

GOYA

grades 7-12

Y²AMM Ministry
Plan

October 2017

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 GOYA 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 GOYAnS 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

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.

GOYYA

Grades 7-12

Resources Book

A Y²AM Project

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

“Fruit of the Spirit” : Joy

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

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LEARNING SESSION

OCTOBER 2017

How Joy is a Fruit of the Spirit

DATE:

Week of Monday, October 9, 2017

GOAL:

To learn to rejoice with those who rejoice

OBJECTIVE:

To create a gratitude journal

ESTIMATED DURATION:

45 minutes

LEARNING SESSION:
GOYA 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

Make sure each participant has a pen and sheet of paper. Ask each participant to write down three things they are grateful for today, and allow them a minute to do so.

Remember:

It's always helpful to start with an activity to help participants relax and allow community to build. Early in the session, focus primarily on getting participants to open their hearts and connect with what's happening in the group. This is an opportunity to encourage participants to share their honest opinions and thoughts, as well as listen to those of others. Take this time to connect with what is important to them and notice what connections they are making.

ACTIVITY 1: LEARNING

10 minutes

Ask participants to write down their definition of happiness. Next, ask them to write down their definition of joy.

- Are these definitions the same or similar?
- What is the difference between joy and happiness?
- How can you explain this difference?
- Does God want you to be happy or joyful?
- Where are you seeking your joy?

Remember:

The words “happy” and “joy” are sometimes used interchangeably. Happiness is caused by a moment of something good. Gratitude helps transform our hearts when we remember that God is present in our lives, even in the small things. This remembrance brings us joy. We may have a bad day or may be suffering or in pain, but joy is still possible. Happiness is a feeling of worldly pleasure that depends on good circumstances, but joy is eternal and can be experienced even in dark or difficult times. It is an abiding in God. This feeling cannot be taken away because it comes from God.

ACTIVITY 2: REFLECTION

10 minutes

Ask participants to share the thoughts from the gratitude journal they created during the icebreaker. Give them a few minutes to reflect and share.

When that's done, ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- What types of things did you write down? Big events? Small events?
- Did listing these things on paper and reflecting on them change your outlook on your day? On your life?
- How do you feel after writing and sharing the things for which you are grateful?

Remember:

Many of the participants may have never reflected upon the things in their daily lives that bring about joy. This activity and discussion can build on the previous discussion and help participants become more specific in how they define joy: an abiding in God.

ACTIVITY 3: SCRIPTURE & APPLICATION

10 minutes

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

This priest had been thrown into prison by Communists in the Soviet Era. His son died in jail, his daughter was sentenced to 20 years, his sons-in-law were also jailed, and his grandchildren had no food and had to eat garbage. Yet, in spite of this, the priest greeted everyone with the words, “Always rejoice!”

“One day, he was asked, ‘Father how can you always say rejoice—you who passed through such terrible tragedy?’

“He replied, ‘Rejoicing is very easy. If we fulfill at least one word from the Bible, it is written ‘rejoice with all those who rejoice!’ Now if one rejoices with all those who rejoice, he always has plenty of motivation for rejoicing. I sit in jail, and I rejoice that so many are free. I can’t go to church, but I rejoice with all those who can go to church. I can’t take Holy Communion, but I rejoice for all those who can. I can’t read the Bible or any other holy book, but I rejoice for those who do. I can’t see flowers, we never saw a tree or a flower during those years. We were under the earth, in a subterranean prison. We never saw the sun, the moon, the stars. Many times we forgot that these things existed. We never saw a color, only the gray walls of the cell and our gray uniforms. But we knew that such a world existed, a world with multi-colored butterflies and with rainbows, but I can rejoice for those who see the rainbows and who see the multi-colored butterflies. In prison, the smell was horrible... Others have the perfume of flowers around them, and girls wearing perfume. And others have pictures, and others have their families of children around them. I cannot see my children but others can. And he who can rejoice with all those who rejoice can always rejoice. I can always be glad.’” (p. 67-69)

Fr. Anthony Coniaris tells the story of a 70-year-old Romanian Orthodox priest in his book Holy Joy: the Heartbeat of Faith (Light and Life Publishing, 2003).

LEARNING SESSION: GOYA RESOURCES 2017-18

Ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- Where can we find examples of joy in the passage?
- What does this passage teach us about joy?
- What is the connection between sorrow and joy?
- What does Christian joy (from God) look like?
- Is it possible to “rejoice always”?
- How can we hold fast to joy, make it our mode of being?

Lesson:

We have heard in the Gospel, “through the Cross, joy”. How can we say this or even believe this? The truth is, “you and I were created for joy, and if we miss it, we miss one of the reasons for our existence. In fact, the reason Jesus lived and died was to restore the joy we had lost” (Fr. Anthony Coniaris). We do not rejoice in death, but we rejoice in the fact that Jesus came to save us, and He did so through the Cross.

Happiness is temporal and fleeting. Joy is eternal because it comes from God. Abiding in God brings us joy and that can never be shaken. We only experience pure

LEARNING SESSION:
GOYA RESOURCES 2017-18

joy when we walk in His ways. Even in tragedy, we are able to rejoice because we are answering the call to “rejoice with all who rejoice.”

We are each searching for meaning in our lives, but what exactly are we searching for? We have God within us and should be seeking to draw nearer to Him each day. If we try to replace the immaterial with the material, we fall short. We find happiness, but it never lasts because it does not truly fill what we long for.

