



– ILLUMINATION LEARNING –

SANCTIFICATION OF TIME

Homeschool Curriculum Guide

This homeschool curriculum guide is built for grades
1st - 3rd. It is not intended as a three year guide.

This is a preview draft of the “Sanctification of Time” curriculum
guide available Late Spring / Early Summer of 2022.

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GOALS FOR THE YEAR

1

Attend vespers on Saturdays & liturgies on Sundays

2

Attend liturgy for all the major feast days of the Church year

3

Learn *Christ is Risen* in as many languages sung at your parish

4

Learn the response to *Christ is Risen!* in as many languages said at your parish

5

Achieve developmentally appropriate goals in reading, writing, math, and executive function skills

6

Learn about the Sanctification of Time - everything points to Christ

THEMES FOR EACH MONTH

AUG

Life and Executive Function Skills (ongoing skill building for the yr)

SEPT

Timekeeping & Timelines (ongoing projects for the year)

OCT

Our Solar System

NOV

Our Earth

DEC

Our Moon

JAN

Baking Assistant

FEB

Little Sous Chef

MAR

Ongoing Projects: Major Feast Days of the Orthodox Church;
Biographies; Experiments; and Projects

APR

Ongoing Projects: Major Feast Days of the Orthodox Church;
Biographies; Experiments; and Projects

MAY

Ongoing Projects: Major Feast Days of the Orthodox Church;
Biographies; Experiments; and Projects

SANCTIFICATION OF TIME

Why does time matter to us? Our daily life, as well as, our entire lifetime revolves around the inevitable passing of time. Where does this passage lead each and every one of us? It always leads towards our death. Why is this important and how do we teach our children about it?

Fr. Michael Oleksa has many talks, recorded by various people, available on YouTube. There is one in particular where he explains the concept of *chronos* (measurable time) and *kairos* (meaningful time):

[2017 Hormel Foundation Gifted and Talented Symposium: Rev. Dr. Michael Oleksa](#)

(It will make more sense if you watch the entire video for context but the specific part about time is around time stamp 2 hours 10 minutes.)

Fr. Alexander Schmemmann talks at greater length about the sanctification of time in “Liturgy and Life: Christian Development Through Liturgical Experience”, which is available through [St. Vladimir Seminary Press](#).

He explains that our days, weeks, months, seasons, and liturgical year all revolve around time - but it's within this context of time that we are always directed towards Christ's Resurrection. It is our **participation** in the prayers of the daily hours, the services celebrated throughout the week, and the major feast days celebrated each season which always guides us to the feast of feasts - the Resurrection of Christ. We are always traveling towards and away from Pascha each year. This journey shapes and changes us. It is through Christ that we find meaning and purpose in our lives.

WORSHIP, TEACHING, PRAXIS

Dr. Constance Tarasar was a professor of religious education at St. Vladimir's Seminary and also contributed to a great many religious education projects. She is one of the most extensive writers on the topic of Orthodox religious education and wrote her doctoral dissertation on *A Process Model for the Design of Curriculum for Orthodox Christian Religious Education*. You can find it at the St. Vladimir's Seminary library. I contacted one of the librarians there and was able to pay a reasonable price to have a copy of the dissertation mailed to my house. It is well worth the read!

In her dissertation, she explains that the development of a curriculum for our church schools - or homeschools, as the case may be - should contain well defined: **content** (What will we be teaching?), **goals** (What are we striving to achieve with these lessons?), and **developmental levels** (Have we properly developed the lessons for the intended age group?)

Additionally, Dr. Tarasar explains that we should develop the curriculum within the greater framework of **worship, teaching, praxis**. As Orthodox Christians, we learn and grow throughout our entire lifetime. It is an experiential process of attending services (worship), continually learning (teaching), and living our faith daily (praxis). It is within this model that the Church has taught and guided one generation to the next about their Orthodox Christian faith. Therefore, when we develop the teaching portion of our curriculum, it's important to always place it within the context of attending services regularly and living our faith everywhere we go as well.

- **WORSHIP:** We participate in the services within the rhythm of the Church year
- **TEACHING / LEARNING:** We explain the feast days of the year to our children in the context of the cycle of the Church year
- **PRAXIS:** We guide our children by immersing ourselves in our Orthodox Christian faith. We do this through our preparation for the feasts - fasting, praying, reading the Bible, giving alms, going to confession, learning the hymns for the feast days etc. We also celebrate the feast days!

