Third Grade: Sharing God’s World

In Third Grade, the emphasis is on sharing based on the life of the Church. The students now become familiar with peer pressure and group relationships. The student learns of relationships in the Old and New Testament, as well as in the history of the Church. Through the study of the life of the Church, the child experiences sharing, giving dialogue, and dealing with relational difficulties in a positive manner. (This definition is taken from the Scope and Sequence of our Greek Orthodox Archdiocese.)

During the Third Grade Catechetical School year, students should learn:

I. God the Father
   Discussion revolves around the love and blessings God showed toward Adam and Eve. Students also learn of God’s love toward Abraham and Isaac and His promise to God’s peoples.

II. God the Son-Jesus Christ
   Jesus selects His disciples and shares His love, the Gospel, meals, His teachings and His mission with them.

III. God the Holy Spirit
   The Pentecost is explained as the birth of the Church when the Holy Spirit is given to the followers of Christ.

IV. Church
   Stories from the Book of Acts is covered which discuss the early days of the Church, the first persecution-Stephen the Deacon and more of the history of the Church.

V. Worship and Prayer
   Examples of sharing are taught, such as worship of God in the Old Testament, and worship of God in the Church.

VI. Liturgy
The emphasis is on the Liturgy and examples Jesus gave us of His love. We share prayer, Holy Communion, the Antidoron and other things in the Liturgy.

VII. Sacraments and Other Services
The blessing of the loaves is explained as a sharing act. Discussion of the Vasilopeta is seen as a blessing for the poor and needy and the blessing of the water as sanctification of the Church and home is covered.

VIII. Prayers and Hymns
Hymn of the Pentecost, prayers of thanksgiving after Communion and the Articles of the Creed should be covered.

IX. Saints, Feasts, Cycles
This section covers the feast of all Saints, Sunday of Orthodoxy, Pentecost, Transfiguration and students’ own Patron Saint.

X. Scripture
Biblical accounts are related through stories and examples.

XI. Tradition
Students learn of icons related to Biblical events and persons. Students learn of kolyva, Holy Water and blessing of the loaves.

XII. Christian Family
The Christian Family is emphasized.

XIII. Ethics and Spirituality
Aspects and examples of sharing in the Church, home and community are discussed. Students learn that compassion and forgiveness toward others is important.

XIV. Service and Mission
Story of Orthodox missionaries who serve the Orthodox faith in Africa is explained.

XV. Other Faiths, Society and World
The Orthodox Church rejects prejudice against people on the basis of race, color, sex and wealth.