Resources for Catechism

Preschool-3 year olds:
1. **God loves us.** Love, which children so freely give and so naturally expect, is the basis for this program.
   
   Text: *God Loves Us.* (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese).

2. The wonder of it all. A preschooler's twenty-four sessions of carefully planned activity on everyday life themes - growth, food, playing, plants. The programs aim to build an awareness of the wonders of the natural world as a basis for a liturgical sense of wonder and awe and a foundation for prayer. Includes songs, dances, and hand activities.
   
   Text: *The Wonder of it all.* (Orthodox Christian Education Commission).

2. **Icon Coloring Book: The Old Testament.** The icons included are Jacob 's ladder, Abraham and Isaac, Moses and the Ten Commandments and other scriptural events.
   
   Text: *Icon Coloring Book: The Old Testament.* (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese).

Preschool-4 year olds:
1. **Reaching for Jesus.** A pictorial introduction to Christ, with large drawings for coloring and easy text that reinforces prayer, the observance of the feast days and the love of Jesus.

   Text: *Reaching for Jesus.* (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese).

2. **God, My Friends and Me.** Consisting of thirty lessons which focus on everyday life themes. The program emphasizes the importance of the relationship among friends, family and God in the homes and the Church. It attempts to use these everyday situations as the basis for encouraging Christian awareness of loving fellowship. It includes Bible stories, songs, dances, and finger plays for the four year old.

   Text: *God, My Friends and Me.* (Orthodox Christian Education Commission).

3. **Bible studies coloring book.** Forty-six Bible stories selected from the Old Testament. The story that goes with each picture is included.

   Text: *Bible Stories Coloring Book* (Light and Life Publishing).
Kindergarten:

1. **Happy With God.** God's love is the source of joy, the main theme of this program designed for Kindergarten age children. Aspects of worship and stories from scripture highlight specific examples of and reason for joy centered on Christ.
   
   **Text:** Happy With God. (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese).

2. **What We See and Do In Church.** An introduction to basic Church teachings, events in the liturgical calendar, Bible stories and hymns. Each lesson has a brief text and an illustration for coloring.
   
   **Text:** What We See and Do In Church. (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese).

3. **Stories From the Old Testament.** Powerful scenes from the Old Testament dramatically come to life in this coloring book. Artists of all ages can apply their coloring skills to 30 boldly rendered biblical scenes. Thirty ready-to-color illustrations. Brief re-telling of the stories appear on the facing pages.
   
   **Text:** Stories From the Old Testament (Coloring Book).
   Light and Life Publishing.
1. Me and My World. The focus of this program is on Creation as God's gift. In discovering the world, the child understands that the family, friends, church school—all come from God. Through depictions of the daily experiences of God's world, the child comes to realize that God is real, loving, and caring.

   Text: Me and My World. (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese).

3. God Loves Us. These lessons lead the children to experience God as our living, caring, and forgiving Father, Who is ever-present, and whose love is life giving. Developmentally appropriate for children of this age/grade level, God Loves Us builds on the child's own experiences and leads him/her to an increased awareness of his/her relationships with God and with others.

   Text: God Loves Us. (Orthodox Christian Education Commission).

4. The Bible for Young People. This beautifully illustrated volume contains 162 pages of stories for young readers from both the Old and the New Testaments. The stories, theologically Orthodox, are written in a fascinating style that will keep the interest of the children.

   Text: The Bible for Young People. (Light and Life Publishing).
2nd Grade:

1. Loving God. This program concentrates on the theme of "Loving God." Through the example of men and women of the Bible, and of our Saints, children begin to understand right, wrong and forgiveness in the light of God's love. They also learn the importance not only of loving God unconditionally, but also of respecting other people, of taking care of the environment, of doing good in His Name.
   
   Text: Loving God. (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese).

2. The Children's Bible Reader. This is the most complete Orthodox Children's Bible storybook ever written. Through over 200 excellent iconographic illustrations it brings to life 74 central stories of the Old Testament and 89 of the New Testament. Recently translated from the Greek Bible society's acclaimed work, the text is attractively written and easy to understand. Archbishop Demetrios considers it "a very valuable resource for families, parents, children and schools."

   Text: The Children's Bible Reader. (Light and Life Publishing).

4. Introduction to prayer. Curious children ask lots of questions, especially about things they can't see or understand. The little girl in this story has a lot of questions about prayer and her grandmother helps her with the answers. Written in easy-to-read verse and richly illustrated, this Scripture-based book helps answer children's questions about how to pray, where to pray, and the purpose of prayer.

