

# Getting Kids to Sing in Church

(without gimmicks)

David Lucs – June 2014  
Pan-Orthodox Liturgical Music Symposium





“Bottom line: Don't patronize kids.

They're little people. You gotta personalize it.

Make it fun. If it's something you'd enjoy, they'd enjoy it.”

- Euphegenia Doubtfire (1993)

# ***Goals for Kids to Join Us in Song:***

## **+ Spiritual Nourishment**

Examples of Christian Love

Provide age appropriate interaction

## **+ Spiritual Knowledge**

Teachings to apply in their daily lives

Create / Provide memorable experiences

= Reasons to come to church







amazement



serenity

peace

awe



breath-  
taking

wonder



**Do our kids grow *in* church as much  
as they grow *outside* of church?**



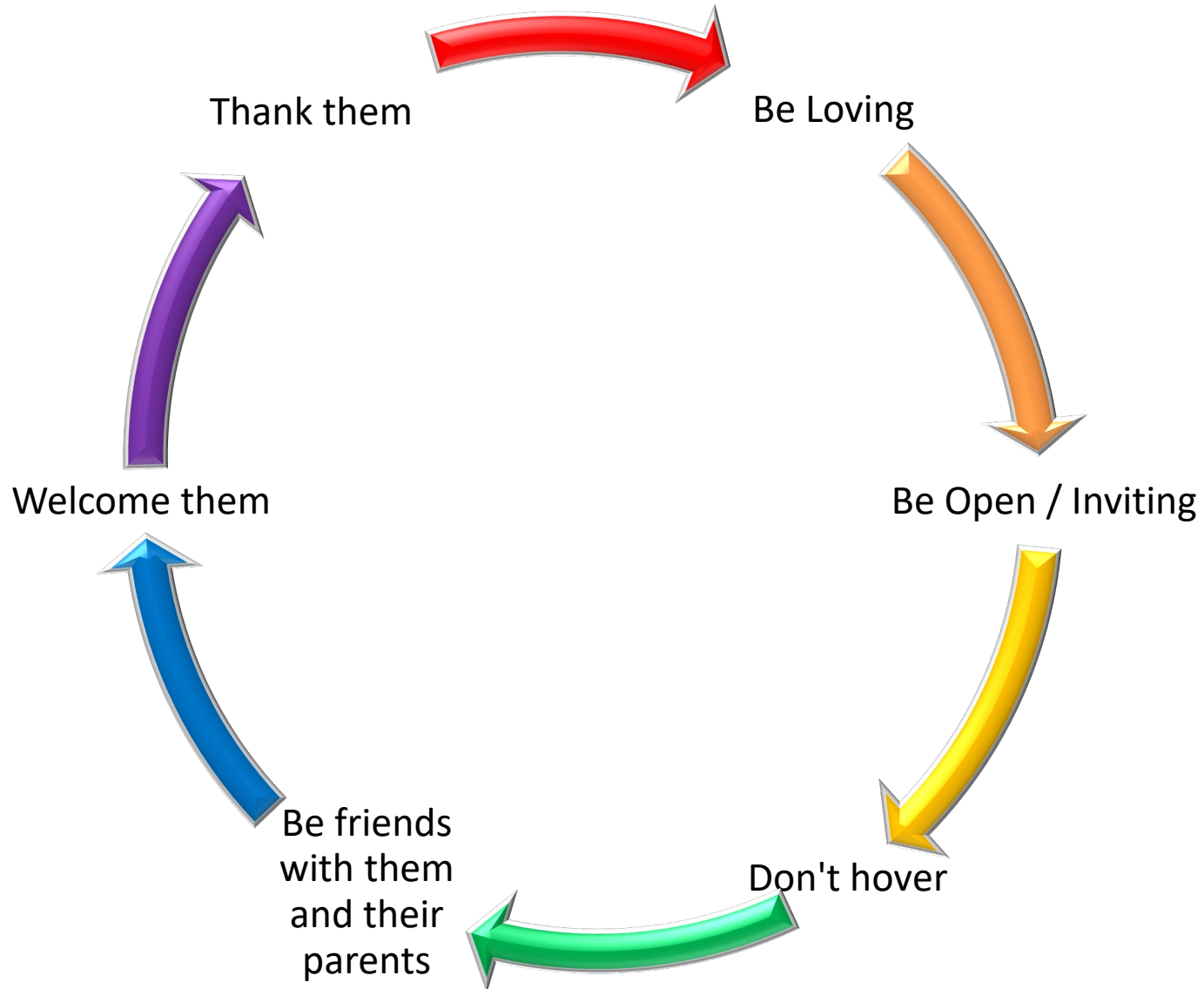
**Our adolescents need urgently two aspects of religious education in order to help them gain maturity:**

- The opportunity to make religion a part of their own experience of life, of their own thinking, of their own motivation through very informal free discussions, through participation in church work, and through friendships.
- They also need to acquire information that will allow them to think intelligently, that will provide some material for evaluation and judgment.

