

JOY

grades 3-6

Y²AMM Ministry
Plan

February 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

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.

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

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” : Goodness

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

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LEARNING SESSION

FEBRUARY 2018

How Goodness is a Fruit of the Spirit

DATE:

Week of Monday, January 29, 2018

GOAL:

To learn why goodness is a fruit of the Spirit

OBJECTIVE:

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

ESTIMATED DURATION:

45 minutes

LEARNING SESSION:
JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

1. blank paper for each participant
2. pen for each participant
3. scissors

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)

LEARNING SESSION:
JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

ICEBREAKER

10 minutes

Gather participants in a circle. Ask them to say their name and something about themselves that is good.

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 need to establish a level of comfort and safety to encourage participants to open their hearts to each other and to God.

LEARNING SESSION: JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

ACTIVITY 1: PASSAGE

10 minutes

Read the following passage:

"I know from experience that in this life people are divided in two categories. A third category does not exist; people either belong to one of the other. The first one resembles the fly. The main characteristic of the fly is that it is attracted by dirt. For example, when a fly is found in a garden full of flowers with beautiful fragrances, it will ignore them and will go sit on top of some dirt found on the ground. It will start messing around with it and feel comfortable with the bad smell. If the fly could talk, and you asked it to show you a rose in the garden, it would answer: "I don't even know what a rose looks like. I only know where to find garbage, toilets, and dirt." There are some people who resemble the fly. People belonging to this category have learned to think negatively, and always look for the bad things in life, ignoring and refusing the presence of good.

The other category is like the bee whose main characteristic is to always look for something sweet and nice to sit on. When a bee is found in a room full of dirt and there is a small piece of sweet in a corner, it will ignore the dirt and will go to sit on top of the sweet. Now, if we ask the bee to show us where the garbage is, it will answer: "I don't know. I can only tell you where to find flowers, sweets, honey and sugar; it only knows the good things in life and is ignorant of all evil." This is the second category of people who have a positive way of thinking, and see only the good side of things. They always try to cover up the evil in order to protect their fellow men; on the contrary, people in the first category try to expose the evil and bring it to the surface.

When someone comes to me and starts accusing other people, and puts me in a difficult situation, I tell him the above example. Then, I ask him to decide to which category he wishes to belong, so he may find people of the same kind to socialize with."

From *Elder Paisios on the Holy Mountain* by PriestMonk Christodoulos, p.43-44

LEARNING SESSION: JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

Ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- What did you hear in the passage? What is one thing that caught your attention?
- What do flies look for?
- What do bees look for?
- Could flies and bees be in the same garden, but see different things?
- How would it affect our lives to act like the bees or to act like the flies?
- What makes it important for us to look for what is good?

Remember:

The words on their own are difficult to act out, but if they are put into action, they are easier. It is easier to demonstrate goodness through an action like giving a helping hand to someone in need.

ACTIVITY 2: LEARNING

10 minutes

Ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- How do you know that God is good?
- What does it mean to be good?
- How has God created us to be?
- Are we supposed to be good?
- Have you ever felt rejected or discouraged when you tried to be good or do something good?
- What makes us want to be good?

Remember:

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

ACTIVITY 3: PAPER HEARTS

10 minutes

Hand out a piece of paper, a pen, and scissors to each participant. Ask them to draw a heart on the paper, write their name in the middle, and cut it out. Have each participant pass their paper heart to another person in the group. Have that person crumple the heart up and give it back.

Lesson:

God has created each of us and He has created us good. When He shows us love, it is a gift to each of us. It is a miracle. When we hurt others with mean words or actions we are taking their heart and crumpling it, just as was done with the paper.

Have each participant take their heart and smooth it out, unfolding all of the wrinkles. In the end, the heart is still a heart.

Lesson:

We are always able to unfold all of the hurt we have caused by saying sorry and asking for forgiveness. Confession is a good way to do this as well.

