

JOY

grades 3-6

Y² A M Ministry
Plan

January 2018

Part of the 2017-2018 Ministry Year

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
Youth & Young Adult Ministries
Office of Camping Ministries

Welcome to the Y²AM Ministry Plan!

August 3, 2017

Dear JOY Leader,

Being a ministry worker isn't easy. For too long, Church workers have spent countless hours finding or identifying resources and materials for their important work: drafting curricula, brainstorming sessions, creating calendars, etc.

That's all valuable effort. But wouldn't it be better if you could spend that time working with the JOY children in your care, rather than cooped up in your office?

But to do that, you need support. You need a set of reliable, high-quality materials to help you lead Christ-centered ministry for your community.

That's why we created the **Y²AM Ministry Plan**.

We've created nine months of materials carefully designed for well-rounded, effective, and Kingdom-oriented ministry. Organized week-by-week and month-by-month, the Y²AM Ministry Plan gives you a comprehensive set of tools that will help you lead ministry designed, not simply for the head, but for the heart.

After all, Christians aren't simply informed: they are formed. They are transformed in the light of Christ into the people, the saints, God has called us to be.

That's why the **Y²AM Ministry Plan** offers a diverse set of experiences that don't simply pass on messages but rather facilitate encounters: both with other Christians and with our Lord Himself.

And it's all laid out for you, from the first week of September 2017 through the last week of May 2018.

If you ever have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us at y2am@goarch.org. Please, let us know what you think: we're committed to creating a new **Y²AM Ministry Plan** every year and constantly refining and improving the materials we offer you.

In Christ,

Steven Christoforou
Director, Y²AM

Special Acknowledgment

August 3, 2017

The **Y²AM Ministry Plan** takes the very best ministry insights and sets them forth in a simple, concrete, easy-to-use resource that can offer ministry workers help today. It reflects the great work of our Team, a fantastic group of people who have done (and continue to do) amazing things for the Church.

I'm blessed to work with them; their fierce dedication and humble love of the Lord encourage me daily.

Yet I'd be remiss if I don't offer special thanks to Cassandra Garibaldi, Y²AM's Resources & Training Coordinator, for her unique contribution.

Cassandra started working on this vital project almost a year ago. It's been an interesting and challenging process as she's both helped shape Y²AM's ministry vision and crystallized it into this concrete, user-friendly **Y²AM Ministry Plan**. Despite all the twists and turns and challenges along the way, Cassandra stayed focused on serving Christ and doing her best to help create ways to reveal Him in our lives.

Her leadership and effort (not to mention the amazing final product) are an incredible testament to Y²AM's ministry vision and the incredible impact that committed, Christ-centered young adults can have on the Church.

In Christ,

Steven Christoforou
Director, Y²AM

Additional Acknowledgment

August 3, 2017

The **Y²AM Ministry Plan** reflects the successful work and cooperation of dedicated, Christ-centered Church workers from across the country. It is a testament to the way the fruits of our labors are multiplied when we work together, both *for* and *with* each other.

Thanks in particular to our dedicated brothers and sisters in Christ:

Bryce Buffenbarger
Father Joseph Collins
Elaine Cremeens
Alex Demos
Spyridoula Fotinis
Father Andreas Houpos
Father Sampson Kasapakis
Summer Kinard
Father Dean Kokanos
Maria Koursaris
Alyssa Kyritsis
Alex Magdalinos
Father Nicholas Mueller
David Munkres
John Shelton
Emma Solak
Melissa Tsongranis
Natalie Wians
Sam Williams

In Christ,

Steven Christoforou
Director, Y²AM

How to Use the Y²AM Ministry Plan

When working with small groups, it can be easy to let talkative people (leaders and students included) take over conversation. Small groups are also filled with people who process things in different ways: some may need more time and silence, some may need physical manipulation (writing, getting up, etc.).

Here are some tips that you can use to help your groups thrive in discussion:

Before each session:

1. It is important to read through each session before presenting the session to participants. Be confident in what you are presenting.
2. Note time allotments and have in mind what you would like to accomplish with your group during the session.
3. Before each session begins, pass out paper and pens to each participant. This can help participants process their thoughts and reactions.

