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## **ЖІНОЧІ ЄПАРХІАЛЬНІ УЧИЛИЩА В СИСТЕМІ ДУХОВНОЇ ОСВІТИ НА ВОЛИНІ (1864-1917 РР.)**

**Анотація.** У статті проаналізовано зміст і особливості діяльності жіночих релігійних навчальних закладів на Волині – єпархіяльних шкіл для дочок духовенства, заснованих у Житомирі (1864 р.) та Кременці (1884 р.). Визначено основні риси функціонування Волинської єпархіяльної школи на трикласному етапі (1864–1884 рр.), шестикласному етапі (1884–1903 рр.) та етапі за Статутом 1891 року (1903–1914 рр.). Зазначено, що мета жіночих релігійних навчальних закладів зосереджувалася на вивченні Закону Божого, молитовних практик і розвитку навичок ведення домашнього господарства. Проаналізовано зміст освіти у Волинській єпархіяльній жіночій школі. Особливу увагу приділено ролі педагогіки як предмета, введеного до навчальної програми єпархіяльних шкіл Волині наприкінці XIX століття, що надавало випускницям право здобути звання домашніх наставниць. Наголошено на важливості створення парафіяльної школи при Волинській єпархіяльній школі як місця практики для майбутніх учителів. Визначено основні форми та методи навчальної діяльності в жіночих єпархіяльних школах на Волині, які переважно були репродуктивними: читання, переписування текстів, заучування їх напам'ять і відтворення, а також письмові творчі завдання. Зазначено, що особливе місце в мережі релігійних навчальних закладів Волині посідали жіночі єпархіяльні школи для дівчат духовного походження. Таким чином, не тільки хлопчики, а й дівчата, народжені в сім'ях священників та інших представників духовенства, здобували релігійну освіту і залишалися в цьому духовному стані в зрілому віці, забезпечуючи розшарування цієї соціальної групи протягом тривалого історичного періоду. У статті також розглянуто персонал жіночих релігійних навчальних закладів (начальниця, декан, виховательки, викладачі, помічниця виховательок, завідувачка господарської частини тощо).

**Ключові слова:** релігійна освіта, єпархіяльна жіноча школа, Волинь, педагогіка, молитовна практика, рукоділля.

## **WOMEN'S DIOCESAN SCHOOLS IN THE SYSTEM OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN VOLYN (1864-1917)**

**Abstract.** Aim and tasks research is to describe the content, forms, and methods of teaching and spiritual upbringing of girls in the women's diocesan schools of Volyn in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The article analyzes the content and characteristics of the activities of women's religious educational institutions in Volyn – diocesan schools for daughters of the clergy, which were established in Zhytomyr (1864) and Kremenets (1884). The main features of the Volyn Diocesan School's operations during the three-class stage (1864-1884), the six-class stage (1884-1903), and the stage under the 1891 Statute (1903-1914) are defined. It is noted that the goal of women's religious educational institutions was focused on studying the Law of God, prayer practices, and developing household management skills. The content of education at the Volyn Diocesan Women's School is analyzed. Special attention is given to the role of pedagogy as a subject introduced into the curriculum of Volyn's diocesan schools for women at the end of the 19th century, which granted graduates the right to claim the title of home tutors. The importance of establishing a parish school at the Volyn Diocesan School as a practice site for future teachers is emphasized. The main forms and methods of educational activities in women's diocesan schools in Volyn, predominantly reproductive, are identified: reading, copying texts, memorizing them, and reproducing them from memory, as well as written creative assignments. A special place in the network of religious schools in Volyn during the studied period was occupied by women's diocesan schools for girls of clerical origin. Thus, not only boys but also girls born into the families of priests and other representatives of the clergy received religious education and remained within this spiritual estate in adulthood, ensuring the stratification of this social group over a long historical period. The article also examines the personnel of the women's religious educational institutions (headmistress, dean, governesses, teachers, assistant governesses, supervisor of household matters, etc.).

