The Eastern Orthodox Committee on Scouting

Alpha—Omega

Program Service Book

Religious Award Program for
Sixth - Twelfth Graders
of the Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts USA
Trail Life USA, American Heritage Girls &
Campfire USA

Revised Jan 2019
Our Background
In 1955, Archbishop Michael, of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, Metropolitan Anthony Bashir, of the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese, Bishop Orestes Chormock, of American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Diocese, and Metropolitan Leonty, of the Orthodox Church in America met with Joseph A. Brunton, Jr., the Chief Scout Executive of the Boy Scouts of America. The prelates came attired in their robes of office to bestow their blessing of the Boy Scouts and to make known to their constituents that they wanted Scouting to become a part of the youth programs of the local churches. This was one of the first cross-jurisdictional enterprises of the Orthodox Churches in North America. Later they included the Girl Scouts USA. As a result of this historical meeting, the Eastern Orthodox Committee on Scouting [EOCS] was created in 1960 by the Standing Conference of Orthodox Bishops in the Americas, whose purpose is to conduct the mission of our Lord and His Church via the Boy Scouts of America and the Girl Scouts USA programs on a national level.

In 2009 SCOBA became The Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North & Central America. The Assembly understands itself to be the successor of SCOBA, and as such, it has assumed all of its agencies, dialogue, and other ministries.

The bishops of the USA, Canada, and Central America were originally together in one Assembly, called the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North and Central America; in April 2014 it was announced that, in order to best respond to the cultural diversity and pastoral needs in the region, the Canadian and US bishops would form separate assemblies and the Central American bishops would join the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of Latin America.

Our Mission
• Support and conduct the mission of our Lord and His church via the scouting program.
• Recognize the individual youth member as our most important member.
• Provide support, programs, and recognition to the scouts and scouters of Eastern Orthodox faith whether in units in the Eastern Orthodox Churches, or registered in units sponsored by other institutions, via the religious youth recognitions, adult recognitions for volunteer scouters and clergy, retreats, camp-o-rees, associated events and activities.
• Provide support, guidance, programs, and consultation to the Eastern Orthodox Churches that sponsor Scouting and are partners in the scouting program.
• Create, expand, enhance and project a presence of Eastern Orthodox Scouting in the Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts USA, and Camp Fire Boys and Girls.
• The E.O.C.S. exists to complement and supplement the youth’s program and the unit’s program. The E.O.C.S. does not exist to direct or replace a unit’s program.
• Encourage the use of the Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts USA, and Camp Fire Boys and Girls programs as part of the youth ministry program of the Church and community.
• Develop and extend our Scouting network with our ministry partners.
• The E.O.C.S. is the officially recognized Eastern Orthodox religious committee for the Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts USA, Trail Life USA, American Heritage Girls and Camp Fire USA programs.
Award Programs of the Eastern Orthodox Committee on Scouting

For more information on the individual awards visit us: https://www.eocs.org/religious-awards
The Alpha-Omega Award Program

The Emblem

The Alpha-Omega emblem is a sign of recognition that the Orthodox Church gives to a youth member of a Scouting movement who completes the spiritual and practical achievements of the program. It does not take the place of any award within those organizations, nor is it a substitute for a good parish Christian Education Program. It is offered to Scouting youth of the Orthodox Christian faith as a help in living the spiritual guides of the Scouting organizations and as evidence of the interest our Church has in the lives of her spiritual children.

Who is eligible?

Any Orthodox Christian boy or girl who is registered in a EOCS recognized Scouting program may earn the Alpha-Omega emblem. The recipient must be in the sixth - twelfth grade and must attend church, school or other formal religious instruction program. The scout must also be a communicant member of an Orthodox Christian Church recognized by the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America formerly known as SCOBA.
For a current list of qualified Orthodox Christian Parishes see: http://www.assemblyofbishops.org/directories/parishes
Priests are encouraged to adapt these requirements for use with mentally and/or physically challenged youth members of these Scouting movements.

Presentation

The Alpha-Omega Orthodox Medal is granted by the Eastern Orthodox Committee on Scouting, so it should be presented in the church by a priest or a bishop. Consult current uniform regulations of the appropriate Scouting program for the proper location of the medal on the uniform.

Instructions

This booklet is for you. As you read the booklet and work through the program, you will be learning more about yourself, your faith, your Church, and most important, about Christ's love. You may write in this booklet: it is yours to keep. You will also need a notebook or binder to write in. There are suggested ideas, activities and resources in this program. These are noted for your help. Your own ideas and activities are welcome.
At the end of each part there is a space for comments by your parent(s) and by your priest. Any new ideas or comments can be noted there. The completed part should be signed by you, one of your parents, and by the priest after having reviewed it with you. When all the parts are completed, the priest will sign the application/order form on the last page and submit it with the required fee.

