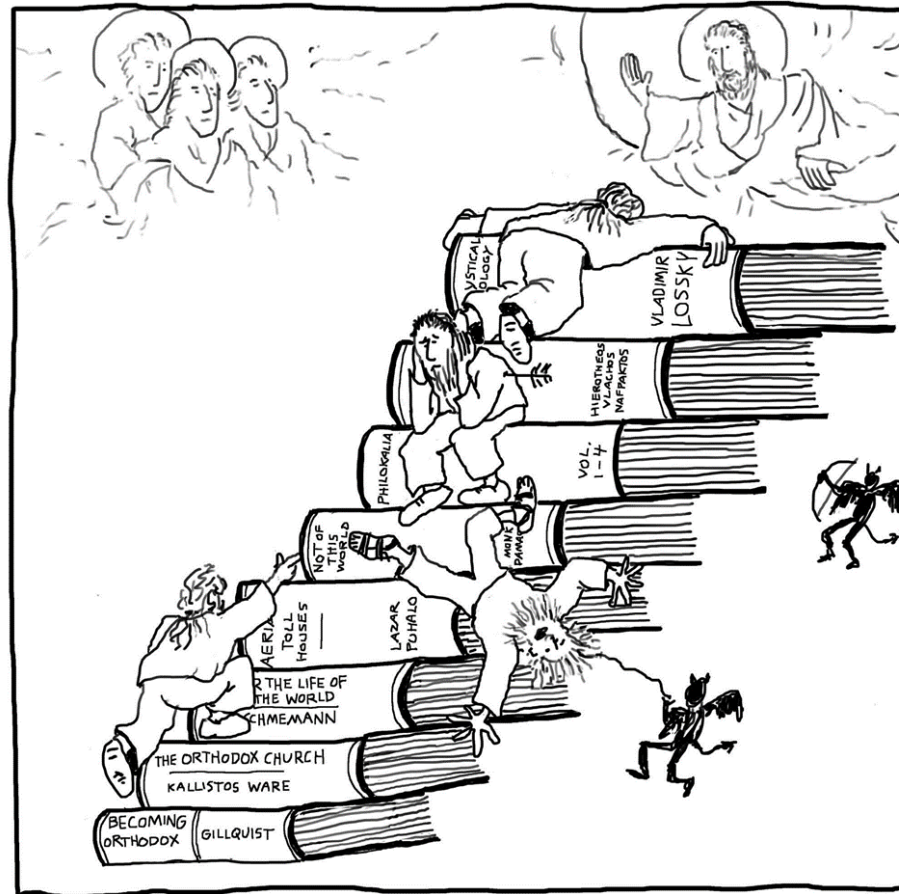
*“Woe to you, scribes,  
Pharisees and  
hypocrites! For you  
travel land and sea to  
win one proselyte, and  
when he is won, you  
make him twice as  
much a son of hell as  
yourselves.”*

***Matthew 23:15***

·THE SOWER OF GOOD SEEDS·



# A Great Warning





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# Beware of:

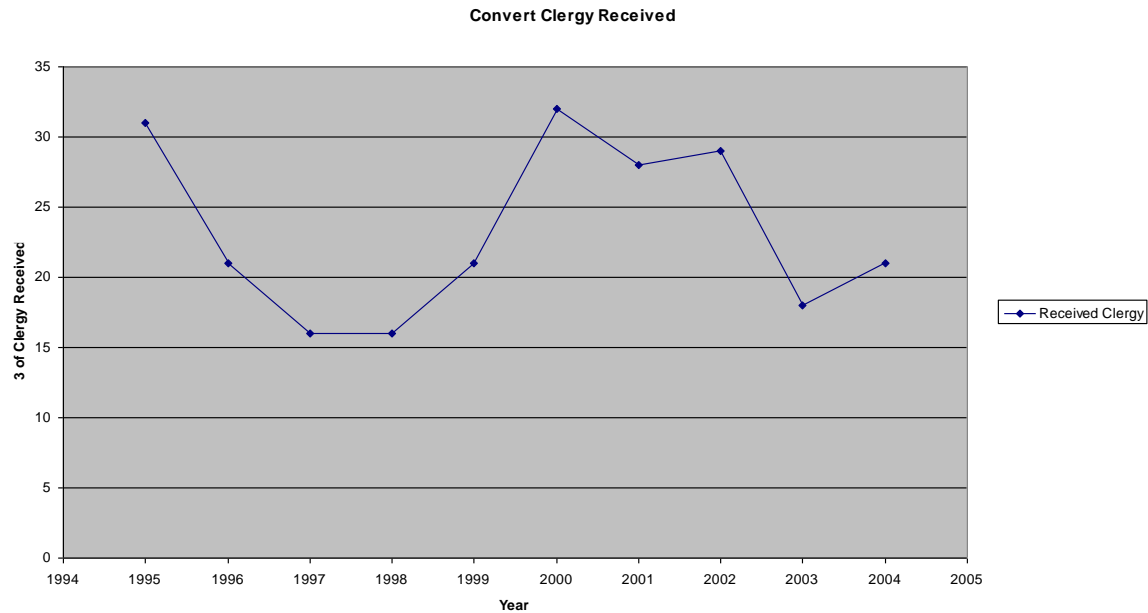
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- ◆ The “issue” people
- ◆ The “culture” seekers
- ◆ The “wanderers”
- ◆ The “apathetic”
- ◆ The “fly-bys”
- ◆ The “forevers”
- ◆ The “zealous”
- ◆ Nones and Dones