**Keywords:** religious education, diocesan women's school, Volyn, pedagogy, prayer practice, needlework.

### **INTRODUCTION**

**The problem formulation.** A special place in the network of religious schools in Volyn during the studied period was occupied by women's diocesan schools for girls of clerical origin. Thus, not only boys but also girls born into



the families of priests and other representatives of the clergy received religious education and remained within this spiritual estate in adulthood, ensuring the stratification of this social group over a long historical period. Additionally, these schools addressed the education and upbringing of orphaned girls whose parents were priests (Kolesnyk, 2011). Since girls could not hold priestly positions, after marriage, their husbands could receive priestly ordination, thereby preserving the continuity of the clerical estate from parents to children.

The Russian imperial education policy from the late 18th century transferred some powers to the Holy Synod, which led to some educational institutions being under dual subordination – to the Ministry of Public Education and the Church Department. This solidified the dominance of Orthodoxy in the education system across all regions of the Russian Empire.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** The history of women's religious educational institutions has been thoroughly studied in historical and historical-pedagogical research by L. Ershova (2000) (Yershova, 2000), S. Lisnenko (2015) (Lisnenko, 2015), A. Svyatnenko (2013) (Svyatnenko, 2013), G. Stepanenko (2007) (Svyatnenko, 2007), and others.

**AIM AND TASKS RESEARCH** is to describe the content, forms, and methods of teaching and spiritual upbringing of girls in the women's diocesan schools of Volyn in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

**RESEARCH METHODS:** method of analysis and synthesis, historical method, method of generalization, systematic.

### RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

The need for the establishment of special women's religious educational institutions is attributed by scholars (L. Yershova (Yershova, 2000); H. Stepanenko (Svyatnenko, 2007)) to the first half of the 19th century, with the founding of such institutions dating back to the 1860s. Archival documents preserve reports from deans and other clergy to their direct superiors (mostly metropolitans) concerning the necessity of opening such institutions. These reports highlight the inability of girls from Orthodox priestly families to receive an education, which led to certain discontent within the clergy (Orthodox) community in the regions (Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Kyiv, sheets 1-1v).

Regarding the upbringing of future wives for Orthodox priests – «matushkas» – as L. Yershova (2006) rightly notes, the purpose of their education and upbringing was to ensure that graduates of religious educational institutions could «provide pleasant companionship to their husbands, assist them in maintaining the church premises, prepare medicine for the sick, raise their own children, and keep their households in the best possible order» (Yershova, 2006, p. 233). During the studied period, women's religious institutions were somewhat contrasted with women's gymnasiums and private boarding schools, as they occupied their own educational niche and differed in content from other women's educational institutions. These latter institutions were criticized by the Holy Synod for «fostering a passion for balls, dances, outfits, music, theatrical performances, and other not entirely safe entertainments» (Historical perspective on the participation of women in the religious..., p. 48). Some researchers (H. Stepanenko, 2007) see diocesan women's schools as a prototype of pedagogical institutions for training teachers for parish schools (Stepanenko, 2007).

In Volyn during the period under study, the Volyn School for Girls of Clerical Origin functioned in Zhytomyr (1864), followed by the later establishment of the Kremenets Diocesan Women's School (1884) (On the number and condition of educational institutions in the Volhynia province for 1874..., sheet 8). Additionally, in the early stage of the development of women's religious education in Volyn, the Horodyshche Monastery School also existed in the region (List of pupils of the Horodyshchensky Monastery School for 1871). Monastery women's schools are often considered the first form of primary education for girls of the Orthodox faith. By the mid-19th century, religious schools, representing a middle tier of religious education for women, began to be established.

O. Fotynsky (1914) wrote that the first such school in the Russian Empire was opened in 1843, modeled after the Tsarskoye Selo Lyceum. Later, women's diocesan religious schools began to emerge, followed by parish and church-teacher women's schools (Fotynsky, 1914, p. 4). The Volyn Diocesan Women's School was founded in 1864. According to O. Fotynsky, the official rationale for its creation was the need of «local clergy, who until then had to settle for a poor home education for their daughters or send them to private semi-Polish boarding schools» (Fotynsky, 1914, p. 4).

