Youth Worker Training Manual
Dear Youth Worker:

By the Grace of God and the leadership, vision, blessing, and love of His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios, we have been given a great opportunity to empower and strengthen our clergy, pastoral assistants, youth directors, staff, volunteers, parents, youth, and all laity as we continue our journeys to living a life in Christ and serving His Holy Church.

As part of the Strategic Plan of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta, Goal 11.2 was commissioned to create a Youth Worker Training Manual to prepare and equip those serving our youth in any capacity within our beloved parishes. This manual ushers in a new era in training all our youth ministry volunteers at the parish level.

A team was assembled to assist in achieving the goal of creating this manual which comprised of experienced Youth Ministry professionals from throughout the Archdiocese. Team Members include: Rev. Fr. Sampson N. Kasapakis, Efimerios of St. Nicholas Cathedral in Tarpon Springs, FL, Rev. Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis, Priest of St. John the Baptist in Tampa, FL, Rev. Dr. Anton Vrame, Director of Department of Religious Education, Julia A. Moricz, previous Metropolis of Atlanta Youth, Education, and Hellenic Culture Director, Angeliki Constantine M. Div, Project Coordinator of the Department of Religious Education, and Alyssa Kyritsis M. Div, Pastoral Assistant at St. John the Divine in Jacksonville, FL. We give many thanks for their efforts towards the completion of Goal 11.2 of our Strategic Plan.

This Youth Worker Training Manual was developed as a resource that clergy, youth directors, pastoral assistants, and parent volunteers could use to educate themselves on various topics and areas of focus within Youth Ministry. As you will see on the Manual’s table of contents it has plenty of information and we have indicated, when possible, age appropriateness of material to assist the reader. The Table of Contents on the following page outlines the various areas of focus, and we have indicated, when possible, age appropriateness to assist you.

We invite you all to read through every section to see the most updated information in Youth Protection, Recruiting Youth Ministry leaders, updated forms for Youth Ministry participants and volunteers, Youth retreat preparation and best practices.

I like to close sermons and discussions with a call to challenge and being that this manual is for everyone, it means everyone receives a challenge regardless of your knowledge level. If you are someone who thinks you know all about youth ministry, I give you the challenge to open this manual with an open mind to see what was created, too look and see if there is something new you can try to use within Christ’s ministry. If you are someone who might not have any or little knowledge within the practices of Youth Ministry, I challenge you to learn, empower yourself by educating yourself in what it takes to be a youth worker and serving Gods Church. No matter where we fall, knowledgeable or not, or even in between, we always have something to learn. Our Metropolis and Parish Youth ministries thanks you all for your love and desire to serve within the vineyard of our Lord

With Love in the Lord,

+Rev. Fr. Sampson N. Kasapakis
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These famous words, spoken by parents through the centuries, reminds us of the goal of all parents to ensure their children stay safe and make good decisions. These same words apply to Clergy, Pastoral Assistants/Youth Directors, Youth Ministry leaders, Camp Counselors, etc.:

Our Archdiocesan website proclaims:
“The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America is deeply committed to the protection of its children and youth. Those who work with our young people are accountable to God and the community to ensure their safety, well-being, and spiritual formation. As a Church, we must provide a safe and secure environment where young people can grow and mature in the Faith. While we can never eliminate the possibility of abuse or injury, we can take steps to ensure that our programs are as safe as possible.

In the spirit of prevention and protection, the Youth Protection Manual (YPM) was created to help clergy and laity charged with the task of selecting, training, and supervising those who work with young people at Archdiocese camps and retreats. Charged by the Holy Eparchial Synod and beginning in 2009, each camp and Metropolis retreat of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America is mandated to utilize the YPM within their program.

The YPM serves not only to keep our children and youth safe, but also to protect the adults who serve them. The Archdiocese realizes that healthy relationships among people are at the foundation of Christian ministry, and as such, are central to the life of the Church. Defining healthy and safe relationships through our Youth Protection Manual is not meant, in any way, to undermine the strength and importance of personal interaction in our ministries. Rather, it is to assist in more clearly defining behaviors and practices that allow the church to more fully demonstrate its love and compassion for children and youth in sincere and genuine relationships.”

In the following pages, you will find the entire Youth Protection manual. Please review and keep this document handy, as the safety of our children and ourselves is the number one priority. Remember - Safety First!!
Recruiting Volunteers:

It is essentially impossible to do youth ministry on our own whether we are Clergymen, Youth Directors, or Volunteers. The best source of volunteers for our Church’s youth ministry is the Parents of our Youth. Those working in youth ministry have come to learn that our job isn’t just working with kids and planning events, but mostly working hand in hand with their parents. If what we do at Church is not reinforced in the home, truthfully it gets lost.

The reality is that the youth’s parent or guardian are the main influence on their spiritual journey. With that reality in mind, the Church Clergy and the parents must join to show their youth an Orthodox Christian way of life. One of the main reasons why this manual was created was to empower, encourage, and equip parents with the tools necessary to lead their child and youth of their parish towards the Heavenly Kingdom. How do we get parents to care about their spiritual life and that of their youth? How do we get them to want to volunteer? How do we then build our Youth Ministry Volunteer team?

Step 1: Prayer: Realizing that we cannot do it without God.
As much experience, or inexperience, we feel we may possess, we all will eventually fail if we think our skills alone are enough to achieve a solid and successful Youth Ministry Program. The good news is God always provides. He will provide us with the guidance we need to establish the right team for our Church’s mission. We must start the journey, as we do every journey, with prayer.

When we hit the road block of not finding volunteers, we should remind ourselves of Christ’s words to his disciples in Matthew 9:37-38: "The harvest is so great, but the workers are so few. [38] So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send out more workers for his fields." Jesus tells us to ask God to send us workers. We need to depend on Him to make this process happen. Prayer will remind us that He is in charge - and that He has promised to meet our needs in this area. Now we don't have to worry!

Note to reader: We are not over spiritualizing this - it is true. If we want God and our relationship with Him to be the center of our lives, it must start this way. Pray.
Step 2: Building a Staff Team

1. Brainstorm:
Okay, so you're ready to build a staff team, but you don't know where to start. First, write down the names of everyone you know who has the following qualifications:
   1) They have a pulse. Meaning, they are alive.
   2) They exhibit an Orthodox Christian way of life: live the faith, participate in the sacramental life, involved in other ministries of the church, etc.

A very important thing to remember is that brainstorming is not the time to decide if you think they can do it. In your mind, you will think, “Oh, they'll never want to do this,” or “I haven't talked to them in years.” You will be surprised how many people are willing to help.

**REMEMBER:** Brainstorming is simply writing down ideas of people who come to mind. You'll edit the list down later. Don't edit a name before it makes the list!

2. Invite:

There has been much success in inviting people on your list to help you in your ministry ONCE in a small way. It's that simple. Don't try to get them to join your staff for 5 years. Don't give them an Orthodox theology exam. Just tell them you need help scooping ice cream or handing out pizza for GOYA or Sunday School. You want them to see what God's doing in the ministry so they can become excited about it.

Many people have a bad habit of trying to recruit via telephone calls, texts, emails, or quick conversations. In the sales profession, there is a principle called “get the appointment.” The main success of this principle in the business world is getting a person to attend a meeting so you can show them the benefits, they can experience the “product” and envision themselves as part of this group. The same goes for recruiting staff for youth work. So many of us call the people on the brainstorm list and start laying out the commitment it takes and the time it requires. At least 90% of the time you will scare off potential volunteers. Just “get the appointment.” Invite them to help you out once - no strings attached. Invite them to help with a current need like scooping ice cream, serving pizza, driving a van, acting as weekend nurse, something that allows them to get a taste of the ministry.
When people become involved in your ministry in small ways, the workers which will best fit your needs will float to the top. They will enjoy that initial experience and often ask if they can help again.

3. Evaluate: We must make the habit of evaluating our ministry leaders and volunteers. Before asking someone if they want to help regularly, you MUST evaluate if they are ready to serve in the respective area. Remember- your requirements so far have been minimal: a pulse and living an Orthodox lifestyle. Evaluating the individual allows you to have a conversation and get to know the individual.

Taking people to lunch or coffee allows you the time to know them more personally, to find out more about their life and their relationship with Christ and His Church. Through such opportunities, you will often be able to see their character. After one or two opportunities for fellowship, you will determine their passion, their hidden talents, their level of commitment. Through these conversations, you can determine if they will be a good fit as a ministry leader or a part of the ministry team.

Please do not skip this step. Make sure you evaluate your prospects. See if these are the people you want impacting the lives of our youth and church community. Find out their abilities and skills and help them find a place where they can use their gifts to serve God and further your ministry. (this sentence seems very sneaky & self-serving)

4. Invite Back: Invite them back again, this time with the question in their mind, “How can I serve this ministry?” Don't ask for a commitment right then- just get them to come visit again with the understanding that you want to talk to them afterwards and see what God instills in their heart, whether it is a fit or not. Let them be the one who makes the choice if they serve or not. (I’m a little confused with this step)

5. Make it official: Have them fill out all the forms necessary to register as a Youth Worker and make sure to complete a background check.

In closing, the Lord has given us a great harvest, we pray to Him for more workers
and they are in our communities, and He has big things planned for your ministry. Trust in Him and be diligent with the ability and knowledge He has given us to serve His flock.

## All Forms Needed for Youth Ministry

It is natural for parents and those signing up their children for Youth Ministries (and anything really) to dread the registration process. Many Churches have been trying to expedite the process by making all forms accessible through online platforms. Whether electronic or not, filling out the necessary forms is the very first and essential step to a successful Youth Ministry Program.

Registrations and other forms are an integral part of the mission and vision of the Church. It allows us the opportunity to know the basic information about our youth and their parents/guardians so we can properly minister to their needs, and recruit for potential volunteers through the same process.

These forms also protect our beloved churches, the Metropolis of Atlanta, and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America from liability and potential legal situations. They act as a preventative measure for the safety of the Church, our families, and especially our Youth.

The next several pages provide sample forms that can be used in your parish. They are also available on the Strategic Plan Website if your parish uses an online registration system. You will first find the various participant forms, followed by the Youth Worker forms.
Sample Youth Participant Forms
Youth Ministry Registration Form

“Let the little children come to Me, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” Matthew 19:14

Participant’s Full Name ___________________________ Age __ Date of Birth __________ Grade in School __________

Participants’s Name Day ____________________________

Participant’s E-Mail: ________________________________

Participant’s Hobbies/Talents: ________________________________

Ministries that they would like to join:

- Sunday School
- Little Lambs
- HOPE/JOY
- GOYA
- Greek Dance Ministry
- Greek School
- Altar Servers
- Sports Ministry
- Oratorical Festival
- Special Treasures Ministry
- Summer Camp Program
- Choir/Youth Choir

Parent’s Name(s) : ________________________________

Address: __________________________________________

City: ________________________________ Zip: __________

E-Mail: ________________________________ Phone: ________________________________

Does your child suffer from any allergies? Yes/No

If yes, please specify: _______________________________________________________

Occasionally photos of the children’s activities are used in the newsletter, website and around church. Names are never published with the pictures.

I give permission for my child to be photographed for these purposes
I do not give permission for my child to be photographed for these purposes

Dear Parents:

We need your support and assistance in carrying out a number of student projects throughout the course of the Church School Year. Please volunteer your time and talents.

I am interested in volunteering for ______________________________________________
Covenant for Youth Participant

Name: ________________________________

◊ I am an Orthodox Christian and attend Church regularly.

◊ I understand that it is a blessing to serve my community, and to be the positive role model of an Orthodox Christian.

◊ I will participate in all activities throughout our Church’s Ministry Year.

◊ I will be held personally responsible for my actions. I will respect all property including Church, housing, athletics, outdoor and indoor facilities whether at my home parish or any host parish event facility. I will refrain from using offensive language, alcohol, and illegal drugs, especially at Church Events.

◊ I understand that if my behavior is not becoming of an Orthodox Christian, I will be asked to leave any event even at my own expense.

◊ I will respect all Clergy, all advisors, all adults, other youth participants and myself.

◊ I agree to follow the Archdiocesan Youth Protection Plan and understand that there is a copy in the Parish office for my review.

◊ I have read the above covenant and will follow them to the best of my ability. ???

◊ I understand that the failure to comply with this covenant and all rules of event will result in a meeting with my Parish Priest to discuss my participation in future Church events.

I agree to this covenant and will follow the above rules and the rules and each event I attend throughout the year.

Signature of Participant: ___________________________________________________________

Date: ____________________________ please add a statement about bullying
Bed Consent form for Youth Participant

Dear Parents:

Please complete the form below, including your signature, and return it to your Parish Church office to finalize your child’s registration for the upcoming Event.

Each child must have a separate form completed by their parent or guardian.

We encourage you to discuss this issue with your children to ensure they understand and are comfortable with the housing arrangements. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the Metropolis Youth Office for assistance.

YOUTH Name ______________________________________

Parish ____________________________________________

City/State __________________________________________

I, ____________________________ hereby give my permission and consent for my child, to sleep in a bed with another child of same sex and similar age (who may not be a sibling) for Winter Youth Rally ________ (year).

________________________________________________________
Signature Date

Note: This form is only valid for one year
Insurance Card Form

Participant’s Name:________________________________________

Parish City & State:________________________________________

*Place attach a copy of the FRONT AND BACK of your Insurance Card to this form and fill in the below information:*

**Insurance Company**

Name:______________________________________________________

Name of Insured:____________________________________________

Group Number:______________________________________________

Bin Number:_________________________________________________

ID Number:__________________________________________________

Phone Number:______________________________________________
METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA WAIVER AND COMPLETE RELEASE OF LIABILITY, MEDICAL TREATMENT AND PHOTO AUTHORIZATION

In consideration of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta, Inc. or the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta Diakonia Center, Inc. (which entities, together with all of the churches and missions that comprise a part of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta, are collectively defined herein as the “Church”) furnishing or making available services, property, camp site, housing, transportation, supervision, activities, resources, supplies, programs and equipment to enable the undersigned participant (the “Participant”) to participate in Church religious, social, cultural, athletic or other activities, services, programs and events (collectively, the “Church Events”), and for other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, the undersigned Participant and the undersigned legal Guardian of Participant, on behalf of themselves, and their respective children, representatives, executors, heirs, beneficiaries and successors (all of the foregoing being collectively defined as the “Undersigned”) fully and unconditionally agree as follows:

1. The Undersigned fully understand, acknowledge and agree that:

(a) all indoor or outdoor Church Events have inherent risks, dangers, hazards and exposures (collectively defined as the “Dangers”);

(b) participation in Church Events and/or use of Church owned, borrowed or leased equipment, facilities, real or personal property, buildings, or spiritual, residential or recreational items, properties or equipment (collectively defined as the “Church Property and Equipment”) may result in injury, illness, sickness, disease, strains, breaks, fractures, partial and/or total paralysis, death or other ailments or injuries that could cause serious disability (all of the foregoing being collectively defined as the “Injuries”);

(c) these Dangers or Injuries may be caused by: (i) accidents, the forces of nature, foreseeable or unforeseeable causes, or other causes; or (ii) the actions, omissions or negligence of other participants in Church Events or other individuals or entities; or (iii) the actions, omissions or negligence of the Church Youth Director, Metropolitan, Church Event chaperones or leaders, clergy or other Church Council members, parishioners, agents, subcontractors, officers, volunteers or employees of the Church (all of the foregoing individuals being collectively defined as the “Church Officials”); and

(d) by the participation by any of the Undersigned in Church Events or use of Church Property and Equipment, the Undersigned hereby assume all risks and Dangers and all responsibility for any and all Injuries, Dangers, losses and damages, which occur or arise therefrom, whether caused in whole or in party by the actions, omissions or negligence of any of the Church Officials, the Church or any other person or entity.