WHAT ARE EXECUTIVE FUNCTION SKILLS?

Executive function skills are the processes we use to organize, coordinate, execute, and complete any given task. These skills are taught and not innate. Some compare executive function skills to a control tower at an airport - it is our brain's way of directing traffic which enables us to effectively get stuff done - everything from memory to self control to initiating a task!

How many of us have asked our child to clean their room and come back to check on their progress, only to find that little has gotten done? Oftentimes, a job like this is overwhelming for a child and they simply don't even know where to begin this task. This is where executive function skills come into action.

We all learned in our writing class - in middle school or high school - how to create an outline before writing a paper. The teacher taught us how to organize our thoughts by subject and sub-theme on paper before beginning to write our paper about the assigned topic or book. This allowed us to organize our thoughts about what we wanted to write. With practice, our essays flowed better and we were able to convey our thoughts to the intended audience with more clarity. As we got better with writing, we didn't necessarily need to write an outline exactly how we had been taught by our teacher. We may have chosen to write a modified outline or simply organized our thoughts in our head before we began to write - but learning how to write an outline in the first place taught us how to structure all of our formal writing for the future.

This school year, we are going to focus on helping our children begin to learn many valuable life skills - one in particular, teaching them how to organize, initiate, and complete a sequence of tasks for a life skill. Choose a task for them to complete and create a list of what they need to do, step-by-step, in order to complete the task. They don't have to follow these steps precisely for the rest of their life, but it will enable them to look at their bedroom, not be overwhelmed by the job ahead of them, and clean the room on their own. Create a list of steps for them, stay in the room with them, and provide one task at a time until they are done.

HOW DO I BREAK DOWN A JOB INTO TASKS FOR MY CHILD?

For the Parent:

1. Choose a life skill you want your child to complete
2. Write it down on a piece of paper
3. List the steps it will take for them to complete the task - Be realistic with what your child can do considering their age and experience with doing this task
4. Don't expect the room to look as if you cleaned it. It won't. That will come in later years as they learn to do more detailed work.
5. Don't expect this age to keep working if you leave the room for a long time.
6. This is all about teaching them how to do the individual steps in this task. Later, you'll be able to hand them a list (clean your bedroom, sweep the kitchen, take out the trash) and they will be able to do it, but they aren't ready for that...yet!

Example - Clean Bedroom:

- Pick up all the stuffed animals and put them on your bed
- Pick up all of your dirty laundry and put it in the basket
- Line up all of your shoes on the floor of your closet
- Nicely place your books on the bookshelf
- Make your nightstand look neat and clean
- Pick up your toys and put them where they belong (If your child has a lot of toys - break it down by types of toys. For example - Pick up all of the cars and place them in the bucket. Pick up all the doll clothes and place them in the bucket. Etc. ALWAYS leave legos for last. They are so small and it will seem like an eternity of cleaning if you start with them.
- Make your bed
- Dust your window shades and dresser (more advanced)
- Vacuum / sweep your floor (more advanced)

Example - Load the Dishwasher:

- (Show them exactly where you want them and how much you want them to prepare / wash the dishes before putting them in the dishwasher)
- Put cups into the top rack
- Put silverware into the basket
- Put plates into the bottom rack
- Put bowls here
- Place **this** there
- Also teach them what *cannot* go into the dishwasher and needs to be hand washed or put to the side for you to do later

Example - Make Your Own Bowl of Cereal:

- Get a bowl
- Get a spoon
- Get milk
- Get cereal
- Show them how to pour the cereal and milk, if they've never done it before
- Put away cereal and milk (Show them if they've never done it before)
- Put bowl and spoon on the counter or in the dishwasher

MORE ON EXECUTIVE FUNCTION SKILLS

FASTING

When we introduce fasting to our young children, we are teaching them - on a basic level - self control. We are teaching them that they can't eat everything they want whenever they want it. This skill will carry into other areas of their life as well - such as relationships and that we can't buy everything we want at the store.

PRAYER

When we pray with our children, we are teaching them to focus, work with information in mind, and filter distractions around them. This skill will also carry over into other areas of their life - such as reading a chapter book, writing a paper, or driving a car.

ALMSGIVING

When we guide our children to give alms, we provide the opportunity for them to see someone else's perspective. This is also an executive function skill and it's important because it encourages children to share, think about other's feelings, and love one another.

Fasting, prayer, and almsgiving are an integral part of living our faith. I'm constantly amazed at how the Church provides what we need for every stage of life.

