**Theme:** Becoming Human by Finding Christ through **Discipline**

**Materials:** paper, pens, pitchers or clear plastic cups, pebbles or marbles (enough for each participant)

**Goal:** GOYAns will learn about discipline.

**Objective:** GOYAns will identify one area in which they wish to become more disciplined..

**Opening Prayer:**

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

Lord, allow us “to offer ourselves as a living sacrifice,” one that is “holy and acceptable to God, for this is Your true and proper worship.” Allow us to “not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewal of our minds, so that we may be able to “test and prove what is God’s will, His good, pleasing and perfect will.”

Amen.

**Ice Breaker:** Tell us your name and something you want to get better at.

**Activity 1:** Pitcher Activity

Pass out a piece of paper and a pen to each participant.

Next, remind participants of the last session on stillness. We filled the pitcher with our distractions and through stillness we were able to empty the pitcher.

Pass out an empty pitcher or cup to each participant, and a small cup of marbles.

Ask participants to think about all of the choices that they made yesterday.

When they made a good choice (excelled at a virtue), ask them to add a marble to their pitcher. When they made a wrong choice (were tempted by a passion), ask them to take a marble out of their pitcher. The goal is to fill up our spiritual pitchers with goodness (marbles) through exercising discipline.

**Debrief:**

* What was your day like yesterday? Easy? Challenging? What made it that way?
* How many marbles did you add to your pitcher? Were you surprised by the number? Why or why not?
* How can discipline help us fill and keep our pitchers full?

**Activity 2: Discussion**

(Whole-group discussion or small break-out groups, depending on how many Youth Workers are present to facilitate the discussion.)

Prompt: Fr. Thomas Hopko has 55 maxims. Number 27 is “do the most difficult and painful things first.” What does that mean to you?

* What are your values and virtues? How could these values and virtues help you get closer to God?
* What would your life be like if you “did the hard things first”?
* What would change? What would stay the same?

**Activity 3: Scripture**

John 5: 1-15

“**1** After this there was a Jewish feast, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. **2** Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool called Bethzatha in Aramaic, which has five covered walkways. **3** A great number of sick, blind, lame, and paralyzed people were lying in these walkways. **4** For an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool, and troubled the water; whoever stepped in first after the troubling of the water was healed of whatever disease he had. **5** Now a man was there who had been disabled for thirty-eight years. **6** When Jesus saw him lying there and when he realized that the man had been disabled a long time already, he said to him, “Do you want to become well?” **7** The sick man answered him, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up. While I am trying to get into the water, someone else goes down there before me.” **8** Jesus said to him, “Stand up! Pick up your mat and walk.” **9** Immediately the man was healed, and he picked up his mat and started walking. (Now that day was a Sabbath.)

**10** So the Jewish leaders said to the man who had been healed, “It is the Sabbath, and you are not permitted to carry your mat.” **11** But he answered them, “The man who made me well said to me, ‘Pick up your mat and walk.’” **12** They asked him, “Who is the man who said to you, ‘Pick up your mat and walk’?” **13** But the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had slipped out, since there was a crowd in that place.

**14** After this Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, “Look, you have become well. Don’t sin anymore, lest anything worse happen to you.” **15** The man went away and informed the Jewish leaders that Jesus was the one who had made him well.”

**Debrief:**

* Who are the characters in this passage and what are their roles?
* Did any characters choose to be disciplined?
* How could the paralyzed man have chosen to act out discipline?
* What did the discipline of the paralyzed man lead to?
* How can we practice discipline in such a way that it leads to faithfulness in God?

**Conclusion:**

Go around the circle and ask each individual to name one new thing they learned during the session.

**Closing Prayer:**

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

“Thank You, Lord, for Your strength and guidance in my work. You are the fulfillment of all good things. Fill also my soul with joy and gladness, that I may praise You always.”

Amen.

**Learning Session 2:**

Goal: GOYAns will learn about discipline.

Objective: GOYAns will identify ways to practice discipline.

Materials: smartphone or laptop, paper, pens, liturgy books, a few copies of the debrief questions (at least 3)

**Opening Prayer:**

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

“Christ my Lord, the Giver of light and wisdom, who opened the eyes of the blind man and transformed the fishermen into wise heralds and teachers of the gospel through the coming of the Holy Spirit, shine also in my mind the light of the grace of the Holy Spirit. Grant me discernment, understanding and wisdom in learning to abound in every good work, for to You I give honor and glory.”

Amen.

Ice Breaker: If God were to give you a strength to help others, what would you want that to be?

**Activity 1:** Saint Story - Symeon (Ascetics of the World)

([Symeon Ascetics of the World)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xPpumAzqcm0) - Be the Bee #81 - “Pray Simply, Pray Always”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xPpumAzqcm0>

**Debrief:**

* What was your view of holiness before reading the story?
* How did your view change from reading the story?
* What did this daily discipline do to Symeon’s soul? How did it affect him?
* What does Symeon's story suggest to you about your own prayer life?
* What can you learn from him about being closer to God?

**Activity 2:** Liturgy Discussion

“Let us be attentive”

**Debrief:**

* Who is the “us” in this line from the Divine Liturgy?
* How many times in the liturgy are we called to “be attentive”? (6)
* Why are we being called to “be attentive” or pay attention so many times in the Liturgy?
* What does it mean for you to “attend”?
* How can attentiveness help us in our practice of discipline in our daily lives?

**Activity 3: Practice the Discipline of Silence**

Pray with the group for a few minutes. Pray the Trisagion Prayer and then the Lord’s Prayer. Then read 1 Kings 19:11-13:

11 “And he said, “Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord.” And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; 12 and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.”

Try to practice stillness for 3-5 minutes.

**Debrief:**

* What was that like for you?
* What was going on in your body and mind as you were trying to be still?
* What could you do differently next time to help yourself?
* What do you think could be the value of stillness for you in your spiritual life?

**Conclusion:**

Go around the circle and ask each individual to name one new idea they learned during the session.

**Closing Prayer:**

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

“O Lord, You who steadied the hand of Peter as he began to sink on the stormy sea, if you are with me, no one is against me. Grant to me the shield of faith and the mighty armor of the Holy Spirit to protect me and guide me to do Your will. The future I put into Your hands, O Lord, and I follow You to a life in Christ.”

Amen.