In 1861, it was planned to open such a school in the village of Mezhyrich in the Ostroh district, using the premises of a dissolved Franciscan monastery. However, Archbishop Antonyi deemed it more appropriate to open the school in Kremenets, next to the theological seminary, as it would be easier to provide the women's religious school with appropriate teaching staff. This attempt failed due to insufficient funds to set up the school in Kremenets, specifically in the buildings of a dissolved Basilian monastery (Case with a note from the council of the Volhynian Women's Diocesan School about the arrangement of the school in the city of Kremenets, 1891, sheet 18v). Consequently, the decision was made to establish the diocesan women's school in Zhytomyr. The school began its first academic year with 26 students, although six more could not start because their parents were unable to support them in Zhytomyr, having expected Kremenets to be the location of the school (Fotynsky, 1914, p. 8-9).

During the opening ceremonies of the diocesan school, much was traditionally said about the oppression of Orthodox Volhynians by Catholics, the «heavy hand of the Union», and the enslavement of peasants by the nobility. «The sphere of its [the Orthodox clergy's – S. L.] activity was incredibly challenging. ... All Jesuit virtues were employed against the least fortunate: hypocrisy, flattery, deception... The memorable Union laid its heavy hand particularly on the clergy, as representatives of the true religion and true Christian enlightenment» (Fotynsky, 1914, p. 11). Interestingly, in Bishop Antonyi's speech, a woman was described as «a rational and moral being, who has a share and right to partake in the benefits of reason» (Fotynsky, 1914, p. 11).

O. Fotynsky (1914) identified three stages in the history of the Volyn Women's Diocesan School: the three-class stage (1864-1884); the six-class stage (1884-1903); and the stage under the 1891 statute (1903-1914) (Fotynsky, 1914, p. 14).



According to archival materials (On the number and condition of educational institutions in the Volhynia province for 1874, sheet 8), during the initial phase of development, the Volyn Diocesan Women's School had between 20 and 50 students. The educational content at both monastic and diocesan schools was focused on varying degrees of study of the Law of God, participation in various prayer practices, and the development of household management skills. For instance, at the Volyn Spiritual School, students studied the Law of God, music, singing, basic medicine, needlework, domestic management, and the basics of accounting Report on the condition of the Volhynian School..., 1872).

At the beginning of its existence, Bishop Antoniý suggested incorporating the following subjects into the curriculum of the Volyn Diocesan Women's School:

1. The Law of God, including catechism, the history of the Old and New Testaments, and explanations of religious services;
2. Reading and writing in Russian and Church Slavonic;
3. Spelling;
4. Arithmetic, «up to the rule of three, solving arithmetic problems orally without the use of a board; counting on an abacus»;
5. Russian grammar; composition of short essays in the form of a story, letter, or brief reflection;
6. Church Slavonic grammar;
7. Russian history and Russian geography;
8. World history and world geography in a concise format;
9. Church singing;
10. Needlework, including the sewing of church vestments and other liturgical garments;
11. Training in household management and the necessary financial reporting for it (Fotinsky, 1914, p. 15).

The academic year at women's diocesan schools lasted from August 15 to June 15, with the final month dedicated to promotion and graduation exams. In 1873, the best graduates of the Volyn Spiritual School were awarded with copies of the Holy Scripture (Report on the condition of the Volhynian School..., 1872, p. 657).

Here is the translation of the text you provided, which includes the weekly schedule of lessons at the Volyn Diocesan Women's School in 1869 and the daily class schedule.