   Texts: Grandma, What is Prayer? (Light and Life Publishing), An Introduction to Prayer (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese).
3rd Grade:

1. *Sharing God's World.* Children learn about sharing through the examples of Jesus, and are inspired to observe these same examples in the Divine Liturgy, the Sacraments, and other Services of the Church. From there they become caring, sharing individuals. Contains words to hymns and songs.
   
   **Text:** *Sharing God's World.* (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese).

3. *Finding your way through the bible.* A book that will help the student become familiar with the Bible, how it is divided and how to look up passages. Students can work in class or at home, at their own rate. Since the 3rd graders are getting their bible that year, this is a great addition to this program.
   
   **Text:** *Finding your way through the bible.* (Orthodox Christian Education Commission).

4. *One Hundred Bible Stories.* Contains more than 200 pages of Bible stories, each illustrated with a beautiful full-color picture, designed to catch the attention of young readers and impress upon them the excitement of learning biblical history. An excellent tool for imparting the Gospel story to children. Each story is told in the language of the Bible, has explanatory notes, and suggests a memory text and prayer or hymn stanza.
   
   **Text:** *One Hundred Bible Stories.* (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese).

4. *Come Bless the Lord: Icon Packet.* Contains 40 beautiful color icons (81/2"x11") of major Orthodox feast days and popular saints. Each includes a description on the back. A companion booklet explains iconography. Teaches the children the meaning of each icon.
   
   **Text:** *Come Bless the Lord: Icon Packet.* (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese).
4th Grade:

1. *Growing With God*. A program devoted to helping children learn how to use and appreciate the Bible. Also introduces examples of living the sacramental life—attending services, fasting, praying, observing feast days, helping others, learning about the Saints and the Church of Christ. After this program, children love the Bible, and know how to refer to it in times of doubt and fear. Contains words to hymns and songs.

   Text: *Growing With God*. (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese).

2. *Hymns of the Orthodox Church*. Excellent teaching materials for 12 hymns of the Greek Orthodox Church. Includes nine liturgical hymns, three feast day hymns and an instructional cassette tape featuring the voices of Eikona. Each booklet relates the hymn to an icon and contains the music, plus words in English, Greek and English phonetics, teaching suggestions and vocabulary for young children.

   Text: *Hymns of the Orthodox Church*, Hymnology Education Pocket. (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese).

3. *Our Father Who Art in Heaven*. Iconographically illustrated in color by a renowned Byzantine iconographer. Tells the story of the Lord’s Prayer to elementary age children from an Orthodox point of view.

   Text: *Our Father Who Art In Heaven*. (Light and Life Publishing).

5. *God is With Us: Bible Stories for Children*. This Orthodox book of Bible stories from the Old and New Testaments is illustrated in iconographic style. Bible Stories include Creation, Noah, Moses and the Life and Ministry of Jesus.

   Text: *God is With Us: Bible Stories for Children*. (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese).
5th Grade:

1. **God Calls Us.** Concentrates on the stories of those heroes of the Faith who have responded to God’s call. Through these examples of faith, loyalty self-sacrifice, obedience, love, justice and social responsibility, students of this age learn to respond to God in terms of personal faith and the basics of Christian morality. It includes an attractive, simplified 4,000-year timeline of our Church and Bible History. Contains words to hymns and songs.

   **Text:** God Calls Us. (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese).

2. **Parables of Our Lord.** Stories of our Lord are told with contemporary writing and Biblical illustrations. The Parables of Jesus offer basic truths for application to daily living. Each chapter concludes with discussion questions and vocabulary.

   **Text:** Parables of Our Lord. (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese).

3. **Lives of the Saints and Major Feast Days.** These brief biographies of over 100 Orthodox Saints and stories of major feast days point toward the source of faith, Jesus Christ.

   **Text:** Lives of Saints and Major Feast Days. (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese).
6th Grade:

1. **Making God Real in the Orthodox Christian Home.** Here is a book filled with ideas to help Orthodox Christian religious educators. Some of those ideas are: How to celebrate your name day, why are we having memorial services, using incense etc.

   *Text: Making God Real in the Orthodox Christian Home. (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese).*

2. **Let's Take a Walk Through Our Orthodox Church.** When we come to worship in the Orthodox Church, we are surrounded by a variety of objects that conspire to keep our attention focused on the worship of God. Icons, architecture, candles, incense, votive lights, chandeliers, vestments—all speak to us in their own way to tell us something about our faith. This book takes a child on a tour through an Orthodox Church, clearly and simply explaining in forty-five brief chapters the meaning of the many objects seen in most Orthodox Churches. Each explanation is enhanced with an original four-color painting.