During each session:

1. When asking questions, allow time for participants to reflect and write their answers down on the paper.
 2. Read one of the main questions or Bible verses from the lesson and write it on a board. Give a few minutes to respond and then allow time for each participant to respond.
 3. Try many different ways to engage conversation, and don't be afraid of silence; just because people aren't saying anything doesn't mean that they aren't thinking or responding.
 4. Remember to listen before reacting.
 5. If a question comes up and you are not sure of the answer, be honest and let participants know. Ask a priest and follow up with the participants. Be honest and true to yourself.
 6. If you have a good discussion going on a topic, allow the conversation to flow. Don't feel like you have to ask every question or go through every activity in its entirety.
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Remember:

1. These sessions are a time for participants to share their own hearts, thoughts and feelings. They have much to say and offer, so try your best to be an active listener.
2. The goal is for participants to speak and learn, not to force a lesson on them for the sake of getting through the paper outline.
3. You are on a journey with your participants, and everyone is on a journey of learning together.

Thanks for letting the **Y²AM Ministry Plan** help you lead incredible, Christ-centered ministry.

And thank you for letting us join you on this journey.

JOY

Grades 3-6

Resources Book

A **Y²AM** Project

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
Youth & Young Adult Ministries
Office of Camping Ministries

“Fruit of the Spirit” : Kindness

Model sessions, activities, and lesson plans for the
month of January

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LEARNING SESSION

JANUARY 2018

How Kindness is a Fruit of the Spirit

DATE:

Week of Monday, January 1, 2018

GOAL:

To learn why kindness is a fruit of the Spirit

OBJECTIVE:

To identify one way you can show Christian kindness in your daily life

ESTIMATED DURATION:

45 minutes

LEARNING SESSION:
JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

1. projector and laptop
2. blank paper for each participant
3. pen for each participant

OPENING PRAYER

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

O Holy Spirit, grace me with your fruit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Amen.

(A Prayer by Archbishop Anastasios of Albania)

ICEBREAKER

10 minutes

Gather participants in a circle. Ask each participant to say their name and a kind action that begins with the first consonant in their first name. Ex: Smile Suzie, Hold door Harry, etc.

Remember:

It's always helpful to start with a fun activity to help participants relax and allow community to build. Ministry is about hitting hearts, not just heads, and we should strive to establish a level of comfort and safety to encourage participants to open their hearts to each other and to God.

ACTIVITY 1: ROLE-PLAY

10 minutes

Gather participants together. Divide them into groups of 3-4. Give each group a scenario to role-play and allow the group to discuss for a few minutes. Ask each group to stand up and act out their scenario.

- You see someone sitting alone in the lunch room.
- Your sibling is having a hard time making their bed.
- Someone is walking into a building after you.
- Your friend forgot his or her lunch.
- Your teacher is having a bad day.

Ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- What did you see and hear in the scenarios? What is one thing that caught your attention?
- What's one lesson you can take away?

Remember:

Early in the session, focus primarily on getting participants to open their hearts and connect with what is happening in the group. Take this time to connect with what is important to them and notice what connections they are making.

ACTIVITY 2: LEARNING

10 minutes

Ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- What does it mean to be kind?
- When have you felt kindness?
- To whom do you show kindness?
- Can you offer an example of when it is hard to show kindness to certain people?
- What are some ways you show kindness to others?

Remember:

This is another chance to have participants wrestle with important questions, and share their hearts.

ACTIVITY 3: COMPLIMENT CIRCLE

10 minutes

Have participants come together, standing in a circle. One at a time, have each participant turn to their right and say something kind to the person next to them. (Encourage them to comment on the person and not just their appearance).

Lesson:

Though small, each kind word can fill us up and cause us to feel joy. We are able to spread this to others through our random acts of kindness.