**You cannot think profitably of something about which you know practically nothing, and we have to admit that this is the status of a large majority of adolescents.**



# Keeping Kids in Church





The church has to offer adolescents *meaningful values* that young people can consciously accept of their own free choice at this special level of maturity and insecurity that they have reached.

The church has to give them an image, a taste, of what life should be, of what is holiness, what is truth, faith, loyalty.

The Church is where they can find forgiveness, understanding and love when they have done wrong, and are confused, and mixed-up.

- Sophie Koloumzin

# What are the initial types of ways kids can become involved in singing?

Join the Choir

- Or, sing with their family

Let them get comfortable

Attend consistently

Become familiar with services

Turn the pages

# What can we do to encourage a familiarity with the services?

An Oral  
Tradition

Share our Knowledge

# Let's start from the very beginning...



## Scales

- In Unison
- In 2 part harmony
- In 3 part harmony

## Music

- Sing / Repeat (Echo)
- Watch the Director
- Listen to each other

**Do mi so do do so mi do**



**Bring the music ringing from your chest and not your nose while you sing your scales and your arpeggios.**



Moderato ♩ = 100

Melody

**A**

Harmony

Section A consists of two staves. The top staff, labeled 'Melody', contains a sequence of eight quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, and F4. The bottom staff, labeled 'Harmony', contains a sequence of eight quarter notes: G3, A3, B3, C4, B3, A3, G3, and F3. Both staves end with a fermata over the final note.

**B**

Section B consists of two staves. The top staff contains a sequence of eight quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, and F4, ending with a fermata. The bottom staff begins with a whole rest, followed by a sequence of seven quarter notes: G3, A3, B3, C4, B3, A3, and G3, ending with a fermata.

**C**

Section C consists of two staves. The top staff contains a sequence of notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, and F4. The notes from G4 to B4 are beamed together. The notes from C5 to F4 are beamed together. The notes C5 and B4 are marked with a fermata. The bottom staff contains a sequence of eight quarter notes: G3, A3, B3, C4, B3, A3, G3, and F3, with the first five notes beamed together.

# Trisagion

*Divine Liturgy*

D. Lucs 2009

Moderato ♩ = 60

Soprano  
Alto

A - men. Ho - ly God, Ho - - -

Tenor  
Bass

Musical notation for Soprano and Alto parts of the Trisagion. The Soprano part is on a treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a time signature of 4/4. The Alto part is on a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: "A - men. Ho - ly God, Ho - - -".

ly Migh - ty, Ho - ly Im - mor - tal, have

Musical notation for Tenor and Bass parts of the Trisagion. The Tenor part is on a treble clef staff and the Bass part is on a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: "ly Migh - ty, Ho - ly Im - mor - tal, have".

mer - cy on us!

Musical notation for Tenor and Bass parts of the Trisagion. The Tenor part is on a treble clef staff and the Bass part is on a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: "mer - cy on us!".

# Koinonikon

Psalm 115:4 (116:13)

*Feasts of the Theotokos*

Moderato  $\text{♩} = 80$

D. Lucs 2009

Soprano  
Alto

Tenor  
Bass

I will re - ceive the cup of sal - va -

Detailed description: This system shows the vocal parts for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The Soprano and Alto parts are written on a single staff with a treble clef. The Tenor and Bass parts are written on a single staff with a bass clef. The music is in a minor key (one flat) and 4/4 time. The tempo is Moderato with a quarter note equal to 80 beats per minute. The lyrics are "I will re - ceive the cup of sal - va -".

tion and call on the name of the Lord.

Detailed description: This system continues the vocal parts from the first system. The lyrics are "tion and call on the name of the Lord." The Soprano and Alto parts are on a treble clef staff, and the Tenor and Bass parts are on a bass clef staff.

Al - le - lu - ia Al - - - le - lu - ia.

Detailed description: This system continues the vocal parts. The lyrics are "Al - le - lu - ia Al - - - le - lu - ia." The Soprano and Alto parts are on a treble clef staff, and the Tenor and Bass parts are on a bass clef staff.

Al - - - le - lu - - - ia.

Detailed description: This system concludes the vocal parts. The lyrics are "Al - - - le - lu - - - ia." The Soprano and Alto parts are on a treble clef staff, and the Tenor and Bass parts are on a bass clef staff.

