



JOY
grades 3-6

Y²AAM

Ministry Plan

2018-19

A Life of Offering:
Offering the Gospel
April 2019





EFFECTIVE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

BUILDING FAITH TO MOVE **MOUNTAINS**

A new ministry course designed to help you:

1. **develop** a **vision** for ministry
2. **understand** the **challenges** to ministry
3. **implement** the **practices** of effective Christian ministry

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The Y²AM Ministry Plan 2018-19

A Life of Offering

Module 1: Preparing to Connect

September 2018: Offering our Talents
October 2018: Offering our Struggles
November 2018: Offering our Conflicts

Module 2: Connecting with God

December 2018: Offering our Prayer
January 2019: Offering our Story
February 2019: Offering our Sacrifice

Module 3: Living with Connection

March 2019: Offering our Gifts
April 2019: Offering the Gospel
May 2019: Offering our Lives

Welcome to the Y²AM Ministry Plan!

July 5, 2018

Dear JOY Leader,

Last summer, we launched the **Y²AM Ministry Plan** to help Church workers lead Christ-centered and Kingdom-oriented ministry.

And, glory to God, the feedback was incredible.

This year, we're proud to unveil a new and improved version of the **Y²AM Ministry Plan**, a tool to help communities and homes lead transformational ministry for the youth and young adults in their care.

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 into people who live lives of constant offering to God.

And it's all laid out for you, from the first week of September 2018 through the last week of May 2019.

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

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.

We couldn't have produced the **Y²AM Ministry Plan** without the hard work of Christian Gonzalez, Maria Pappas, and Christina Andresen who helped edit and review the sessions and offered invaluable feedback and suggestions. I'm also grateful to Kristina Wenger who generously took the lead in developing the Family Supplement and did outstanding work.

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 continues to elevate this project. Not only has she been crafting the **Y²AM Ministry Plan** for almost a year, she faithfully collected and reviewed all the feedback we received from people across the Church. As a result, I think this year's version of the **Y²AM Ministry Plan** will be even better than last year's.

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.

How to Use the Y²AM Ministry Plan

The **Y²AM Ministry Plan** is a tool designed to help you lead great ministry. It's designed to eliminate the stress of finding or creating ministry resources, so you can be free to spend time with the young people in your care. So, as you flip through the **Y²AM Ministry Plan**:

Remember:

1. The **Y²AM Ministry Plan** may be more than you need. We offer week-by-week ministry guidance, but your group may not meet every week. In practice, you may need to skip some of the lesson plans we offer. That's ok: feel free to use the **Y²AM Ministry Plan** in the way that's best for you.
2. Calendar notes are suggestions, not requirements. While the **Y²AM Ministry Plan** is designed intentionally week-by-week and month-by-month, this may not fit your schedule perfectly. That's ok.
3. Anytime you have questions about how to use the **Y²AM Ministry Plan** you can always reach out to us. We're here to help.

Here's a bit more practical advice:

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.

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.



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April 2019

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LEARNING SESSION

APRIL 2019

Offering the Gospel

DATE:

Week of Monday, April 1, 2019

GOAL:

To learn how to share Christ with others

OBJECTIVE:

To identify one way to offer the Gospel to others

ESTIMATED DURATION:

50 minutes

LEARNING SESSION: OFFERING THE GOSPEL

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.

“Let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge His name.” And help us to, “not neglect to do good and to share what we have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.”

Amen.

(a passage from Hebrews 13:15-16)

LEARNING SESSION: OFFERING THE GOSPEL

ICEBREAKER

5 minutes

Tell us your name and share the name of your favorite saint.

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's important to them, and to understand what they've connected with.

LEARNING SESSION: OFFERING THE GOSPEL

ACTIVITY 1: SAINT STORY

10 minutes

Read the following story to the group or share a personal story about a Saint.

An old monk and young monk lived in community together. One day, the older monk told the young one that they would be going to the village. “We’re going to preach!” he said. The two walked to the village. While they were there, they shopped, they talked with people, and generally just were there, being themselves, in their village. After a while, it was time for them to return to their home. As they walked, the young monk asked, “So, when are we going to preach?” The older monk replied, “We just did!”

LEARNING SESSION: OFFERING THE GOSPEL

ACTIVITY 2: DEBRIEF

10 minutes

Ask participants the following questions and help facilitate a discussion:

- What was the story about?
- What feelings or emotions came up in you as you were hearing a story?
- Did you learn something from the story about the saint, God, or yourself?
- What is preaching? How did the monks preach in the story?