HELP
The EOCS maintains a website and Facebook page.
We can be reached at www.EOCS.org or Facebook.com/EOCS23.
THE ALPHA-OMEGA CURRICULUM

How to Begin

Make an appointment to meet with your priest to discuss your enrollment in the Alpha-Omega program. There are three parts to the program, each designed to take about two months to complete. Each part consists of four areas:

- **Personal Life** - your life and actions as an Orthodox Christian.
- **Parish Life** - things you see and do in your parish church.
- **Community Life** - how your church functions as the representative of Christ in your community.
- **Service Projects** - helping your parish and your fellow Christians.

Your work in this program must be under the direction of a counselor, preferably your priest. Your priest may appoint an interested and qualified layman to supervise your progress. If this is done, then the counselor will take you to your priest at the end of each part for his examination and approval. Only your priest may sign the completion statement for each part.

You should keep a neat and legible record of all your work in a special notebook. Questions and answers or explanations should be written in this notebook and carefully identified by part, area and number. Bring this notebook to each meeting with your priest and to the final review. Your priest may make changes, additions, or substitutions to the program as you proceed. He is especially encouraged to adapt this program to meet the needs of mentally and/or physically challenged Scouts.
Part I.
A. Personal Life

The most important part of our personal lives should and must be our relationship with God. Important are prayer and Scripture reading. This is the greatest source of our growth in faith and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. The key to becoming a good Orthodox Scout is making Jesus Christ real and personal in your life every day.

1. Have a personal Bible and Prayer Book.

2. Repeat from memory the Trisagion Prayers.

   Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us (three times). Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

   O All-Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, wash away our sins. O Master pardon our transgressions, O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for thy name's sake. Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy. Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

   Our Father who art in heave, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. Amen.

3. Using your prayer book, and with the aid of your priest, develop and begin a regular program for morning and evening prayers.

4. Recite a blessing before all meals, whether at home or away. Write a mealtime prayer in your notebook.

5. Demonstrate the proper way of making the sign of the cross. Explain the significance of each movement. When and how did the sign of the cross originate?

   Join together the thumb, index, and middle fingers of the right hand while touching the palm with the ring finger and pinky. Touch the forehead and say, "In the name of the Father," then the chest, saying, "and of the Son", then the right shoulder saying, "and of the Holy Spirit", and last the left shoulder saying, "Amen".

   By touching the forehead, we ask God to bless our minds to know good; our chest, we ask God to bless our hearts to desire good; our right and left shoulders, we ask God to bless our power of strength to perform good acts.

   The sign of the cross originated among the first followers of Christ. It was a sign of mutual recognition as well as a sign that they were placing their very lives under the cross.

6. Begin a program of daily Bible reading. Learn the prayer from the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom preceding the Gospel reading, ("Open our hearts..."). Read the Gospel of St. Mark, one chapter a day (16 days), after your daily prayers.
B: Parish Life

There are two different types of prayer: Private and Corporate (which is worship together as a community). The Parish or Church prays together at times as a family. This is also an important source of growth in Christ.

1. Name the most important corporate worship service in the Orthodox Church.
2. What two other corporate worship services may be served regularly in your church?
3. Name the three most commonly celebrated Liturgies of the Orthodox Church. How do they differ? In general, when is each Liturgy served?
4. What are the three main parts of the Divine Liturgy you attend on Sundays? What does each include?
5. What does the priest do in the parish? What is his role in the life of the parish?
6. How is the priest helped in his function by laymen? List as many ways as you can see laypeople in your parish offering their services.
7. Know the members of your parish council. How are they selected?
8. Know the founding date of your parish.

C: Community Life

Our lives as Orthodox Scouts must bear fruits in the world around us. We should not be of service only to our family and parish but to our community and city in which we live. Being a scout gives us the opportunity to serve others as Christ served us.

Explain the terms evangelization, mission as forms of spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ. (See Matthew 25:31-46)

D: Service Project

Service Projects are required for each Part of this book. Please choose any of the following for each section.