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 good, even when it may be difficult?

CLOSING PRAYER

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

Christ my God, set my heart on fire with love in You, that in its flame I may love You with all my heart, with all my mind, and with all my soul and with all my strength, and my neighbor as myself, so that by keeping Your commandments I may glorify You the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

Amen.

FELLOWSHIP NIGHT

FEBRUARY 2018

How to Demonstrate Goodness Through our Relationships

DATE:

Week of Monday, February 5, 2018

GOAL:

To learn how to demonstrate goodness through
our relationships

OBJECTIVE:

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

ESTIMATED DURATION:

3 hours

FELLOWSHIP NIGHT:
JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

1. copy of *How to Train Your Dragon*, or another appropriate movie on goodness
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 food 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 38 minutes

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

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 did people assume about the dragons? Were those assumptions correct?
- What made the dragons good instead of bad?
- 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 love and goodness 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 demonstrate goodness?
- Can you give an example of where we see this kind of good in our own lives?
 - Parents, siblings, friends, family
- How do we show goodness to others?

Lesson:

God created each of us to be good. He wants each of us to be good to one another and ourselves. It is not easy to be good all the time, but that is what we should try to do. We can show goodness to God by following the commandments of how He has taught us to live.

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 be good to a specific person in your life?
- How have you been fulfilling your commitment from last week to be good even when it's difficult?

FELLOWSHIP NIGHT:
JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

CLOSING PRAYER

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

Christ my God, set my heart on fire with love in You, that in its flame I may love You with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength, and my neighbor as myself, so that by keeping Your commandments I may glorify You the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

Amen.

WORSHIP SESSION

FEBRUARY 2018

Experiencing God's Goodness
through Worship

DATE:

Week of Monday, February 12, 2018

GOAL:

To experience God's goodness 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.

WORSHIP SESSION: JOY 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 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:

- Do you experience God's goodness in Church services?
- Did you experience God's goodness in this service?
- What happened during the service?
- Can you identify themes from Paraklesis?
 - Love, repentance, forgiveness, goodness
- How does the Small Paraklesis relate to goodness?
- How do you experience or feel goodness through chanting Paraklesis together?

Remember:

Some (perhaps many) participants don't feel God's goodness 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:

- When we are struggling with trying to be good and to see good in others, how can Panagia help us?

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 1 - Verse 4

*Diseased is the body and the soul;
Deem me truly worthy
Of divine guidance and your care;
For you alone are God's Mother,
As the good and the birth-giver of the Good.*

Ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- What stood out to you?
- What does it mean for our lives?
- How is Panagia good? How is her Son good?

Lesson:

Panagia is a great example of someone who chose the good in life. We can pray to her to help us make the difficult decision, each day, to choose goodness.

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 goodness in your daily life through what you learned in the service?
- How have you been fulfilling your commitment from last week to be good to people 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.

Christ my God, set my heart on fire with love in You, that in its flame I may love You with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength, and my neighbor as myself, so that by keeping Your commandments I may glorify You, the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

Amen.

SERVICE PROJECT

FEBRUARY 2018

To Serve with Goodness

DATE:

Week of Monday, February 19, 2018

GOAL:

To learn to serve with goodness

OBJECTIVE:

To identify one way to show goodness 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.*

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 goodness through this project?
- How did you share goodness during this project?

ACTIVITY 4: SCRIPTURE READING & APPLICATION

10 minutes

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

“In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

(Matthew 5:16)

Then ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- What’s one lesson you can take away from the project?
- How does the service project relate to “goodness”?
- How can we let our lights shine?

Lesson:

We can serve with goodness by showing others who God is through our actions. When we let our light shine, others are able to see that. Our light is God’s goodness in us, and it is up to us to share that goodness with others.

SERVICE PROJECT:
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 to experience God's goodness in your daily life through what you learned during the service project?
- How have you been fulfilling your commitment from last week to experience God's goodness?

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.