Carole A. Buleza, Director; (717) 747-5221; aodce@aol.com
Carole was appointed to the position of Director of the Department of Christian Education for the Antiochian Archdiocese in January 2000. She holds a B.A. in Elementary Education and a Master’s Degree in Religion, with a specialty in Religious Education. Soon after, Carole was asked to chair the Curriculum Department of the OCEC, a position she held from 2001-2005. Also, in 2001, with her volunteer staff, Carole began the conference, the “Orthodox Institute for Continuing Education in the Faith,” which was held at Antiochian Village for 14 years. Along with her staff, Carole has conducted mini-institutes around the Archdiocese. One of the first to see the potential of the internet for educational purposes, she launched the widely used Antiochian Gospel Program “Let Us Attend” in 2004. In her position as chair of the OCEC Curriculum department, Carole was the project director and primary author for the high school text *The Way, The Truth & The Life*. She also established the Training Department and wrote a program of standardized training for teachers, entitled “Educating Ourselves and Our Children in Godliness.” Since 2004, it has provided thousands of teachers throughout North America with the resources and training for success in the church school classroom. In the last five years Carole identified the need of today’s parents, directors and teachers to be informed and educated through the media of social networking. The Department provides Facebook, Pinterest and blog sites for interaction with parents and those involved in church school ministry. As Carole continues to serve the Archdiocese, her focus is on providing the resources required for an entirely new formative curriculum.

Kristina Wenger, Internet Ministries; aodcesocialnetworking@gmail.com
Kristina Wenger has her M.Ed. in Elementary Education. She has taught first grade, homeschooled her children, and worked together with her husband, Timm, to found the educational organization Kids and Cultures. Kristina works part time for the Department, managing social media ministries: the Orthodox Christian Parenting and Sunday Church School Teachers Facebook pages and blog sites and the AODCE pinterest account, while also writing some curriculum for the department. Previously, she has written a VCS curriculum for the Department, and presented at the Orthodox Institute. Additionally, she and her husband provide the Department’s weekly Gospel podcast “Let Us Attend,” which can be heard on Ancient Faith Radio. She works part time as a professional storyteller for Kids and Cultures, helps her husband manage an AirB&B and assists him in his job offering different kinds of tours of their city of Lancaster, PA. Kristina volunteers at the local public library and in two local schools. The Wengers are recently adjusting to an “empty nest.” In her free time, Kristina enjoys being with her family, creating things, photography, and hiking. Kristina and Timm and are members of St. John Chrysostom Church, York, PA.

Leslie Atherholt, Staff Assistant; (717) 747-5221 aodce.events@gmail.com
Leslie works part time for the Department of Christian Education and assists with special projects, including assisting parishes plan and publicize trainings, and preparing materials for the department’s workshops and displays at Parish Life Conferences. She
also manages content for the department website and facebook page. Leslie graduated from the Pennsylvania State University with a degree in advertising. She is a member of St. John Chrysostom Church in York, PA, where her husband, Deacon Jerome, serves. Together, they are former JOY and SOYO leaders. Leslie spent 19 years homeschooling her three children.

DIOCESAN COORDINATOR VOLUNTEERS
Please contact the Diocesan Coordinators for updates on training activities and other events in your region.

Charleston, Oakland, Pennsylvania & the East; New York and Washington D.C.
V. Rev. George Alberts; (570)824-5016; frgeocar@sbcglobal.net
Fr. George, a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh and St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, has been involved in Orthodox Christian Education for over 50 years. Ordained to the priesthood in 1973, he also studied Clinical Pastoral Education at Pine Rest Mental Health Hospital, Grand Rapids, MI, and has taught Sociology, Marriage and Family, Philosophy and Ethics at the community college level. Fr. George has served as Spiritual Advisor for both the Midwest and Eastern Region Teen SOYO as well as Antiochian Village Summer Camp Director and Special Olympics Camp Coordinator. He has served at parishes in New York, New Jersey, California, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Montreal, Canada and Connecticut and is currently the pastor of St. Mary Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church in Wilkes-Barre, PA. In addition, he holds the position of Antiochian Archdiocese representative to the Orthodox Christian Education Commission (OCEC) and is their Recording Secretary. He is also the Christian Education Coordinator for both the Diocese of New York and Washington, D.C., and the Diocese of Oakland, Charleston and the Mid-Atlantic.