# What can we do to encourage a familiarity with the services?

An Oral  
Tradition

Introduce the  
Basics of Church

Share our Knowledge

**These Gifts and for whom they were offered...**



**Sing to God**

**Hear the Gospel**

**Pray to God**

**Return to God**

**Receive the Eucharist**

**Worship God**

**Be A Part of the Church**

**Give Thanks to God**

# What can we do to encourage a familiarity with the services?

An Oral Tradition

Introduce the Basics of Church

Share our Knowledge

Introduce the Basics of Music



# Introducing the Basics of Music

## *Learning to read music.*

Music is a language we use to convey sounds which accompany the words of the hymns we sing. The music on the opposite page guide us in how to sing the words of the Trisagion.



The vertical bar with two dots says we repeat starting here.

This indicates we'll sing the hymn three times. (3x)

These 'curves' are called slurs, and mean we should sing the notes smoothly.

These are eighth notes, and are sung twice as fast as the quarter note for the syllable "Ho-"

This is a flat, and helps us know how to sing notes which appear in the music.

Five lines are used to show how each note is sing and how it relates to the rest of the music.

These circles with stems are called notes, and represent the sound we'll sing. Some notes are solid while others are hollow. Some have tails, while others don't even have stems. These indicate how long we should sing each note.

The words which we sing are divided by each syllable in relation to the notes which will be sung.

These are called quarter notes and are often used to indicate the tempo of the hymn.

A musical staff with a treble clef and a flat key signature. The staff contains a repeat sign, followed by a solid note, a slur over two eighth notes, and a slur over two quarter notes. Below the staff, the words "Ho - ly God," are written, with lines connecting them to the notes above. The word "Ho" is under a solid note, "ly" is under a slur over two eighth notes, and "God," is under a slur over two quarter notes. The word "Ho" is followed by a dash, and "God" is followed by a comma.

# What can we do to encourage a familiarity with the services?

An Oral Tradition

Introduce the Basics of Church

Share our Knowledge

Introduce the Basics of Music

Resources to bring home

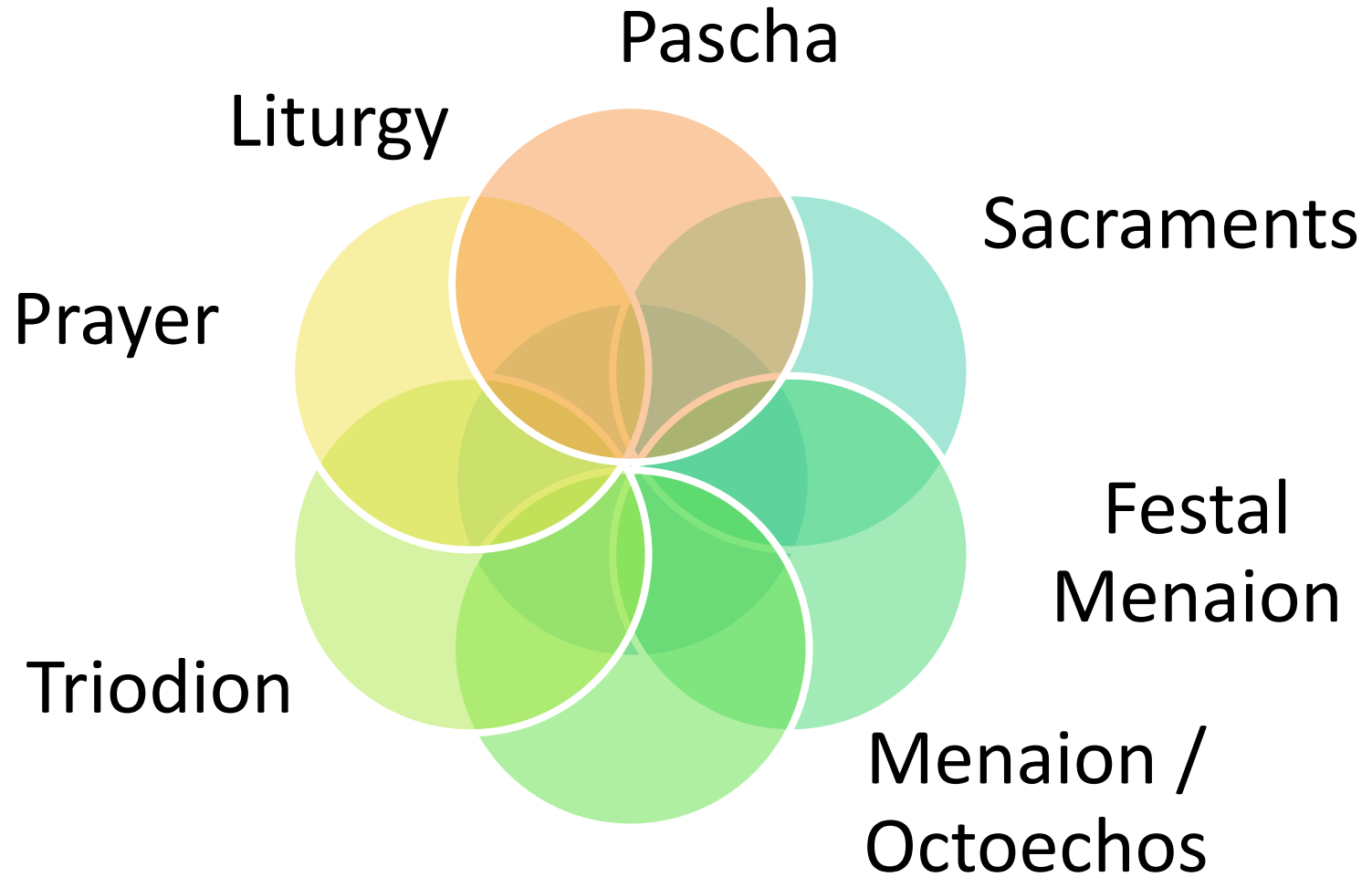
# What can we do to help bring music into the home?