Table 1

**Weekly number of hours allocated to the study  
of different subjects at the Volyn Diocesan Women's School (1869)**

| Subject           | Number of lessons (1.5 hours each) |              |              |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
|                   | Junior Class                       | Middle class | Senior class |
| Law of God        | 4                                  | 2            | 2            |
| Spelling          | 4                                  | 4            | 3            |
| Russian Language  | 1                                  | 2            | 2            |
| Needlework        | 8                                  | 7            | 3            |
| Arithmetic        | 1                                  | 1            | 2            |
| World Geography   | 1                                  | 1            | -            |
| Russian Geography | -                                  | 1            | 1            |
| Russian History   | -                                  | 1            | 2            |
| World History     | -                                  | 1            | 2            |
| Singing           | 2                                  | 2            | 2            |
| Spiritual Reading | -                                  |              | 1            |

Source: Developed by the author

Table 2

**Class Schedule at the Three-Class Volyn Diocesan Women's School (1869)**

| Day    | Class Hours | Junior Class | Middle Class     | Senior Class      |
|--------|-------------|--------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Monday | 09:00-10:30 | Handicrafts  | Spelling         | Copying Lessons   |
|        | 10:30-12:00 | Spelling     | Handicrafts      | Divine Law        |
|        | 14:00-15:30 | Handicrafts  | Divine Law       | Spiritual Reading |
|        | 15:30-17:00 | Divine Law   | Russian Language | World History     |



|                  |             |                  |                                      |                    |
|------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Tuesday</b>   | 09:00-10:30 | Handicrafts      | Spelling                             | Handicrafts        |
|                  | 10:30-12:00 | Russian Language | Handicrafts                          | Spelling           |
|                  | 14:00-15:30 | Geography        | World Geography                      | Historical Reading |
|                  | 15:30-17:00 |                  | Arithmetic                           | Russian Language   |
| <b>Wednesday</b> | 09:00-10:30 | Spelling         | Handicrafts                          | Singing            |
|                  | 10:30-12:00 | Singing          | Singing                              | Handicrafts        |
|                  | 14:00-15:30 | Handicrafts      | World History                        | Historical Reading |
|                  | 15:30-17:00 | Arithmetic       | Homework as Directed by Headmistress | Russian History    |
| <b>Thursday</b>  | 09:00-10:30 | Spelling         | Handicrafts                          | Copying Lessons    |
|                  | 10:30-12:00 | Handicrafts      | Copying Lessons                      | Spelling           |
|                  | 14:00-15:30 | Divine Law       | Russian Language                     | Russian History    |
|                  | 15:30-17:00 |                  | Handicrafts                          | Russian Literature |
| <b>Friday</b>    | 09:00-10:30 | Spelling         | Handicrafts                          | Arithmetic         |
|                  | 10:30-12:00 | Handicrafts      | Spelling                             | Spelling           |
|                  | 14:00-15:30 | Divine Law       | Russian Geography                    | Divine Law         |
|                  | 15:30-17:00 |                  | Divine Law                           | Russian Geography  |
| <b>Saturday</b>  | 09:00-10:30 | Handicrafts      | Handicrafts                          | Singing            |
|                  | 10:30-12:00 | Singing          | Singing                              | Handicrafts        |
|                  | 14:00-15:30 | Divine Law       | Arithmetic                           | World History      |
|                  | 15:30-17:00 | Handicrafts      | Russian History                      | Russian Language   |

Source: Developed by the author

Regarding handicrafts, as indicated in Tables 1-2 (especially when it comes to sewing), there was so much of it that students had very little time left for other activities. The students were required to cut, sew, and repair their own clothes, knit stockings, and embroider. At the same time, Table 2 shows a wide range of not only religious but also general education subjects studied at the diocesan school. In this regard, we fully agree with the opinion of the well-known researcher L. Yershova that diocesan schools «were only approaching the type of an incomplete gymnasium» and that these educational institutions demonstrated "the tsarist government's interest, in alliance with the Orthodox clergy, in developing such women's institutions that, while addressing social issues, would not undermine the cornerstones of Russian autocracy" (Yershova, 2006, p. 238). The academic year at women's diocesan schools concluded with public examinations, just as in any other religious educational institutions of the period (in May or June). For students who did not pass the public examination with satisfactory grades, retakes for certain subjects were scheduled (at the end of August). For example, the «Volhynian Diocesan News» in 1896 wrote about this: «The retakes at the school will be held on August 27; starting at 9 a.m., for Divine Law, Russian language, writing, and the theory of literature; on August 28 at the same hours, for arithmetic, geometry, physics, civil history, and geography. Entrance exams will take place on August 31. Those who did not attend the retakes or entrance exams on the scheduled date will not be re-examined» (From the administration of the Volhynian Women's School, 1896, p. 368).

