

# Teaching the Creative Festivals Theme to Teachers

**GOAL:** To explain and define the spiritual dimensions of the theme for teachers so that they will be able to teach the theme to their students.

**OBJECTIVES:** Look at the two parts of the theme separately; defining each part and then discuss how they relate one to the other.

1. **Define:** Body of Christ; Church; Unity; Unity of the faith; Pan-Orthodox; Jurisdictions; Who is the Head of the Church.

2. **“Building up the Body of Christ” – three aspects of “building”**

- a. Personal – *“Save yourself and you save a thousand souls” St. Seraphim of Sarov*
  - i. Discuss the “image” of God within us and distinguish from the “likeness” of God - one is our soul; the other our potential to become saints.
  - ii. We must develop our personal relationship with Christ through prayer, fasting, almsgiving, receiving the Holy Mysteries of the Church; reading Scripture and the Church Fathers, and worship.
  
- b. Church = Parish/diocese/archdiocese - Why do we need the Church?  
*“upon this rock . . .” cite Matthew 16: 13-18*
  - i. We are the people of God; the community of Faith; as the Church we maintain unity of Spirit, one Church; one God; one Doctrine; one Baptism.
  - ii. Members of one another – many and diverse, but one in the Communion Cup.
  - iii. The place where we may become what we are created to be - one with Christ.
  
- c. Nationally (all of SCOBA jurisdictions under one administrative umbrella)
  - i. With all SCOBA jurisdictions working as one we are a stronger witness/voice for the Faith.

3. **“ . . . until we all come to the unity of the faith . . .”**

*From the Divine Liturgy; at the Anaphora: “And grant us with one mouth and one heart to glorify and praise . . .”*

*And just before the Lord’s Prayer: “Asking for the unity of the Faith, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.”*

*From Prayer of the Hours: “Surround us with Your holy angels so that guided and guarded by them, we may attain to the unity of the Faith and to the full knowledge of Your unapproachable glory. For You are blessed unto ages of ages. Amen.”*

- a. If we get our “houses” in order beginning with our personal “house” and take that work in progress to the Church, we might then proceed to uniting nationally as One Faith and One Witness.
  - i. From an administrative point of view, we could better use our resources and cease to duplicate each others efforts using the IOCC and OCMC as models of cooperation.
  - ii. We could have a greater spiritual and moral impact on issues of the day, i.e. abortion, stem cell research, foreign policy, the media, etc.

- iii. We bring more people into the faith by providing a united voice of the faith of more than 5 million Orthodox Christians; providing understanding of Scripture; knowledge of God . . . walking “in love, in light, in wisdom” together.
- iv. We would have a diversity of people emphasizing the universality of the True Faith.