# Some Statistics

<b>The OCA: 1970</b>	452 Parishes, mostly Slavic background with large number of Romanian parishes	90 (aprx)	36000	40000	2nd & 3rd generations	90% "Old"	90% Slavonic	Mostly Slavic, few converts	4 Bishops American Born, Primate not fluent in English	Harrisburg, PA	Positive Spirit
<b>The OCA: 2005</b>	680 Parishes, of many backgrounds including and "American" (ie convert) backgrounds	75 (aprx)	25,000	45000 (minister to 125,000 in North America)	4th and 5th generation	Majority "new" with 1 diocese and handful "old"	80% All English, 2% a mixture of English and Slavic or other language	Converts make up 1/3 of the clergy	4 Bishops born outside of North America, 7 active bishops are converts	St. Louis, MO	Seeking to impliment goals and principles of a unified Church

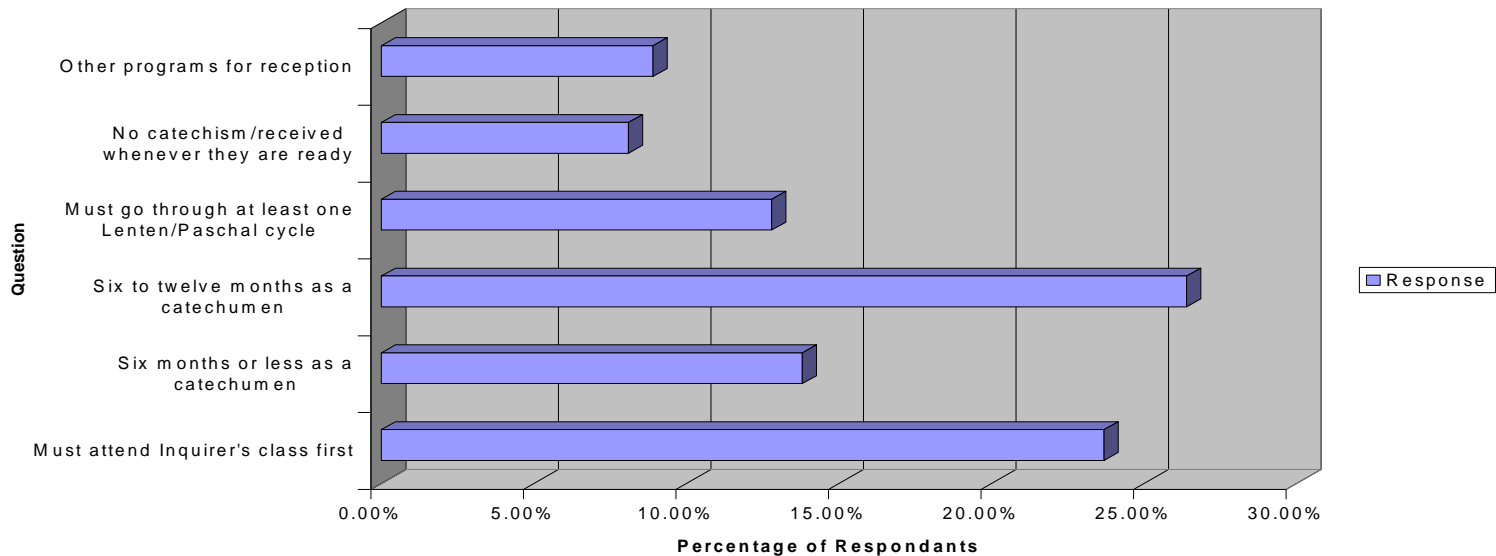
# Some More Statistics



- ◆ 172 clergy were received through baptism/chrisamation
- ◆ 11 clergy received through vesting
- ◆ 10 clergy received through confession
- ◆ Over 1/3 of present seminarians are converts

# How We are Receiving People

2005 Clergy Survey Results on Catechism



# Before We Get Started

- ◆ Prayer
- ◆ Modest and lowly spirit
- ◆ Do not presume or expect extraordinary success
- ◆ Be calm and in full control
- ◆ Do not begin without previous thought
- ◆ Love alone creates
- ◆ Use the same place for instruction
- ◆ Be of comfort
- ◆ Vary instruction according to state of mind/age/faculty
- ◆ Start from the beginning/Salvation

*From St. Innocent's Instructions to Missionaries*

# Steps in Catechism



- ◆ Guest
- ◆ Inquirer
- ◆ Catechumen
- ◆ Reception
- ◆ Integration

# Methods of Outreach

- ◆ Be a part of the community
- ◆ Make sure people can find you
- ◆ Use communication tools (web/yellow pages/etc.)
- ◆ Families bring in families
- ◆ People come from the strangest places
- ◆ Be open when they come
- ◆ Programs vs. Love
- ◆ Gatekeepers

# Some Useful Tools for Guests

- ◆ Visitor Cards
- ◆ Do not single out people