Toledo and the Midwest
Robert Snyder; (330) 493-4029; bobsny1107@aol.com
Robert is the Christian Education Coordinator for the Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest, a position he has held for over twenty years. He has actively been engaged in Christian education for nearly 49 years as a high school teacher, a teen youth advisor, and currently an instructor in Adult Christian Education. During this time, Robert has conducted many Christian Education workshops and written numerous articles on Christian Education for the Word Magazine and the OCEC Christian Education Newsletter. He authored the high school curricula “Celebrations- Feasts and Holy Days”, “Great and Holy Saturday- Old Testament Stories of Salvation,” “The First 800 Years,” “My Body Myself,” and “Coming to America- The Orthodox Church in America.” Robert graduated with honors from the University of Akron School of Business Administration. He later received his CPIM from APICS. Robert has previously worked at McNeil Machine, Goodyear Aerospace, Loral, Teledyne and has been employed for the last 13 years at Coltene LLC, an international manufacturer and distributor of dental consumables. He is also Vice President and Co-founder of the Barberton Historical, an organization dedicated to preserving the remaining buildings of the O.C. Barber estate.
Los Angeles and the West  
Eagle River and the Northwest  
Anne Beach; (425)478-9885; philotheavenizelou@gmail.com

Anne Beach earned a B.A. in Communication Sciences and Disorders and an M.A. in Speech Language Pathology from Western Washington University. Previously having earned a vocational certificate as a marine carpenter, Anne worked both in shipyards and on tall sailing ships. She has 3 grown children who she homeschooled for most of their K-12 education. Anne has been a prosphora baker and a leader of Women’s Fellowship. She has been involved in Christian education in her home parish of St Paul Orthodox Church in Brier, Washington for 20 years. Anne taught Church school for many years and was instrumental in organizing a Vacation Church School program and a yearly Nativity Play. For the past 12 years, she has been the director of the church school program. Currently, Anne works in the public schools as a speech language pathologist serving children ages 3-21 with developmental communication delays and disorders.

Ottawa and Upstate New York  
Rev. Fr. Christopher Rigden-Briscall; (519) 807-2986; father@xcsaviour.com

Father Christopher, originally from the West Coast of Canada, has a background in the field of Social Work. He has worked directly with children and families in crisis (including being a foster parent with his wife) for over 20 years. He converted to Orthodoxy in 1996 and has been a priest since 2005. He studied at St. Vladimir’s Seminary and at Wilfrid Laurier University. He now serves at Christ the Saviour Church in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. He also serves as a Hospital Chaplain, a University Chaplain and serves at the Local Women’s Prison. Over the years he has also been very involved in Camp Ministry. A father of four and married for over 25 years, Father, enjoys travelling with his family as well as gardening, canoeing and Sci-fi and Fantasy literature and movies. He has served as the Christian Education Coordinator of the Diocese of Ottawa, Eastern Canada and Upstate New York since 2009.

Wichita and Mid-America  
Dn. Elisha Long; (512) 497-8328; rlongsummer@gmail.com  
(Deaneries: Great Plains, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Rocky Mountain)

Deacon Elisha has a B.A. in Christian Ministry and Biblical Studies, an M.A. in Applied Orthodox Theology and is currently enrolled as PhD student at the Antiochian House of Studies. He was ordained to the Holy Diaconate in April 2016. He spent sixteen years in the classroom at Regents School of Austin, teaching 5th grade for four years and middle school Bible for twelve. At the end of May 2017, he was named the Head of the School of Logic and in May 2019 he transitioned into the Head of Grammar role. He has served as the
Church School Director at St. Elias in Austin for almost ten years. Deacon Elisha has been working with students since his days in college. Deacon Elisha and his wife, Sh. Nina, have been married since 1997. They have two sons, George and Cosmas.

