

# Curriculum

## Pre-Catechumen

- Exchange Contact Information
- Setup a few initial meetings to get to know him/her
  - What notions or ideas do they have about God/Christianity/Orthodoxy
  - Why are they seeking the Church? What are they looking for?
  - Who is their family, what kinds of friends, school/work, family attitude about religion, about God, etc.
  - What kind of support system do they have (if any)
- Give them a tour of the church
  - Church and Chapel
  - Church service calendar
  - Who are the priests, bishops, etc.
- Attend multiple liturgies
- Q&A
- When the time is right, offer for them to start Catechumen classes and explain what that means and what that timeline looks like.
  - REMEMBER: there is no pushiness in Orthodoxy. There is only the Truth. We are not looking for quantity, but for quality. If numbers were the main goal, to fill our pews, then we could compromise the Truth in order to obtain followers. But that is not the case. See John 6.

## Meeting Structure

1.5 hours

1. Prayer (in Church/Chapel)
2. Follow-Up
3. Pressing Questions (Q&A)
4. Lesson

## Curriculum

### Introduction

1. Intro to Catechism
  - What is it
  - Discipleship
  - Components
    - Catechism Class
    - Liturgical Experience

- Spiritual Canon
  - Expectations
    - Commitment
    - Reverence
    - ASK QUESTIONS
  - Misconceptions
2. Introduction to Coptic Church
- Coptic Orthodox Church
    - Apostolic
    - Martyrs
    - Ascetic
    - Modern
  - **Orthodoxy is NOT a denomination**
  - Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern US
  - Church Calendar
  - Recommended Websites, Apps, Books, etc.

## Truth

**Recommended Reading:** The Gospel of Matthew/Mark/Luke

1. Truth
  - The point here is to establish a baseline... there is such a thing called Truth. And Truth is important (imperative). And discovering or knowing the Truth is the point of catechism.
  - Some things are unknowable
  - Some things require faith
  - Here, some preliminary ideas can be mentioned as the truth, to "get them out of the way" - homosexuality is sin, transgenderism is sin, abortion is sin
2. How does God reveal the Truth to us?
  - Nature
    - "For since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse" (Romans 1:20)
    - The Church is NOT against Science or the Scientific Method but...
  - Scripture
  - Tradition
3. Tradition
  1. Intro to Tradition & Orthodoxy
  2. Benefits of Holy Tradition
  3. vs. Sola Scriptura
4. Scripture

1. Authenticity and Reliability of the Bible
2. Biblical Interpretation
3. Infallibility of the Bible
4. How to Read the Bible

5. The Gospel Message

## Who is God

### **Recommended Reading:**

1. Existence of God
2. Trinitarian Faith
  1. Introduction
  2. Analogies
  3. Biblical Foundations
3. Attributes of God
4. Trinitarian Heresies
5. Nature of Christ
6. Christological Heresies
7. The Holy Spirit
8. Pneumatological Heresies

## Soteriology

### **Recommended Reading:** Genesis, Romans

1. Who is Man
2. Fall of Man
3. Salvation in the Orthodox Concept
4. Sacraments: Introduction
5. Sacraments: Priesthood
6. Sacraments: Baptism

7. Sacraments: Chrismation
8. Sacraments: Eucharist
9. Sacraments: Repentance and Confession
10. Sacraments: Unction of the Sick
11. Sacraments: Matrimony

## Church History

1. Apostolic Fathers
2. Gnosticism
3. Arianism & Council of Nicaea
4. Macedonius & Council of Constantinople
5. Nestorianism
6. Chalcedon
7. Monasticism

## Church Rituals

1. Introduction to Ritual & Liturgical Prayer
  1. What is Ritual
  2. Use of Matter (Icons, Candles, Incense, etc.)
  3. What is Liturgy
2. Divine Liturgy & The Eucharist
3. Liturgy of Time - Agpeya
4. Liturgy of Time - Vespers & Matins
5. Liturgy of Time - Midnight Praises
6. Rite of Initiation: Baptism
7. Rite of Initiation: Chrismation
8. Crowning Ceremony

# Liturgical Experience

Divine Liturgy

Vespers & Matins

Pascha Week

Part of the benefit of a long catechism is the chance to experience the entirety of the liturgical year/calendar

## Spiritual Canon

### Prayer

Everyone starts at a different level, but if someone is at zero, I usually go in this order:

1. Pray the Lord's Prayer until it's memorized. Pray extemporaneous prayer after.
2. Add the Thanksgiving Prayer
3. Add Psalm 50
4. Up to twice a day (morning and evening) if not already
5. "Come Let us Kneel Down" (with prostrations) in the mornings
6. Add Gospel of 1st Hour in mornings, 12th Hour in evenings

### Scripture

Use NKJV, can read one section at a time or continue through a chapter

If you have any question, write it down and bring it to next meeting (or send it to Abouna)

1. Gospel of St Luke
2. Acts
3. Genesis
4. Exodus
5. Romans
6. Gospel

### Fasting

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