- ◆ Have material for people to take home
- ◆ No “hard” sell
- ◆ Greeters
- ◆ Coffee Hour
- ◆ Use what is available

# Inquirers

- ◆ Simple Introduction
- ◆ Spend time to learn about them
- ◆ Stay away from “issues”
- ◆ Answer questions
- ◆ Get them involved
- ◆ Have them come to the services/events
- ◆ Have them start to read
- ◆ Start a process of prayer/fasting/almsgiving
- ◆ Mailing list

# Recommended Readings

- ◆ Ware: *The Orthodox Church*
- ◆ Schmemmann: *For the Life of the World*
- ◆ Hopko: *Rainbow Series*
- ◆ Carlton Series: *The Faith* (catechism), *The Truth* (Roman Catholicism), *The Way* (Protestantism)
- ◆ Topical series from Conciliar Press
- ◆ Stay away from controversial books

# Roman Catholics

## Top Reasons

- ◆ Vatican 2 Refugees
- ◆ Church Governance
- ◆ Scandals
- ◆ Liturgical Continuity
- ◆ Possible Changes

## Issues

- ◆ Papal Issue
- ◆ Liturgy is Important
- ◆ Icons etc is not problem
- ◆ Time between Communion

# Suggested Reading

- ◆ *The Truth* by Clark Carleton
- ◆ *Orthodoxy and Catholicism* by Fr. Theodore Pulcini
- ◆ *How Orthodoxy Differs from Roman Catholicism*  
by Fr. Eusebius Stephanou
- ◆ A host of historical books from SVS Press
- ◆ *Popes and Patriarchs* by Michael Whelton

# Episcopalian/Lutheran

## Top Reasons

- ◆ Dissolution of Liturgy
- ◆ “New” Priesthood
- ◆ Charismatic Movement
- ◆ Loss of  
Theology/Belief in  
Christ

## Issues

- ◆ Liturgy
- ◆ Social Conservatives
- ◆ Theology
- ◆ Sola Fida



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# Suggested Readings

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- ◆ *The Way* by Clark Carlton
- ◆ *Anglican-Orthodox Pilgrimage* by Franklin Billerbeck
- ◆ *A Faith Fulfilled* by Michael Harper
- ◆ *Facing East* by Fredrica Mathewes-Green
- ◆ Letters between Luther and Patriarch Jeremias II

# Protestant

## Top Reasons

- ◆ Seeking a Liturgical Life
- ◆ Who am I worshipping?
- ◆ Personalities
- ◆ Historical Church
- ◆ Missionary Movement

