**Opening Question:**

*(Leader should ask the group)*

How would you fill in this blank: “Patience is --------.”

Have campers answer this question on paper or a notebook.

**Teaching:**

Patience is “the capacity to accept or tolerate delay, trouble, or suffering without getting angry or upset.” Patience is a gentle, long-suffering attitude toward the other. We all have things in life that we do not want to do. It is only through doing the things we do not want to do, in a way of not complaining, that we grow patience in our lives. When we are successful at this, patience can bring peace and joy to our lives and relationships. “The word ‘patience’ means “to endure.” It means to bear and put up with people and things. It means to carry the burdens of others, and of ‘the heat of the day.’ It means to **watch and to wait**, not to hurry and to rush. It means literally to suffer with and to suffer through, in quiet expectation of the hoped-for result. For only those, says Jesus, who endure to the end will be saved (Matthew 24:13).” \*from The Lenten Spring by Fr. Thomas Hopko, published by St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1983.

It can be easier to do things on your own, and working together with others can be very difficult. We each have our own needs and desires, and we want to do things our own way. Being patient with others means we have to put our needs away and do things in a kind way. Then we are able to work with the other person patiently.

Some (perhaps many) participants don’t feel patient 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.

Patience is more than a feeling. It’s a choice, something we live out in particular relationships with particular people. Family life gives us many opportunities to grow in patience. Practicing patience allows God to work in our lives. Going to school requires active waiting (in order to graduate for example, we have to get through each grade by doing our homework, studying for tests, and doing projects). Patience is needed or we end up just going through life angry

We need to practice patience in our lives through kindly serving one another so that patience becomes a habit. Serving one another and spending time with other people (especially those who might challenge us) helps us to cultivate patience.

**Teaching 2:**

Below is the story of St. Joachim and Anna told in a homily by Met. Nicholas of Detroit. Please read the homily and retell the story to the campers. Please do not read the homily word-by-word. Tell the story in your own words.

*To be certain, Joachim and Anna were not an extraordinary couple. In reality they appear to be everyday people.*

*Joachim and Anna were an ordinary family, as ordinary as any of ours: which means, of course, that like the rest of us, their family was warm and loving, … but it wasn’t perfect. Upon them was the pain of childlessness. In their culture and in that place and time, this problem was more than a heartache; it was a social stigma, seen by some as a sign of divine disfavor. Unlike today where we consider ourselves to be the sole arbiters of the miracle of human creation, our forebears understood family and childbearing to be part of God’s divine blessing and plan.*

*The tradition of the Church tells the story of the great faithfulness and love of Joachim and Anna. In many ways, they were considered blessed: for by God’s mercy and providence, they had material abundance; and from their abundance they offered one third of their material blessing to the work of the Temple and its priests; one third to the needs of the poor; and they cared for themselves with the remaining third. One might say that they had everything – except the joy of children.*

*Thus on that fateful day it was not unusual for Joachim to approach the Temple with generous gifts and offerings – he always gave to the work of God, and he always prayed for the blessing of a child; what was different on that day was that he was turned away. An unthinking person in authority challenged him: How can a childless man be deemed worthy to come before God? In typical male fashion, confused and ashamed, Joachim goes off to be alone (in his “man-cave”) in the wilderness; there to nurse his soul’s wounds, but even more, to pour out his heart before God.*

*His faithful wife Anne fears the worst for her absent husband. Unaware of what happened, she too goes into mourning as a childless widow. And from her heart, shattered with pain, escapes a prayer that reaches the heavens: “O God of our fathers, bless me.”*

*Yes, my friends, we know these people, don’t we? We know this family: they are us. For, beloved, what family among us is untouched by hurt, by loss, by weakness, by strife, … by shame? Which of our families is not affected by some condition that breaks our hearts and challenges our hope, whether because of unemployment or underemployment or financial stress or medical issues or legal troubles? What family has not been tested by the presence of moral failure and loss of hope? When we see the family of Joachim and Anna, we see people just like ourselves, just like everyone else. We see people who ache for a sense of God’s presence, a sense of God’s purpose in their life. And just as both were in deep despair, God sent his angel to tell them of His mercy and love, and that after waiting with faith and hope, their prayers would be blessed: they would have a child.*

*That the greatest story of human history starts with such an ordinary family—this brings hope that God can make wonderful things happen even through us—despite our limitations, despite our frailty, despite our basic human nature in all its broken beauty.*

*And a wonderful thing did happen for Joachim and Anna, a wonderful thing for all humanity. A child was born, a little girl.*

*Joachim and Anna were well along in years when they became parents—in their late sixties at the least. Their child was a miracle. But even in this, Joachim and Anna are akin to all of us. Each and every time a child is born, what parent does not look upon their infant as an absolute miracle, a gift directly from God? Made as we are in God’s own image and according to His likeness, we bear within us the latent powers of creation. (Gen 1:26)*

*When you see the fruit of the union of Joachim and Anna—when you behold an icon of the Virgin Mary—you see a most profound spiritual statement. Theologians struggle to put into words what every father and mother, every godfather and godmother, every grandparent, every aunt and uncle knows to be true: When human prayers come together with God’s grace, miracles happen. We creatures of dust cannot will it to be so. But when we humans do our human things and live our human lives in cooperation with God, miracles happen, even though the eyes of the world see nothing new under the sun. God speaks to His people every day!*

*The infant Mary was a miracle. But she was not magical. She did not enter the world ready-made for her role as the Virgin Mother. The work of Joachim and Anna in God’s plan of salvation did not end after a conception and nine months of pregnancy. They were called not merely to be progenitors, but even more, to be parents. The Latin word is so fitting, sharing as it does a root with the word “prepare.” A parent is not simply the one who sires a child, but the one who prepares a child to become an adult—through instruction, through patience, by word and example.*

*This, too, is part of the greatest story ever told. That the mother of our God had parents who were role models of love and self-sacrifice, of perseverance and prayer.*

***Saint Anna was patient and prayerful. She is a great example of patience to us all!***

**Wrap-up**

Provide the breakout questions to the entire group. Provide the instructions to the breakout activity.

*Note: Campers and Staff are moved from main Zoom room to their Breakout rooms*

**Discussion Questions** (for breakout groups):

Start with the an activity:

Instruct campers to count up to the number ten. This must be done one at a time. If two campers say the number at the same time, then the group must start at the beginning.

* When is the right time for **patience** and when is the right time to take action?
* What is your relationship to patience?
* Has it been easy or hard for you to be patient over the past few months? Explain.
* What can be learned from the story of Saint Joachim and Anna?

**Devotional (Cabin Talk):**

Ask campers to think about a relationship they admire.

* What are the qualities that make this relationship successful?
* What do you think is the key ingredient in that relationship?

Allow everyone to take a chance to explain a relationship that they admire and think about the key ingredient.

Read the following: “Love is patient.”

* Have you heard this before?
* What does this mean to you?
* How can we be more patient with the people we love?