Opening session by OL Leader (guest speaker or clergy) in main Zoom group:

20 minutes

**Opening Question:**

*(Leader should ask the group)*

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

Have campers answer this question on paper or a notebook.

**Teaching:**

It’s easy to feel at peace when everything is going well and things are calm.

But sometimes life is chaotic and troubling, and it’s much harder to be at peace in our hearts. As a world and as a nation, we find ourselves in turbulent times right now, and peace may be harder to find.

In the moments of unrest, we can always turn to prayer. We must remember that peace isn’t something we just manufacture ourselves -- ***peace comes from God***.

Read the Scripture aloud:

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you. (Philippians 4:6-9)

The God of peace will be with you. God sends us peace, and according to this Epistle, if we want to be at peace we should:

* Pray -- bring everything in prayer to God.
* Give thanks -- our prayers should include “thanksgiving” or gratitude to God
* Find the Good -- we should meditate or focus on those things that are good.

It’s not that your circumstances become more peaceful. The outside world doesn’t change. With prayer and thanksgiving and looking for the good, God will send us peace, even in chaotic and difficult times.

Peace is more than just a feeling. It’s a way of being, something we live out in our lives and in particular relationships with particular people. People can be at peace with one another, or not. When we are peaceful, others will feel our peace and they too may become more peaceful.

Like Christ, we love by serving. Being at peace and spreading that peace happens through serving one another. Serving our neighbor in a peaceful way brings God into our own lives as well.

**Activity:** *Display attached sheet (Glory to God for All Things) on shared screen.*

St. John Chrysostom was the Patriarch of Constantinople, but he upset powerful people and was removed from his position and died in exile. And yet, his final words were “Glory to God for All Things”. Despite his circumstances, he was filled with gratitude and peace.

Met. Tryphon Turkestanov was imprisoned in a Soviet gulag. He would have witnessed and been victim to terrible tortures and cruelty, truly seeing the worst of human behavior. Before he died in the prison camp, the Metropolitan wrote an Akathist of Thanksgiving called ‘Glory to God for All Things’, in which he thanks God for everything -- even the bad things that surround him. The Akathist was found with Fr. Gregory Petrov’s things when he died in the Soviet prison camp in 1940. This song of praise in the middle of suffering must have been precious to him, and through him many Orthodox people have discovered and loved this beautiful prayer.

Ask the campers to write an answer to each of these questions:

How did these two men find peace during difficult times?

How can we learn from this, and learn to maintain our peace during our own struggles?

**Teaching 2:**

We cannot attain peace on our own, but we can pray that it be sent to us, and once we receive it, we can cultivate it and protect it -- and radiate it.

**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):

* What does peace mean to you? When have you felt peace?
* When have you felt un-peaceful or distracted?
* Is it easy to be peaceful all the time? What makes this hard? Ask for examples.
* Where does peace come from?
* What is one way you will try to be peaceful, even when it may be difficult?
* What do you think of when someone says peace?

**Devotional (Cabin Talk):**

* How can you invite peace into your heart?
  + Meditate on the good, thank God for it, pray about all of it.
  + Ask God to send peace.
* Do you know someone who is peaceful? Write their name down.
* How does it feel to be around them?
* How could you spread peace to others in your home? Friends?

**Glory to God for all things!**

-- last words, St. John Chrysostom

**Glory to God for All Things: An Akathist of Thanksgiving**

-- written by Met. Tryphon Turkestanov in a Soviet Prison Camp

Kontakion 4

How filled with sweetness are those whose thoughts dwell on Thee; how life-giving Thy holy Word. To speak with Thee is more soothing than anointing with oil; sweeter than the honeycomb. To pray to Thee lifts the spirit, refreshes the soul. Where Thou art not, there is only emptiness; hearts are smitten with sadness; nature, and life itself, become sorrowful; where Thou art, the soul is filled with abundance, and its song resounds like a torrent of life: Alleluia!

Ikos 4

When the sun is setting, when quietness falls like the peace of eternal sleep, and the silence of the spent day reigns, then in the splendour of its declining rays, filtering through the clouds, I see Thy dwelling-place: fiery and purple, gold and blue, they speak prophet-like of the ineffable beauty of Thy presence, and call to us in their majesty. We turn to the Father.

Glory to Thee at the hushed hour of nightfall

Glory to Thee, covering the earth with peace

Glory to Thee for the last ray of the sun as it sets

Glory to Thee for sleep's repose that restores us

Glory to Thee for Thy goodness even in the time of darkness

When all the world is hidden from our eyes

Glory to Thee for the prayers offered by a trembling soul

Glory to Thee for the pledge of our reawakening

On that glorious last day, that day which has no evening

Glory to Thee, O God, from age to age

Kontakion 5

The dark storm clouds of life bring no terror to those in whose hearts Thy fire is burning brightly. Outside is the darkness of the whirlwind, the terror and howling of the storm, but in the heart, in the presence of Christ, there is light and peace, silence: Alleluia!