Remember:

For some participants, this could be their first time hearing a spiritual story. As human beings, we are hardwired for storytelling. We can find connection with others through sharing and listening to stories. Saint stories can help us grow deeper in faith, by creating connections between humans and God. These stories can allow the group to experience God in a more tangible way. This experience may be new for some participants and could be transformative. Although telling stories is a simple practice, it is very meaningful and important for our spiritual journeys because these stories point us back to Christ.

LEARNING SESSION: OFFERING THE GOSPEL

ACTIVITY 3: WRITING

10 minutes

Pass out more paper and pens if needed. Ask participants the following questions and have them journal their responses. When participants have finished writing, ask them to share their thoughts aloud.

- What is it like for you to be in Liturgy? Is it peaceful? Boring? Confusing? Helpful?
- What do you think is happening in the Liturgy?
- How do you think the saints experienced the Liturgy? What did they believe was happening?
- Do you have the same kind of feelings during the Divine Liturgy as you did when hearing the Saint stories? Explain.
- How can we cultivate the feelings of the Saints (perhaps joy or peace) during the Liturgy?

LEARNING SESSION: OFFERING THE GOSPEL

Teaching: *(reflect on this rather than read it directly to participants)*

When we enter the Liturgy, we are transported out of space and time, and we enter the Kingdom of Heaven. With this entrance we are invited to participate in this Liturgy.

When we try to live a life of faith, we are living a Christian life. The Saints are great examples of this because the stories of their lives ultimately point back to Christ. They are filled with His light, not their own. They have seen Christ. They have tasted of Him. They have encountered Him and been changed by Him. This is the truth we all are able to participate in during the Divine Liturgy.

Christ left witnesses and those witnesses are the Saints. When we say Saints, we are referring to real people, just like you and I. We too are called to be His witnesses. Through the choices and actions of the Saints, they revealed to others who Christ really was and how powerful His love truly is. The reality of the Gospel is that we are the witnesses. It's not just a matter of saying the right words or being nice, it is about living a faithful and Christian life and allowing that to transform our hearts and the hearts of the people around us.

It is very easy to get distracted during the Liturgy, but we are surrounded by icons of Saints and those icons lead us back to Christ and the Liturgy, We remember the lives they led and we are filled with love and pointed right back to Christ. In this same way we are called to be transformed by Christ and be that living sacrifice to the people in our daily lives.

LEARNING SESSION:
OFFERING THE GOSPEL

ACTIVITY 4: SCRIPTURE READING & APPLICATION

10 minutes

Have students read the following verse:

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?”
And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God
with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all
your mind. This is the great and first commandment.
And a second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as
yourself.”

(Matthew 22: 36-39)

Ask participants the following questions and help facilitate a discussion:

- What is this scripture passage about?
- How can we commit to God with this Bible passage in mind?
- Do you think the saints lived this way?
- How does this passage relate to preaching the Gospel?
- How could our personal transformation help us to offer the Gospel to others?

LEARNING SESSION: OFFERING THE GOSPEL

Teaching: *(reflect on this rather than read it directly to participants)*

We are called to be living sacrifices and this is only achieved through a full commitment to Christ and His Church. We freely choose to make this commitment because through it we will be transformed and renewed. This transformation is by God and for our benefit. Once we have experienced our own transformation, we can come from a place, centered in Christ, where we can help lead others to God as well. We must first commit and transform, it is only then that we can preach the Gospel to others.

The Saints presented their bodies as living sacrifices, and we see examples of that through reading the stories about their lives. We are also called to this sacrificial life. This commitment is an ongoing journey to make God a priority in our lives. We too are called to be living sacrifices, and this is achieved through living a faithful life, and letting ourselves become vessels of Christ's love. When we choose to walk on the path towards Christ, we are able to experience our own transformation. Then we begin to live our lives with Christ in the center, then we may even be able to help lead others to God. We are all created to worship something and during the Liturgy we have the perfect opportunity to worship our Creator. When we participate in the Liturgy, we can begin to be transformed, and it is from a place of transformation that we can preach the Gospel to others through our actions and if necessary our words. We can best preach by living a life of faith in hope. This is how we show others how to be true Christians. Preaching is not about empty words, it is about living a life pleasing to God.