## Issues

- ◆ Icons/Physical Worship
- ◆ Theotokos/Saints
- ◆ Confession
- ◆ Biblical Base
- ◆ Sola Scriptura

# Suggested Readings

- ◆ *Preaching Another Christ* by St. Theophan the Recluse
- ◆ *Three Views on Eastern Orthodoxy and Evangelicalism* by J. Stamoolis
- ◆ *Eastern Orthodoxy Compared* by Fr. Constantine Mathews
- ◆ *Thirsting for God in a Land of Shallow Wells* by Matthew Gallatin
- ◆ *Journeys to Orthodoxy* edited by Thomas Doulis
- ◆ *Eastern Orthodox Response to Evangelical Claims* by Fr. Paul O'Callaghan
- ◆ *Am I Saved* by Fr. Ted Bobash
- ◆ *Becoming Orthodox* by Fr. Peter Gillquist

# Judaism

## Top Reasons

- ◆ Finding Christ
- ◆ Liturgy
- ◆ Marriage
- ◆ Integration

*Surprised by Christ and  
Jews and Orthodox* by  
Fr. James Bernstein

Fr. Alexander Men

## Issues

- ◆ Christ
- ◆ Separation from culture
- ◆ Anti-Semitism
- ◆ Gone through a  
Protestant phase



# Islam



## Top Reasons

- ◆ Finding Christ
- ◆ Intermarriage
- ◆ Divides families
- ◆ Secret Conversions

## Issues

- ◆ Anti-Muslim Attitude
- ◆ Can lose their life
- ◆ Different Worship

# Suggested Readings

- ◆ *Islam Encounters Christ* by Nahed Metwalli
- ◆ *Answering Islam* by N.L. Geisler
- ◆ *Bible and Quran* by J. Jomier
- ◆ *The Sword of the Prophet* by Serge Trifkovic
- ◆ *Witness for Christ* by Nomikos Vaporis

# Mormon/Jehovah Witness Etc.

## Top Reasons

- ◆ Discovery of Christ usually through a study of the Bible and Church History
- ◆ Break from a cultic existence
- ◆ Missionary experience

## Issues

- ◆ Break with community
- ◆ Misunderstanding
- ◆ VERY hard to break away
- ◆ Scriptures

# Suggested Readings

- ◆ *God-Makers* by Ed Decker
- ◆ *Mormon America* by Richard Ostling
- ◆ “*How to Respond*” series by Light & Life
- ◆ *The Trinity of God* by Efthymios Zoulianitis
- ◆ *Kingdom of Cults* by Walter Martin
- ◆ *Jehovah Witnesses Answered* by David Reed
- ◆ *False Gods* by Michael Welton

# Buddhist/Hindu

## Top Reasons

- ◆ Finding Christ
- ◆ Return to Christian Roots
- ◆ New Age spirituality leaves them cold
- ◆ Cultic

## Issues

- ◆ Usually were abused by a “Christian”
- ◆ Individualism
- ◆ “Way of Life” not a “religion”
- ◆ Trendy



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# Suggested Readings

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- ◆ *Orthodoxy and the Religion of the Future* by Fr. Seraphim Rose
- ◆ *Christ the Eternal Tao* by Fr. Damascene
- ◆ *One God, Many Gods* by Light and Life

# Oriental Orthodox

## Top Reasons

- ◆ Need for a Church
- ◆ Communities attach themselves
- ◆ Language
- ◆ No structure in America
- ◆ Refugees

## Issues

- ◆ Don't know theological difference
- ◆ Learn their customs
- ◆ Commune infrequently
- ◆ Elders
- ◆ Receive them properly

# Suggested Readings

- ◆ *Two Thousand Years of Coptic Christianity* by Otto Meinardus
- ◆ *The Treasured Traditions and Customs of the Orthodox Churches* by Mary Hallick
- ◆ *Towards Unity* by Christine Chaillot
- ◆ *Turn to God, Rejoice in Hope* by Thomas Fitzgerald

# Romanji

## Top Reasons

- ◆ Local Community
- ◆ Trust in Clergy
- ◆ Resolution of problems
- ◆ Prejudice

*Bury Me Standing* by  
Isabel Fonseca

## Issues

- ◆ Very Superstitious
- ◆ Reluctant to admit
- ◆ Wants Sacraments
- ◆ Inconsistent in attendance
- ◆ Customs