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 joyful, even when it may be difficult?

CLOSING PRAYER

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

Lord, let Your will be done within us and help us remember to: “Be joyful at all times, pray without ceasing, and give thanks for all things.”

Amen.

FELLOWSHIP NIGHT

OCTOBER 2017

How to Demonstrate Joy Through Our Relationships

DATE:

Week of Monday, October 16, 2017

GOAL:

To learn how to demonstrate joy through our relationships

OBJECTIVE:

To identify one way you can show Christian joy in your daily life, even when it is difficult

ESTIMATED DURATION:

3 hours

MOVIE NIGHT:
GOYA RESOURCES 2016-17

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

1. copy of *Life is Beautiful*, or another appropriate movie on joy
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: GOYA 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 meal 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

2 hours 25 minutes

Make sure everyone has access to food, a comfortable place to sit, and a good view of the movie. For this month's theme of joy, we suggest that you watch the film *Life is Beautiful*. Feel free to show any movie that is appropriate for the audience and likely to spark a good conversation about joy.

FELLOWSHIP NIGHT:
GOYA 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 joy, gratitude, and love 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:

- What were the key relationships you saw in this movie?
- Remembering the previous session: what is joy?
- How was joy portrayed in the movie?
- What are some ways people have helped you to stay grateful?
- In what ways do you help others to be grateful?

Remember:

Joy is more than an emotion. It is a result of abiding in God.

Lesson:

It can be very hard to be joyful all the time. When we are upset about something, joy can feel like an impossible thing. It is helpful in those low times to remember God and to remember all of the blessings He has given us. When even that is hard to do, being around positive, joyful people can help lift us up.

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 cultivate joy in your life?
- How have you been fulfilling your commitment from last week to try to be joyful even when it's difficult?

CLOSING PRAYER

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

Lord, let Your will be done within us, and help us remember to “be joyful at all times, pray without ceasing, and give thanks for all things.”

Amen.

WORSHIP SESSION

OCTOBER 2017

Experiencing God's Joy Through Worship

DATE:

Week of Monday, October 23, 2017

GOAL:

To experience God's joy through our Christian
worship

OBJECTIVE:

To chant the Small Paraklesis together

ESTIMATED DURATION:

90 minutes

WORSHIP SESSION:
GOYA 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. Pass out pencils and paper so that everyone can write down names for commemoration. 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 the parts the priest would do.

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.

WORSHIP SESSION: GOYA RESOURCES 2017-18

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.

ACTIVITY 2: DEBRIEF

10 minutes

Ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- What did you 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:

- What do you think of when someone says “joy”?
- Can you share a time today when you felt joyful?
- Did you feel joyful in Church (i.e., singing, praying)?
- How does the Paraklesis service relate to joy?

Remember:

Some (perhaps many) participants don't feel joyful 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:

- What is one way that I noticed God's presence today?
Pause and give thanks.

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 9 - Verse 2

*With gladness fill my heart,
Most holy Virgin lady,
For you are she who received the abundant joy;
Take the grief of my sinfulness,
And make it disappear.*

Ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- What did you read? What spoke to you?
- What does it mean for our lives?
- What would “the grief of my sinfulness” be? Does being aware of our own sinfulness make joy less abundant?
- What is the “abundant joy”?
- Based on what we read, how can the Virgin Mary help us to be filled with joy?

WORSHIP SESSION: GOYA RESOURCES 2017-18

Lesson:

Joy is more than just a feeling. It is a way of being and something we live out in particular relationships with particular people. We are not perfect, and we all make mistakes. We can learn from those mistakes and pray to the Virgin Mary to help take the grief away and fill that spot with joy.

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 joy in your daily life through what you learned in the service?
- How have you been fulfilling your commitment from last week to try to cultivate joy in your life?

WORSHIP SESSION:
GOYA RESOURCES 2017-18

CLOSING PRAYER

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

Lord, let Your will be done within us, and help us remember to “be joyful at all times, pray without ceasing, and give thanks for all things.”

Amen.

SERVICE PROJECT

OCTOBER 2017

Serve with Joy

DATE:

Week of Monday, October 30, 2017

GOAL:

To learn to serve with joy

OBJECTIVE:

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

ESTIMATED DURATION:

1 hour 15 minutes

SERVICE PROJECT:
GOYA 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 all of us are broken or wounded people and that we are all in need of 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.*

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: GOYA 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:
GOYA 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?
- How did this service project bring up gratitude for you? Did it make you feel grateful for anything?
- 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 joy today?
- Did you encounter someone who was joyful? How did that impact you and others around them?

ACTIVITY 4: SCRIPTURE READING & APPLICATION

10 minutes

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

*“Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.”
(Romans 12:9-13)*

Then ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- How does the passage relate to the theme of “joy”?
- What is the connection between joy and hope?
- How is service an important part of joy?

Lesson:

We are joyful because we remember what God has promised us, through the death and resurrection of His Son, eternal life. Knowing this brings about joy. When we abide in God in this promise, it also brings about joy. We can share this joy with others through our actions. The way we interact and speak to people, joyfully and lovingly, can spread that joy.

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 joy in your daily life through what you learned in the service?
- How have you been fulfilling your commitment from last week to experience God's joy in worship?

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.