- Collection and distribution of food and clothing at Thanksgiving, Christmas, or in time of disaster.
- Serving at parish dinners and assisting in the kitchen.
- Caring for the church temple and surrounding property.
- Assisting in editing and printing church papers, bulletins, websites, and youth publications.
- Assisting in collecting clothing, books, and/or money for an Orthodox missionary activity.
- Baking holy bread (Proshora) for the Divine Liturgy.
- Assisting the chanters or parish readers in chanting and/or reading at the services.

Other service projects of similar nature and standard may be submitted, if approved by your priest.
COMPLETION PART I

My Signature_________________________ Date Completed ____________

Comments by Parent or Guardian:

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Comments by Priest:

Signature of Priest __________________________________________
Part 2
A. Personal Life

1. Continue prayers and Bible reading. Now read the Gospel of St. Matthew or St. Luke. How is it different from the Gospel of St. Mark? What is a parable? What is a miracle? Discuss them with your priest.

2. Learn the Symbol of Faith, also called the Nicene-Constantinopolitan creed. Repeat it to your priest.

   I believe in one God, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages; Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten, not created, of one essence with the Father through Whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man. He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried; And He rose on the third day, according to the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father; And He will come again with glory to judge the living and dead. His kingdom shall have no end. And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Creator of life, Who proceeds from the Father, Who together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke through the prophets. In one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the age to come.

3. Repeat the oath, law, and/or motto of your Scout organization to your priest. Explain to him how your organization has many objectives common with those of the Church.

4. Sketch the ALPHA-OMEGA Emblem. Explain its significance to your priest.

   A bronze bar with the words ALPHA-OMEGA imprinted thereon.

   A blue ribbon with seven white lines passing parallel through the center, blue denotes the sky in which the cross appeared to the Emperor Constantine, and the seven white lines, the seven sacraments, through which Christians receive the grace of the Holy Spirit.

   An equal-armed Greek Cross with the Orthodox Cross super-imposed in red on it. The three lobes of the Greek Cross remind us of the Holy Trinity. Red symbolizes the blood of Christ shed on the Cross for the salvation of mankind. The three-barred or Orthodox Cross contains the following meaning:

   The top bar is the name-plate which the Gospels say contained: "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" in Greek, Hebrew, and Latin.

   The second bar is that upon which Christ’s hands were nailed.

   The bottom bar is the foot piece to which Christ’s feet were nailed. The slant represents both, the promise that the thief on the right would rise to Paradise and the thief on the left would sink to eternal punishment, and that Christ suffered so much on the Cross, that in his agony he physically bent the foot piece out of shape.
1. Why does the Orthodox Church have Mysteries (sacraments)? There are Seven Mysteries in the Church which are God's way of physically blessing His children. In a very real way we become sharers or partakers in Christ and His Church through The Mysteries. Name the Seven Mysteries, and find passages relating to them in your Bible and explain their purpose and meaning in your own words.

2. Bishops and priests administer The Mysteries of the Church. Name the bishop of your eparchy/diocese.


4. During the period you are studying for this program, attend a service celebrated by a Priest or a Bishop that you normally do not attend. (Example: A Hierarchical Liturgy, a wedding, Vespers, Orthoros, etc.)
Part 2
C: Community Life

1. Describe the first missionary attempts by the Orthodox Church on the North American continent. What year was this missionary work begun? What is the status of this diocese today? How has Fr. Herman, an early missionary to Alaska, been recognized by the Orthodox Church?

2. Where was the first parish church in the continental United States located? In what year was it founded?

3. What is the "Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America"?

4. One of the most significant contributions and enduring forms of Orthodox Christian witness to world culture has been the Icon. In your notebook, sketch your church from the top looking down. Show the iconostasis. Identify the three principle parts of the building.

5. Sketch a simple iconostasis, and show what the icon in each location should represent.

6. What is an icon? What does it represent? What does it mean to venerate an icon? How do we venerate an icon? What is the significance of candles in our Church?

Part 2
D: Two Service Projects
First Orthodox Church in USA founded in 1864

Assembly of Bishops
COMPLETION PART 2

My Signature_________________________ Date Completed __________

Comments by Parent or Guardian:

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Comments by Priest:

Signature of Priest ____________________________________________
Part 3
A. Personal Life