LEARNING SESSION: OFFERING THE GOSPEL

CONCLUSION: WRAP-UP & COMMITMENT

5 minutes

Go around the room and (starting with the session leader) ask each participant to answer the following question:

- What is one way to offer the Gospel to others through what you learned in the session?

CLOSING PRAYER

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

Lord, You have granted us to offer these common prayers in unison and have promised that when two or three agree in Your name, You will grant their requests. Fulfill now, O Lord, the petitions of Your servants as may be of benefit to them, granting us in the present age the knowledge of Your truth, and in the age to come eternal life.

Amen.

FELLOWSHIP NIGHT

APRIL 2019

Offering the Gospel Through Relationships

DATE:

Week of Monday, April 8, 2019

GOAL:

Learn how to create positive stories on tough times

OBJECTIVE:

Identify ways to be more positive in relationships

ESTIMATED DURATION:

3 hours

FELLOWSHIP NIGHT: OFFERING THE GOSPEL

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

1. copy of *Nacho Libre*, or another appropriate movie on creating positive stories in tough times
2. projector/television and speaker
3. meal ingredients

OPENING PRAYER

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

“Let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge His name.” And help us to, “not neglect to do good and to share what we have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.”

Amen.

(a passage from Hebrews 13:15-16)

FELLOWSHIP NIGHT: OFFERING THE GOSPEL

ACTIVITY 1: PREPARE THE MEAL

45 minutes

Organize participants to clean up and prepare the meal 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's 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 32 minutes

Make sure everyone has access to food, a comfortable place to sit, and a good view of the movie. We have suggested *Nacho Libre*, but you could choose any movie that is age-appropriate and will inspire thought and conversation about about creating positive stories in tough times.

FELLOWSHIP NIGHT: OFFERING THE GOSPEL

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 a few of the following questions and facilitate a discussion:

- What did you see/hear in the movie?
- Did you learn anything from the movie?
- What is the message of this movie? Do you agree or disagree with it?
- In what ways are the characteristics of the main character(s) like your own or those of someone you know?
- Which character did you (admire, hate, love, pity) the most? What was it about that character that caused you to have that reaction?
- The resolution of the film teaches a lesson. How can you apply the lesson in the film to your own life?

FELLOWSHIP NIGHT: OFFERING THE GOSPEL

Remember:

Movies are 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.

FELLOWSHIP NIGHT: OFFERING THE GOSPEL

CONCLUSION: WRAP-UP & COMMITMENT

5 minutes

Go around the room and ask each participant to tell the group something new they learned during the session.

CLOSING PRAYER

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

Lord, You have granted us to offer these common prayers in unison and have promised that when two or three agree in Your name, You will grant their requests. Fulfill now, O Lord, the petitions of Your servants as may be of benefit to them, granting us in the present age the knowledge of Your truth, and in the age to come eternal life.

Amen.

WORSHIP SESSION

APRIL 2019

Experiencing Offering Through Worship

DATE:

Week of Monday, April 15, 2019

GOAL:

To learn about the Gospel and worship

OBJECTIVE:

To chant the Small Paraklesis together

ESTIMATED DURATION:

75-90 minutes

WORSHIP SESSION: OFFERING THE GOSPEL

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.

Lord, You have granted us to offer these common prayers in unison and have promised that when two or three agree in Your name, You will grant their requests. Fulfill now, O Lord, the petitions of Your servants as may be of benefit to them, granting us in the present age the knowledge of Your truth, and in the age to come eternal life.

Amen.

WORSHIP SESSION:
OFFERING THE GOSPEL

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's 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: OFFERING THE GOSPEL

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 while you were worshipping during the service?
- Did any part of the service stand out to you?
- Is there 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.

WORSHIP SESSION:
OFFERING THE GOSPEL

ACTIVITY 3: GROUP PRAYER

10 minutes

Pray the following prayer with the group:

Personal prayers for the world

(examples: our neighbors, the homeless, or for refugees)

Remember:

We are all very comfortable with and accustomed to having a priest pray aloud for us. Prayer is a very powerful tool and it is a tool each of us possesses. Use this opportunity to show participants that they too can offer their own prayers.

WORSHIP SESSION: OFFERING THE GOSPEL

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 to offer a prayer in your daily life through what you learned in the session?

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:
OFFERING THE GOSPEL

CLOSING PRAYER

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

Lord, You have granted us to offer these common prayers in unison and have promised that when two or three agree in Your name, You will grant their requests. Fulfill now, O Lord, the petitions of Your servants as may be of benefit to them, granting us in the present age the knowledge of Your truth, and in the age to come eternal life.