2. The Undersigned Participant and Guardian, on behalf of all of the Undersigned, including their respective children, representatives, heirs, beneficiaries and successors, hereby voluntarily release, waive, discharge, hold harmless, defend and indemnify the Church, and all Church Officials, from any and all Injuries, Dangers, lawsuits, other proceedings, claims of any kind, actions or losses of any kind, including without limitation those for bodily injury, Injuries, property damage, wrongful death, loss of services or otherwise, which might arise out of use of the Church Property and Equipment or participation in, or travel to, any Church Events. The Undersigned specifically understand and agree that the Undersigned are releasing, discharging and waiving, without limitation, any claims or actions that the Undersigned may have presently or in the future for the negligence, actions, omissions or other conduct by Church or any or all of the Church Officials in connection with Church Events or Church Property and Equipment. The Undersigned also hereby represent that the Participant is in good physical and mental condition and is capable of participating in outdoor and indoor recreational activities and programs all without incident or problem of any kind, including, but not limited to, swimming, diving, boating, ropes courses, climbing activities, basketball, volleyball and other sports and adventure activities. The Undersigned accept all responsibility for Participant’s physical well being and health and the results of the Undersigned’s participation in any such activities or Church Events.

3. THE UNDERSIGNED HAVE READ THIS WAIVER AND RELEASE AND BY SIGNING IT AGREE THAT IT IS THE UNDERSIGNED’S INTENTION TO FULLY AND COMPLETELY RELEASE, EXEMPT, RELIEVE AND HOLD HARMLESS THE CHURCH AND ALL CHURCH OFFICIALS FROM ANY LIABILITY OR OTHER CLAIM

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OF ANY KIND FOR ANY INJURIES, DANGERS, PERSONAL INJURY, PROPERTY DAMAGE, OR WRONGFUL DEATH CAUSED BY NEGLIGENCE, ACTIONS, OMISSIONS OR OTHERWISE IN ANY WAY RELATED TO CHURCH EVENTS OR CHURCH EQUIPMENT.

4. Any Church Official may seek whatever medical attention or treatment he or she believes the Participant may need, including, without limitation, having them see a doctor or other professional at a hospital, clinic, other medical facility or at Church Events (collectively defined as the “Medical Professionals”), and any Medical Professionals may treat the Participant and provide whatever medical attention or treatment they believe the Participant requires or could benefit from (the “Medical Treatment”).

5. The Undersigned Guardian and Participant (if of legal age) will remain completely financially responsible and liable (regardless of whether or not he or she has insurance) for any and all costs, fees or expenses associated with any such Medical Treatment, and the Guardian and Participant (if of legal age) will promptly reimburse and indemnify the Church, any Church Official and/or the Medical Professionals for any costs, fees, expenses or claims of any kind they may incur in obtaining such Medical Treatment for the Participant, provided, however, that nothing herein shall obligate the Church or Church Official to incur any such costs, fees or expenses or seek such Medical Treatment, and nothing herein shall supersede, limit or conflict with any Waivers, Releases or Hold Harmless Agreements that may be executed in favor of any of the Church or any Church Officials in this or any other document.

6. Representatives and authorized contractors of the Church are hereby authorized to take and record photographs, videotape or other images, and or make audio, video or other recordings, of Participant and Participant’s activities at or involvement in Church Events, or using Church Property and Equipment, solely for use by the Church in its brochures, newsletters, video tapes, recordings, web sites and other promotional material or items to promote the Church or Church Events, all without any remuneration to Participant, Guardian or the Undersigned.

All of the above provisions are accepted and agreed to as of: ______________ (Date)

“UNDERSIGNED”

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<tr>
<th>Participant’s Signature</th>
<th>Participant’s Address</th>
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<td>City</td>
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<td>State</td>
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<tr>
<th>Participant’s Printed Name</th>
<th>City</th>
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<td>State</td>
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<th>Home Phone</th>
<th>Cell Phone</th>
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<tr>
<th>Guardian’s Signature (if Participant is less than 18 years old)</th>
<th>Guardian’s Address (if different than above)</th>
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<tr>
<th>Home Phone</th>
<th>Other Phone</th>
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In case of emergency, please contact:

NAME: ____________________________________________

Home Phone: __________________________ Cell Phone: __________________________

EMAIL: ______________________________________
DRESS CODE FOR METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA YOUTH EVENTS
(standards for Retreats, WYR, & HDF)

We have established a standard of dress which allows for both individual expression and concern for others. These appearance standards are meant to promote self-respect, love of Christ, humility, and pride within our Greek Orthodox community. The dress code gives standard guidelines to follow based on the principles of modesty, neatness, practicality, and love of neighbor. A youth’s appearance should represent the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta in a positive manner and should glorify God.

The fashion world is developing new styles all the time, and the styles are not always right or wrong; however, in a day of constantly deteriorating cultural styles, we feel we must set a minimum standard. It is important to remember that conformity to our standards is expected for all youth, advisors, chaperones, staff, and adult volunteers. Together we form the body of Christ and our outward appearance and actions should reflect this at all times.

SHIRTS & BLOUSES:
No sleeveless shirts, including tank tops or halter tops. Please refrain from anything low-cut, or with bare shoulders, bare back, and/or stomach. T-Shirts must not include inappropriate words or pictures. If men are wearing a collared shirt, it should be tucked in. All tops should be of a fit and fabric (not see through fabric) that do not reveal undergarments. Tight fitting tops are not permitted.

PANTS:
Students may wear pants, jeans, and Capri’s that are in good repair (no holes or tears) and present a neat, well-groomed appearance. No oversized, baggy, tight fitting pants or leggings are permitted. Except during athletic events, sweatpants, yoga pants, biker pants, or warm up pants are not acceptable.

DRESSES/SKIRTS:
Length must not be shorter than 1” above the knee (this applies even if wearing tights). Tight-fitting skirts and dresses are not permitted. The bodice of the dress must follow the guidelines for tops, and appropriate undergarments must be worn.

ATTIRE FOR DIVINE LITURGY:
Men should wear dress slacks or khakis – no jeans please. Collared shirts are preferred, and a suit coat & tie are appreciated (especially in a hotel or church setting). Dress shoes and socks should also be worn.

Women should follow the guidelines for dresses/skirts above. Dress pants are also acceptable, provided they are not skin tight. Capri’s, leggings, and jeans are not appropriate attire for church. Appropriate dress shoes that provide ease of walking are required.
Sample Youth Ministry Volunteer Forms
Youth Ministries and Catechetical School Volunteer Application

APPLICATION DATE: ____________________________________________
MINISTRIES VOLUNTEERING FOR: ________________________________
DATE AVAILABLE: _____________________________________________

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name: _________________________________________________________
  Last               First               Middle

Home Address: __________________________________________________

City, State, Zip ________________________________________________

Date of Birth: _________________________________________________

Home Phone: ______________________  Cell Phone: ______________________

Email Address: ________________________________________________

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Person to be contacted in case of emergency: ____________________________

Emergency Contact Phone Number: _________________________________

Relationship of Emergency Contact Person: __________________________
VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Have you ever been a volunteer for Youth Ministries? (Circle one) YES NO

If yes, please provide volunteer experience including, dates, ministries, responsibilities, and any duties involving working with or around children:

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

PERSONAL HISTORY

Do you have a valid Driver’s License? (Circle one) YES NO

Driver’s License Number:________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Expiration Date:________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Has your license ever been suspended or revoked? (Circle one) YES NO

Is your vehicle Insured? (Circle one) YES NO

NOTE: Copy of current Driver’s License and Health Insurance Card (front and back) to be turned in with completed application.

Have you ever been arrested? (Circle one) YES NO

If yes, please provide details as follows:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date of arrest</th>
<th>Charge</th>
<th>Disposition</th>
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Are you currently on, or have you ever been on court ordered probation? (Circle one) YES NO

If yes, please provide details:________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
**PERSONAL REFERENCES** (do you need to indicate no relatives?)

Please provide the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of three personal references. Email addresses?!?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
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**TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF** (Please feel free to use addition paper if necessary)

Are you an Orthodox Christian? (Circle one) YES NO

Are you a steward of XYZ Church (Circle one) YES NO

How often do you attend church? (Circle one) Weekly Often Somewhat Often Rarely

What special qualities or qualifications would you contribute as a volunteer staff member?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Why do you want to be a volunteer within the (XYZ) Community?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
Please read carefully before signing

I understand that my signature on this application signifies that the information provided is true and accurate. I also understand that any information found to be intentionally inaccurate, misleading or untrue is grounds for rejection of your application and/or immediate dismissal is already selected. I also understand that you may be requesting and examining public records related to my application for employment or volunteer service. This may include, but not be limited to, driving records and criminal history information.

Print Name: ____________________________________________________________

Signature: ____________________________ Date Signed: ________________

To be filled out by Clergy or ECYDC Director:

Background Check Completed: YES NO

Date Completed: ____________________________

Completed by: ____________________________

Interview with priest (Optional or as determined by parish clergy)

Comments: ___________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

Approved Disapproved

Date: ________ Printed Name: ____________________________ Signature: ____________________________
Covenant for Youth Ministry Volunteer

Name: ________________________________________________________________

◊ I am an Orthodox Christian and an active sacramental member of my local parish.

◊ I understand it is a blessing to serve my community, the youth and their families, and act as a positive Orthodox Christian role model.

◊ I will participate in all activities throughout our Church’s Ministry Year. (perhaps allow them to miss 10% without repercussions. This makes the expectation more realistic.

◊ I will be held personally responsible for my actions. I will respect all property including Church, housing, athletics, outdoor and indoor facilities whether at my home parish or any host parish event facility. I will refrain from using offensive language, alcohol, and illegal drugs, especially at Church Events.

◊ I understand that if my behavior is not becoming of an Orthodox Christian, I will be asked to leave any event, at my own expense.

◊ I will respect all Clergy, advisors, adults, youth participants and myself.

◊ I agree to follow the Archdiocesan Youth Protection Manual (YPM), and attend a Youth Protection Seminar conducted by Metropolis clergy or staff. I also understand there is a copy of the YPM in the Parish office for my review. (It will be called – Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth)

◊ You should add something about abusing children, protecting children, and/or reporting concerns.

◊ I understand that the failure to comply with this covenant and all rules of event will result in a meeting with the Priest of my Parish to discuss my participation in future Church events.

I agree to this covenant and will follow the above rules and the rules and each event I attend throughout the year.

Signature of Youth Ministry Volunteer: __________________________________________

Date: ___________________________
Chaperone Registration Form

Youth Ministry Volunteer Name: ________________________________________________________________

This form is required for all field trips, retreats, conferences, over-night stays. The opportunity to work with our youth is a position of privilege available to those individuals who demonstrate behavior consistent with this responsibility. Applicants must have previously completed a Volunteer Form & Covenant and been approved by the Education, Culture, and Youth Diakonia Committee prior to submitting this form and being eligible for consideration as a chaperone.

Chaperone Responsibilities:
(Specific instructions to be provided by group for when you are chaperoning)

1. Chaperones will be assigned small groups of children for whom they will be responsible at all times. Chaperones will know the whereabouts of each child at all times. Children must never go anywhere unsupervised. Chaperones will stay with the same group of children throughout the entire field trip. Chaperones must accompany children to the restrooms. Individual chaperones must never be alone with only one child. (Rule of 3 or is there a certain ratio of adults to children)

2. Chaperones (and children) must be at the departure location and ready to leave at the designated time. {does this mean at the end of the event, or before you leave church?}

3. Chaperones will be assigned children for whom they will be responsible. The assignment of children is not subject to review, negotiation or change. (this is terrific!) The ministry advisor in charge of the field trip will maintain emergency, medical and other information for all children on the trip. Chaperones must be aware of any medical issues with the children in their care.

4. Chaperones must have a cellular phone and will provide their cellular phone number to the ministry advisor in charge of the field trip.

5. Chaperones will cooperate with and otherwise support the ministry advisor in charge of the field trip. (LOVE this one!!!)

I have read and agree to all terms of XYZ Parish Chaperone Registration Form.

Signature: ___________________________________________ Date: ________
METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA WAIVER AND COMPLETE RELEASE OF LIABILITY, MEDICAL TREATMENT AND PHOTO AUTHORIZATION

In consideration of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta, Inc. or the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta Diakonia Center, Inc. (which entities, together with all of the churches and missions that comprise a part of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta, are collectively defined herein as the “Church”) furnishing or making available services, property, camp site, housing, transportation, supervision, activities, resources, supplies, programs and equipment to enable the undersigned participant (the “Participant”) to participate in Church religious, social, cultural, athletic or other activities, services, programs and events (collectively, the “Church Events”), and for other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, the undersigned Participant and the undersigned legal Guardian of Participant, on behalf of themselves, and their respective children, representatives, executors, heirs, beneficiaries and successors (all of the foregoing being collectively defined as the “Undersigned”) fully and unconditionally agree as follows:

1. The Undersigned fully understand, acknowledge and agree that:

(a) all indoor or outdoor Church Events have inherent risks, dangers, hazards and exposures (collectively defined as the “Dangers”);

(b) participation in Church Events and/or use of Church owned, borrowed or leased equipment, facilities, real or personal property, buildings, or spiritual, residential or recreational items, properties or equipment (collectively defined as the “Church Property and Equipment”) may result in injury, illness, sickness, disease, strains, breaks, fractures, partial or/and total paralysis, death or other ailments or injuries that could cause serious disability (all of the foregoing being collectively defined as the “Injuries”);

(c) these Dangers or Injuries may be caused by: (i) accidents, the forces of nature, foreseeable or unforeseeable causes, or other causes; or (ii) the actions, omissions or negligence of other participants in Church Events or other individuals or entities; or (iii) the actions, omissions or negligence of the Church Youth Director, Metropolitan, Church Event chaperons or leaders, clergy or other Church Council members, parishioners, agents, subcontractors, officers, volunteers or employees of the Church (all of the foregoing individuals being collectively defined as the “Church Officials”); and

(d) by the participation by any of the Undersigned in Church Events or use of Church Property and Equipment, the Undersigned hereby assume all risks and Dangers and all responsibility for any and all Injuries, Dangers, losses and damages, which occur or arise therefrom, whether caused in whole or in party by the actions, omissions or negligence of any of the Church Officials, the Church or any other person or entity.

2. The Undersigned Participant and Guardian, on behalf of all of the Undersigned, including their respective children, representatives, heirs, beneficiaries and successors, hereby voluntarily release, waive, discharge, hold harmless, defend and indemnify the Church, and all Church Officials, from any and all Injuries, Dangers, lawsuits, other proceedings, claims of any kind, actions or losses of any kind, including without limitation those for bodily injury, Injuries, property damage, wrongful death, loss of services or otherwise, which might arise out of use of the Church Property and Equipment or participation in, or travel to, any Church Events. The Undersigned specifically understand and agree that the Undersigned are releasing, discharging and waiving, without limitation, any claims or actions that the Undersigned may have presently or in the future for the negligence, actions, omissions or other conduct by Church or any or all of the Church Officials in connection with Church Events or Church Property and Equipment. The Undersigned also hereby represent that the Participant is in good physical and mental condition and is capable of participating in outdoor and indoor recreational activities and programs all without incident or problem of any kind, including, but not limited to, swimming, diving, boating, ropes courses, climbing activities, basketball, volleyball and other sports and adventure activities. The Undersigned accept all responsibility for Participant’s physical well being and health and the results of the Undersigned’s participation in any such activities or Church Events.