1. Continue with daily Bible reading, prayers, and blessings before meals. Now read the Gospel of St. John. Read one chapter every day. How is it different from Matthew, Mark and Luke?
2. Explain the importance and meaning of the Holy Eucharist (Holy Communion).
3. Name the most important feast day in the Orthodox Church. How is its date determined?
4. Explain the significance of the following important feast days of the Orthodox Church. Give the dates, or how the date is determined.
   a. Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)
   b. Theophany (Epiphany)
   c. Nativity of the Theotokos
   d. Presentation of our Lord
   e. Annunciation
   f. Presentation of the Theotokos
   g. Transfiguration of our Lord
   h. Dormition of the Theotokos
   i. Entry into Jerusalem
   j. Ascension
   k. Pentecost
   l. Exaltation of the Cross
   m. Sunday of Orthodoxy

https://www.goarch.org/chapel/calendar

B. Parish Life

1. Discuss with your family and priest the specific customs of your parish relating to the Feast of Feasts (Pascha), and other Feast days of the Church.
2. The parish is also part of one family through ministry in one's home. Explain how to prepare the room of a sick person when the priest comes.
3. Explain what to have ready when the priest comes to bless your home.
C. Community Life

1. Discuss with your priest how the services and feasts of the Church can help others learn about Greek Orthodoxy, and help people in the world.

2. Read one of these suggested books:

   Book of the Saints by Mary P. Hallick
   Lives of the Saints Series by Constance Tarasar
   Lives of the Saints for Young People by The Rev. Dcn. Lev Puhalo
   Orthodox Saints Series by George Poulos
   They Walked with God by Lydia Kesich

D. One Service Project
COMPLETION PART 3

My Signature________________________ Date Completed __________

Comments by Parent or Guardian:

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Comments by Priest:

Signature of Priest ________________________________
Part 4

1. The Scout Oath says: On my honor I will do my best to do my Duty to God and my country and to obey the scout law to help other people at all times to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight.

What does Duty to God mean to you? Tell how you do your duty to God in your daily Life:

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

2. Make a list of things you can do to practice your duty to God as you are taught in your home or Church. Select two of the items and practice them for at least two weeks.

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Part IV may be supplemented / replaced by the appropriate rank / program requirement as listed by your scouting program handbook.
Registration / Presentation Instructions

1. Final Review:
   When all four parts are completed, the priest should arrange a meeting between the recipient, the parents or guardians and himself. This discussion could begin with what it meant to work together as a family on the Alpha-Omega Award Program.

2. Registration:
   Visit our webpage at: https://www.eocs.org/alpha-omega-award to download the Application form. The Application/Order Form should be filled out and mailed with payment to the following address:

   Programs of Religious Activities with Youth (P.R.A.Y.)
   11123 S. Towne Sq Ste B
   St. Louis, MO 63123
   www.PrayPub.org
   tel. (800) 933-7729 fax(314) 845-0038
   email: info@praypub.org
   Or

   May be ordered online at: https://store.praypub.org/eastern-orthodox

3. Please allow two to three weeks prior to presentation date. It should be presented in the church by an appropriate church authority.

   The presentation of the medal is made only on the authority of the Eastern Orthodox Committee on Scouting through the local parish priest.
Eastern Orthodox Committee on Scouting
Community and Individual Donation Form

The EOCS seeks donations on a yearly basis to offset the costs of its various Outreach and religious growth programs. The suggested membership donation per community is $50, which registers all the scouting units in the parish. It also entitles one designated leader of the community to be put on our mailing list (either internet or regular mail). It is recommended that you consider naming your parish priest the designated leader. Other adult leaders of the community and any other individual wishing to support the EOCS is encouraged to make an individual donation of $10 each in order to support our programs and be put on our mailing list. Please make the form available to others who may want to support the EOCS and its mission of promoting Orthodox Scouting. The EOCS makes all of its news events, meeting minutes and other announcements available via the internet (www.eocs.org). You can also visit us on Facebook.

Community Donation                                                                   $50 ________
Individual Donation (s)                                                _______ X $15 ________
(list name/address of individual donors on a separate paper)
Official EOCS Patch (sent via regular mail)               _______ X $10________
Contribution to the EOCS Scholarship Fund                               $     ________
Donation to the EOCS general operational fund                        $     ________
Total donation $     ________

Please select one:
[ ]Community Leader (included in community donation)
[ ]Individual supporter

Please fill in the appropriate spaces below:
Parish name: __________________________________________________
Unit Designation: _______________________________________________
Name: _________________________________________________________
Position _______________________________________________________
Street Address: ________________________________________________
Phone # _______________________________________________________
City/St./Zip Code: _____________________________________________
Email Address: _______________________________________________

Please make your selection:
[ ]Notify me via the internet          [ ] Notify me via the USPS

Mail all completed forms and checks( payable to the Eastern Orthodox Committee on Scouting) to the address below.
EOCS Van Christakos 14-33 30 Road Astoria, NY 11102-3639