Amen.

SERVICE PROJECT APRIL 2019

Offering Through Serving

DATE:

Week of Monday, April 22, 2019

GOAL:

To learn to offer through serving

OBJECTIVE:

To identify one way to create positive stories in tough times

ESTIMATED DURATION:

1 hour 15 minutes

SERVICE PROJECT: OFFERING THE GOSPEL

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

1. bowls
2. measuring cups and spoons
3. flour
4. water
5. yeast
6. salt
7. sugar
8. prosforo seal
9. paper and pens

OPENING PRAYER

*In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Lord, this bread that we are baking represents each one of us.
We are offering ourselves to You, our very life, in humble
obedience and total commitment to You. We place ourselves on
Your holy altar through this bread to be used by You in any way
that You feel will help enlarge Your kingdom. Accept our gift and
make us worthy to receive the greater gift that You will give us
when You consecrate this bread and give it back to us as Your
Precious Body.
Amen.*

SERVICE PROJECT: OFFERING THE GOSPEL

ACTIVITY 1: PREP

10 minutes

Have all participants wash their hands thoroughly, remove all bracelets, rings and watches, and push up any long sleeves.

ACTIVITY 2: MAKE THE DOUGH

30 minutes

We recognize that there are many different ways to make prosforo. This is one recipe. You can also follow your own or bring in someone from your church that regularly makes prosforo to help. More important than the recipe is that this process is done prayerfully and that all participants are able to contribute.

Possible recipe:

Ingredients:

2 tsp yeast (1 pkg)

1 tsp sugar

¼ cup warm water

5 cups pre-sifted, flour (King Arthur preferred)

1 tsp salt

1 ½ cup warm water

SERVICE PROJECT: OFFERING THE GOSPEL

Procedure:

- Place yeast and sugar in a small bowl. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup warm water and whisk to mix well. Sift flour and salt on top of yeast and water to allow yeast to rise for approximately 10 minutes. Next, slowly begin mixing ingredients to form dough. Dough should be soft but not sticky. Place dough on floured surface and knead to make a smooth round ball.
- Once the dough is done being kneaded. Place it in a bowl with a towel over it a place in a warm (but not too warm) area. Allow it to rise for a half hour.
- Prepare a list of names of Orthodox Christians who you would like commemorated in the service. Use first names only. On the left side, write "Living" at the top and list the names below. On the right side, write "Departed" and write the names of departed below. Bring the list and the bread to the Church before the start of Orthros (or the day before).

SERVICE PROJECT:
OFFERING THE GOSPEL

ACTIVITY 3: REFLECTION

DISCUSSION GROUP

30 minutes

While the dough rises, pass out paper and pens to participants.

Give participants the following prompts and have them write down their thoughts:

What can you do to spread your faith to others without using the word God or religion?

What message do you think is so important that all people need to know that message?

How can you share that message through your actions?

After a few minutes of silent writing, ask participants to share what they wrote and facilitate a discussion using the prompts as a guide.

SERVICE PROJECT: OFFERING THE GOSPEL

ACTIVITY 4: KNEADING AND STAMPING THE DOUGH

10 minutes

Have each group punch out and knead the dough a bit longer. They should shape it into a smooth round ball.

Once this is done, place the dough on a floured (not greased) baking sheet. Have participants press the seal in (make sure to flour the seal). This must be done evenly and firmly.

Once this is done, use toothpicks to poke holes around the seal and around the sides of the prosforo.

Bake in 350 degree oven for approximately 45 minutes.

ACTIVITY 5: CLEAN UP

10 minutes

While the dough is baking, make sure the space is completely clean.

SERVICE PROJECT: OFFERING THE GOSPEL

CONCLUSION: WRAP-UP & COMMITMENT

5 minutes

Go around the room and ask each participant to answer the following question:

- How can you identify and create positive stories in tough times?

CLOSING PRAYER

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

O God, our God, You sent the heavenly Bread, the food for the whole world, our Lord and God Jesus Christ, as Savior, Redeemer, and Benefactor, to bless us and sanctify us. Do bless this offering and accept it upon Your heavenly altar. As a good and loving God remember those who brought it and those for whom it was brought. Keep us blameless in the celebration of Your divine Mysteries. For sanctified and glorified is Your most honorable and majestic name, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

Amen.