Kh. Gigi Shadid; (281) 903-7193; gigishadid@gmail.com
(Deaneries: Southwest, and North, Central, and East Texas)

Kh. Gigi graduated from the University of Houston in 1998 with a degree in Interdisciplinary Studies. She has been in education for over 20 years and has a passion for teaching with music. To date, she has produced five original educational music CDs, four of which are for teaching Orthodox children of all ages. In addition, she wrote a 5-day VBS curriculum entitled, "Time to Go to Church: Touch, Smell, Taste, Hear, and See Jesus." She has served the Department of Christian Education for over 10 years and has helped write Creative Festival lesson plans and songs as well as present workshops to teachers. For over 10 years, Gigi has served the Diocese of Wichita and Mid-America as their Bible Bowl Coordinator. She has been involved in four of our Orthodox summer camping programs, has been a full-time youth director, and is currently teaching first grade and sixth grade at The Saint Constantine (Orthodox Classical) School in Houston. Gigi is married to Fr. James Shadid of St. George in Houston, Texas and has three children: Dimitri, Noel, and Emil Shadid.

Worcester and New England
Mat. Anna Hughes; (978) 686-3274; matannah@aol.com

Mat. Anna Timko Hughes, who resides in Methuen MA, is the regional coordinator for the Diocese of Worcester And New England. She holds a BA in Sociology and Education from Wilkes College and a M.Ed with concentration in History from Lamar University. She currently teaches American History and AP US Government at Methuen High School. She is married to the Very Rev. Edward W. Hughes and they have four adult children and three grandchildren. She is a member of St. George Orthodox Church in Lawrence, MA, where she chants, sings in the choir and volunteers with the Sunday school and other activities. She also is a trainer for the OCEC. She spends her free time crocheting, reading and traveling.

Miami and the Southeast
Anna-Sarah Farha; (901) 409-8059; aodce.csdirectors@gmail.com

Anna-Sarah Farha earned a Bachelor of Science, Merchandising from the University of Kentucky and for several years worked within retail management training employees in various capacities. While she no longer works corporately, she homeschools her daughter and actively serves the Sunday School of St. George in Jacksonville, FL. Prior to living in Jacksonville, Anna-Sarah and her family were at St. John Church in Memphis, TN, Saint George Cathedral in Coral Gables, FL, and St. Thomas Church in
Snohomish, WA. She has served as vice-president and president of the Antiochian Orthodox Women local chapter (St. John), organized several events at the PLC held in Memphis (St. John), and served at Saint George as vice principal of Sunday School for two years, the Creative Arts Festival coordinator for two years, and editor of the monthly Sunday School newsletter for two years. While at St. Thomas in Washington, Anna-Sarah trained in Level I Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. Within the Department of Christian Education, Anna-Sarah is the direct liaison and support for our Sunday Church School Directors. She can be reached at: aodce.csdirectors@gmail.com.

ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEERS/INSTRUCTORS

Gail Meena attends St. Matthew the Evangelist Orthodox Church in North Royalton, Ohio. She currently assists with the church education program as well as the Creative Festivals projects at St. Matthews. She was regional Creative Festival Chair for the past three years. Gail has published church school curriculum, including “Starting Over, Preparing for First Confession in the Orthodox Church” and “Papa’s Clock, a Children’s Book of Feast Days.” Gail coordinates the Antiochian Village camp scholarship program for her church, as well. She has taught in Parma, OH for the past 20 years, and is currently a 5th grade intervention specialist. She has three children and three grandchildren.

Sandy Mitchell received her B.A. in Biology from Cornell College. She currently teaches science to students in grades 1-12 at St. Peters Classical School Fort Worth, Texas. She is a member of St. Peters Antiochian Orthodox Church, where she serves as part of the teen SOYO advisor team. For 18 years, she has been an active part of St. Peter’s Christian Education department, serving as Church School Director, teacher, and VBS coordinator. Sandy is the Christian Education Director for Camp St. Raphael, for which she writes and compiles a yearly curriculum. She serves the Department of Christian Education as the Western Rite liaison, a teacher trainer for the OCEC, and as an associate Christian education coordinator for the Diocese of Wichita and Mid America.