

# JOY

grades 3-6

Y<sup>2</sup>AMM Ministry  
Plan

## April 2018

Part of the 2017-2018 Ministry Year

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

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# Welcome to the Y<sup>2</sup>AM 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 **Y<sup>2</sup>AM 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 Y<sup>2</sup>AM 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 **Y<sup>2</sup>AM 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.

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If you ever have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us at [y2am@goarch.org](mailto:y2am@goarch.org). Please, let us know what you think: we're committed to creating a new **Y<sup>2</sup>AM Ministry Plan** every year and constantly refining and improving the materials we offer you.

In Christ,

Steven Christoforou  
Director, Y<sup>2</sup>AM

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## Special Acknowledgment

August 3, 2017

The **Y<sup>2</sup>AM 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, Y<sup>2</sup>AM'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 Y<sup>2</sup>AM's ministry vision and crystallized it into this concrete, user-friendly **Y<sup>2</sup>AM 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 Y<sup>2</sup>AM's ministry vision and the incredible impact that committed, Christ-centered young adults can have on the Church.

In Christ,

Steven Christoforou  
Director, Y<sup>2</sup>AM

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## How to Use the Y<sup>2</sup>AM 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 **Y<sup>2</sup>AM Ministry Plan** help you lead incredible, Christ-centered ministry.

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

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## Additional Acknowledgment

August 3, 2017

The **Y<sup>2</sup>AM 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, Y<sup>2</sup>AM

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# JOY

Grades 3-6

## Resources Book

A Y<sup>2</sup>AM Project

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

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### “Fruit of the Spirit” : Gentleness

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

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# LEARNING SESSION

## APRIL 2018

### How Gentleness is a Fruit of the Spirit

#### DATE:

Week of Monday, March 26, 2018

#### GOAL:

To learn why gentleness is a fruit of the Spirit

#### OBJECTIVE:

To identify one way you can show gentleness 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

## 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*

Make sure each participant has a pen and sheet of paper. Ask each participant to write down three pet peeves and why those things bother them. Allow them a minute to do so.

**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.*

LEARNING SESSION:  
JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

## ACTIVITY 1: LEARNING

*10 minutes*

Ask participants to turn their sheet over and write down their definition of gentleness.

When they have finished writing, ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- What similarities and what differences do you see on the two sides of the paper?
- Can gentleness help us to overcome our pet peeves?
- What does it look like to be gentle in the face of anger or hate?

### **Lesson:**

*Gentleness is a fruit that is often seen as a quality of the weak. We have the example of Jesus who shows us how to be a successful leader and a teacher, while being gentle.*

## LEARNING SESSION: JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

*Gentleness is a way we interact with others and gives strength and hope to others. We must choose to be gentle with others and ourselves. No one is perfect, and we will all fall short and make mistakes. If we are gentle with one another and ourselves in our mistakes and shortcomings, we can help bring love to negative situations instead of strife and anger.*

### ACTIVITY 2: REFLECTION

*10 minutes*

Read the following quote. Give participants a few minutes to reflect their thoughts on paper.

“You cannot be too gentle, too kind. Shun even to appear harsh in your treatment of each other. Joy, radiant joy, streams from the face of one who gives and kindles joy in the heart of one who receives. All condemnation is from the devil. Never condemn each other, not even those whom you catch committing an evil deed. We condemn others only because we shun knowing ourselves. When we gaze at our own failings, we see such a morass of filth that nothing in another can equal it. That is why we turn away, and make much of the faults of others. Keep away from the spilling of speech. Instead of condemning others, strive to reach inner peace. Keep silent, refrain from judgement. This will raise you above the deadly arrows of slander, insult, outrage, and will shield your glowing hearts against the evil that creeps around.” - St. Seraphim of Sarov

## LEARNING SESSION: JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

When they have finished writing, ask participants the following question and facilitate a discussion:

- What did this teach you about gentleness?

### **Remember:**

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

## ACTIVITY 3: SCRIPTURE & APPLICATION

*10 minutes*

Read the following verse:

*“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”*

*(Matthew 11:29)*

Ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- What does this passage teach us about gentleness?
- How can Jesus be our example of gentleness?
  - How was He gentle, yet firm in His convictions?
- What does this kind of gentleness look like?
- How can we hold fast to gentleness and make it our mode of being?



## LEARNING SESSION: JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

### **Lesson:**

*Here, we see Christ as the ultimate example of gentleness. He was a leader and taught others, while being hated for it. He was also betrayed, beaten, and killed. Through it all, He was gentle. In the face of constant persecution, He was gentle. Never did He lash out or raise His voice. These are the qualities we are called to emulate.*

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 gentle, even when it may be difficult?

