

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY 101

2009 – 2010

SEPTEMBER

23 Introduction: a tour of St. Paul's. Art, history, theology and Jesus.

“What the walls of an Orthodox Church teach us”

from *Introducing the Orthodox Church* pp. 111-118

“The Theotokos with Child in the Apse” and “Christ Pantokrator”

from *Sacred Symbols that Speak* pp. 125-155

30 Liturgy: Why do we worship the way that we do? Bible & Sacraments.

“Symbols: What are they?” and “Incense” and “Candles”

from *Sacred Symbols that Speak* pp. 1-46

OCTOBER

7 Looking at the Liturgy: A commentary and explanation 1.

“The Divine Liturgy: Reality not Symbol”

from *Sacred Symbols that Speak* pp. 155-193

14 Looking at the Liturgy: A commentary and explanation 2.

“What we believe about the Divine Liturgy”

from *Introducing the Orthodox Church* pp. 44-61

21 Preparing the bread and wine for worship: the Proskomide

The “Worship” section in the *OC 101 Notebook*

28 Living a sacramental life.

“What we believe about the sacraments”

from *Introducing the Orthodox Church* pp. 163-196

“The Meaning of Baptism” – a letter of St. Cyprian of Carthage

NOVEMBER

4 The Liturgical Year: seasons of feasting and fasting.

“What we believe about the Church Year”

from *Introducing the Orthodox Church* pp. 93-110

11 Worship in Spirit and in Truth.

Questions, answers and discussion.

18 Icons: Jesus is the icon of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15).

“What we believe about icons”

from *Introducing the Orthodox Church* pp. 225-240

DVD – an excerpt from *The Face: Jesus in Art*

25 Thanksgiving eve celebration of the Liturgy. Come to Liturgy!

No class tonight.

DECEMBER

2 Advent: Preparing for Christmas and Epiphany.

“The Winter Pascha” and a collection of brief articles about the

Christmas fast by Father Thomas Hopko in the *OC 101 Notebook*

9 Advent: Preparing for Christmas and Epiphany.

“Epiphany and the blessing of water”

from *Sacred Symbols that Speak* pp. 195-217

16 Christmas break. No class tonight.

23 Christmas break. No class tonight.

30 Christmas break. No class tonight.

JANUARY

6 The Church: the body of Christ, the bride of Christ, foretaste of the Kingdom.

“The one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church” and

“We are the Church of the early fathers”

from *Introducing the Orthodox Church* pp. 4-18 and 74-93

DVD – *A History of Orthodox Christianity: Beginnings*

13 The history of the early Church.

“Which came first: the Church or the New Testament?”

a pamphlet by Father James Bernstein

DVD – *A History of Orthodox Christianity: Byzantium*

20 Where did all these churches come from? The history of the Church in the Middle Ages thru modern times.

The “Teaching” section in the *OC 101 Notebook* about the Church and her history

DVD – *A History of Orthodox Christianity: A Hidden Treasure*

27 The Church of the 7 ecumenical councils and the Nicene Creed.

“What we believe about the Nicene Creed” and “What we believe about Jesus” and “What we believe about the Holy Trinity” and

“What we believe about salvation.”

from *Introducing the Orthodox Church* pp. 19-43 and 62-73

DVD – *Synaxis: A Gathering*

All those who wish to be made catechumens on Sunday, February 7th and begin the process of entering the Church thru baptism and/or chrismation must have made their decision and informed Father Steve by tonight!

FEBRUARY

- 3 Reading the Scriptures: the Bible as sacrament.**
“What we believe about the Bible”
from *Introducing the Orthodox Church* pp. 197-224
- 10 Studying the Bible: being a disciple of Jesus and doing the Truth.**
The “Scripture” section in the *OC 101 Notebook*
- 15 Pure Monday: Great Lent begins! Lenten mini-retreat 10AM-1PM**
- 17 Reading the Old Testament: getting our feet wet.**
Genesis, Psalms, Proverbs and Amos
- 24 Reading the New Testament: getting our feet wet.**
The Gospel of Luke and the First Letter of John

MARCH

- 3 The monastic witness to the Gospel.**
“Monasticism: the Biblical Call” from *The OC 101 Notebook*

DVD – *The Monastery of St. Katherine on Mt. Sinai*
- 10 Being holy: the saints and their witness to Jesus.**
“What we believe about the saints and the Theotokos”
from *Introducing the Orthodox Church* pp. 119-138

DVD – *Mother Teresa: A Documentary*
- 17 Life after death, praying for the dead and the end of the world.**
“What we believe about eschatology or life after death” and
“What we believe about prayers for the dead”
from *Introducing the Orthodox Church* pp.139-162 and 241-247
“Prayer and the Departed Saints”
a pamphlet by Professor David Ford

24 Christianity as personal encounter and personal discipline.

Read all of *God and You: Person to Person*

Developing a Personal Relationship with Jesus pp. 1-133

DVD – *Icons from Sinai*

In preparation for the services of Holy Week, read “Palms: symbols of victory, surrender and allegiance” and “Good Friday: the tomb of Jesus” from *Sacred Symbols that Speak* pp.93-124

31 Great and Holy Wednesday. No class tonight.

Come to the anointing service.

APRIL

7 The spiritual ascent: silence, solitude and prayer.

"What we believe about Prayer" from *Introducing the Orthodox Church*" pp. 248-274

“The Ladder to Heaven” and “Hesychasm: the Practice of Silence”
from *Sacred Symbols that Speak* pp. 61-92

14 Living faithfully at St. Paul's.

"In view of all this: what, therefore, is expected of us?"
from *Introducing the Orthodox Church* pp. 275-282

21 Wrap-up; final discussion; potluck celebration!

REQUIRED READING

The Bible

Introducing the Orthodox Church by Father Anthony Coniaris

Sacred Symbols that Speak by Father Anthony Coniaris

God and You: developing a daily personal relationship with Jesus
by Father Anthony Coniaris

The Orthodox Christianity 101 Notebook

Suggested Reading

The Orthodox Church by Metropolitan Kallistos Ware

The Orthodox Way by Metropolitan Kallistos Ware

Beginning to Pray by Metropolitan Anthony Bloom

Living Prayer by Metropolitan Anthony Bloom

The Ladder of the Beatitudes by Jim Forest

For the Life of the World by Father Alexander Schmemmann

Becoming Orthodox by Father Peter Gillquist