3. THE UNDERSIGNED HAVE READ THIS WAIVER AND RELEASE AND BY SIGNING IT AGREE THAT IT IS THE UNDERSIGNED’S INTENTION TO FULLY AND COMPLETELY RELEASE, EXEMPT, RELIEVE AND HOLD HARMLESS THE CHURCH AND ALL CHURCH OFFICIALS FROM ANY LIABILITY OR OTHER CLAIM
OF ANY KIND FOR ANY INJURIES, DANGERS, PERSONAL INJURY, PROPERTY DAMAGE, OR WRONGFUL DEATH CAUSED BY NEGLIGENCE, ACTIONS, OMISSIONS OR OTHERWISE IN ANY WAY RELATED TO CHURCH EVENTS OR CHURCH EQUIPMENT.

4. Any Church Official may seek whatever medical attention or treatment be or she believes the Participant may need, including, without limitation, having them see a doctor or other professional at a hospital, clinic, other medical facility or at Church Events (collectively defined as the “Medical Professionals”), and any Medical Professionals may treat the Participant and provide whatever medical attention or treatment they believe the Participant requires or could benefit from (the “Medical Treatment”).

5. The Undersigned Guardian and Participant (if of legal age) will remain completely financially responsible and liable (regardless of whether or not he or she has insurance) for any and all costs, fees or expenses associated with any such Medical Treatment, and the Guardian and Participant (if of legal age) will promptly reimburse and indemnify the Church, any Church Official and/or the Medical Professionals for any costs, fees, expenses or claims of any kind they may incur in obtaining such Medical Treatment for the Participant; provided, however, that nothing herein shall obligate the Church or Church Official to incur any such costs, fees or expenses or seek such Medical Treatment, and nothing herein shall supersede, limit or conflict with any Waivers, Releases or Hold Harmless Agreements that may be executed in favor of any of the Church or any Church Officials in this or any other document.

6. Representatives and authorized contractors of the Church are hereby authorized to take and record photographs, videotape or other images, and or make audio, video or other recordings, of Participant and Participant’s activities at or involvement in Church Events, or using Church Property and Equipment, solely for use by the Church in its brochures, newsletters, video tapes, recordings, web sites and other promotional material or items to promote the Church or Church Events, all without any remuneration to Participant, Guardian or the Undersigned.

All of the above provisions are accepted and agreed to as of: _____________ (Date)

“UNDERSIGNED”

Participant’s Signature ___________________________ Participant’s Address ___________________________

Participant’s Printed Name ___________________________

Home Phone ___________________________

Cell Phone ___________________________

Guardian’s Signature ___________________________
(if Participant is less than 18 years old)

Guardian’s Address (if different than above) ___________________________

Guardian’s Printed Name ___________________________

Home Phone ___________________________

Other Phone ___________________________

In case of emergency, please contact:

NAME: ___________________________

Home Phone: ___________________________ Cell Phone: ___________________________

EMAIL: ___________________________
St. Nicholas Cathedral Ministry Leader Self Evaluation

Name: ________________________________________________ Date: ________________

Ministry(s) I volunteer for: _______________________________________________________

**Part 1:** Please answer statement responses on a scale of 1-10, with 1 being poor and 10 being excellent.

1. My attendance of worship in the Greek Orthodox Church is:

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2. My attendance in other St. Nicholas Cathedral Ministries is:

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3. I strive to make all youth and parents involved in youth ministry as well as visitors to the church and acquaintances feel invited and comfortable at church/youth events:

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4. My behavior per the St. Nicholas Cathedral Youth Ministry Worker Covenant is:

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5. I support my peers on the ministry team I participate on by cooperating with them when they lead in their area of the Cathedral ministry and by treating them with respect:

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6. My knowledge and understanding of the Archdiocesan Youth Protection Manual is:

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7. I strive to live a Christ-like example in all aspects of my life (ex: behavior at Work, School, cooperation with parents and family, with friends outside of church):

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**Part 2:** Please answer the following questions in a few sentences. If you need more room, use back of page.

1. Name at least one strength and one weakness that you see in yourself when it comes to serving the St. Nicholas Cathedral ministry team:

2. I would like to continue volunteering my time and serving the St. Nicholas Cathedral Ministry team for the respective ministries listed above until next year for the following reasons (Please list at least one):
Part 1: Please answer statement responses on a scale of 1-10, with 1 being poor and 10 being excellent.

1. YM Volunteer’s attendance of worship in the Greek Orthodox Church is:
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10
   POOR BELOW AVERAGE AVERAGE EXCELLENT SUPERIOR

2. YM Volunteer’s attendance in other St. Nicholas Cathedral Ministries is:
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10
   POOR BELOW AVERAGE AVERAGE EXCELLENT SUPERIOR

3. YM Volunteer’s desire to make all youth and parents involved in youth ministry as well as visitors to the church and acquaintances feel invited and comfortable at church/youth events:
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10
   POOR BELOW AVERAGE AVERAGE EXCELLENT SUPERIOR

4. YM Volunteer’s behavior per the St. Nicholas Cathedral Youth Ministry Worker Covent is:
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10
   POOR BELOW AVERAGE AVERAGE EXCELLENT SUPERIOR

5. YM Volunteer’s support of their peers on the ministry team they participate on by cooperating with them when they lead in their area of the Cathedral ministry and by treating them with respect:
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10
   POOR BELOW AVERAGE AVERAGE EXCELLENT SUPERIOR

6. YM Volunteer’s knowledge and understanding of the Archdiocesan Youth Protection Manual is:
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10
   POOR BELOW AVERAGE AVERAGE EXCELLENT SUPERIOR

7. YM Volunteer’s desire to strive to live a Christ-like example in all aspects of their life (ex: behavior at Work, School, cooperation with parents and family, with friends outside of church):
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10
   POOR BELOW AVERAGE AVERAGE EXCELLENT SUPERIOR

Part 2: Please answer the following questions in a few sentences. If you need more room, use back of page.

1. How can we better utilize strengths or avoid their weakness within our Ministry Team? Is there a better place in another ministry? Does their involvement help us achieve our mission at St. Nicholas Cathedral?

2. Should YM Volunteer continue volunteering their time and serving the St. Nicholas Cathedral Ministry team for the respective ministries listed above until next year? Why?
Creating a Youth Ministry Calendar:

Creating a Youth Ministry Calendar can be one of the most difficult parts of establishing a consistent ministry experience at your Church. Our youth today have school 35-40 hours a week, up to 20 hours of homework, and are expected to also participate in extracurricular activities, including sports, music, dance etc. Public schools consistently tell our families that school and secular activities are much more important than church participation. The challenge that many Churches have is finding a consistent time that does not interfere with other activities.

The harsh reality is this: WE need to make the Church and our Faith a priority again. WE must recognize the difference between what activities would be helpful for college, and what activities are helpful for our spiritual life. WE need our kids to go to school and get educated. However, does the need of sports, band, dance, hobbies, etc. exceed the need of a life in Christ and His Church. We hear or make that excuse too often. The argument is not to have to choose. The argument is that our youth can be great students, great athletes and still be involved in the Church and its’ ministry. There have been plenty of examples of great student athletes who are also very involved within their Church community. They are successful by making Church, School and Sports all a priority in their lives.

One way to achieve making this a priority is to have consistency just like the practices and school work. A weekly youth ministry program is not impossible and allows for the families of our communities to know “its Wednesday night (or any other night of the week), so it’s GOYA night” and it is best to keep revolving between a four-part cycle that reinforces the Orthodox way of life. That does not just mean Catechism and services each week, it includes social events and outreach as well.

1) **Liturgical Life Event:** Invite the youth to a Parakleisis to the Theotokos, or Vespers and have a fellowship meal afterward. Example: If you parish feast day is coming up have them help even prepare and serve the meal as part of playing a role within the community.

2) **Community Service Outreach:** Reach out to non-profits within your area and help with their mission and goal to serve the greater community of your city or town. This is very successful especially around the Holiday Seasons.

3) **Social Event:** In most cases, many of our kids need the Church to find other Orthodox Christians their age. Allow them the opportunity to get together by going to a ropes course, rock climbing, paintballing, sports, bowling, movie night, etc.

4) **Religious Discussion:** Prepare a religious discussion on a topic of their choice. The best way to do this is to hand out pieces of paper for them to write down a topic or question they have about their faith. Allow for more discussion than someone lecturing.

A consistent and diverse youth ministry calendar allows for more interaction, exposure to the Church, and a richer Orthodox life.
For most people, even those with experience, the first thing that comes to mind when we are asked to put together a Youth Retreat is the idea “I don’t know if I can do that. I never went to school for this. How will I possibly begin?” This section of the Manual will give you the confidence, skills, and instructions to enthusiastically respond to the request with the words – “YES I can!!” This section contains sample schedules, retreat discussion outlines, various room configurations to compliment the activity environment, Church Service Books that can be used at your retreat or gathering, and everyone’s personal favorite…ICEBREAKERS! There is a lot of information in this section and is to be handled more of a resource that you can reference back to when you need. Good Strength!
Sample Schedule for Retreats and Gatherings:
**ONE DAY RETREAT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Arrival and Registration and Breakfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Orthros/Prayer Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Group Icebreaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Session One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Breakout-session/discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Session Two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Breakout-session/discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Concluding remarks</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Closing Prayer/Departure</td>
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TWO DAY RETREAT—
(I’m assuming they can have it on any days, I would be more generic recognizing most people would have something on Saturday & Sunday)

**Day 1** 9:00 a.m.  Arrival/registration/breakfast

9:30 a.m.  Orthros/Prayer

10:00 a.m.  Group Icebreaker

11:00 a.m.  Session ONE  (consistency – 1st page uses One)

11:45 a.m.  Breakout session/discussion

12:30 p.m.  Lunch

1:30 p.m.  Session TWO

2:15 p.m.  Breakout session/discussion

3:00 p.m.  Free Time

4:00 p.m.  Session THREE

4:45 p.m.  Breakout session/discussion

5:30 p.m.  Vespers

6:00 p.m.  Large Group Activity (ice-breaker, skit prep_)

7:00 p.m.  Dinner

8:00 p.m.  Evening Activity (bonfire/movie/dance? )

10:00 p.m.  Prayer/Alone with God

10:30 p.m.  Depart for hotel

**SUNDAY**

Orthros/Liturgy/Lunch
# THREE DAY RETREAT

**Friday**
6:00 p.m.  Arrival  
6:30 p.m.  Introductory Remarks, Expectations  
7:00 p.m.  Vespers  
7:30 p.m.  Dinner  

8:30 p.m.  Icebreaker  
9:30 p.m.  Opening Session  
10:30 p.m.  Closing Prayer  

**Saturday**
8:30 a.m.  Orthros  
9:15 a.m.  Breakfast  
10:00 a.m.  Quick group activity  
10:30 a.m.  Session ONE and breakout session  
12:00 p.m.  Session TWO and break out session  
1:30 p.m.  Lunch  
2:30 p.m.  Session THREE and breakout session  

IF Confessions will be heard, then do it at this time  

4:00 p.m.  Vespers  
4:30 p.m.  Confessions begin  
4:30 p.m.  Free time  
6:00 p.m.  Dinner  
7:00 p.m.  Large group activity  
9:00 p.m.  Closing session/Reflection/Compline/Alone with God  
10:00 p.m.  Departures  

**Sunday**—Orthros/Liturgy/Lunch/Depart
Retreat Discussion Outline Templates:
Outline for 30 min-45 min:

Objective:
By the end of the session, youth will be able to...

Objectives are measurable, for example: “Goyans will discuss the benefits of prayer…” rather than “Goyans will learn how to pray…”

Start-up/Activator (5-7 minutes): Great Opportunity to insert an Icebreaker or an art and craft that is relevant to the teaching.

Mini-lesson (10 minutes)
This is the meat of the presentation or discussion and where you dive into the topic and lesson.

Group work (15 minutes)

So you know how in biology or chemistry we had the lecture and then afterwards we had the practical lesson in the lab section where we took what we learned and applied it and practiced it ourselves. This is that time slot to take the lesson they just learned and apply it to their lives or into the situation. This can happen in many ways such as break out sessions or activities and so on. Find something that allows them to use the lesson they just learned.

Wrap-up/debrief (3-5 minutes)

Simply summarize the lesson and relevant parts of activities and such.

SECTION TITLE: 30-45 minute session
More Lesson Plan Oriented Session Outline Format

Objectives:

Materials Needed:

Vocabulary Words:

1. **Focusing activity**: Draw students’ attention to the theme of the class session, using a story, allegory or symbol.

2. **Name present praxis**: Help students identify a part of the Orthodox Tradition or their current way of life.

3. **Reflect on present praxis**: Help students inquire about and consider the implications of their life or the Orthodox Tradition.

4. **Access the Christian story and vision**: Segue into the content of the lesson, which includes activities and discussion, in addition to the zine texts. If the students have not read the zine’s passages before class, this would be the time.

5. **Appropriate the story and vision**: Students make the Christian “story” their story. Students retell the teachings in their own words, responding to and interacting with them in an authentic way.

6. **Decision for lived response**: Students take what they have learned and consciously decide how this lesson can be put into practice and bear fruit in their lives.

**Session Suggestions for different Age Groups:**
Elementary school: around 30 min of discussion with relevant activity.
Middle and High School: Around 45min discussion with relevant activity.
Optimal Learning Environments for Retreats

**Traditional Classroom:** Desks/chairs arranged in Square Format in rows with teacher up front.

- **Facilitator Style:** The facilitator keeps the power and participant’s participation is of secondary importance.
- **Facilitator Belief of Learning:** Participants learn with an emphasis on Facilitator directed communication and activity.
- **Possible attitude of Participants:** “I listen to you because you are the leader and I am the follower.”
- **Impact on Learning Process:** Participants wait for the facilitator’s directions.
- **Potential Contribution by Students:** In a class of thirty, a participant has a 1 in 30 chance of speaking.
- Successful with younger age groups such as elementary school

**U-Shape or V-shape Classroom:** Participant desks/chairs are in U-shape or V-shape with facilitator in center of participants.

- **Facilitator Style:** The facilitator keeps the power but allows opportunities for participation by participants.
- **Facilitators Belief about Learning:** Students learn with an emphasis on facilitator directed communication and activity. The teacher can occasionally yield to discussion among students.
- **Possible attitude of Participants:** “I listen to you because you are the Leader. Sometimes you give us a chance to discuss with one another.”
- **Impact on Learning:** The participant has the possible of becoming involved in relevant discussion and add to overall lesson by the facilitator.”
- **Potential Contribution by Participants:** In a class of Thirty, a student has a 1 in 30 chance for speaking.
- Successful with all ages, especially with middle and high school ages.

**Small Group Arrangement:** There are small tables or clusters of desks/chairs around the class. The facilitator may be sitting with one group or monitoring small group work.

- **Facilitator Style:** Participants are given the power to conduct learning within their small groups. The teacher acts as a resource and catalyst.
- **Facilitators Belief about Learning:** Participants can learn as much or more from each other as from facilitators-directed learning.
- **Possible attitude of Participants:** “We lean working together.”
- **Impact on Learning:** The participants have the opportunity to discuss, explore, criticize, share, and solve problems together while using the facilitator as a resource/guide.
- **Potential Contribution by Participants:** In small groups of 4 (example), a participant has a 1 in 4 chance of speaking.
- Successful with older groups such as High school or Young Adults.
**Circle:** Participants sit in circle shape without a barrier such as desk or table. The instructor may sit as part of the circle or walk within the circle.