## CLOSING PRAYER

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

*Christ my God, You are a gentle God, and You ask us to be gentle with each other. Teach us how to treat one another with gentleness.*

*Amen.*

# FELLOWSHIP NIGHT

## APRIL 2018

### How to Demonstrate Gentleness Through our Relationships

#### DATE:

Week of Monday, April 2, 2018

#### GOAL:

To learn how to demonstrate gentleness through  
our relationships

#### OBJECTIVE:

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

#### ESTIMATED DURATION:

3 hours

FELLOWSHIP NIGHT:  
GOYA RESOURCES 2017-18

## SUPPLIES NEEDED:

1. copy of *Brave*, or another appropriate movie on gentleness
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's 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 42 minutes*

Make sure everyone has access to food, a comfortable place to sit, and a good view of the movie. We have suggested *Brave*, but any age-appropriate movie that showcases gentleness 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 a great way to show people the compelling beauty behind Christian ideals like love and sacrifice 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 gentleness?
- How was gentleness shown in the movie?
- What are some ways people have shown this kind of gentleness to you?
- In what ways do you show this gentleness towards others?

### **Remember:**

*Gentleness does not mean being a pushover. It is strength to stand up for what is right, in a soft way.*

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

## CLOSING PRAYER

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

*Christ my God, You are a gentle God, and You ask us to be gentle with each other. Teach us how to treat one another with gentleness.*

*Amen.*



# WORSHIP SESSION

## APRIL 2018

### Experiencing God's Gentleness Through Worship

#### DATE:

Week of Monday, April 9, 2018

#### GOAL:

To experience God's gentleness 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 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](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

*8 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:

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

### **Remember:**

*Some (perhaps many) participants don't feel gentleness 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 questions and facilitate a discussion:

- Can you think of a time when you were corrected harshly?
- How did it make you feel?
- What is a better way to be corrected?

### **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:

### Troparion - Tone 2

*All those do you shelter, O Good One,  
Those who in their faith flee unto you,  
With your strong hand, you protect;  
We who sin have no one else,  
Who intercedes for us  
Before God, praying endlessly,  
In ills and all dangers,  
For us who are laden with  
Our many sins and mistakes;  
Mother, of our God in the Highest  
Therefore, we fall down to you, humbly;  
From all the misfortunes, keep your servants safe.*

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 strength relate to gentleness?

## LEARNING SESSION: JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

### **Lesson:**

*Panagia is a mother to all of us. She was strong in her life, but treats each of us gently. Through the Paraklesis service we come to her, and in humility, we ask her to be gentle with us and pray to her Son on our behalf. Being a mother, she is strong in her request for us, but pleads in a gentle way. We each should strive to emulate her gentleness.*

### **Remember:**

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



## 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 gentleness in your daily life through what you learned in the service?
- How have you been fulfilling your commitment from last week to try to treat one person in your life with gentleness?

### **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, You are a gentle God, and You ask us to be gentle with each other. Teach us how to treat one another with gentleness.*

*Amen.*

# SERVICE PROJECT

## APRIL 2018

### To Serve with Gentleness

#### DATE:

Week of Monday, April 16, 2018

#### GOAL:

To learn to serve with gentleness

#### OBJECTIVE:

To identify one way show gentleness 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/](http://focusnorthamerica.org/programs/yes/)
- FOCUS North America - [focusnorthamerica.org](http://focusnorthamerica.org)
- IOCC (*International Orthodox Christian Charities*) - [iocc.org](http://iocc.org)
- OCMC (*Orthodox Christian Mission Center*) - [ocmc.org](http://ocmc.org)
- Salvation Army - [salvationarmyusa.org](http://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 gentleness through this project?
- How did you show gentleness during this project?

## ACTIVITY 4: SCRIPTURE READING & APPLICATION

*10 minutes*

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

*“I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love.”*

*(Ephesians 4:1-2)*

Then ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- What is one lesson you can take away from the project?
- How does the service project relate to the theme of “gentleness”?
- How is gentleness an important part of love and of service?
- How does this passage teach us about gentleness?
- What does this kind of gentleness look like?
- How can we hold fast to gentleness and make it our mode of being?



## SERVICE PROJECT: JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

### **Lesson:**

*To love is to serve. Through loving our neighbor, we are loving God. We serve others to be an example of Christ in the world and to bring to love into their world. When we serve though gentleness, we are following the way Jesus served others during the time He lived on Earth.*

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

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.*