The direct supervision of the diocesan school was carried out by its headmistress. The first headmistress of the Volhynian Diocesan School was V. Loseva, who was later replaced by A. Shalygina. Almost the same responsibilities were performed by the school's chaplain, A. Puriyevich, who was in charge of overseeing the educational and disciplinary aspects of the school's functioning (Fotinsky, 1914, p. 61).

After some time, the issue arose about transforming the three-grade diocesan women's school into a six-grade one. This initiative was proposed by Father Pavlo Stefanovych at the diocesan clergy congress in Kremenets: «Education for women is becoming increasingly necessary every day to ensure their future livelihood. The time has long passed when merely being from a clerical background guaranteed a secure future for a woman of this class» (Fotinsky, 1914, p. 40-41). It took another six years to finalize the curriculum for the six-grade school, modeled after the women's (Mariinsky) gymnasiums, one of which was successfully operating in Zhytomyr. Physics and pedagogy were added to the curriculum, and in 1879, senior students from the three-grade school took their final exams in these subjects.

The introduction of pedagogy into the curriculum allowed graduates of diocesan schools to qualify for the title of home teachers. In 1883, music (as an optional subject) and French were added to the curriculum, and in 1888, drawing (one lesson per week) was introduced. In 1898, hygiene and first aid were included in the list of subjects, with two lessons per week in the fifth and sixth grades.

The lesson schedule for the six-grade Volhynian Diocesan School is presented in Table 3.



Table 3

**Number of lessons for some subjects at the Volhynian Six-Grade Women's Diocesan School (1892)**

| Subject             | Number of lessons per class per week |    |     |    |   |    |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|----|-----|----|---|----|
|                     | I                                    | II | III | IV | V | VI |
| Spelling            | 2                                    | 2  | 2   | 1  |   |    |
| Singing             | 2                                    | 2  | 2   | 2  | 2 | 2  |
| Geography of Russia | 1                                    | 1  | 1   | 1  | 1 | 1  |
| Geometry            |                                      |    |     |    | 3 |    |
| Physics             |                                      |    |     |    |   | 5  |
| Arithmetic          |                                      |    |     | 2  | 2 |    |
| Pedagogy            |                                      |    |     |    | 2 | 2  |

Source: Developed by the author

With the introduction of the six-grade system, the diocesan school began to hire permanent teachers, instead of those who combined teaching with other duties. For instance, the teacher of religious studies became seminarian Father Ivan Hlaholev; the department of Russian literature was taken by Kyiv Theological Academy candidate Hryhorii Mossakovskiy; and the department of history and geography was headed by another candidate of the same academy, Orest Fotynskiy, who also documented the entire history of the school in his well-known research study, «*An Outline of the History of the Volhynian Women's Spiritual Department Over Fifty Years of Its Existence (1864-1914)*» (Fotynsky, 1914). The department of mathematics, physics, and cosmography was overseen by St. Volodymyr University candidate Mykola Buinytskyi, while pedagogy was entrusted to retired director of the teacher's seminary Ivan Solomonovskiy. The only part-time teacher remaining was the singing instructor and regent of the bishop's choir, A. Kvashevskiy.

