

## ~ SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES ~

**Lori Branch** is associate professor of Restoration and 18th-century British Literature at the University of Iowa. Her first book, *Rituals of Spontaneity: Sentiment and Secularism from Free Prayer to Wordsworth*, was named 2007 Book of the Year by the Conference on Christianity and Literature. She and her husband Robert Peterson are jointly homeschooling their five-year-old twin daughters, Nina and Nicole.

**Elizabeth Bushelli** is a priest's wife and the mother of six children who range in age from two months to almost twelve years. Until the birth of her first child, Elizabeth worked as a Title I Tutor in Alaska. Now, in addition to homeschooling her children and attempting to keep her house in order, she directs the adult and youth choirs at St. Philip's Church in Souderton, PA.

**Sharon George** has always been fascinated by the story of the Titanic and the story of her great grandmother, Shawneenee George. The fact that her great grandmother is a survivor of the Titanic makes it all the more fascinating. It is her expressed goal to share her great grandmother's story with as many as possible as both a tribute to her and to all immigrants who made the United States into what it is today, a land of great opportunity and freedom for all.

The children of Sharon's great grandmother started Joy Cone Company in 1918 and that legacy carries on today. Joy Cone Company, located in western Pennsylvania is still owned and operated by the George family. Sharon is the Director of Quality Assurance/Quality Control. Her father, Joseph A. George and brothers, David and Aaron George, and cousin, Joseph White are also owners.

Sharon's talk focuses on 3 passengers: Molly Brown, the legend, Richard Norris Williams, the Olympian, and Shawneenee George, the matriarch of the George family. These 3 passengers have fascinating and unique stories to tell. Despite each coming from different worlds both literally and culturally, they nonetheless come together on the fateful voyage of the Titanic. Not only do they share voyage on the Titanic, but there are some striking links and similarities in their life stories despite their vastly divergent backgrounds and upbringing. Woven into each passenger story is news and information on the Titanic herself: what she looked like, 1<sup>st</sup> class versus 3<sup>rd</sup> class, why she sank, and the events that took place once she hit the iceberg.

The Titanic perhaps has more stories to tell from one single event than any other in history; it is a microcosm of life. And yet, in many ways, Titanic, like her name indicates, was larger than life...

**Sharon will be speaking to the children ages 7+ during Workshop Sessions 1 & 2. Parents are also welcome to attend these sessions.**

**Vicki Ghareeb** is a mother of 6 children ranging in ages from 13- 18 mo. She and her husband George have been officially homeschooling for 8 years. Prior to being a mother, Vicki enjoyed teaching in Preschool Special Education class.

**Vigen Guroian** received his B.A. from the University of Virginia in 1970 and his Ph. D. in Theology from Drew University in 1978. He is Professor of Religious Studies in Orthodox Christianity at the University of Virginia and the recipient of the University of Virginia Student Council Distinguished Teacher Award for 2010-2011. He and his wife June Vranian have two grown children, and live in Culpeper, Virginia on five acres of rolling countryside. They enjoy tending their large perennial and vegetable gardens, keeping bees, and strolling down the wooded “Wordsworthian Walk” to Hungry Run.

Dr. Guroian has authored ten books and has contributed nearly two hundred articles to books, journals, encyclopedias, magazines, and newspapers. His books have been translated into Greek, Russian, and Romanian.

*Tending the Heart of Virtue: How Classic Stories Awaken a Child’s Moral Imagination*, published in 1998, received national attention in newspapers and on radio, including NPR’s “Talk of the Nation,” and “The Mark Steiner Show.” It has continued to be read and used as an educational resource by parents, homeschoolers, religious instructors, and classical school faculties.

Dr. Guroian has written two books of Christian meditations on gardening. *Inheriting Paradise* (1999) and *The Fragrance of God* (2006). These are by the author’s own admission his favorite writing. They have earned him invitations to speak and give readings from gardening groups and churches in America and Great Britain. Mars Hill Audio offers a complete recording of *Inheriting Paradise* read by the author. *The Fragrance of God* has been the subject of an interview with the author on the syndicated National Public Radio Program, “On Being” (previously “Speaking of Faith”).

In 2005, ISI Books issued a collection of Dr. Guroian’s essays on literature, politics, education, and ethics. The book’s title is *Rallying the Really Human Things*. It includes such chapters as “On Fairy Tales and the Moral Imagination,” “On the Office of Being a Good Son or Daughter,” “Huxley’s Mirror,” “Flannery O’Connor: The Art of Incarnation,” “Dorm Brothel,” and “Why Should Businessmen Read Great Literature?”