## Send home:

- Morning / evening prayers
- Basics of music
- Settings of common hymns:
  - Lord's Prayer
  - O Heavenly King
  - It is Truly Meet
  - Festal troparia / kontakia
  - Troparia for patron saints for family members
  - Prayers at meals
  - Paschal Troparion
  - All of Creation



# What can we use to connect the liturgical life to the daily life of kids?



# What Kids Can Do....

## Troparion

*Pascha - The Resurrection of Our Lord*

Moderato  $\text{♩} = 90$

Lucs - 2010

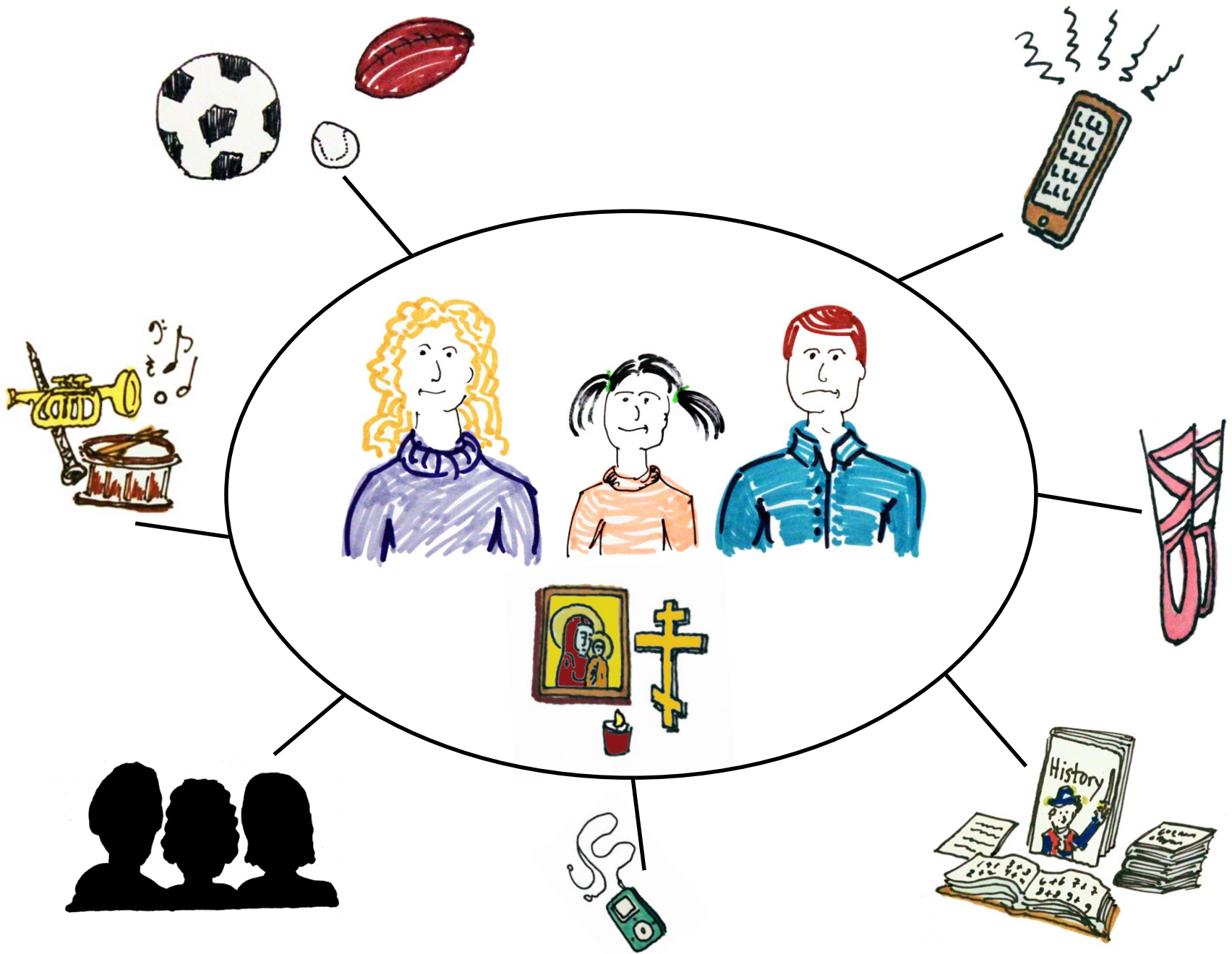
Voice 1  
Voice 2



Christ is ri-sen from the dead, tramp-ling down death by death,



and u-pon those in the tombs, be-stow - ing life!







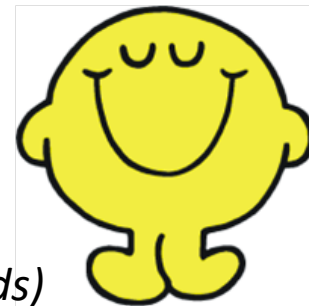
# What to Avoid...

*(from yourself and the kids)*

- Unrealistic expectations
- Patronizing
- Closed doors
  
- Sprinting
- Sophomore slump
- Scare Tactics
  
- Perfection
- Excuses
- Helicopters / Deadbeats
  
- Gimmicks
- Kid concert liturgies
- Singing which distorts the liturgy

# What to Do...

*(for yourself and for the kids)*



- Be realistic
- Be happy
- Open communication
  
- Run a marathon
- Take a break
- Be Thankful
  
- Appreciate
- Reason
- Partner / Encourage
  
- Lead with patience
- Practical musical settings
- Joyous and dynamic liturgies