The main forms of educational activities at women's diocesan schools were primarily reproductive: reading, copying texts, memorizing them, and then reproducing them from memory. Methods at a productive or creative level were rare and mainly included writing essays (in Russian language and literature) and handicrafts, where students could demonstrate their skills in embroidery or sewing. Written assignments played a significant role in both the content and forms of education at diocesan schools. All students were involved in essay writing, whether as a class or homework assignment. In grades 2-3, students completed over 20 written assignments on various subjects (Russian language, Divine Law, geography). In grades 4-6, written work was divided as follows:

- **4th grade:** 4 written assignments in Russian language, 3 in Divine Law, 3 in history, 2 in geography.
- **5th grade:** 4 written assignments in literature, 3 in Divine Law, 3 in history, and 1 written assignment each in geography and history.
- **6th grade:** 3 written assignments in literature, 2 in Divine Law, 2 in history, 2 in pedagogy, and 1 written assignment each in geography, physics, and cosmography.

As for the evaluation of students' academic performance, a specific set of rules was in place:

1. Students could not repeat the year if they did not demonstrate the required level of knowledge; they were expelled from the school at any time during the academic year.

2. Retakes were not permitted, except in cases where students were unable to take exams due to illness.

The students' academic success was influenced by their preparation before entering the diocesan school. Girls were expected to know common prayers, write from dictation, read Gospel texts correctly, count within the number twenty, and understand fractions.

With the introduction of pedagogy into the curriculum of diocesan schools, the need arose to establish a parish school at the institution where students could apply their pedagogical knowledge, skills, and abilities. Such a school was indeed opened at the Volhynian Diocesan School in 1888. Initially, there were doubts about the necessity of this parish school, as the Holy Synod did not allocate funding for it. However, the funds were provided by the diocese, and the school began to operate successfully. The head of the parish school was traditionally the pedagogy teacher from the diocesan school, as were its other teachers. Thanks to this parish school, from 1892, special exams were conducted for graduates of the diocesan school to earn the title of teacher for a one-class parish school. However, it should be noted that there were only one or two candidates per year (Fotynsky, 1914, p. 83-85).

Due to the ongoing financial difficulties in maintaining the diocesan school, an initiative by one of its teachers, I. Radetskyi, led to the founding of the «Society for the Assistance of the Volhynian Women's Diocesan School» in 1897. The governing board of this society included the headmistress of the school, two of its teachers, and four external members. Twice a year, letters were sent throughout the province inviting people to contribute donations for the benefit of the diocesan school's students. According to historical records, these efforts did not yield significant results. Consequently, the society organized public lectures for the Zhytomyr community, charitable lotteries, and other events. They also arranged sales of books and various stationery supplies for the students at reduced prices. Despite these efforts, they did not





significantly improve the financial situation of the school, which in 1901 came under the patronage of Grand Duchess Ksenia Alexandrovna, ensuring a more stable financial base for the educational process (Fotinsky, 1914, p. 92-93).

Based on the «Instructions for the Staff of the Volhynian Women's School of the Ecclesiastical Department» (1869-1870), conclusions can be drawn regarding the approximate daily schedule for students and the strict requirements for adhering to it. The instructions state: «In the morning, the students wake up, wash, comb their hair, dress, and make their beds under the supervision of the governess, who then brings them to morning prayers and breakfast... during lunch, the governesses monitor cleanliness and propriety; during games, they sometimes participate, aiming to awaken joyfulness in the students and protect them from carelessness... During lesson preparation from 6 to 8 p.m., they especially focus on those who, due to weaker abilities, need their attention most» (Fotinsky, 1914, p. 169). The general daily schedule is summarized in Table 4.