RESOURCES:

- [A Guide to Executive Function](#) from Harvard University
- Executive Function “Dysfunction”: Strategies for Educators and Parents by Rebecca A. Moyes
- Beyond Behaviors: Using Brain Science and Compassion to Understand and Solve Children's Behavioral Challenges by Mona Delahooke

TIMEKEEPING & TIMELINES

Spend this month working on basic telling time skills, as well, as more advanced time skills - such as learning the time zones in the U.S. and how a timeline works.

GOALS:

1. Learn to tell time on an analog and digital clock
2. Write the time in reference to an analog and digital clock
3. Learn what time liturgy starts (and what time you need to leave the house to be on-time); What time do I need to go to bed?
4. What are time zones?
5. What is a timeline?
6. The Church Calendar - Begins Sept. 1st (Major Feast Days as they occur throughout the year)

RESOURCES:

- [Time Activity Set](#)
- About Time: A First Look at Time and Clocks by Bruce Koscielniak
- Timelines! Timelines! Timelines! by Kelly Boswell
- An idea for introducing [Past, Present, and Future](#)
- [Living Books Timelines](#)

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS:

- Learn about the [hours of prayers](#) in the Orthodox Church - say a short prayer at 9am, 12pm, and 3pm as part of this lesson
- Teach our children that everything we do points us towards Christ

- Put a map on your wall of the United States. Using post-it notes, write names of family, friends, and godparents on each piece of paper. Then have your child place the post-it note on the state that person lives in. Finally, have your child write the time on the post-it note in relation to each time zone. For example: (Boston) Grandma 3:00pm; (Tulsa) Uncle Jacob 2:00pm
- Create a timeline on a wall in your house. You can use sentence strips from a teacher store, fax paper, or make your own taping index cards together. Label the years on the timeline. Hang a picture of each person in your family over the year they were born. Hang a picture of someone you learned about over the year they were born. Hang a picture of an event that you learned about over the year that it happened. This can be an ongoing project for the entire year.
- How does a clock work? Buy an old clock from a thrift store or yard sale. Let your child take it apart with you and try to put it back together again.
- Make a sundial
- Make a family calendar - include namedays, feast days, fasting periods, birthdays, and anniversaries ([shutterfly.com](https://www.shutterfly.com))
- Review or learn how to read a calendar
- Write the date on all written work
- Make a yearbook chronicling everything you did this year in the order that it happened - trips to a museum, vacation, nature exploring at the park or in your backyard, projects, your artwork, etc. (This is great practice for when they are older and possibly need to make a portfolio for a class assignment or for a job interview.)
- Check out books from the library and read biographies on people in relation to telling time and the solar system

OUR SOLAR SYSTEM

Since ancient times, the “heavens” provided scientists with the first celestial clocks. The movement of the planets and the stars became the basis for how we measure time. By watching and measuring the movement in our solar system, we could predict the changing of the seasons, when to plant crops or harvest them, and predict the movement of the tides. The use of time and the movement of the planets lead to the first navigation over the oceans.

GOALS:

1. Name the planets in our solar system in relation to our sun
2. Learn basic facts about each planet
3. Learn about the planets’ orbits

RESOURCES:

- *About Time: A First Look at Time and Clocks* by Bruce Koscielniak
- [Solar System Unit Study](#) by Steph Hathaway Designs
- [Sun Themed Bundle](#) by Twig and Moth
- [Illustrated Solar System Flash Cards](#) by PipandJPapery
- [The Solar System](#) by LearningIsSimple
- [Solar System Planets Tracing Sheets](#) by Little Montessori Shop
- [NASA Kids’ Club](#)
- [NASA Space Place - Explore Earth and Space!](#)

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS:

- Build a model of the solar system
- Visit an observatory

- Learn about astronomers and astronauts
- Visit a science museum with exhibits on space
- Watch a documentary on the solar system
- Make a book or video about what you've learned about the solar system and then share it with your grandparents

OUR EARTH

The movement of the Earth provides the foundation of our daily and yearly cycles. The rotation of the Earth on its axis provides us with our 24 hour day. It causes the change between day and night providing the daily cycle of work and rest and also drives the cycle of the changing tides. The tilted orientation of the planet on its axis creates weather differences in the northern and summer hemispheres, while the orbit of the Earth around the Sun gives us the cycle of 4 seasons and our 365 day year.