- **Facilitator Style:** The facilitator participates as a group member while at the same time the facilitator. The power is relatively shared or given.
- **Facilitators Belief about Learning:** Learning depends on involvement of participants. The environment that is created by the circle style allows for more opportunity to share and discuss.
- **Possible attitude of Participants:** “We are all here to learn from each other.”
- **Impact on Learning:** “There is a high potential for learning due to opportunities for involvement.”
- **Potential Contribution by Participants:** “In a group of 20, the participants has a 1 in 25 chance to speak but is more willing to speak.

**Referenced:**


WORSHIP SERVICES
Morning Prayers
PRIEST: Blessed is our God always, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

CAMPERS: Amen.

PRIEST: Glory to You, our God. Glory to You.

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth: You are everywhere filling all things; Treasury of blessings and Giver of Life: come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One!

CAMPERS:

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3)

Glory to Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, forgive our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for your name’s sake.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

PRIEST: For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. (Amen.)

The Great Litany

PRIEST: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

(Lord, have mercy.)

For the peace from above and the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

For peace in the whole world, for the stability of the holy churches of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

For this retreat center; and for those gathered here in faith, reverence, and the fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

For our Archbishop (name), the honorable presbyters, the deacons in the service of Christ, and all the clergy and laity, let us pray to the Lord.

For our country, the president, and all those in civil authority and public service, let us pray to the Lord.

For this EVENT, for the staff, campers, and their families, that the Holy Spirit may protect them and strengthen their faith, let us pray to the Lord.

For favorable weather, an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and temperate seasons, let us pray to the Lord.

For travelers by land, sea and air, for the sick, the suffering, for captives, and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.
For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and distress, let us pray to the Lord.

Help us, save us, have mercy upon us and protect us, O God, by your grace.

Remembering our most holy, pure, blessed, and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

(To you, O Lord.)

For to You belong all glory, honor, and worship, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

(Amen.)

CAMPERS (sing)

MODE 4

Verse. Give thanks to the Lord, and call upon His holy name.
God is the Lord...

Verse. All the nations surrounded me, but in the name of the Lord I defended myself against them.
God is the Lord...

Verse. And this came about from the Lord, and it is wonderful in our eyes.
God is the Lord...
O Stephen, a crown of royalty was laid on your head for contests you courageously endured for Christ our God, as first among Martyrs. You stood in accusation of the raging Jews; and you saw your Savior at the right hand of the Father. We pray that you will ever entreat Him to save our souls.
Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion.

We magnify you, O Theotokos, and cry out: You are the bush in which, without being burnt, Moses saw, as a flame, the fire of Divinity.
PSALM 50

Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your great mercy;
And according to the abundance of Your compassion,
blot out my transgression.
Wash me thoroughly from my lawlessness
And cleanse me from my sin.
For I know my lawlessness,
and my sin is always before me.
Against You only have I sinned
and done evil in Your sight;
that You may be justified in Your words,
and overcome when You are judged.
For behold,
I was conceived in transgressions,
and in sins my mother bore me.
Behold, You love truth;
You showed me the unknown
and secret things of Your wisdom.
You shall sprinkle me with hyssop,
and I will be cleansed;
You shall wash me,
and I will be made whiter than snow.
You shall make me hear joy and gladness;
my bones that were humbled
shall greatly rejoice.
Turn Your face from my sins,
and blot out all my transgressions.
Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from Your presence,
and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,
and uphold me with Your guiding Spirit.
I will teach transgressors Your ways,
and the ungodly shall turn back to You.
Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God,
the God of my salvation,
and my tongue shall greatly rejoice
in Your righteousness.
O Lord, You shall open my lips,
and my mouth will declare Your praise.
For if You desired sacrifice, I would give it;
You will not be pleased
with whole burnt offerings.
A sacrifice to God is a broken spirit,
a broken and humbled heart
God will not despise.
Do good, O Lord,
in Your good pleasure to Zion,
and let the walls of Jerusalem be built;
then you will be pleased
with a sacrifice of righteousness,
with offerings and whole burnt offerings;
then shall they offer young bulls
on Your altar.  \textit{(Psalm 50, SAAS)}

PRIEST: The Theotokos and the Mother of light, in hymns do we honor you.

CAMPERS \textit{(sing)} The Magnificat. \textit{MODE PL. 4F.}

Verse: My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.

Verse: For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant;
for behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.
Greater in honor than the Cherubim...

Verse: For He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His Name;
and His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation.
Greater in honor than the Cherubim...

Verse: He has shown strength with His arm;
He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
Greater in honor than the Cherubim...

Verse: He put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted the lowly,
He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He sent away empty.

Verse: He has helped His servant Israel in remembrance of His mercy,
as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and his seed forever.
Greater in honor than the Cherubim...

(Then, the Hymns for the Saints of the day.)
BIBLE READINGS

PRIEST: Let us be attentive.

READER: The reading is from *(name of the Epistle)*.

PRIEST: Wisdom. Let us be attentive.

READER: *(reads the Epistle lesson.)*

PRIEST: Peace be to you the reader.

CAMPERS *(sing)*: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

PRIEST: Wisdom. Stand. Let us listen to the holy Gospel. Peace be with all.

*(And with your spirit.)*

The reading is from the holy Gospel according to *(name)*. Let us be attentive.

*(Glory to You, O Lord; glory to You.)*

PRIEST: *(reads the Gospel lesson)*

*(Glory to You, O Lord; glory to You.)*

PRIEST: Have mercy on us, O God, according to your great mercy; we pray you, hear us and have mercy.

*(Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.*

Lord, have mercy.)

Let us pray for pious and Orthodox Christians.

Let us pray for our Archbishop *(name)*.

Let us pray for all priests, deacons, monks and nuns, and all our brethren in Christ.

Let us again pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, visitation, forgiveness, and the remission of sins of the servants of God, the youth participants and Staff of this Event, and their families, and all pious and Orthodox Christians here and everywhere.

For you are a merciful God who loves mankind, and to You we send up glory, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

*(Amen.)*

PRIEST: Wisdom!

*(Father, bless!)*

PRIEST: Christ our God, the One who is, is blessed, always now and forever, and to the ages of ages.

CAMPERS: Amen. Preserve, O God, the holy and Orthodox Faith of the pious and Orthodox Christians, together with this Event, our Church and our nation, to the ages of ages. Amen.

PRIEST: Glory to You, O Christ our God and our hope, glory to You.
May Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-pure Mother; by the power of the precious and life giving Cross; the protection of the honorable, bodiless powers of heaven, the supplications of the honorable, glorious prophet and forerunner John the Baptist; the holy, glorious and praiseworthy apostles; the holy, glorious and triumphant martyrs; our holy and God-bearing Fathers; the holy and glorious Proto-Martyr Stephen, patron saint of this camp; the holy and righteous ancestors Joachim and Anna; and all the saints, have mercy on us and save us, as our good, loving and merciful God.

Through the prayers of our holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us. (Amen.)
Vespers
PRIEST: Blessed is our God always, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

CAMPERS: Amen. (then read)

Come, let us worship and bow down before our King and God.
Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ our King and God.
Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ himself, our King and God.

Bless the Lord, O my soul. Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, You are magnified exceedingly; You clothe Yourself with thanksgiving and majesty, who cover Yourself with light as with a garment, who stretch out the heavens like a curtain; You are He who covers His upper chambers with water, who makes the clouds His means of approach, who walks on the wings of the winds, who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire. He established the earth on its stable foundation; It shall not be moved unto ages of ages. The deep like a garment is His covering; the waters shall stand upon the mountains; at Your rebuke they shall flee; at the sound of Your thunder, they shall be afraid. The mountains rise up, and the plains sink down to the place You founded for them. You set a boundary they shall not pass over; neither shall they return to cover the earth. You are He who sends springs into the valley; the waters shall pass between the mountains; they shall give drink to all the wild animals of the field; the wild asses shall quench their thirst; the birds of heaven shall dwell beside them; they shall sing from the midst of the rocks. You are He who waters the mountains from His higher places; the earth shall be satisfied with the fruit of Your works. You are He who causes grass to grow for the cattle, and the green plant for the service of man, to bring forth bread from the earth; and wine gladdens the heart of man, to brighten his face with oil; and bread strengthens man's heart. The trees of the plain shall be full of fruit, the cedars of Lebanon, which You planted; there the sparrows shall make their nests; the house of the heron takes the lead among them. The high mountains are for the deer; the cliff is a refuge for the rabbits. He made the moon for seasons; the sun knows its setting. You established darkness, and it was night, wherein all the wild animals of the forest will prowl about; the young lions roar and snatch their prey, and seek their food from God. The sun arises, and they are gathered together; and they shall be put
to bed in their dens. Man shall go out to his work and to his labor until evening. O Lord, Your works shall be magnified greatly; You made all things in wisdom; the earth was filled with Your creation. There is this great and spacious sea: the creeping things are there without number; the living things are there, both small and great; there the ships pass through; there is this dragon You formed to play therein. All things wait upon You, that You may give them food in due season. When You give it to them, they shall gather it; when You open Your hand, all things shall be filled with Your goodness. But when You turn Your face away, they shall be troubled; when You take away their breath, they shall die and return again to their dust. You shall send forth Your Spirit, and they shall be created, and You shall renew the face of the earth. Let the glory of the Lord be forever; the Lord shall be glad in His works: He looks upon the earth and makes it tremble: He touches the mountains, and they smoke. I will sing to the Lord all my life: I will sing to my God as long as I exist; may my words be pleasing to Him, and I shall be glad in the Lord. May sinners cease from the earth, and the lawless, so as to be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Both now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia. Glory to you, O God (3).

Our hope, O Lord, glory to you.

The Great Litany

**PRIEST:** In peace let us pray to the Lord.

*(Lord, have mercy.)*

For the peace from above and the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

For peace in the whole world, for the stability of the holy churches of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

For this retreat center; and for those gathered here in faith, reverence, and the fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

For our Archbishop (name), the honorable presbyters, the deacons in the service of Christ, and all the clergy and laity, let us pray to the Lord.

For our country, the president, and all those in civil authority and public service, let us pray to the Lord.

For this Event, for the staff, campers, and their families, that the Holy Spirit may protect them and strengthen their faith, let us pray to the Lord.
For favorable weather, an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and temperate seasons, let us pray to the Lord.

For travelers by land, sea and air, for the sick, the suffering, for captives, and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and distress, let us pray to the Lord.

Help us, save us, have mercy upon us and protect us, O God, by your grace.

Remembering our most holy, pure, blessed, and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

(To you, O Lord.)

For to You belong all glory, honor, and worship, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. (Amen.)
CAMPERS (sing)

LORD I HAVE CRIED. MODE 1.

Lord, I have cried to You; hear me.

Hear me, O Lord. Lord, I have cried to You; hear me. Give heed to the voice of my supplication when I cry to You. Hear me, hear me, O Lord.
Let my prayer be set forth before You as incense, the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice. Hear me, hear me, O Lord.
CAMPERS: (Sing)

Mode pl. 1.
(Like Stanza I of the Encomia)

1. You, O Master, made me * from the dust of the earth. * When my body had been damaged thru sin, O Lord, * you became like me and raised me with yourself.

2. He who gives divine life * breathed a soul into me. * Then, because I died, He came and He died for me, * so that He might resurrect me with himself.

3. Christ is God and human, * and He makes me divine. * He has lifted me to heights through humility. * And for this I sing in gratitude and praise.

4. Jesus Christ is Master * and the Giver of Life. * Even so He suffered torture and death for me, * so that I might lead a pure and sinless life.


6. For the love of mankind, * you, O Savior, were nailed * to a cross, and when you died you went down to hell, * and released the righteous souls that you found there.

7. All the Lord’s Apostles * were sent out to proclaim * the good news that Christ is God and has saved the world. * If we choose it, we can have eternal life.

8. Every race and nation * let us join into one * congregation and sing praises and glorify * Christ the Savior who was crucified for all.

9. Blessed Virgin Mary, * as the Mother of God, * you can save us who respectfully honor you * and who worship Jesus Christ your Son and God.

Mode 3.
(Like Stanza III of the Encomia)

10. You died for us, O Savior; You rescued us from Hades; You rose and raised our nature.

11. O Christ, You sent the holy Apostles to the whole world to preach Your resurrection.

12. We Christians have been baptized into the death and rising of Christ, for our salvation.

13. The risen Christ will free me from sin and my addictions if I believe and love Him.

14. Christ, Your resurrection enables me to love all, not seeking my advantage.

Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

15. Father, Son, and Spirit, the Trinity, our one God, have mercy on Your servants.

Both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

16. Most-holy Theotokos, mother of all Christians, take care of us your children.

PRIEST: Wisdom. Arise!
GLADSONE LIGHT. MODE 2.

Campers: (Sing)

Glad some light of holy glory
of the holy blessed heavenly immortal Father O Jesus Christ arriving at the hour of sunset
and having seen the evening light we praise the Father Son and Holy Spirit

God. It is worthy for You to be praised at all times with happy voices
Grant, Lord, to keep us this evening without sin. Blessed are you, O Lord, God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is your name forever. Amen. Lord, let your mercy come upon us, for we have put our trust in you. Blessed are you, O Lord, teach me your commandments. Blessed are you, O Master, make me understand your commandments. Blessed are you, O Holy One, enlighten me with your commandments. Lord, your love endures forever. Do not turn away from the work of your hands. To you is due praise, song, and glory, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.
before the awesome judgment seat of Christ, let us ask the Lord.

Remembering our most holy, pure, blessed, and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

(To you, O Lord.)

For you are a good and loving God, and to you we give glory, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. (Amen.)

Peace be with all.

(And with your spirit.)

Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

(To you, O Lord.)

PRIEST: Lord our God, who bent the heavens and came down for the salvation of mankind, look upon Your servants and Your inheritance. Your servants have bowed their heads and bent their necks before You, the awesome and merciful Judge. It is not from men that they expect help, but from You they hope for mercy and salvation. Protect them at all times, both during this evening and throughout the coming night from every enemy, from every assault of the powers of hell, from vain deliberations, and from evil thoughts.

May the might of your kingdom be blessed and glorified, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. (Amen.)

CAMPERS: (Sing)

Mode 2. O House of Ephratah.

1. Shining now with the bright, resplendence of the virtues, let’s climb that holy mountain, and we shall see the godly, Transfiguration of the Lord.

2. Christ Shines forth like the sun today upon the mountain, in view of his disciples, before his crucifixion, and shows that He is truly God.

3. Shining whiter than snow before Your three Disciples, You partially uncovered the essence of Your glory, which no one can approach, O Christ.

4. Savior exceeding good, when You were on Mount Tabor transfigured, Your disciples beheld and knew the glory of the all-holy Trinity.

5. When the bright shining cloud at your transfiguration with brilliant light spread over Your holy three disciples, if filled them with astonishment.

6. Standing with You, O Word, at Your transfiguration, were Moses and Elias.

The Father spoke from heaven and called You His beloved Son.

7. Come, O believers all, and climb the height of virtue with the august disciples, so that we may together be worthy of the grace of God.

8. Let us all purify our hearts, so that in due time the grace and holy glory of the tri-solar Godhead may come upon us here on earth.
9. Jesus, the Father's voice was clearly heard from heaven at Your transfiguration. It shouted, “All you, hear him, for this is my beloved Son.”

10. When the Disciples saw the splendor of Your garments and of Your whole appearance, O Word of God, they fell on their faces and were much afraid.

11. Eagerly let us scale Mount Tabor in the Spirit to see the holy glory of Christ our Lord and Savior and worship Him as King of all.

12. Savior, when You appeared together with Elijah and Moses and Your chosen Disciples on Mount Tabor, You shone forth brighter than the sun.

   Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

13. Trinity of divine Apostles of the Savior, rejoice, for on Mount Tabor you saw Him who is one of the Trinity essentially.