   *Text: Let's Take a Walk through Our Orthodox Church. (Light and Life Publishing).*

3. **Those Whom God Calls Blessed: The Beatitudes for Everyday Living.** Through the Beatitudes Jesus paints an icon describing the life of the new person, the "new creation" that the Triune God produces for the Kingdom of God. Jesus came not just to reveal God's truth but to save us and conform us to the beautiful icon he paints of us in the Beatitudes. Through the use of the Church Fathers and the lives of the saints as well as countless contemporary stories, anecdotes and illustrations, this book makes the Beatitudes come alive and relevant for the twenty-first century.

   *Text: Those Whom God Calls Blessed: The Beatitudes for Everyday Living. (Light and Life Publishing).*

4. **Icons-The Story of Icons.** An excellent introduction to the meaning of icons in the Church and the part they play in worship. Explains the origins of icons, from the catacombs to the iconoclastic conflict and the triumph of the icons that
ended in the Sunday of Orthodoxy and why icons are painted as they are. The second half of the book is devoted to the icons for the feast days of Christ and the Virgin Mary, teaching how to “read” the icons for the story that each tells. Contains a glossary of terms in the back especially helpful for younger readers.

7th Grade:

1. **Introduction to the Divine Liturgy.** One of the most thorough and concise commentaries on the liturgy. A complete explanation of the liturgy.
   
   **Texts:** Divine Liturgy - Analysis, Exegesis and Commentary (Light and Life Publishing).
   Divine Liturgy According to St. John Chrysostom (Light and Life Publishing).
   The Divine Liturgy for Children. (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese).
   DVD-Understanding the Divine Liturgy. (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese).
   The Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom, by Fr. George Papadeas.

2. **The Miracles of Christ.** An introductory commentary on Christ's miracles written from an Orthodox Christian point of view.
   
   **Text:** The Miracles of Christ. (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press).

3. **The Church Liturgical Year.** An excellent manual for Sunday School teachers and home-schooling parents on the meanings of the various feasts and cycles of the Orthodox liturgical year. Contains full-color icons of the feast days, with descriptions, and a wealth of other information.
   
   **Text:** The Church Liturgical Year. (Saint Nectarios Press).

4. **Sacred Tradition in the Orthodox Church.** One of the finest definitions of Sacred Tradition ever written. The author was a well-known Orthodox monastic who combined spirituality with intellectual acumen and a deep knowledge of the Scriptures. Helps us appreciate Sacred Tradition as the life of the Holy Spirit constantly abiding in the Church.
   
   **Text:** Sacred Tradition in the Orthodox Church. (Light and Life Publishing).
8th Grade:

1. The Sacraments of The Orthodox Church. Baptism, Chrismation, Communion, Confession, Unction, Marriage, Ordination—here, the seven Sacraments of our Church are described and explained, bringing into focus their importance and impact on our lives. Students learn that the Sacraments are not simply ceremonies, but truly holy experiences which transform our beings and lead us to a spiritual and fulfilling daily life. Study guide and activities are included with each chapter.

   Text: The Sacraments of the Orthodox Church. (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese). DVD: Baptism and Chrismation, Unction. (Light and Life Publishing). Marriage. (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese).

2. Teenage Ten Commandments. This is an overview of the Ten Commandments and their relevance for our times. After a review of the Old Testament, a chapter with study guide and activities is devoted to each Commandment.

   Text: Teenage Ten Commandments. (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese).

3. A Child’s Paradise of Saints. The stories of fifteen beloved saints presented in a warm, informal style, suitable for reading aloud. Here are stories of the struggles and triumphs of holy Fathers and Mothers from throughout the world. The saints included are: Constantine and Helen, Cyprian and Justina, Demetrius, Guardian Angel, Herman of Alaska, John the Russian, Mary Magdalene, Mary of Egypt, Moses, Nicholas, Nina, Panteleimon, Philothei, Seraphim, and Xenia.


4. A Dictionary of Orthodox Terminology. A "dictionary" listing with a brief definition of many terms one may come across in reading about Orthodoxy.

   Text: Handouts. (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese).
1. **The Creed.** This discussion of the Nicene Creed—the foundation of our Faith—begins with a review of Christianity, the Church and Tradition. It offers a definition and an explanation of the Creed.

   **Texts:** The Creed. (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese). The Nicene Creed for Young People. (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese). **DVD:** The Creed. (Light and Life Publishing).

2. **The Gospel of Mark.** The Gospel of Mark records Christ's public ministry as a journey to the Cross, yet as a time of vigorous action when His miracles astounded the multitudes, and His boldness infuriated His foes. Written from an Orthodox and patristic perspective.