GOALS:

1. How long is an earth day? Why?
2. Why do we have four seasons?
3. What is a hemisphere?
4. Why are the seasons different for the Northern and Southern Hemispheres?

RESOURCES:

- *About Time: A First Look at Time and Clocks* by Bruce Koscielniak
- [Layers of the Earth](#) by Steph Hathaway Designs
- [World Mapping Activity](#) by Fiddlesticks Ed
- [Earth's Atmosphere](#) by Simply a love
- [Planet Earth Mega Bundle](#) by wild feather edu
- [NASA Kids' Club](#)
- [International Space Station](#)

OUR MOON

The orbit of the moon around the earth provides us with the 28 day lunar cycle. This is where our monthly calendar comes from. The timing of the moon's orbit and the phases of the moon are what divides up our time into a 7 day week and a 4 week month. We divide the year into 12 months because of the number of times the moon orbits the Earth in the 1 year it takes the Earth to orbit the Sun. The monthly cycle of the moon's orbit was used to mark time for critical events. The most important of these included planting and harvesting. The use of the moon as a time keeping method was so important that people gave special names to different special events in the lunar year. (Blue Moon, Harvest Moon, Blood Moon, Super Moon, etc.)

GOALS:

1. Learn about the moon's orbit around the earth
2. Learn about and track the phases of the moon
3. How does the moon affect the earth? (For example: tidal waves)
4. Learn about people who have studied the moon and astronauts

RESOURCES:

- About Time: A First Look at Time and Clocks by Bruce Koscielniak
- [Moon Phases and Lunar Unit Study](#) by Steph Hathaway Designs
- [Moon Landing History Pack](#) by Fiddlesticks Ed
- [Moon Bundle](#) by Twig and Moth
- [NASA Kids' Club](#)

BAKING ASSISTANT

This is intended as an introduction to baking for kids. Many of us have fond memories of helping our parents or grandparents bake something in the kitchen. We stood on a chair or a footstool and asked to pour in any ingredient available. We can still remember the smell of vanilla being poured into batter, the hope of getting to crack an egg all by yourself for the first time, and the joy of scooping flour into a measuring cup. All of these experiences linger on our memories and taught us precious lessons in the kitchen - about patience, following directions, reading a recipe, measuring ingredients, temperature, time, fine motor skills, using our senses to bake, and more!

GOALS:

1. Learn the science of making bread
2. Bake a loaf (any kind) of bread
3. Learn about prosphoro
4. Bake a loaf of prosphoro and bring it to your parish priest at vespers on Saturday night
5. Bake a treat following the directions in a recipe

RESOURCES:

- Yiayia and the Prosforon by Potamitis Publishing
- The Woman and the Wheat by Jane G. Meyer
- Bread Lab! By Kim Binczewski and Bethany Econopouly
- Starter Sourdough by Carroll Pellegrinelli
- Flour, Water, Salt, Yeast by Ken Forkish
- Thundercake by Patricia Polacco
- [Guide to Baking Prosfhora](#) on Illumination Learning

LITTLE SOUS CHEF

There are basic cooking skills that can be introduced at this age - such as, learning to prepare the kitchen before cooking by cleaning up and having our ingredients all ready to go. It's also critical to teach our kids about safety in the kitchen because there is heat, sharp objects, and food can go bad if we don't take care of it properly.

GOALS:

1. What is mise en place?
2. What is a sous chef?
3. Kitchen safety - stoves, ovens, toaster, keeping food cold, how long can food last outside of the refrigerator and inside the refrigerator
4. Learn how to use measuring cups and measuring spoons
5. How do we hold a knife properly? (Feel free to start with a safety knife)
6. How do we cut using a knife?
7. Learn how to read and follow the directions in a recipe (Any recipe)
8. Make a fasting meal

RESOURCES:

- Chef Academy by Steve Martin and Hannah Bone
- Square Foot Gardening with Kids by Mel Bartholomew
- Little House on the Prairie Series
- The Little House Cookbook by Barbara Walker
- Good Eats series

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS:

- Watch a cooking demonstration on YouTube and then try to create that dish together in the kitchen
- Learn how to make the different knife cuts

ONGOING PROJECTS

- Continue reading biographies about people relating to our topics
- Add their picture to your timeline
- Write a short summary about the person
- Work on projects relating to time, the feast days, or space
- Discuss our goal in life - our salvation - with our children. Read the lives of the saints. How can we use *this saint* as an example in our own lives?