



“Scripture Through the Lens of the Holy Land,” the Exhibit *By Carole A. Buleza*

The exhibit is available for rental from the Antiochian Orthodox Department of Christian Education. Please see the second section of the article, “Hosting,” for information. “Scripture through the Lens of the Holy Land” is dedicated to His Eminence Metropolitan PHILIP for his continuing support of Orthodox Christian

Education, and to all in the Archdiocese whose roots in the Middle East have given the Antiochian Department of Christian Education the particular privilege of presenting the Holy Land in word and image. Participants at the 2011 Orthodox Institute, “Scripture Through the Lens of the Holy Land,” were the first to view the exhibit prepared especially for that event.

“The exhibit made real my dream of visiting the Holy Land—it brought it to life for me.” N. D’Alessio, Kansas

“Phenomenal!” M. Ewing, New York

“Amazing. St. Helen came to the Holy Land and built churches to recall to us our spiritual roots; the exhibit does the same, and with her same passion and spirit. Dr. M. Khoury, Palestine



no longer are vague and incidental but rather related to Galilee and Jerusalem by certain distances and terrain. The land that Abraham settled is the seen to be the land where Jesus walked. Churches and monuments serve to mark the holy sites, so we will not forget that our faith is in a man who *lived* 2000 years ago, and *lives still*.

The exhibit is educational and is appropriate for retreats, camps, and special events at a parish or diocesan level. Regional clergy associations might consider sharing the costs and the exhibit. If a diocese or region wishes to schedule the exhibit with its corresponding Orthodox Institute program, “Scripture through the Lens of the Holy Land,” arrangements can be made with Mat. Myra Kovalak, Director, O.C.E.C. Department of Teacher Training, contact information: mekovalak@gmail.com.

An Invitation to the Spiritual Seeker

While certainly educational, the exhibit’s potential is far greater. If arrangements are made for a separate room where quiet can be maintained, the presentation offers the chance to learn the “divine ekonomos”—to walk through salvation history, and to understand the relationship of the Old and New Testaments. For the spiritual seeker, the alcoves of seven-foot banners provide an escape to a distant land where palms can be seen, soft music from the hills of Galilee can be heard, and the air is fragrant with sweet basil and cinnamon. Scriptural passages, beginning with the story of creation, immerse the seeker into history, but more importantly, into a special time—“kairos,” or sacred time—when the present moment touches eternity. Large illustrations of Abraham, Moses, Mary, and Jesus, and photos of where they lived, bring their reality home. Seeing the relatedness of the law and the prophets, the Promised Land and the Kings, Jerusalem and the Temple, leads to a deeper understanding of Jesus’ teachings, and Jews of His time. Place names familiar through hearing scriptures—Bethsaida, Nazareth, Canaan—

Hosting the Exhibit

The exhibit consists of one three-foot sign banner, and 20 three- and four-foot retractable banners that extend to a height of 7 feet. The exhibit’s footprint is 10 x 40 feet; 15 x 40 feet is the *minimum* that will allow for comfortable viewing—to envision the space required for the alcoves and viewing, picture four circles of 10 foot diameter next to each other. Ideally, it backs up against a wall. Provided with the exhibit are: clay replicas of oil lamps, a coat stand “spice tree,” and a cd of music.

The host provides at least *four people* as “crew” for set-up and take-down-repacking, and it would be very beneficial if at least one person helped both times. Care needs to be taken because the banner stands and poles are lightweight aluminum (to save shipping costs). While it may look easy, and we’ve done all we can to make it organized and efficient, it takes at least four careful people working at an unhurried pace to get the job done in 90 minutes. A person is to be “host” at the exhibit at all times making sure that every panel is secure and the exhibit well-presented.

The required materials are one or two small (card) tables, possibly floor lamps and extension cords. The lamps may be necessary if the room lighting is inadequate (the 7’ banners may block lighting from reaching all the alcoves). The costs are \$200 for shipping, and whatever donation (from \$20 to \$200) you can make to the department for a rental period of up to 16 days (negotiable). Contact aodce@aol.com.