   Both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

14. Master and King of all, grant peace unto our planet hearing the intercessions of the all-holy Virgin, the Queen of all, and all Your saints.

PRIEST: Lord, now let Your servants depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light to enlighten Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel.

CAMPERS: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3)

   Glory to Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

   All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, forgive our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for your name's sake.

   Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

   Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

   Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

PRIEST: For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

   (Amen.)
CAMPERS *(sing)*

APOLYTIKION. MODE 4.

Soft Chromatic

E

O Stephen, a crown of royalty was laid on your head for contests you courageously endured for Christ our God, as first among Martyrs. You stood in accusation of the raging Judases; and you saw your Savior at the right hand of the Father. We pray that you will ever entreat Him to save our souls.
Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Theotokion.

We magnify you, O Theotokos, and cry out: You are the bush in which, without being burnt, Moses saw, as a flame, the fire of Divinity.
PRIEST: Wisdom!

CAMPERS: Father, bless!

PRIEST: Christ our God, the One who is, is blessed, always now and forever, and to the ages of ages.

CAMPERS: Amen. Preserve, O God, the holy and Orthodox Faith of the pious and Orthodox Christians, together with this Camp, our Church and our nation, to the ages of ages. Amen.

PRIEST: Glory to You, O Christ our God and our hope, glory to You.

May Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-pure Mother; by the power of the precious and life giving Cross; the protection of the honorable, bodiless powers of heaven, the supplications of the honorable, glorious prophet and forerunner John the Baptist; the holy, glorious and praiseworthy apostles; the holy, glorious and triumphant martyrs; our holy and God-bearing Fathers; the holy and glorious Proto-Martyr Stephen, patron saint of this camp; the holy and righteous ancestors of God Joachim and Anna; and all the saints, have mercy on us and save us, as our good, loving and merciful God.

Through the prayers of our holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us.

(Amen.)
The Blessing of the Waters
PRIEST:  Blessed is our God, always, now and forever, and to the ages of ages.

CAMPERS:  Amen.

Mode pl. 2. The Heirmos.
You received the joyful message through an Angel,
and gave birth to the Lord who created you.
O Virgin, save us who magnify you in song.

Most holy Theotokos, save us.
All we Christians praise your Son, O Theotokos,
and we call out to you, All-immaculate:
From every danger, rescue us who pray to you.

Most holy Theotokos, save us.
Blameless Maid, you are the pride and joy of Martyrs,
of Apostles and Prophets and pious Kings,
and the protection of Christians throughout the world.

Most holy Theotokos, save us.
Cause the Judge, who is your Son, to be forgiving,
by your strong intercession, O Lady pure;
for I, the sinner, have erred more than everyone.

Most holy Theotokos, save us.
Duty-bound we shout "Rejoice" to you, O Lady
ever-virgin and pure Mother of our God.
And we implore you, intercede that we be saved.

Most holy Theotokos, save us.
Every Orthodox believer calls you blessed
and rejoices in you, Mary Bride of God,
and glorifies your immaculate childbirth

Most holy Theotokos, save us.
Free your servants from afflictions and diseases;
and from dangers, we pray you, deliver us,
who for protection to your sacred shelter flee.

Most holy Theotokos, save us.
Guard your servants from impending threats and danger,
and deliver them from every injury
of soul and body, O Lady all immaculate.

Most holy Theotokos, save us.
Hear the prayers of all the Saints, O loving Master,
and the heavenly Orders on our behalf,
and through Your Mother be gracious to me, O Lord.

Most holy Theotokos, save us.
I have set my hopes on you, O Theotokos.
Through your strong intercessions save me, I pray,
and grant forgiveness of offences unto me.

Most holy Theotokos, save us.
Jesus Christ, as One compassionate, forgive me,
the unworthy one, all of my debts, I pray,
through the entreaties of her who gave birth to You.

Most holy Theotokos, save us.
Keep us safe and sound in hazardous conditions
and preserve us from dangers of every kind,
O Theotokos and Mother of our Savior Christ.

PRIEST: Let us pray to the Lord, that we be counted worthy to hear the holy Gospel.


CAMPERS: And with your spirit.

PRIEST: The reading is from the holy Gospel according to St. John. Let us be attentive.

CAMPERS: Glory to You, O Lord; glory to You.

PRIEST: At that time, there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Hebrew called Bethesda, which has five porticoes. In these lay a multitude of invalids, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool and troubled the water. And whoever stepped in first after the troubling of the water was healed of whatever disease he had.

CAMPERS: Glory to You, O Lord; glory to You.

PRIEST: In peace let us pray to the Lord. (Kyrie eleison.)

For the peace from above; and for the salvation of our souls; let us pray to the Lord. (Kyrie eleison.)

For the peace of the whole world; for the stability of the holy Churches of God; and for the union of all; let us pray to the Lord.

For this retreat center; and for those gathered here in faith, reverence, and the fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

For our Archbishop (name), the honorable presbyters, the deacons in the service of Christ, and all the clergy and laity, let us pray to the Lord.

For our country, the President and all those in public service, let us pray to the Lord.
For this Event, for the staff, the youth participants, and their families, that the Holy Spirit may protect them and strengthen their faith, let us pray to the Lord.

For favorable weather; an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and temperate seasons; let us pray to the Lord.

For travelers by land, sea, and air; for the sick, the suffering, the captives, and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

That this water might be sanctified by the might, and operation, and descent of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.

That there may descend upon these waters the cleansing operation of the supersubstantial Trinity, let us pray to the Lord.

That this water may be to the healing of souls and bodies, and to the banishment of every hostile power, let us pray to the Lord.

That there may be sent down upon it the Grace of Redemption, the blessing of the Jordan, let us pray to the Lord.

For all of them who need God to help and give protection, let us pray to the Lord.

That He will illuminate us with the Light of understanding of the Consubstantial Trinity, let us pray to the Lord.

That the Lord our God will show us forth as sons and daughters and heirs of His Kingdom through the partaking and sprinkling of these waters, let us pray to the Lord.

For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and distress, let us pray to the Lord.

Help us, save us, have mercy upon us and protect us, O God, by your grace. (Kyrie eleison.)

Remembering our most holy, pure, blessed, and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commit ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God. (To You, O Lord.)

For to You belong all glory, honor, and worship, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages. (Amen.)

Let us pray to the Lord. (Lord, have mercy.)

O Lord our God, Who are mighty in counsel and wondrous in all Your deeds: the Creator of all things: Who keep Your Covenant and Your mercy upon all those who love You and keep Your commandments: Who receive the devout tears of all that are in distress: for this cause did You come in the similitude of a servant, scorning not our image but giving true health to the body and saying, "Lo! you are healed, sin no more." And with clay did make man's eyes whole, and having commanded him to wash, made him by Your word rejoice in the light, putting to confusion the floods of passions of enemies; and drying up the bitter sea of life of the same, subduing the waves of sensual desires heavy to be endured: do You, the same Lord and King Who loves mankind, Who has granted to us to clothe ourselves in the garment of snowy
whiteness, by water and by Spirit: send down on us Your blessing, and through the partaking of this water, through sprinkling with it, wash away the defilement of passions. Yea, we beseech You visit our weaknesses, O Good One, and heal our infirmities both of spirit and of body through Your mercy; through the prayers of the all-pure, exceedingly blessed Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary; Through the intercessions of the precious and life-creating Cross; through the protection of the glorious bodiless Powers of the Heavens; through the intercessions of the glorious Prophet and Forerunner John the Baptist; of the holy, glorious and all-praiseworthy Apostles; of the holy and theophoric Fathers; of our Fathers among the Saints, the great Hierarchs and ecumenical Teachers, Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and John Chrysostom; of our Fathers the Saints, Athanasios, Kyrillos, and John the Merciful, Patriarchs of Alexandria; of Nicholas Bishop of Myra in Lycia; of Spyridon the Wonderworker Of Trymitheus; of the holy, glorious Martyrs, George the Victorious, Demetrios the Exhaler of Myrrh, Theodore of Tyron and Theodore Stratilatis; and of the holy and glorious Hieromartyrs Charalambos and Eleutherios, and of all the righteous Martyrs; of the holy and righteous forefathers Joakim and Anna; of the holy wonderworking Unmercenaries, Kosmas and Damian, Kyros and John, Panteleimon and Hermolaus; Samson and Diomedes, Mokios and Anekitas, Thalleiaios and Tryphon; of Saint (Name of the Saint of the Day), whose memory we commemorate; and of all Your Saints. Preserve, Lord, the president of the United States, and all the other Civil Authorities enabled by the American people; save, O God, all Orthodox Bishops who rightly divide the word of Your truth, granting unto them spiritual and bodily health; be merciful unto this Christian habitation which labors for You; have in remembrance, O God, every priestly and monastic order and their salvation; have in remembrance, O God, both those that hate us and those who love us, the brethren who serve with us; the people here present; and who for any cause are worthy of blessing and have gone forth having empowered us, unworthy though we are, to pray, for them; have in remembrance, O God, our brethren who are in captivity and affliction, and show mercy unto them according to Your great Mercy, delivering them from every tribulation.

For You are the Fountain of healing, O Christ our God, and to You do we send up all glory, together with Your Eternal Father and Your All-Holy, Good, and Life-creating Spirit, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages. (Amen.)

Peace be with you all. (And with your spirit.)

Let us bow our heads to the Lord. (To You, O Lord.)

Bow down Your ear and listen to us, O Lord, Who deigned to be baptized in the river Jordan, and there sanctified the water. Bless us all who by the bowing of our heads do show forth our apprehension that we are Your servants. Grant that we may be filled with Your sanctification through the partaking of this water, and let it be for us, O Lord, for the health of soul and body.

For You are the sanctification of our souls and bodies, and to You do we send up all glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages. (Amen.)

**Apolytikion for the Cross. Mode 1.**

Save, O Lord, your people, and bless your inheritance, granting victory to the faithful over the enemy, and by your Cross protecting your commonwealth. (3x)

Soson Kyrie ton laon Sou, ke evlogison, tin klironomian Sou, nikas tis vasilefsi, kata varvaron doroumenos, ke ton son filaton, dia tou Stavrou Sou politevma.
As the priest sprinkles the people with holy water, the campers continue singing the canon.

**Dismissal**

**PRIEST:** Glory to You, Christ our God and our Hope, glory to You.

May Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-pure Mother; by the power of the precious and life giving Cross; the protection of the honorable, bodiless powers of heaven, the supplications of the honorable, glorious prophet and forerunner John the Baptist; the holy, glorious and praiseworthy apostles; the holy, glorious and triumphant martyrs; our holy and God-bearing Fathers; the holy and glorious Proto-Martyr Stephen, patron saint of this camp; the holy and righteous ancestors Joachim and Anna; and all the saints, have mercy on us and save us, as our good, loving and merciful God.

Through the prayers of our holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us. *(Amen.)*
ICE BREAKERS:

Q: “How much does a polar bear weigh?”
A: Enough to break the ice.

Yes, what you have all been waiting for, it is finally time to talk about icebreakers.
**Ice Breakers:**

Many people believe Ice Breakers are the key to successful retreats and gatherings. They allow the guard which we build around us in our daily interactions to be broken down, and the “cool kid” card to be thrown out the window because at our events it does not matter if you are popular at school or not. The goal of our programs is to build up the body of Christ by focusing on our shared values, and love of God and His Church. We embrace the things that unite us rather than the things that separate us, and a great way to do this is through icebreakers.

**Frequently Asked Questions about Icebreakers:**

Q: Who are icebreakers for?
A: EVERYONE

Q: Aren’t I too old for icebreakers?
A: If you are too old for ice cream, you are too old for icebreakers…and let’s be real I have never met anyone too old for ice cream. (Please note: that also means you are never too old for Ice Breakers)

Now with those two questions answered and out of the way, Icebreakers can serve different functions:

1. You can do group games and relay races to facilitate bonding of the group, comradery, and teamwork. These also serve as a creative way for people to expend excess energy so that when it comes time to sit and learn, people are in the right frame of mind.
2. Icebreakers can also serve as lead-ins to discussions. An icebreaker related to the topic you are discussing can lead to a better discussion.
3. People learn more concretely through experiential learning. When you are DOING something rather than being told about something, it is more likely to stick with you.

To make things easier for you, we have included numerous icebreakers, with suggested age ranges, so pick the ones that work for you and begin including Ice Breakers in your activities. Should you have other creative Ice Breakers, please let us know so we can share the ideas with all the other parishes and volunteers.
Your Arsenal of Ice Breakers:

1. **Introductory Survey**  
   **Supplies:** Surveys, pens  
   **Ages:** ALL  
   a. Make a “short” survey of 5-6 things—i.e. name, hometown, favorite subject in school, place you’d like to travel, something unique about you.

2. **Name game with bean bags**  
   **Supplies:** Bean bags  
   **Ages:** ALL  
   a. Make a circle, get multiple bean bags. Person A throws the beanbag to person B (anyone), calling out their name. Person B throws to anyone but person A. Eventually beanbag is thrown to everyone and every name is called. Goal is to try to not drop the beanbag. Do exercise throwing two beanbags, one at a time around the circle, then work up to five bean bags and see if this can be done without dropping a beanbag by the group.

3. **Bean bag juggle**  
   **Supplies:** Bean bags  
   **Ages:** ALL  
   a. When you’ve gotten good at the bean bag game above, give everyone a beanbag, and everyone has to throw and catch a beanbag constantly, until all bean bags have made it around the circle.

4. **Do you like your neighbor**  
   **Supplies:** Circle of Chairs  
   **Ages:** Middle/HS  
   a. Everyone sits in a chair, in a circle. One person is in the middle. This person approaches someone in the circle and says “Michael (or whatever name of the person) Do you like your neighbor?” There are two possible answers: If the answer is “no”, then Michael’s two neighbors exchange seats while the person in the middle tries to take one of their seats. If that person in the middle takes one of the seats, then the person whose seat was taken becomes the person in the middle. If the answer is “yes,” then Michael says “Yes, but I don’t like anyone who (pick anything) is wearing black shoes.” Anyone wearing black shoes must move seats. The last person standing in the middle is “it” for the next round.

5. **Who is the leader?**  
   **Supplies:** none  
   **Ages:** ALL  
   a. Everyone sits in a circle. Someone is chosen to be “it” and stands in the center of the circle with their eyes closed. Someone else is chosen in the circle, and “it” does not who it is. This person starts to do something like rub their stomach; everyone in the circle does the same thing. Once everyone is following the leader, the person who is “it” opens their eyes and tries to guess who is the leader. The leader meanwhile changes what everyone does every few seconds—things like clapping their hands, rubbing their head, pulling their ears, etc. Once the person who is “it” guesses the leader, choose a new person to be “it” and once they have their eyes closed, then choose a “leader” in the circle.

6. **And who is my neighbor?**  
   **Supplies:** none  
   **Ages:** All  
   a. Have everyone sit in a circle or chair or on the floor. Explain the game this way: “This game is called who is my neighbor. Everyone will sit in a circle with their eyes closed. One person from the circle will have their eyes open and walk around
the circle, and designate someone in the circle by tapping them on the shoulder. The person who is tapped on the shoulder will open their eyes, get up and walk around the circle and select someone in the circle and standing behind them, cover their eyes with their hands. The person whose eyes are covered now has to guess who is covering them. They can ask three “yes/no” questions like “are you a girl?” or “are you in high school?” the person who is covering their eyes can answer either “yes” or “no”, uh-huh, or nuh-huh, or shake the person’s head up or down. Then after the three questions (or more if this is too hard), they have to guess who it is (you can determine how many guesses they get). Have everyone change seats (that makes this game harder)—and then the person who had their eyes covered goes around the circle and selects the next person.

b. After several rounds of this game, you can ask if someone thinks they could identify everyone in the group. That person sits in the center of the circle with their eyes closed—everyone else comes up one at a time at random, covers this person’s eyes and has them guess who they are, using the question-method described above. If the person is correct, they keep their eyes closed. When they are incorrect, then ask for someone else to try or the game is over.