# Provide a setting which can be:

- Prayerful
- Transformative
- Memorable
- Adopted
- Shared





# Remember the Sower...

“I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor; others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”

- John 4:38

“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

- Matthew 28:19-20

“The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom.”

- Matthew 13:37-38



# Thank you

Especially to:

Kurt and Larissa Sander

*and all those who helped organize this conference*

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David Drillock

Mark Bailey

Father Ivan Moody

Dr Maria Takala-Roszczenko

and to Sasha and our girls (Tatiana & Gabriella)

# *Suggested Resources*

## **Our Church and Our Children**

– Sophie Koulomzin / SVS Press

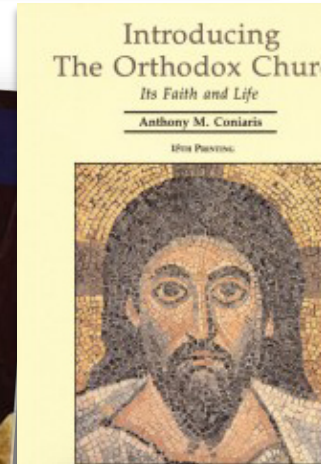
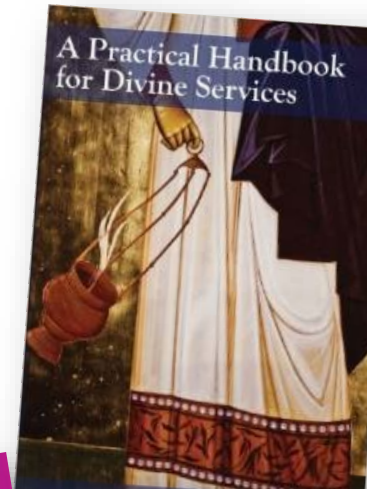


## **80 Talks for Orthodox Young People**

– Fr Anthony Coniaris / Light & Life Press

## **A Practical Handbook for Divine Services**

– Gregory W. Woolfenden / Holy Trinity Press



## **Chant Settings by Fr Ivan Moody**

[www.ivanmoody.co.uk/downloads.htm](http://www.ivanmoody.co.uk/downloads.htm)

## **Chant Settings by David Lucs**

[www.dlucscollection.com/music/index.html](http://www.dlucscollection.com/music/index.html)