**Table 4.**

**Daily Schedule for Students of the Zhytomyr Diocesan Women's School  
(First Stage, Three-Class System)**

| Time   | Schedule  | Responsible Personnel                                 |
|--|---|---|
| 06:00 AM (or 06:30, from Oct 1 to Mar 1 annually)<br>Sundays and holidays – 07:00 AM | Wake-up   | Governesses and their assistants                      |
| 07:00 AM   | Morning hygiene   | Governesses and their assistants                      |
| 08:00 AM   | Breakfast   | Governesses, Housekeeping Supervisor                  |
| 09:00 AM – 12:00 PM  | Handicrafts, Reading  | Literature Teachers, Governesses, Assistants          |
| 12:00 PM   | Lunch   | Housekeeping Supervisor, Governesses                  |
| 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM   | Free time for games and reading                                     | Governesses, Assistants, Duty Teachers                |
| 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM  | Lessons according to the schedule                                   | Teachers according to the schedule, Governesses       |
| 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM (for senior class students)  | Reading of spiritual books under the supervision of the school head | School Headmistress, Literature Teachers, Governesses |
| 5:00 PM  | Snack   | Housekeeping Supervisor                               |
| 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM  | Preparation for the next day's lessons                              | Governesses   |
| 8:00 PM  | Dinner  | Housekeeping Supervisor, Governesses                  |
| 9:00 PM  | Evening hygiene and bedtime   | Governesses   |

Source: Developed by the author

The mission of the diocesan school, as outlined in the «Instructions for the Staff of the Volhynian Women's School of the Ecclesiastical Department» (1869-1870), highlights the spiritual and moral goals of the institution. It emphasizes that governesses must «strive with all their might so that the Spiritual School, to which they dedicate their talents and efforts, continues to improve in spiritual perfection. It should become a true House of God, filled with piety, harmony, order, diligence, integrity, and fervent Christian love and humility. The students, nourished and permeated by this spirit, should bring the Kingdom of God into their own homes and spread it in their future residences through both their example and all available means» (Fotinsky, 1914, p. 169-170).

#### **Educational Content of Diocesan Schools**

The curriculum at the Volhynian diocesan schools evolved over time. Initially structured as a three-class system, and later expanded to six classes, the schools provided a well-rounded education aimed at the daughters of clergy, preparing them for roles both within their families and the broader religious community. The curriculum included:

- **Religious education:** The study of the **Law of God**, which involved the catechism, the history of the Old and New Testaments, and explanations of liturgical services.
- **Languages:** Instruction in **Russian language** and **Church Slavonic**, with a focus on reading, writing, and grammar. Students also practiced composition, including short essays in the form of stories, letters, and reflections.
- **Mathematics:** Basic **arithmetic** and, later, more advanced mathematical concepts.



- **History and geography:** Russian and world history and geography were key components of the curriculum, providing students with a broader understanding of their country and the world.
- **Practical skills:** The girls were taught **handicrafts** (sewing, embroidery), which were considered essential domestic skills.
- **Music: Church singing** played a significant role in their education.
- **Household management:** Basic financial literacy and skills for managing a household were also introduced.

#### CONCLUSIONS AND PROSPECTS OF FURTHER RESEARCH

The analysis of the activities and curriculum of women's spiritual educational institutions in Volhynia reveals the primary aim of these schools: the spiritual, moral, and practical preparation of girls from clerical families. The schools focused on religious education, prayer practices, and teaching essential household management skills. Over time, the curriculum expanded, adapting to the evolving needs of society, and reflected a combination of spiritual and secular education. Key stages in the development of the Volhynian Diocesan Women's School, from its three-class system (1864-1884) to its six-class expansion (1884-1903) and later under the Statute of 1891 (1903-1914), demonstrate the institution's efforts to provide a well-rounded education grounded in religious and practical life skills.

The significant role of pedagogy as a subject, introduced into the curriculum of the Volyn diocesan women's schools at the end of the 19th century, was noted, as it granted graduates the right to claim the title of home teachers. The importance of the decision to establish a parish school at the Volyn diocesan school as a place for future teachers to practice was emphasized.

The main forms and methods of educational activities in the women's diocesan schools of Volyn were identified, predominantly reproductive in nature: reading, copying texts and memorizing them for subsequent reproduction from memory, as well as written creative works. The staffing of the women's spiritual educational institutions was analyzed, including the headmistress of the school, the dean, caregivers, teachers, assistant caregivers, the housekeeper, and others.

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