LEARNING SESSION:
JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

CONCLUSION: WRAP-UP & COMMITMENT

5 minutes

Go around the room and ask each participant to answer the following question. The session leader should go first.

- What is one way you will try to be kind to people, even when it may be difficult?

CLOSING PRAYER

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Lord, help us to be kind and merciful. Let everyone we encounter come away feeling uplifted. Allow us to be the living expression of Your kindness through kindness in our eyes, our smile, and our presence.

Amen.

FELLOWSHIP NIGHT

JANUARY 2018

How to Demonstrate Kindness Through our Relationships

DATE:

Week of Monday, January 8, 2018

GOAL:

To learn how to demonstrate kindness through
our relationships

OBJECTIVE:

To identify one way you can show Christian
kindness in your daily life

ESTIMATED DURATION:

3 hours

FELLOWSHIP NIGHT:
JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

1. copy of *Up*, or another appropriate movie on kindness
2. projector or television, and speaker
3. meal ingredients

OPENING PRAYER

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

O Holy Spirit, grace me with your fruit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Amen.

(A Prayer by Archbishop Anastasios of Albania)

FELLOWSHIP NIGHT: JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

ACTIVITY 1: PREPARE THE MEAL

45 minutes

Feel free to use your own preferred recipe. Organize participants to clean up and prepare the dinner for the movie night. Make sure everyone has a job, even if it is a small one. Remember to pray before everyone starts eating.

Remember:

You can order pre-made food, but preparing a meal is a great way for people to connect and share a special bond. It is no accident that the focus of every Liturgy is a meal, and that early Christians shared meals together as a sign of their love and community.

ACTIVITY 2: WATCH MOVIE

1 hour 41 minutes

Make sure everyone has access to food, a comfortable place to sit, and a good view of the movie. We have suggested *Up*, but any age-appropriate movie that showcases kindness would work.

FELLOWSHIP NIGHT: JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

ACTIVITY 3: CLEAN UP

10 minutes

Make sure the space is completely clean after everyone has eaten.

ACTIVITY 4: MOVIE DEBRIEF

10 minutes

Ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- What did you see and hear in the movie?
- What is one lesson you can take away from the movie?

Remember:

Art impacts people by compelling us with beauty rather than convincing us with data. It hits us in the heart rather than the head. Movies are great way to show people the compelling beauty behind Christian ideals like kindness, and can connect with people in a way that a talk or academic lesson may not.

ACTIVITY 5: TEACHING

10 minutes

Ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- How do the characters in the movie demonstrate kindness?
- How was kindness portrayed?
- Do we see this type of kindness in our own lives?
 - Parents, siblings, friends, family

Remember:

Kindness can be a small action. Remind participants of this and do not underestimate the small examples that might come up in conversation.

Lesson:

Kindness is something that can be given freely. We are all able to give this. It could be a small gesture like a smile or holding a door. This small gesture can fill another with joy and change their heart. This change can have a ripple effect and cause others to do kind actions for others.

FELLOWSHIP NIGHT: JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

CONCLUSION: WRAP-UP & COMMITMENT

5 minutes

Go around the room and ask each participant to answer the following questions. The session leader should go first.

- What is one way you will try to show kindness to a specific person in your life?
- How have you been fulfilling your commitment from last week to try to show kindness to people even when it is difficult?

CLOSING PRAYER

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Lord, help us to be kind and merciful. Let everyone we encounter come away feeling uplifted. Allow us to be the living expression of Your kindness through kindness in our eyes, our smile, and our presence.

Amen.

WORSHIP SESSION

JANUARY 2018

Experiencing God's Kindness Through Worship

DATE:

Week of Monday, January 15, 2018

GOAL:

To experience God's kindness through our
Christian worship

OBJECTIVE:

To chant the Small Paraklesis together

ESTIMATED DURATION:

90 minutes

WORSHIP SESSION:
JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

1. copies of Small Paraklesis to the Theotokos
2. pencils and paper

OPENING PRAYER

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

O Holy Spirit, grace me with your fruit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Amen.