# Catechumens

- ◆ Officially receive them with the prayers of the Church
- ◆ Take your time
- ◆ Must come to services
- ◆ Integrate into the community
- ◆ Groups work better
- ◆ Be flexible with times and discussions



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# Essentials of Catechism

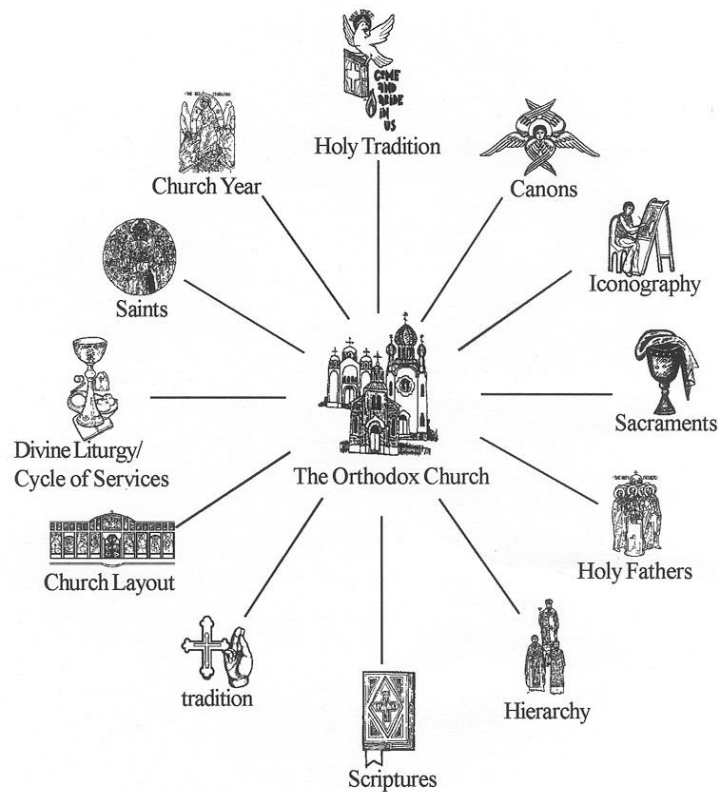
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- ◆ Jesus Christ
- ◆ The Trinity
- ◆ The Church
- ◆ Tradition
- ◆ Liturgy
- ◆ Sacraments
- ◆ Need to learn: *Nicene Creed, Trisagion Prayers, Pre-Communion Prayers*

# Other Essentials of Catechism

- ◆ Do not judge others
- ◆ Do not judge other faiths but compare
- ◆ Simple explanations
- ◆ Don't rush
- ◆ Be positive
- ◆ Don't talk about politics, especially Church politics
- ◆ Allow plenty of time for questions
- ◆ ALL questions are open for discussion
- ◆ Do not "beat" them up
- ◆ Do not overburden them
- ◆ Be careful on how you bring them in

# Catechism Model #1



- ◆ What is the Church
- ◆ The Church is One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic
- ◆ The Nicene Creed
- ◆ Jesus Christ
- ◆ Tour the Church
- ◆ Prayer/Fasting/Almsgiving

# Elements of Catechism

- ◆ What is the Orthodox Church
- ◆ Tour of the Church
- ◆ Liturgical Cycle
- ◆ Divine Liturgy
- ◆ Liturgical Life
- ◆ Baptism/Chrismation
- ◆ Confession
- ◆ Unction/Ordination
- ◆ Marriage
- ◆ Death
- ◆ Saints
- ◆ Icons
- ◆ Nicene Creed
- ◆ Hierarchy
- ◆ Ecumenical Councils/History
- ◆ Discipleship
- ◆ Trinity
- ◆ Prayer
- ◆ Bodiless Powers
- ◆ Fasting
- ◆ Holy Tradition
- ◆ Tradition
- ◆ Theotokos
- ◆ Prayer
- ◆ History
- ◆ Parish Life
- ◆ Stewardship
- ◆ Church Fathers
- ◆ Role of the Clergy/Laity
- ◆ 12 Feasts
- ◆ Monasticism
- ◆ Evangelism