7. **Telephone game**  
   **Supplies:** Pens, Paper and Messages  
   **Ages:** ALL
   a. **Goal/Topic** (maybe different word than “lesson”: Gossip
   b. **Directions:** divide everyone into two or three teams, each team should have 8 people on it. Make a line with people behind each other. The first person in line comes up to you and receives a message. On “Go,” the first person goes back to their line and whispers the message to the next person, who whispers it to the next person, until the message reaches the last person. The last person in the line comes to the front of the line where they find a paper and pencil and they right down the message they received. Most of the messages will not be the same as the original message—the one that is the most accurate wins. Play several rounds with a different person being in the front and back each time.
   c. **Sample sentences:**
      i. It is hot in Florida today.
      ii. I like ice cream sundaes with extra whipped cream and nuts.
      iii. The Orthodox Church is the original Christian church.
      And any others you can think of.

8. **Back art**  
   **Supplies:** Papers with object drawn, pens and plain paper  
   **Ages:** ALL
   a. **Lesson:** Gossip
   b. **Divide into teams of 8-10 people.** People will stand front to back. Show the person in the back of the line a picture (something simple like a cross or a heart and eventually more complex pictures, like a short word or a more complicated drawing). On go, the back person will draw the picture on the back of the person in front of them, who will draw what they believe the picture to be on the person in front of them, up until it gets to the front person in the line, who will draw on a paper what they believe the picture to be. Most of the pictures will not be the same
as the original message—the one that is the most accurate wins. Play several rounds with a different person being in the back and front each time.

9. Tallest Tower  Supplies: Popsicle sticks, tape, bandannas  Ages: Middle/HS
a. Lesson—Teamwork, Fruits of the Spirit,
b. Prepare envelopes—each envelope has 100 popsicle sticks, a role of scotch tape and a bandanna
c. Divide everyone in groups of three, assign each person in the group a number
d. Each group sits at a table
e. Each group opens its envelope.
f. If your number is 1, then you can only use your right hand
g. If your number is 2, then you can only use your left hand
h. If you are person number 3, you are the only one who can use both hands and you are the only one who can touch the tape, but you will be blindfolded.
i. You have 10 minutes to build the tallest free-standing tower

10. Someone talks, directs, finds  Supplies: objects, bandannas  Ages: ALL
a. Lesson—everyone plays a role, everyone has a talent
b. Divide everyone in groups of three
c. Put objects out on court/field.
d. Tell each group the object they are to retrieve
e. In each group, person number one is blindfolded and will retrieve the object
f. Person number two will stand at the end of the field and will give directions using their hands, no voice
g. Person three will stand facing person number 2, with their back to the objects on the field. They can use their voice only. Person two will make hand motions for where person one should go. Person three will shout verbal commands. Person one will listen to directions and find the object. Person two in each group should be the one with the loudest voice.
h. Once each group has found its, person one in that group can remove their blindfold.

11. Trust walk  Supplies: blindfolds, obstacles  Ages: Middle/HS
a. Lesson—trust, believing without seeing, faith in God, companions in our walk of faith
b. Divide people into groups of two—preferably with people they don’t know
c. One person in each pair is blindfolded and they go for a walk—you can set up an obstacle course, or just walk around your church complex. Part of the walk should be talking but not touching your partner. Part of the walk should be touching but not talking to your partner. And if you want to get complicated, make part of the walk no touching and no talking—using non-verbal cues like clapping hands or snapping fingers. After 10 minutes or so, change roles so that each person gets the chance to be leader and follower.
12. How do I choose?  
Supplies: Blindfold, tennis ball, small candies  
Ages: Middle/HS

Goal/Topic

a. Choose a volunteer and blindfold that person. Then, after the person is blindfolded, choose two other people, and give one a tennis ball and one a piece of candy, so that the blindfolded person will not know who has which, or even who the two people are. On “go”, the two people are to try to convince the blindfolded person that they have the candy. They can talk or yell, whatever they want, but they can’t move. The blindfolded must choose who he/she thinks has the candy and go toward that person. IF they guess correctly, they get the candy.

b. Variation—vary the groups—instead of having two people competing against each other for the blindfolded person’s attention, have it be two groups of people, or boys against girls, or one person against a whole group.

c. Lesson—peer pressure—how to you make decisions, based on who has the loudest voice, the calmest voice, what the majority are saying, your gut instinct. Play several rounds of this game and ask the blindfolded people how they decided which person or group to pick that they thought had the candy and why. (this is a really good follow-up to the game)

13. Pac-Man  
Supplies: basketball court with stripes on it  
Ages: ALL

a. Choose someone to be pac-man. Everyone else goes on the lines. You can only walk on the lines—both the players and pac-man. On go, pac-man tries to catch people on the lines, the last person standing is the next pac-man. To make it not take so long, have two people named as pac-man and they try to catch all the others. This may need a little more “direction”, or maybe I’m just slow.

14. Line up by birthday/last name/first name, etc.  
Supplies: none  
Ages: ALL

a. Get people to make a line by one of these criteria and don’t let them talk while they do it. This is a great thing to do at the beginning of a game session as a say to assign teams, partners, etc.

15. Find team-mates by making a sound  
Supplies: blindfolds  
Ages: ALL

a. Make teams of anywhere from 2-8 people. Give each team a minute to come up with a non-verbal sound that makes them distinctive. Then have everyone put on a blindfold, have the advisors move everyone around the room, a distance from each other, and then on “go”, teams make their nonverbal sound while finding each other. Once all members are together, the blindfolds can be removed.

16. Run and scream  
Supplies: cones  
Ages: ALL

a. Either use a basketball court or field and designate the running lane using cones

b. One at a time, each person runs the course while screaming. When they take a breath, and stop screaming, then mark where they are. The one who runs the farthest wins.
17. **Blindfold dodgeball**  
**supplies: blindfolds, a dozen dodgeballs**  
**Ages: ALL**

a. Randomly partner people (this may be preferred, based upon earlier comments and to avoid friends ganging up on others.. One person in each pair will be blindfolded. The sighted partner will guide the other one, by voice only, to pick up squish balls that have been scattered around the floor. The blindfolded partner will pick up the balls and throw them at the other blindfolded people. If you are hit, you are out. The last one not to get hit wins. After the first game is finished, play another game with partners reversing roles.

18. **Catch-Phrase**  
**supplies: game unit**  
**Ages: ALL**

a. This is a game that you buy from the store—it is a combination of hot potato and charades, where you play in two teams and people try to get their teammates to guess the word on the game board screen without saying the word.

19. **Over under**  
**supplies: tennis balls**  
**Ages: ALL**

a. This is a relay race. Divide into teams of 8 people. The people on each team line up one behind the other but close to one another. The first person in each line gets a tennis ball. On “go” the first person puts the tennis ball through their legs “under them” and the second person grabs the tennis ball and passes it over their head to the third person who passes it under and it goes over and under until the last person in line gets the ball, and they run to the front of the line and the whole thing starts again. Game continues until the person who initially was first in the line is first in line again. For older teens, you may want to consider a larger ball so no one is near the groin area of another teen trying to “grab something”.

20. **Counting by numbers**  
**supplies: none**  
**Ages: ALL**

a. Everyone gathers in an area, and takes a knee. Everyone closes their eyes. Let’s say you have 20 people. So, the group will count from 1-20. Everyone can only say one number. So one person says “one” and the count begins. Again, everyone has their eyes closed. And no one is allowed to talk, except for saying a number, no strategizing for this game. Just give the rules and play. If two people say a number at the same time, you have to start the count again. This game usually take a while everyone to understand the rules.

b. You may also consider moving this game to the previous section, followed by a discussion of patience, always wanting to be first, becoming upset with others and how that make you feel.

21. **Labryinth**  
**supplies: tarp with holes cut in it, a tennis ball**  
**Ages: ALL**

a. Purchase a tarp, like a 12 x 10 tarp, and cut a few holes (like 8-10) in it that are of varying sizes and locations. Have all members of the group hold the tarp taut. Place the tennis ball on the tarp. And then people will maneuver the tarp so that the ball goes around the hole without going in it. Continue until all the holes have been circled. If the ages is ALL, you may need a smaller tarp for younger kids &
potentially a plastic golf ball or just something smaller. They may even have trouble holding up the tarp.

22. Handkerchief drop  
**supplies:** one bandanna  
**Ages:** ALL
a. Divide into two equal teams. Each team sits shoulder to shoulder on the ground with legs crossed, holding hands. The teams face each other. Everyone closes their eyes except for the last person on each team. The leader drops the bandanna somewhere in between all teams (it will not make a sound when it hits the ground)—the last person (the one with their eyes open) will then squeeze the hand of the person next to them, who will then squeeze the next hand and then the next and so on. When the first person in line has their hand squeezed, they open their eyes and jump to grab the bandanna. Play several rounds, keeping score between the two teams and rotate the line so that people have a chance to be at different places in the line. This came is played in silence.

23. Balloon juggle-group  
**supplies:** one balloon for each team
a. Teams of 6–8 people get in a circle, standing, holding onto each other’s shoulders, (like Greek dancing). Each group inflates a balloon and they juggle the balloon (keep it from touching the ground) for as long as possible. They can move their feet and jump or head the balloon, but the hands must remain on the shoulders. The last group to not have their balloon hit the ground wins.

24. Ball around circle  
**Supplies:** A tennis ball or soccer ball  
**Age:** ALL
a. Divide teams into groups of 8 or 10 or 12—it has to be an even number. Number each person in the circle, from one to however many are in the group. Group will stand in a circle with hands on each other’s shoulders. For the first round, the “odd” number people will stand with their legs shoulder width apart and not move. The “evens” can move their feet. On go, one of the evens will have the ball between his/her legs but resting on the ground. On “go”, the evens will try to maneuver the ball through the legs of the odd numbered people from front to back. When ball has made it around circle, the first team to do that wins. You can play again but having the evens stand still with the odds maneuvering the ball beneath and around them.

25. Human knot  
**Supplies:** none  
**Age Range:** ALL
a. Form teams of 6-10 people, must be an even number. Have each team stand in a circle. Each person should stick out their right hand and grab the right hand of someone else. Then each person will stick out their left hand and grab the hand of someone ELSE in the circle. This creates a “human” knot. The goal of this game it to undo the knot but not separate hands in the process. While not every knot will come undone, many of them will.
26. Hula Hoop Relay
Supplies: one small and one large hula hoop for each team Age: ALL
a. Divide your group into two teams, or if it is a large group, teams of 10-12, with same number on each team. Everyone will hold hands with the people next to them. Place a large hula hoop in between two people so that they are holding hands with the hula hoop over them. On “go”, the hula hoop has to get over each person and back to where it started without anyone letting go of their hands. When it gets back to the starting point, team should sit down.
b. Variation one: Do the same thing again but use a smaller hula hoop
c. Variation two: Use two hula hoops, one large and one small. Have one placed to the left of one person and the other to the right of the same person. On “go” the hula hoops have to go around the circle in opposite directions and when they get back to where they started, winning team sits down.
d. Variation four: If you have a small group, make only one circle and have them try to get the hula hoops around within a certain amount of time, like 45 seconds or a minute.

27. Dragon’s Tail
Supplies: bandanas Ages: ALL
a. Divide into teams of 8 (is this an optimal #? If not, indicate divide teams into equal groups—each team stands in a line with everyone placing their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them. The person in the back of the line places a bandanna in their waist or pocket—it cannot be tied on though
b. You can do this with all teams at the same time or just (2) teams, but on “go”, the front person in each line tries to pull the bandanna off the other “dragon”. The “dragons” must remain connected & intact, with all members moving together.

28. Marco Polo
Supplies: cones to mark the “pool”, blindfold Ages: ALL
a. Mark space to use as the “pool” aka a boundary—everyone should enter the pool
b. One person is chosen as “it” and blindfolded
c. Whenever “it” says “Marco,” everyone else must say “Polo.” When “it” catches someone, the person caught becomes the new it
d. To make it harder, make whoever is “it” identify the person who has been caught by asking them a few yes/no questions
e. If “it” cannot find someone within a minute or so, call out “freeze,” and everyone stops where they are. Spin “it” around a few times and then “it” must find someone without talking. The first person caught becomes the new “it.”

29. Sharks and Minnows
Supplies: none Age: ALL
a. On a large area, like a basketball court, or a field, designate the playing area and one person is designated “the shark”. The rest of the people, the “minnows”, line up at one end of the field/court. On “go”, all the minnows try to run to the other end of the field past the shark. Whoever the shark catches stays with the shark. All of the minnows go to the opposite end of the field from where they began. Then the minnows run back and there are now more sharks to catch them. Whoever is caught becomes a shark, and eventually there are many sharks and only a couple of minnows. When all the minnows have been caught, choose a new shark and start the next round.
30. Clumps  
Supplies: 3-4 bandannas  Ages: ALL  
a. All players gather in an area. The group leader calls out a number and then the groups must gather in this number and either link arms so that they are facing out and sit down, or join right hands above their heads (whatever is easier). Whoever does not have a group is eliminated. So for instance, if you have 20 people in the group, call “get in groups of 6” so you have three groups, then 2 people are eliminated, leaving you with 18. Then you can say “group of 4” and you have four groups, with 2 people eliminated, leaving 16, and so on. This goes until you have a group of three, and then you make a group of two with the final two being the winners. (If you want to make it more complicated at the end, when you get down to 4 people left, blindfold the four people, spread them out apart from each other, then call “group of three” and the first three to find each other stay in the game, the fourth is eliminated. Then, separate them again, call group of two and the two that get together first win.

31. Lap sit  
supplies: none  Ages: ALL  
a. Have everyone in the group get in a circle, then turn to the right, grabbing the shoulders of the person in front of them. Then have the group attempt to sit down on each other’s lap. If done correctly, everyone should be supported in the circle and everyone should be able to raise their hands over their heads. It usually takes several tries to get this game right, people have to get very close to each other, and then sit. This game is very good particularly with large groups.

32. Creepy crawlers  
supplies: several colored pieces of paper  Ages: ALL  
a. Prior to playing this game, get four different colored sheets of paper and cut them into small pieces, maybe two inch by two inch. Divide teens into groups of 4. However many groups you have, place that number of the small pieces of paper in four parts of the room. For instance if you have four teams, place four small pieces of green paper on the floor on one side of the room. And four pieces of red paper somewhere else in the room, four pieces of white paper somewhere else and four pieces of blue paper somewhere else.  
b. In each group of four, each player is to extend their right hand and grab the right wrist of another person, so what you end up with is four right hands gripping four right wrists. On “go” each group runs like this, keeping their hands and wrists together and has to pick up one of each piece of paper and return to the starting place with all four, they can be picked up in any order. First team to the finish is the winner.

33. Freeze frame  
supplies: none  Ages: ALL  
a. Get kids into groups of 8-10. Then call out a scene—they have 30 seconds to get into that scene, as if you were going to take a photograph of that scene. After 30 seconds, call “Freeze,” and everyone has to strike the pose of that scene. Ask other advisors to judge which group was the best. Then do another scene. Sample scenes include:  
i. A high school football game  
ii. The Divine Liturgy
iii. The crucifixion
iv. A Parish Council Meeting

34. Chicken fight  supplies: none  Ages: ALL
   a. This game should be played in single gender. So define a small playing area—you could have the boys in the group makes a circle for instance. All the girls in the group get in the middle of the circle, and squat with hands on their ankles. The goal of this game is to knock everyone else down, so they let go of their ankles. Whoever lets go of their ankles is out of the game. After most have been eliminated, you can let the ones who are left in stand up and stretch for a minute before they resume the fight. The last one standing wins. After the girls go, have the girls make a circle with the boys in the middle and the boys then fight among themselves. Make sure anyone who wears eyeglasses removes them. Not confident this is an appropriate game to be included; perhaps for elementary aged children it would work.