(A Prayer by Archbishop Anastasios of Albania)

ACTIVITY 1: SMALL PARAKLESIS

45 minutes

Invite your parish priest to lead the service. If your parish priest is not available, you can still chant it as a reader service. If it is a reader service, make the following changes:

1. Instead of “Blessed is our God...” to begin the service, we say: “Through the prayers of our holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us.”
2. After the “Our Father,” we say “Through the prayers of our holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us,” instead of “For Thine is the power...”
3. We omit all the petitions and commemorations of names done by the priest.

Assemble your group either in the Church building (if possible) or before an icon of the Theotokos.

A copy of the service is available here: http://www.goarch.org/chapel/chant/paraklesis/index_html.

Remember:

The more we are exposed to prayer and the language of the Church, the more our minds and hearts are shaped by the mind and heart of the Church. Over time, we can internalize the prayer of the Church and better learn to talk to God ourselves. This takes time, and should be an important part of every ministry.

WORSHIP SESSION:
JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

ACTIVITY 2: DEBRIEF

10 minutes

Ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- What did you feel or experience during the service?
- What is one lesson that you can take away from the service?

Remember:

Many participants may not have ever celebrated this service before. Some may not have heard it chanted in English. Give them space to process and verbalize what they've just experienced.

ACTIVITY 3: TEACHING

10 minutes

Ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- Did you experience kindness when you came to church?
- Did you experience God's kindness in this service?
- What happened during the service?
- Can you identify themes in the service?
 - Love, repentance, forgiveness, kindness
- How does the Small Paraklesis relate to kindness?
- How do you experience or feel kindness through chanting Paraklesis together?

Remember:

Some (perhaps many) participants don't feel God's kindness in Church services. Instead, they're more often bored than inspired. Don't be afraid of "negative" or "challenging" answers. We can always ask the Theotokos to help us as we struggle with boredom and distraction.

ACTIVITY 4: REFLECTION

10 minutes

Ask participants the following question and facilitate a discussion:

- How can I be kind to someone who is not kind to me?

Remember:

When they are very young, we teach children “how” to connect with God: prayer, fasting, etc. As they grow, we need to teach them “why” we need God. As children grow, they develop a better understanding of the brokenness of the world and the inner brokenness against which we all struggle. We all need help: verbalizing this is a step towards humility and opening ourselves to God, who is the source of life and healing.

ACTIVITY 5: EXCERPT & APPLICATION

10 minutes

Ask one participant to read the following verse aloud:

Ode 3 - Verse 3

*Having brought forth unto us
the cause and giver of good,
From your great abundance of kindness,
Pour forth upon us all;
For all is possible,
For you who carried the Christ,
Who is mighty in power;
You, who are blessed of God.*

Ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- What stood out to you?
- What does it mean for our lives?
- How does Panagia's kindness help us in our lives?

Lesson:

Like love, kindness is a choice. It is something we live out in particular relationships with particular people.

CONCLUSION: WRAP-UP & COMMITMENT

5 minutes

Go around the room and ask each participant to answer the following questions. The session leader should go first.

- What is one way to experience God's kindness in your daily life through what you learned in the service?
- How have you been fulfilling your commitment from last week to try to be kind even when it's difficult?

Remember:

Don't just use this opportunity to ask participants to commit to action: check in with them, and follow up to see how they're doing after past sessions. We can all be accountable to each other to make necessary improvements in our lives.

WORSHIP SESSION:
JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

CLOSING PRAYER

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Lord, help us to be kind and merciful. Let everyone we encounter come away feeling uplifted. Allow us to be the living expression of Your kindness through kindness in our eyes, our smile, and our presence.

Amen.