# Catechism Model #2

## 1. Orthodox Doctrine

- 1.1 Dogma: The sources of Orthodox Teaching
  - 1.1.1 Holy Scriptures
  - 1.1.2 Holy Tradition
- 1.2 Creation
- 1.3 God
  - 1.3.1 Father
  - 1.3.2 Son
  - 1.3.3 Holy Spirit
- 1.4 Salvation
- 1.5 The Church
  - 1.5.1 Sacraments
  - 1.5.2 Hierarchy

## 2. Orthodox Worship and Piety

- 2.1 The Cycles of Orthodox Life
  - 2.1.1 Great Lent
  - 2.1.2 Holy Week
- 2.2 Church Architecture and Symbolism
- 2.3 The Services of the Orthodox Church
  - 2.3.1 Divine Liturgy
  - 2.3.2 Vespers
  - 2.3.3 Matins/Other
- 2.4 The Twelve Great Feasts
- 2.5 Prayer
- 2.6 Saints
- 2.7 Icons

## 3. History

- 3.1 Early Church
- 3.2 Era of the Ecumenical Councils
- 3.3 The Great Schism
- 3.4 Expansion to the North and East
- 3.5 North America
  - 3.5.1 Alaska
  - 3.5.2 Immigrants
- 3.6 World Orthodoxy Today

# Catechism Model #3

- ◆ What is the Orthodox Church?
- ◆ The Symbol of Faith
- ◆ Foundations of the Orthodox Faith
- ◆ The Holy Trinity
- ◆ Creation
- ◆ Fall of Mankind
- ◆ The Promised Messiah
- ◆ The Incarnation
- ◆ Man's "Yes" to God
- ◆ The Teachings of Christ
- ◆ Love Stronger than Death
- ◆ Birth and Mission of the Church
- ◆ The Structure of the Church
- ◆ Holy Baptism
- ◆ Seal of the Gift of the Holy Spirit
- ◆ The Mystical Supper
- ◆ The Church at Prayer
- ◆ The Mystery of Love
- ◆ Monasticism
- ◆ The Lord's Return
- ◆ Living an Orthodox Life in a Secular World

# Reception into The Church

- ◆ Follow the guidelines of the OCA
- ◆ Use the seasons and feasts of the Church
- ◆ Never divide...always unite
- ◆ Do not rush
- ◆ Always in connection with the Divine Liturgy



# Preparing for Reception

- ◆ Baptism vs. Chrismation
- ◆ You will know when they are ready
- ◆ Delay if you must
- ◆ Don't use own family
- ◆ Picking a sponsor
- ◆ Don't split families
- ◆ Preparing for Confession
- ◆ Set a date with plenty of notice
- ◆ Fasting
- ◆ Name
- ◆ Integrate
- ◆ Service to parish



# Actual Reception

- ◆ Announce to the parish
- ◆ Make it special
- ◆ Rally the parish
- ◆ Gift from the parish
- ◆ Icon of saint
- ◆ Invite family
- ◆ Always in conjunction with the Liturgy

# Integration into the Parish



- ◆ Get them involved
- ◆ Ask after them
- ◆ Invite them to join
- ◆ Keep close tabs on them for one year
- ◆ Rein in/Rein out
- ◆ Confession once a month for a year
- ◆ Extended families will join

# Internal Catechism

- ◆ Ethnic groups
- ◆ Older parishioners
- ◆ Non-practicing Orthodox
- ◆ Marriage to Orthodox
- ◆ Returning to The Faith
- ◆ Youth/College  
Students/Young Adults
- ◆ The Zealots
- ◆ **Bottom Line: Know Your  
People**



# Ways to Reach Them

- ◆ Language/culture
- ◆ Use sermons
- ◆ Liturgy/Services
- ◆ Adult class
- ◆ Invite to catechism classes
- ◆ Visit them/listen to them
- ◆ Make changes *slowly*
- ◆ Follow your bishop
- ◆ Simplicity
- ◆ Don't talk about regions
- ◆ Don't talk about previous priest/parish
- ◆ Stay away from issues

# Conclusion



- ◆ Goal is to build up the Body of Christ
- ◆ Not a numbers game
- ◆ Quality
- ◆ The end of their search
- ◆ Peacefulness
- ◆ Knowledge will come in time
- ◆ **JOY**

# Questions