   **Text:** The Gospel of Mark. (Light and Life Publishing).

3. **Twelve Great Feast Days.** Written for young readers and arranged so that it can also be used as a life of Christ and a church school text.

   **Text:** Twelve Great Feast Days. (Light and Life Publishing).

4. **Illustrated Life of the Theotokos for Children.** The authors, two veteran Orthodox religious educators, have told the beautiful story of the Theotokos in a fascinating way that will attract and hold the attention of children of all ages. Magnificently illustrated.

   **Text:** Illustrated Life of the Theotokos for Children. (Light and Life Publishing).
10th Grade:

1. **Contemporary Moral Issues.** Contemporary topics examined from an Orthodox Christian perspective. Topics such as cults, abortion, euthanasia, mixed marriages etc.
   

2. **Teenage Issues.** To help teenagers deal with issues such as peer pressure, temptations, drugs, drinking, sex, jealousy, parents, etc. From the Fathers of the Church and Scripture.
   
   **Texts:** What the Church Fathers Say About. (Light and Life Publishing). Raising Teenagers Right. (Light and Life Publishing).

6. **The Gospel of John.** The Apostle John - one of the Twelve - sets his Gospel in a cosmic context, revealing Jesus as the Eternal Light of God, the Way, the Truth and the Life.
   

7. **Symbols of our faith.** In church and in our homes we see and do certain things, such as, Incense, Candles, Flowering of the Cross; Ladder to Heaven; Hesychasm: The Practice of Silence; Palms; the Epitaphion and Tomb of Jesus, Theotokos With Child in the Apse; Christ Pantocrator; Epiphany and the Blessing of Water, Blessing of Bread, etc. What all these things symbolize?
   
   **Text:** Sacred Symbols that Speak. (Light and Life Publishing).

8. **Eastern Orthodoxy Compared.** An introduction to the main teachings of the Orthodox Church and contrasts them with the teachings of Roman Catholicism and the major Protestant denominations. The differences covered include dogma, liturgy, sacraments, death and the afterlife, the Theotokos, sacred tradition, memorial prayers, the Holy Trinity etc.
   
   **Text:** Eastern Orthodoxy Compared. (Light and Life Publishing).
11th Grade:

1. **Introduction to the Orthodox Church.** Introducing our Orthodox Faith: What We Believe About the One Apostolic Church, the Nicene Creed, Jesus, the Holy Trinity, the Divine Liturgy, Salvation, the Church Fathers, the Church Year, the Sacraments, the Saints and the Theotokos, Life After Death, the Bible, Icons, Prayers for the Dead, and Prayer.

   **Text:** Introducing The Orthodox Church: Its Faith And Life Revised & Expanded) along with a study guide. (Light and Life Publishing).


2. **Challenge Questions on Orthodoxy for Students-Volume 2.** Questions and answers on subjects that include the New and Old Testaments, Church Traditions and Teachings, Liturgy, Sacraments, Vestments, Words and Symbols, Orthodoxy and Other Religions in America. Designed to challenge young people of ages 12 to 18. A fun way to learn.

   **Text:** Challenge Questions on Orthodoxy for Students-Volume 2. (Light and Life Publishing).
12th Grade:

1. The History of the Orthodox Church. A historical jet trip through the two thousand year history of the Orthodox Church. Unveils the essence of Orthodox Christianity, outlining basic similarities and differences between the Orthodox and other Christian Churches. Thirty-one fast moving chapters.


2. The Epistle to the Romans. How to behave, what to believe, salvation is a righteous act of God. A relationship with God transforms the Christian, empowering him or her to become the person intended by God.

   Texts: The Epistle to the Romans-Handouts. (Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese). The Epistle to the Romans. (Light and Life Publishing).

3. Challenge Questions on Orthodoxy for Students-Volume 1. Designed as a challenge for teens, ages 12 to 18. Subjects included are the Old and New Testaments, Church History, Church Year, Feasts and Fasts, Church Tradition and Teachings, Liturgics: Liturgy, Sacraments, Vestments, Words and Symbols. Answers are included in the last part of the book.

   Text: Challenge Questions on Orthodoxy for Students-Volume 1. (Light and Life Publishing).

4. Encountering World Religions: An Orthodox Christian Perspective. Examines the world of religions from an Orthodox Christian perspective. It helps to contrast differences between Orthodox Christianity and Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Confucianism, Taoism, Judaism, Islam and Primal Religions. (Light and Life Publishing).

5. The Epistle of St. James in the life of the Church. Through his epistle, St. James speaks to the life of the church on issues such as gossiping, favoritism, accumulation of wealth, criticizing others, faith and works, profiting from trials, etc.

   (George N Politis).