35. Cotton ball Catch  Supplies: cotton balls, masking tape, blindfolds  Ages: ALL
   a. Divide group into teams of 6-8 people. Ask for a volunteer from each group. That volunteer will put their arms out and have them taped together, with the sticky side out. Once each volunteer has their arms taped, they will stand facing the group and be blindfolded. The group will stand approximately 8-10 feet away from the person with their arms taped. Each person will have 4-5 cotton balls. On “go” they will throw the cotton balls at the person with their arms taped who will try to “catch” them with their sticky arms. The person who catches the most cotton balls is the winner.

36. Shoe Scramble  supplies: blindfolds  Ages: ALL
   a. Take everyone’s shoes and mix them up into a huge pile. Then divide group into teams of 6-10 (an even number is preferable here). Have them pair up with someone in their respective teams. One person from each pair will be blindfolded. On go, the sighted person will direct the blind person (by voice only, no touching) to the pile of shoes and direct the blind person to find the shoes of the sighted person and put them on the feet of the sighted person. Once they are put on, (they don’t need to be laced up), then the blindfold can be removed, both people run back to the line and tag the next two (one of whom will already be blindfolded) and they go find another set of shoes. Every pair has to go twice, switching roles the second time around so that a new blind person can find the shoes of a new sighted person.

37. Mummy Race  supplies: several rolls of toilet paper  Ages: ALL
   a. Divide group into teams of 6-10 people. Have one volunteer from each group stand twenty feet in front of the group. Leave two rolls of toilet paper at their feet. On “go,” two people from each team will run to their “mummy” and start wrapping him/her around with toilet paper. Every 20 seconds, call “switch” and those working must stop, put down the toilet paper, run back to their team, tag the next two people in line who then go and start wrapping. Keep switching every 20
seconds until both toilet paper rolls have been used up. Advisors will then decide who has the best looking mummy.

38. Balloon Stomp Supplies: balloons, one 2-foot piece of yarn for each  Ages: ALL
   a. Give each person a balloon and a two foot piece of yarn. Each person blows up their balloon and ties it off. The yarn is then tied to the balloon and to each person’s ankle. On go, each person tries to pop the balloon of the others by stepping on it while avoiding having their own balloon stomped on. If your balloon is popped you are out of the game. Game continues until only one person is left with an inflated balloon.

39. Back to back balloon relay  supplies: balloons  Ages: ALL
   a. This is a relay so have multiple teams of 8-10 people. Have each partner stand back to back and link arms. Please a balloon in between their backs. They have to run around a cone and return to their team and switch the balloon with the next two people in line. If the balloon breaks, they have to return to the start and get another balloon. In summer, this is a fun game to play outside with water balloons.

40. Hula Hoop Relay  supplies: one large hula hoop for each team  Ages: ALL
   a. Divide into teams of 8-10 people. Three teammates get inside the hula hoop, run around a chair and back, switch hula hoop to next group of three. Teams have to go an equal amount of times and each person has to run in a hula hoop at least once. i.e. if teams have 13 people each, then two people will go twice, each team would have to make 5 runs with the hula hoop in this case.

41. Cup Relay—Supplies needed:  6 cups for each team; blindfolds  Ages: ALL
   a. Form teams with 8-10 people on each team. Each person will be required to build a stack with six cups on the chair opposite their team. This person will be blindfolded while travelling across the play area a chair or table (or use the floor) while building the stack of cups and while traveling back – this sentence does not make sense. Are they traveling in a chair or table? Re-read and then correct. One person may assist this person in traveling across the play area—they can hold their hand, or carry them, whatever means they wish. When they are building the stack of cups, the person who can see may not touch the person who cannot. The same “assistant” can go multiple times, but each person must build a stack with the cups. An advisor will judge when the stack looks good and then the pair of people from each team may return to their line, where the next person is ready, already blindfolded. After the stack is built, the advisor should disassemble the stack and put the six cups together so they are ready for the next person. I like it, but the directions just need to be slightly revised for better comprehension.

42. Underwear Relay  supplies needed: several XXL pairs of underwear  Ages: ALL
   a. Form teams with 8-10 people on each team. This is a back to back relay. Two members of each team stand back-to-back and put on a pair of giant XXL
underwear. They race around a cone and return, where they remove the underwear and the next two put it on.

43. **Yarn relay**

**Supplies:** Strips of yarn in three colors cut in 8-12 inch pieces (make pieces of varying lengths)  
**Ages:** ALL  

a. Divide into teams of 8-10 people. Strips of yarn in three colors will be in front of each chair opposite each team. Teammates will run one at a time and get one color of yarn, one piece. Let’s say, red, then the next teammate runs and gets a blue piece, and the next a green, and then red, then blue, then green. Remaining teammates tie pieces of yarn together and make a chain with it from their chair to the chair opposite. The first to make a chain across the area you designate wins.

44. **Thread the needle**

**supplies needed**—spoon with a long piece of twine or heavy string tied to it.  
**Ages:** ALL  

a. Form teams with 8-10 people on each team. Line up each team shoulder-to-shoulder. Tie twine/string around handle of spoon and have each team try to “sew” themselves together by passing the spoon either in one shirt sleeve and out the other, or top to bottom—down the shirt and through the bottom of the pants. (Most of these games require 8-10 people. Ensure parishes understand there can be smaller teams or they may not realize these activities can be used for a different number. Unless, there is a specific reason why 8-10 people is required.

45. **Wheelbarrow Race**  

**Supplies Needed:** 2 Blindfolds per team  
**Ages:** ALL  

a. Form teams with 8-10 people on each team. Team-mates will pair off—one will be the wheelbarrow and one will be the driver. The one who is the wheelbarrow will be blindfolded. The driver will drive the wheelbarrow around a chair and back, where the next pair (advisor will have already blindfolded the next wheelbarrow) will go. I would also suggest this can be down without being blindfolded. Most of these games require a blindfold and some teens or younger children may not feel comfortable with this, especially if they do not know many people.

46. **Balloon Relay**  

**Supplies Needed:** Balloons  
**Ages:** ALL  

a. Form teams with 8-10 members on each team. Team-mates will get in groups of two. They will bat a balloon back and forth between them while running around a chair and back, then giving their balloon to the next group of two.  

b. Variation—instead of batting the balloon back and forth, have each person kick the ball (alone without a team-mate) around a chair and back.

47. **Balloon Pop**  

**supplies:** Balloons, Chair  
**Ages:** ALL  

a. Form teams with 8-10 members on each team. Each person will run to a chair where there are balloons sitting, be given a balloon, tie up the balloon (though not tie it necessarily) and sit on the balloon and pop it. Once balloon is popped, then run back and tag the next person.

48. **Blind shapes**  

**supplies:** 50 foot lengths of rope, blindfolds  
**Ages:** ALL
a. Have 5-6 group members blindfolded and have them try to make a shape out of a piece of rope without talking. They can also make a letter. Variation: allow one or two people to talk.

49. **ABCs of something** supplies: pens, paper with ABCs on it  Ages: ALL
   a. Write on a piece of paper “ABCs of Teenage life” or “ABCs of School” and then write down the left-hand side of the paper all the letters from A-Z—have the teens get in groups of 2-3 and write one word corresponding with each letter. Give a prize to either the fastest to complete the list or for the best list. Examples: Adolescence, Busy, Confusion, etc.
   b. Variation: ABCs of church, or ABCs of Christmas, or another appropriate topic

50. **Whiffleball** supplies: whiffle ball, bat, and bases (manila folders) Ages: ALL
   a. Set up the hall to be a whiffle ball field and divide everyone up into two teams and play whiffleball.

51. **Relay Hockey** supplies: 4 pool noodles, cones, a tennis ball Ages: ALL
   a. Set up a short field with two sets of cones marking two small goals? Cones marking cones – missing something. Divide everyone into two teams. Have each team stand behind their set of cones. Give each person on the team a number. The way this game works is that you will play two on two hockey. You will call two numbers and they will try to score a goal, every 15 seconds, change numbers. When you change numbers the persons holding the hockey stick (pool noodles) must drop them and the two new people come out. At the start of the game, anytime a goal is scores, or if the ball goes out of play, the advisor can drop the ball for a faceoff between the two teams. Call out “numbers 1 and 4,” or “3 and 7,” or 2 and 6), vary up who plays with who. If you call “numbers 1 and 4” then numbers 1 and 4 from each team play until you call another set of numbers. Play the game to a certain point total or until everyone has had at least two opportunities to play. It’s helpful to rotate the numbers so people are competing with various people.

52. **Blind Draw** supplies: pens, a paper with dot-to-dot on it Ages: ALL
   a. Draw an object like a connect the dots object. Make it a cross, or a church or something else with about 30 dots to it. Number the dots so it can be done like a connect the dots exercise. Have teens get in pairs. Give each pair a paper but leave it face down. On go, one of each pair will have their eyes closed (or blindfolded if you think they will cheat) and will flip over the paper and with the pen, try to connect the dots with guidance from the person who can see. See how well they draw. This exercise is similar to the trust walk, in terms of taking guidance and direction but can be done without moving around. Switch roles and pass out a different picture. So, is this a game that should be the “leads to a discussion topic area?”

53. **Object ID** supplies: envelopes filled with objects, blindfolds, and several lists with the objects on them, with a pen for each team Ages: ALL
a. Divide into teams of 8-10 people. Each team selects a volunteer. This person is blindfolded and sits in a chair at a distance (what is the distance?) opposite the team. An advisor (or an Adult) stands next to this person. Each team is then given an envelope with 15 items in it, such as a penny, a pen, a paper clip, an envelope, a sticky tab, a quarter, a spoon, etc. The advisor behind the blindfolded people also get the same list and a pen. On go, each team will send one person at a time, with one object at a time (objects can be taken in any order) to run to the person in the chair, hand them the object and then have to identify the object. When they identify it correctly, the advisor will check that one off the list, and the person who brought the object will go back to their line, tag the next person who will bring the next object. Players may have to go multiple times but can only bring one object each time. First team to have all 15 objects correctly identified wins.

54. Battleship  
**Supplies:** None  
**Ages:** Middle/HS  

a. The entire playing area is broken down into different parts of a ship. The leader explains the location of each part. For example:
   - **Bow:** the front of the playing area
   - **Stern:** the back of the playing area
   - **Port:** the left side of the playing area
   - **Starboard:** the right side of the playing area

   Special actions are explained. For example:
   - **Submarines:** Players run to the center of the playing area, lie down on back, and raise one foot in the air.
   - **Lifeboats Port:** Players run to left side of playing area, form single line, sit down and begin to row.
   - **Lifeboats Starboard:** Players run to right side of playing area, form single line, sit down and begin to row.

   The game begins with everyone standing in the center of the area. When the leader calls out one of the above parts of the ship, all players must run to the designated area. The last person to reach the spot is eliminated, and goes to help the leader. Each time a different part of the ship is called, the last player reaching the site is eliminated, until one player remains.

55. Hot potato water balloons  
**Supplies:** water balloons  
**Ages:** ALL  

a. Teens get in a circle and start passing the water balloon around while singing a song. The group leader stands in the middle of the circle, with his arm in the air. When he drops his arm, the singing stops, the person who has the balloon may/should/will? break it on the person’s head to their left. Play several rounds.

56. Split-split-splat  
**Supplies:** water balloons  
**Ages:** ALL  

a. Like duck-duck-goose. Players sit in a circle with their eyes closed. One person gets a water balloon and touches each person’s head with it with the water balloon,
saying “split, split, split” and then breaking it on one person’s head and saying “splat”. The “victim” then chases the person who had the water balloon. If they catch the person who broke it on them, they are given a balloon to break on that person’s head, and they also become the next one to go around the circle. If they don’t catch the person, they still get to be the next one to go around the circle.

57. Wet T-shirt relay supplies: extra large t-shirt for each team. Ages: ALL
a. Divide into teams of 8-10 people. On go, the first person puts on an extra large t-shirt over their swim suit and either jumps into a pool or lake, then jumps out and switches the shirt with the next person who jumps in, then out and changes it with the next person, etc, until all have gone.
b. The Metropolis would kindly suggest that this game is not included in the packet, unless perhaps for HOPE or JOY aged children.

58. Human Knots Ages: ALL
An ideal game for when you want a quick energy boost.
Get your group to make a circle, and face center. Have group shuffle up close, shoulder to shoulder and close their eyes. When all ready, ask them to carefully reach out and clasp hands, any hands, with people in the circle.
As facilitator, open your eyes and check that each hand is joined to only one other hand, and that there is a healthy amount of intermingling.
When you’re satisfied they’re ready, ask the group to open their eyes and start un-tangling the knot without letting go hands.
Eventually the group will untangle into a perfect circle, maybe with a breakaway smaller circle. Get everyone to clap and congratulate themselves for a job well done.
Caution – this is a physical activity so ensure that people are suitably dressed, physically able and willing to take part.
We had a similar game earlier – perhaps these 2 can be combined for various options.

59. Circle of Friends Game Ages: ALL
This is a great greeting and departure for a large group who will be attending a seminar for more than one day together and the chances of meeting everyone in the room is almost impossible.
Form two large circles (or simply form two lines side by side), one inside the other and have the people in the inside circle face the people in the outside circle. Ask the circles to take one step in the opposite directions, allowing them to meet each new person as the circle continues to move very slowly. If lines are formed, they simply keep the line moving very slowly, as they introduce themselves.

60. Aardvark Relay Supplies: Bowls, dried peas, straw Ages: Middle/HS
To play this game, you will need to divide the group into teams (the number of teams depends on the area you have available and group size).

You will need some equipment for this game. Place empty bowls on one side of the room, and bowls full of dried peas on the other side. Make sure there is an equal number of peas in each bowl. Give each team member a straw.

The aim of the game is for each team to transport a small pile of dried peas from a bowl on one side of the room to another bowl on the other side, using only their straw. They do this by sucking through the straw so the pea stays fixed to the end of the straw. If they drop the pea they must pick it up again using the straw.

The winning team is the one that transports all the peas first.

**Game Debrief:** You can conclude this game with a devotion on our tendency to want to hold onto material things and the costs & difficulties involved with that. A good bible verse to use is Luke 12:15-21. Again – better suited for the earlier section that leads to discussion.

### 61. GRAB THAT THING  
**Supplies:** None  
**Age:** ALL

The host of the night should make a list of objects that you would expect the audience to have with them or objects that is around that area you are playing this game.

Once done you need two people as the runners.

When ready the host will say an object ’CELL PHONE’ then the runner has to run out into the audience and get a mobile phone.

The first person to bring it back wins a point.

The more items on the list the longer the game shall be. If you are playing with adults then objects like trousers are good to use as an object them making the owner to get them is good.

From this text clearly this was taken from a 3rd party. Who is the “host of the night”, and this is the only game to reference “if you are playing with adults”.

### 62. MINE FIELD  
**Supplies:** Anything that can be an obstacle  
**Ages:** ALL
This game teaches kids the value of communication and trust. Move to the appropriate section.

It works best if you have a large area, indoor or outdoor. Setup a series of obstacles (chairs, tables, balls, etc).