Over the years, Dr. Guroian has gained prominence as an Eastern Orthodox theologian and ethicist. His first book *Incarnate Love: Essays in Orthodox Ethics* (1987) is a favored text in college and seminary courses, and the University of Notre Dame Press published a second expanded edition in 2002. In 2004, Wipf and Stock Publishers reissued his second book on ethics in the Orthodox tradition, *Ethics After Christendom: Toward an Ecclesial Christian Ethic* (1994). His most recent book *The Melody of Faith: Theology in an Orthodox Key* was published in 2010.

**Meg Jenkins** is the mother of 3 children ages 12, 9, and 4, all of whom she has homeschooled since birth. Before having children, she was a middle and high school teacher, and a career advisor at Virginia Tech. She currently teaches Sunday school at Holy Cross in Williamsport, PA where her husband serves as warden. She is passionate about raising children to understand their Faith, strengthen the family, and glorify God!

**Elizabeth Crispina Johnson** is the author of two picture books recently published by Conciliar Press, *And Then Nicholas Sang* and *What Do You Hear, Angel?* In addition to being a writer, she is also shepherd to a flock of Katahdin sheep in the Finger Lakes district of New York where she lives with her husband in an earth-sheltered house. Although her youngest child has recently graduated from homeschooling (the oldest just finishing his doctorate!) she is still involved in home education multi-generationally with her grandchildren who are also being home schooled. Elizabeth's approach to educating children is clearly reflected in her books -- teach, encourage, delight, and inspire.

**Andrew Kern** is the president and founder of the CiRCE Institute, a research and consulting service to classical educators. Andrew has trained teachers, led board retreats, and assisted with institutional development and start up in over 100 schools since 1996. He has been directing the CiRCE Institute full time since the summer of 2000. He is the author of the best-selling *Classical Education, the Movement Sweeping America* with Dr. Gene Edward Veith, and *The Lost Tools of Writing*, the first thorough application of classical rhetoric to upper school writing. Andrew is happily married to Karen. They are the parents of three boys and two girls: David, Matthew, Katerina, Larissa, and Andrew, each of whom they have home-schooled at various stages.

**Mat. Carolyn Klein** of Chambersburg, PA homeschools her 3 daughters while working part time as an Audiologist/Speech-Language Pathologist. She also holds a Montessori teacher credential. The Klein's homeschool challenges include dysgraphia, speech/language, auditory processing, sensory processing, ADHD, attachment disorder and PTSD.

**Vickie Nimmer** has been a lifelong musician and comes from a musical family. Vickie attends St. George Antiochian Church in Cedar Rapids, IA and is a 25 year member of the Adult Choir. Vickie also serves as a Vesper Chanter. Vickie is the director of the St. Romanos Junior Choir comprised of children 5-12 years. She has also authored and assembled the St. Romanos Hymnography book for children based the Church Liturgical Year. She and her husband Allan (retired professor from Kaplan University) live in Marion, IA. Vickie is a registered nurse and is employed by St. Luke's Hospital Nassif Heart Center. They have four grown children and now their first grandchild!

**Susan Papademetris** is in her 5th year of home schooling. She comes by her computing skills via osmosis and a bit of patient training from her computer-guy husband. In her spare time, she devours children's literature in a feeble attempt to keep half a step ahead of her 10-year-old voracious reader. Her family is active at Holy Transfiguration (OCA) in New Haven, CT.

**Barbara Shukin** - is an Orthodox Christian mother of five from ages 20 down to 4, and has homeschooled since the beginning using the Charlotte Mason and classical approaches. After receiving her MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, she taught for several years at the college level, and continues to teach through local co-ops, and by offering art classes for homeschoolers. Barbara is the author and publisher of the History Portfolio Series, the Nature Portfolio, and Journaling Throughout the Liturgical Year, offering a notebooking approach to the study of history, science, and the Orthodox faith.

**Angela Weaver** has been homeschooling her two boys, 8 and 11, for 6 years and uses a combination of Charlotte Mason method as well as a classical method. She has been teaching for her local homeschool group for 6 years and organizing field trips for the last 4 years.

**Robert Weaver** -Mr. Weaver is an Associate Librarian at a large private university in Virginia and has worked as a librarian for eleven years. In his work he has focused on collection development, copyright issues, serials management, in-class library instruction and research assistance. He has given presentations at professional conferences and community lecture series. Robert and his family have been members of Holy Trinity parish in Lynchburg, VA since 2006. He was ordained Subdeacon Robert by His Grace Bishop THOMAS in 2011.