SERVICE PROJECT

JANUARY 2018

To Serve with Kindness

DATE:

Week of Monday, January 22, 2018

GOAL:

To learn to serve with kindness

OBJECTIVE:

To identify one way to be kind in our daily lives
through serving others

ESTIMATED DURATION:

1 hour 15 minutes

SERVICE PROJECT:
JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

As needed (depending on the specific service project you choose)

OPENING PRAYER

*In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Good and gracious Lord, Creator of all, help me to recognize
Your image in all the people that I will serve today and every
day, in person or through activities that may benefit them. Help
me to respect the people in need, and to give my full attention
and effort to the work that we do for them in Your Holy Name.
Guide me to recognize all these people as my brothers and
sisters. Help me to open my heart and fill it with compassion.
Quiet any fears or nervousness that I might have so that I can be
fully present to everyone I encounter today and every day. Help
me to remember that some of the people I serve may be broken
or wounded persons who need healing. Let my heart be moved
to show love, and let my heart rejoice with any good that I may
see or do in Your name. Remind me to do my part, no matter
how small, in Your great work of charity. Through serving my
neighbor, may I recognize the better world that has been
created.
Amen.*

SERVICE PROJECT:
JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

ICEBREAKER

10 minutes

Ask participants to sit in a circle, with one person in the middle. The person in the middle will walk up to someone and ask, “Do you love your neighbor?” That person will respond, “Yes, except for [insert your own criterion here].” For example, “Yes, except for people wearing red.”

Everyone in the circle who matches the criterion needs to get up and find a new seat while the person who was in the middle tries to steal (sit) in someone’s seat. The person left standing becomes the new person in the middle.

SERVICE PROJECT: JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

ACTIVITY 1: SERVICE PROJECT

30 minutes

Begin by introducing participants to the organization or population they will be serving and the specific project they will be starting. Give participants any directions or materials they will need to achieve their goals for the day's service project.

Possible service organizations include:

- Local soup kitchen or food bank
- Homeless shelter
- Nursing home
- YES (*Youth Equipped to Serve, of FOCUS North America*) - focusnorthamerica.org/programs/yes/
- FOCUS North America - focusnorthamerica.org
- IOCC (*International Orthodox Christian Charities*) - iocc.org
- OCMC (*Orthodox Christian Mission Center*) - ocmc.org
- Salvation Army - salvationarmyusa.org

SERVICE PROJECT:
JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

ACTIVITY 2: DEBRIEF

10 minutes

Ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- What did you do during the service project?
- How do you feel after today's project?
- What was the goal of the project? Do you think the goal was achieved?
- What is something new that you learned today?
- Did you think you would be able to complete the task?

ACTIVITY 3: REFLECTION

10 minutes

Ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- How did you experience kindness through this project?
- How did you show kindness during this project?

ACTIVITY 4: SCRIPTURE READING & APPLICATION

10 minutes

Have one participant read the following passage aloud to the group, twice:

“But in every way we show that we are servants of God. We never give up, even though we face troubles, difficulties, and problems of every kind. We are beaten and thrown into prison. People get upset at us and fight against us. We work hard, and sometimes we get no sleep or food. We show that we are God’s servants by our pure lives, by our understanding, by our patience, and by our kindness. We show it by the Holy Spirit, by genuine love, by speaking the truth, and by depending on God’s power.”

(2 Corinthians 6:4-7)

Then ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- What is one lesson you can take away from the project?

SERVICE PROJECT: JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

- How does the service project relate to the theme of “kindness”?
- How can we show everyone we are Christians?
- How is service an important part of kindness?

Lesson:

We can serve others through our kindness. While we are serving others, it is important for us to remember to also be kind. To be kind adds to our actions of love, and as we have learned and experienced, kindness can be infectious.

CONCLUSION: WRAP-UP & COMMITMENT

5 minutes

Go around the room and ask each participant to answer the following questions. The session leader should go first.

- What is one way to experience God’s kindness in your daily life through what you learned today?
- How have you been fulfilling your commitment from last week to try to experience God's kindness?

SERVICE PROJECT:
JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

CLOSING PRAYER

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Almighty God, giver of every good and perfect gift, teach us to render to You all that we have and all that we are, that we may praise You with our whole lives, turning the duties, the sorrows, and the joys of all our life into a living sacrifice to you; Remind us, O Master, to opening our hearts daily to serve our brothers and sisters who are in need. In your Holy name we pray.

Amen.