Ask the group to pair off - one person is blind folded and must make their way through the 'mine field' by listening to their partner. Their partner verbally talks them through but cannot enter the mine field. If the person hits a 'mine' they must return to the start. After everyone has successfully navigated the Mine Field partners should swap roles so everyone has a chance.

At the end of the game, talk about what they learnt about communication and trust.

- what was helpful communication and what wasn't
- was it easy to trust your guide
- what were some of their feelings - fear, safety, etc
- was it easier going first or second

63. RATTLE SNAKE Supplies: None Ages: ALL

The group sits down in a circle. One person is chosen to be "it." Blindfold the youth and spin them in circles. Hand one other person in the circle something that they shake to make noise (ex: maraca, bottle of pebbles, tambourine). It works best if you have something that is hard to pass on without making noise. The students need to pay attention. Once the youth that is blindfolded is done spinning, the leader will call out "rattlesnake" Whoever has the shaker must give one shake and then pass the shaker off to someone else. The shaker will continue to be passed around the circle. The youth leader should continue to call rattlesnake more often until the blindfolded youth can catch the rattlesnake. Whoever was caught will be the next one blindfolded.

64. SHOE GAME Ages: ALL

This is a good short game to help your group mix it up a bit. Sit everyone in a circle, tell everyone to take off their left shoe, and throw it in a pile in the middle. Then everyone randomly grabs a shoe from the pile and put it on. Once everyone has a show on, they then must find the person who is wearing their shoe, and stand next to them. The result is you end up with circle or two. Add this as an alternate to the previous shoe game.

65. TOILET ROLL GAME Supply List: Toilet paper Ages: ALL

Give a role of toilet paper to someone in the group and ask them to tear off as many sheets as they normally use, then pass (or throw) the role to another member of the group to do the same. Don't explain the purpose at this point - it just adds to the mystery! Continue passing the roll until everyone in the group has torn off some paper. You'll find some people will take only a couple of sheets, others will reel off heaps! (You may need multiple toilet rolls) Once the roll has been around to everyone, you explain the next part. For each piece of paper people tore off, people have to reveal one fact about themselves.

66. Charades Ages: ALL
Make a list of words for the kids to act out without talking. If done in groups the one with the most points will win.

67. **Sculpting**  
**Supplies: in description**  
**Ages: ALL**

Give separate groups different supplies such as newspaper, scissors, construction paper, cups, straws, tape, string, etc. and tell them to create the tallest possible structure. Tallest structure wins.

68. **Candy Ice Breaker**  
**Supply List:** Candy  
**Ages: ALL**

Put enough candy in a bowl for each person in the room to take at least 5 pieces, (for larger groups take 3).

After that is done tell everybody they can grab 1-5 pieces of candy.
Each camper then has to tell one fun fact about themself for each piece of candy they took. (example: If Claire took 5 pieces of candy she'd have to tell 5 things about herself.)

After that you can eat your candy.

69. **Human Treasure Hunt**  
**Supply List:** Nothing  
**Ages: ALL**

Create a list of 15-30 statements to distribute to your group.
Give the group a period of time to find people who meet the various criteria of the statements on the list.
When participants find someone who meets the criteria, they ask that person to sign their list.
At the end of the activity, read off the various statements and ask anyone who meets the criteria to stand up. Examples:

A sample list is:
- Has a blue toothbrush
- Is an only child
- Hates chocolate
- Hasn't got all their second teeth
- Is having a very happy unbirth today
- Can stand on her head and count to ten,
- Knows his ABC backwards
- Has two brothers
- Has green eyes
- Had a shower yesterday, etc.

70. **Silent Interviews**  
**Supplies: None**  
**Ages: ALL**

Description
1. Divide the group into pairs - mix the group into pairs of folks who don't know each other well.
2. Ask the participants to introduce themselves to their partner.
3. Instruct the group that from this point forward, speaking is not allowed. This includes whispering, mouthing words, and making sounds, too!
4. Inform the group that they must tell their partner 3 things about themselves without speaking, similar to a charades game. These things cannot be physical characteristics.
5. Once all of the partners have finished miming to each other, call everyone back into a circle.
6. Ask for each pair to verbally introduce their partner to the group, as well as the three things that they learned (or think they learned).

**71. Where Do You Stand?**

Ages: ALL

Have campers sort themselves into groups based on their opinions on simple topics. For instance, ask campers to split into 'favorite toothpaste' groups. Campers might sort themselves into 'Crest', 'Colgate' and 'Don't care' groups. Try asking about house pets, (cats, dogs, fish, none,) pizza toppings, favorite colors, etc. This can also be used to split campers into groups for a game: just keep asking new questions until you have the number and size of groups you want.

**72. My Name is and I like to...**

Ages: ALL

Everyone in the group stands in a circle. The first person says, "My name is and I like to ______ (insert hobby and act out a motion from that hobby.) The rest of group then says, "(Person's Name) likes to (hobby) and acts out motion. Example, "My name is Dave and I like Fish (action out casting a reel).

The next person repeats the process.

The rest of group then says that person's name, hobby, and motion and the moves onto the first person's info. This continues until the last person goes, at which the entire group calls out the last person's info and moves along through the whole group and repeats everyone's info.

**73. All Together**

Supplies: None

Ages: ALL

Ask the group to find a partner and pair up.

The pairs sit on the ground with their backs to each other.

The partners then reach behind their backs to link arms with each other.

When the leader says, “Go,” the partners attempt to stand up without separating.

The leader can specify that the partners can't talk to make the activity harder.

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**Best Practices for Youth Retreat:**

Services: Orthros is held in the mornings. Vespers is held in the evenings. Blessing of the Waters should be at the beginning of every event/retreat. Electronic templates for these services are available on the Strategic Plan website and can be modified to suit your event. Each service lasts 15-20 minutes and has hymns/responses that are easily sung by all to encourage participation. Scripture readings for Orthros can be those “of the day” or can be modified to fit the theme of your event. Add a 5-minute sermonette to the service if desired. Print books so all participants have a text of the service. Should we encourage them to create or cut their services with clergy involvement?

Alone with God: This is an opportunity for retreat participants to sit quietly and pray. The time is called “Alone with God,” because even though the participants may be a large group, they sit separate from each other and just enjoy silence with God. Alone with God is also a time where people can read the Bible. 10-15 minutes is a good amount of time for this for middle and high school students. For younger students, probably not more than 5-8 minutes.

Free Time: Retreat participants need some unstructured time to just enjoy fellowship and hang-out. However, there is a delicate balance between too much of this and not enough. Lack of structure will leave participants feeling unfocused. Too much structure will make them tired and they will tune out.

Confession: The sacrament of confession happens more organically in a retreat (city or setting?). When people are away from home, or away from the business of life, they are more likely to look inwardly and introspectively.

Often, to receive confession in a parish, people have to make an appointment, teenagers have to tell their parents they are going and these challenges can cause people to just not want all the hassle. Ideally, people have a relationship with their parish priest and confession is a part of their Christian life. This is challenging. In a retreat setting, youth are already focused on their faith, so if clergy are available it is a good idea to offer the sacrament of confessions. Please inform the clergy facility or attending the event in advance, so they can come prepared.

Getting a youth to volunteer for an activity: Don’t select someone you know is going to have a hard time doing something. Ask for volunteers. If you don’t think you are going to get one, ask for someone whose birthday is in a specific month. If there is a need for someone to lead and you want to involve a quiet person, memorize who has a birthday in each month (or do a quick line up by birthday), so you know which month to pick.

Picking partners: Usually not a good idea to let kids pick their own partners because someone usually gets left out. You can randomly assign partners by having people line up by first name and then pairing them off two or three at a time.
Choosing Games/Icebreakers: Pick things that involve everyone, so that there are not people standing around getting distracted. If a game is going well, keep it going. If a game is going stagnant, quickly change. If you are going to do multiple games, have the supplies “staged” already so that there isn’t a lot of time between games. Be clear on the rules. Anticipate that they will try to cheat and try to figure out games that are “cheat proof.” Know your crowd—if you have a 350 pound person, you might not want to do the wheelbarrow race. Sell the game—make up a story to go along with it, make it sound cool. (not sure about this last sentence) Be confident and lead. The number of participants will help you figure out what games to do—there are some games that work well with 10 or less, others require 10 or more, and others are designed for large groups – you’ve answered your own question, so maybe a section in Ice Breakers for “Games with Smaller Groups”. Look out for potential safety hazards

In Discussion Sessions: Do not have Multiple facilitators for a discussion or A lot of lecturing. Instead, have questionnaires, ask them to write questions down to get the discussion going, share their own experience (don’t go into sinful experiences), Linking lessons to the games. Actually having (2) facilitators is preferred so they can bounce off ideas and keep things moving. Also, for Youth Protection it’s best to have at least 2 adults. The adults should have an outline of what they would like to discuss, and some open ended questions, but questionnaires is really not the best way to accomplish this. It’s also unclear who is sharing their own experience – the facilitator, the attendees, or both.

How to talk about spirituality: Be truthful—talk about things we know, talk about things we don’t know. Concentrate one topic at a time, like fasting, confession, prayer, or moral living. Depending on the topic, it’s often better to divide the larger group by age or gender. It’s more challenging to have a discussion with more than 20 people. If your group is larger than 20, split them into smaller groups with their own facilitators.

Possible discussion session topics to get the brain flowing for your next retreat:

- a. What is the purpose of the church, what is your role in the Church
- b. Prayer—how to have a meaningful prayer life
- c. Why is the Bible Important—how to read the Bible
- d. The Creed—What is it that we believe
- e. The Divine Liturgy—why is it important, how do we get the most out of worship
- f. Great Lent and Holy Week—goals for Lent, reflections on Lent and Holy Week
- g. Moral issues (Please research what the Orthodox Church says about these topics and make sure to also have age appropriate discussions)
  - i. Drinking
  - ii. Drugs, including pot
  - iii. Pornography
  - iv. Dating and sexuality
  - v. Peer pressure
  - vi. How to get along with parents
  - vii. Goal-setting—what do you want to do with your life
  - viii. Following the Law
  - ix. I would be careful with some of these topics. Especially since this Manual is available to EVERYONE, some people may question this.
h. Repentance and Confession

Great Bible discussions
i. Who is my neighbor—the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)
j. Everyone has a talent—parable of the talents (Matthew 25: 14-30)
k. What happens when we die—the story of the last judgment (Matthew 25:31-46)
l. Lost and Found—the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15: 11-32)
m. The difference between good and Godly—the parable of the Publican and the Pharisee (Luke 18: 9-14)
n. The Importance of Friends—the story of the Paralytic (Mark 2:1-12)
o. Beatitudes—Prescriptions for daily living (Matthew 5:1-12)
p. God makes everything beautiful—don’t worry about how you look or what you wear (Matthew 6:22-34)

Working with and inspiring Parents:
Parents, as we stated earlier are the main influences on a youth’s life. There is a strong correlation between the child’s spiritual growth and the parent’s spiritual growth. If the parent goes to Church, participates in its ministry, helps achieve the parishes Mission and Vision, it is more likely the child will grow spiritually, participate in the ministries of the church and have the desire to continue. Unfortunately, the same happens with the alternative, if the parent isn’t involved within the life of the parish, or lives according to the Orthodox Church, the child will not see the Church, nor the Christian faith as an important aspect of their daily life. We must remember that success is not just getting good grades, being a star athlete, going to college, obtaining a prestigious job, and so on. It is about living a Christ centered life and making sure the parents are establishing a Kingdom oriented home. Involving and communicating with the parents is one of the keys to a successful Youth Ministry at your church. Schedule monthly or quarterly parent meetings to keep them updated and share a list of upcoming dates, activities, needs, and expectations. Allow for as much parent involvement as possible within your events. Ask parents to help at certain events, ensuring everyone has an opportunity to give back and be included. There are many ways for parents to become involved, once they begin with small tasks they may evolve into the future leaders of the Youth Ministry Programs at your parish.

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Evaluation of Youth Ministry Experience
Here comes one of the most intimidating yet most necessary parts of Youth Ministry - the evaluation process. We must overcome the fear of hearing constructive criticism and embrace the notion that feedback, can be used to propel a change of direction for the better. As society, the world, technologies and families change, we must also change. Teaching and presentation methods should change. Lesson plans should change. Even people involved in ministry need to change. The word “change” was used intentionally used above six to show the main reason evaluation is intimidating and difficult. It forces us to change and possibly exit our comfort zone.

The questions below can help shape your ministry or event evaluation form. or discussion that you want to distribute to Youth Ministry workers, Parents, and Youth. It is necessary to evaluate yourself as well as your peers who together form your Youth Ministry Team or Event Team. It is important that you solicit feedback from parents as they are the ones who ask the questions and gauge how successful the event was and how much fun or learning was achieved during the event. It is important to provide the youth with an opportunity to evaluate the programs, staff, etc., as they are the ones who are directly involved as participants. Thank God, all of these groups are very vocal and willing to let you know their thoughts and feelings. This is a very important aspect of Youth Work which allows for diverse ideas and concerns to be heard.

Good Strength to all of us who continue through our successes and honest and sincere acceptance of our failures to grow in knowledge, faith, and love.

Ministry Event Evaluation Form

Event Name ___________________________ Date ___________ Time ___________
Please answer honestly and respectfully. The information on this page will be used to make changes for the betterment of the event and the overall program itself.

Did the date and time of the event work well? Were there any seasonal events that affected your participation? If any, please include suggestions if the event is held on the same date and time next year?

______________________________________________________________________________

Did the Location of events work well for you? (Church, Classrooms, gym, etc.)

______________________________________________________________________________

Did the Event meet your expectations?

______________________________________________________________________________

Was there a Theme for the Event? If so, what was it? A little confused with this question – are you trying to see if they got the theme?

______________________________________________________________________________

What did you learn in the session(s) during this event?

______________________________________________________________________________

What did you like most about the event? What went well?

______________________________________________________________________________

What is one thing you would like to change about this event for next year?

______________________________________________________________________________

Additional comments:

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

Ministry Evaluation Form

Program Name ____________________________ Date __________


Is this Youth Ministry Program achieving its Mission? And why? Did you speak with them earlier about sharing the mission – if people don’t know what your mission is, they can’t answer or they will have created a different vision or mission on their own which may not match yours.

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Is the Youth Ministry Program following its vision? How? How isn’t it? Same comments as above.

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

What are we doing well as a Youth Ministry Program? You might want it more concrete by saying name 2 or 3 items that we are doing well or that your family enjoys, etc.

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

What can we do better as a Youth Ministry Program? Same as above.

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Is the Ministry reinforcing the Orthodox Faith and its Tradition?

______________________________________________________________________________

Is the Ministry Program strengthening the Participants (Workers/Youth) relationship with God?

______________________________________________________________________________

Is the Ministry Program doing any outreach or evangelization?

______________________________________________________________________________

Additional Comments:

______________________________________________________________________________

Great Websites to Reference:

https://www.orthodoxcatechismproject.org/
Final Farewell:

For those who have spent many years serving the church in ministry and for those who are neophytes to youth ministry, know that this is only the beginning for such a manual. There is more to learn about youth ministry no matter how much
experience we have. However, as we start this journey together know this manual is a combination of two efforts: 1) to have a reference book and 2) to serve as an educational tool.

Working in the Lord’s vineyard, especially within Youth Ministry, can be difficult and at that same time richly rewarding. We hope and pray to continue to produce updated editions of this manual to be able to serve all who decided to answer the call of working within Youth Ministry. If there is any materials or suggestions, you would like to see added to this manual please contact us. We pray for strength to fight the good fight of teaching our Orthodox Youth how to live an Orthodox Christian Life on their journey to Christ and His Kingdom.

Many Thanks to all who worked on this Youth Worker Manual for the Metropolis of Atlanta:

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