

JOY

grades 3-6

Y²AMM Ministry
Plan

May 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” : Faithfulness

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

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LEARNING SESSION

MAY 2018

How Faithfulness is a Fruit of the Spirit

DATE:

Week of Monday, April 23, 2018

GOAL:

To learn why faithfulness is a fruit of the Spirit

OBJECTIVE:

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

ESTIMATED DURATION:

45 minutes

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

1. projector and laptop
2. mustard seeds
3. blindfold

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

Pick two volunteers. Have one volunteer put a blindfold on around their eyes. Have the other volunteer guide the blindfolded person across the room. If available, place obstacles in the room to make the activity more difficult.

Ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- Was it easy to be led by someone else?
- What was required to make the activity a success?
- Did you have trust in each other?

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: MUSTARD SEEDS

10 minutes

Pass around a mustard seed to each participant.
Read the following Bible verse:

“For assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.”

(Matthew 17:20)

Then ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- What is the size of a mustard seed?
- Would you expect it to grow into something big or small?
- What if I told you that a tiny mustard seed grows into a really big plant?
- What lesson is Jesus trying to teach us?
- What does a mustard seed have to do with faith?

LEARNING SESSION:
JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

ACTIVITY 2: LEARNING

10 minutes

Ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- What is faith?
 - A loving trust in God
- What does faithfulness mean to you?
- When is it difficult to remain faithful?
- How can we allow God's will to be done in our lives?

Remember:

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

Lesson:

It is very difficult to believe in something that we have never seen. We have never seen Jesus on earth, but we have seen the saintly people who have acted as Jesus would have if He were still with us on earth. Faith is trusting in Jesus. It is trusting that He loves us and wants to share that love with us.

LEARNING SESSION:
JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

ACTIVITY 3: SCRIPTURE READING & APPLICATION

10 minutes

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

“The apostles said to the Lord, ‘Increase our faith!’ And the Lord said, ‘If you had faith as a grain of mustard seed, you could say to this sycamine tree, “Be rooted up, and be planted in the sea,” and it would obey you.”

(Luke 17:5-6)

Then ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- What does a mustard seed have to do with faith?
- What does this mean we can do if we have faith?
- How can we increase our faith?

LEARNING SESSION: JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

Lesson:

Even the Apostles, those closest to Christ, asked for their faith to be increased. They had seen signs, miracles, and the Lord's resurrection, and they still asked. In response, Christ paints a picture of mustard seeds and mountains, telling us that even if we have a little faith, it shows that we believe in God.

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 faithful, even when it may be difficult?

CLOSING PRAYER

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

Christ my God, help us to “be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.”

Amen.

(Romans 12:12)

FELLOWSHIP NIGHT

MAY 2018

How to Demonstrate Faithfulness Through our Relationships

DATE:

Week of Monday, April 30, 2018

GOAL:

To learn how to demonstrate faithfulness
through our relationships

OBJECTIVE:

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

ESTIMATED DURATION:

3 hours

FELLOWSHIP NIGHT: JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

1. copy of *Akeelah and the Bee*, or another appropriate movie on faithfulness
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 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

1 hour 52 minutes

Make sure everyone has access to food, a comfortable place to sit, and a good view of the movie. We have suggested *Akeelah and the Bee*, but any age-appropriate movie that showcases faithfulness 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 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 faith 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:

- How do the characters in the movie demonstrate faith?
- Do we see this kind of faithfulness in our own lives?
- Is this kind of faithfulness to each other easy or difficult?

Remember:

Faith is a loving trust in God.

Lesson:

Faith is an important part of a relationship. Faithfulness is about putting our whole trust in God no matter what happens or what is going on around us. When we doubt the other person, we become closed in and we do not want to share things with them. We must also be trust people ourselves, so that people have faith in us as well.

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 faithful in your daily life?
- How have you been fulfilling your commitment from last week to try to be faithful even when it is 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, help us to “be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.”

Amen.

(Romans 12:12)

WORSHIP SESSION

MAY 2018

Experiencing Faithfulness Through Worship

DATE:

Week of Monday, May 7, 2018

GOAL:

To experience faithfulness 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 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 faithfulness in Church services?
- Did you experience faithfulness in this service?
- What happened during the service?
- How does the Small Paraklesis relate to faithfulness?
- How do you experience or feel faith through chanting Paraklesis together?

Remember:

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

- Is it hard to believe in something you have never seen?
- How do we keep our faith when times get rough?

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:

Kontakion

*A protection of Christians unshamable,
Intercessor to our Holy Maker, unwavering,
Please reject not
The prayerful cries of those who are in sin.
Instead, come to us, for you are good;
Your loving help bring unto us,
Who are crying in faith to you: Hasten to intercede
And speed now to supplicate,
As a protection for all time,
Theotokos, for those who honor you.*

Ask participants the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- What stood out to you?
- What does it mean for our lives?
- How can we have faith in Panagia to intercede for us?

WORSHIP SESSION: JOY RESOURCES 2017-18

Lesson:

Panagia is the ultimate example of a person with faith. She responded to the angel's command to bear and give birth to God. In her free will, she could have answered no. It was her loving trust in God that allowed her to be faithful.

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 faith 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 faithful to God?

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, help us to “be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.”

Amen.

(Romans 12:12)

SERVICE PROJECT

MAY 2018

To Serve in Faithfulness

DATE:

Week of Monday, May 14, 2018

GOAL:

To learn that faithfulness is related to service

OBJECTIVE:

To identify one way to serve with faithfulness

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 faithfulness through this project?
- How did you show faith (in God or in others) during this project?

ACTIVITY 4: SCRIPTURE READING & APPLICATION

10 minutes

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

“Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. Do everything in love.”

(1 Corinthians 16:13-14)

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 “faithfulness”?
- How is service an important part of faithfulness?

Lesson:

We should be faithful to each other, but also show our faith in love. To be faithful is to trust in God above all else, and to have confidence in His will. This takes strength. It is not always easy to have faith.

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 faith in your daily life through what you learned during the service project?
- How have you been fulfilling your commitment from last week to try to experience faithfulness 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.