

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA



Christ IS Risen!

2018/2019

Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry

Leader Manual ages 4 - 8

Leader notes

Thank you for serving as a Youth Leader in 2018/2019! This year's curriculum aims to help the children answer the questions:

- *What is Great Lent?*
- *What is Pascha?*
- *How is Christ Risen in my life?*

This curriculum is designed to be carried out in one session per class meeting, but please feel free to adjust in response to the children. If you find that they want more time to discuss a particular idea or session, others may be shortened or abbreviated, as long as the main understandings above are addressed. Youth can take turns reading the text to the class, or you may choose for them to read it to themselves if they need to adjust the pace.

Sessions are divided into two types: Traditional and Praxis (Experiential). The first nine sessions are developed in a traditional format and the following eight are set in an interactive format. It is suggested that the praxis sessions be interspersed or combined with the traditional sessions based on your discretion. The praxis sessions may be found in the Praxis Session Plan.

This leader's guide includes many suggested topics and activity ideas, and notes are in italics. Again, feel free to modify based on your class and their maturity. Be sure to check with your priest if any significant changes are made.

Most sessions require chart paper, post it notes, and pencils. Other supplemental materials are provided –please be sure to see what you need ahead of time.

General Notes and Suggestions:

Modifications: This curriculum is written for grade school level youth, but the maturity and academic abilities of 4 -8 year-olds can vary greatly, as can their familiarity with the topics being discussed. Although there are some specific ideas for modification listed throughout the curriculum, here are a few general suggestions:

Modifying for younger youth/lower abilities:

Rephrase sections of the text, or ask a quick question as youth read to be sure they are comprehending. This may also be useful if you find the youth need more time working on a different section of the session. Answer questions together.

Modifying for older youth/higher abilities:

Have youth read passages individually and paraphrase them in their own words to share with the class. You may also give a particular youth "homework" to read and prepare an explanation of a passage in order to begin the class discussion the next day. Be sure to communicate with parents so that youth have support as they work at home.

Sensitivity: Sensitivity and empathy are key to any learning environment. Encourage youth to talk freely about experiences they have had. As facilitator of these discussions, it is important to remind the youth that everyone deserves our respect as images of Christ, and that God is the only judge. Keep an eye on all of the youth

and be sure to address any unusual/unexpected conversations with your priest in case further discussion is needed. Young people tend to be more comfortable sharing in situations where they have developed relationships with the other youth and adults in the room. If this is the first time being together for the majority of the group, it might be helpful to do a few “get-to-know-you” activities first. Be sure to include yourself in some of these activities so that the youth begin to develop a relationship with you as well as their peers

The content of sessions and conveying that content is an important part of your ministry. However, the time spent together and relationships created and maintained are just as crucial. It is within this combination of worship, relationship, interaction, learning and living that our youth encounter Christ and deepen their relationship with Him and His church.

Iconography use: Icons exist first and foremost as a tool through which we glorify God. Access to images of icons on the internet can enhance the understanding of your students and bring authenticity to their work, however it is important to consider the source of the icon, to be respectful of the author's work, and to be thoughtful about any applicable copyright issues. When possible, it is best practice to use icons after receiving permission from the iconographer. Most of the icons provided in the curriculum materials are used with the permission of the iconographer, however not all were able to be identified. Please consult your parish priest for guidance in the selection of appropriate icons.

Taking it Home

It is highly recommended that you create a strong link between your youth programming and the families of youth that you serve. Send home a weekly summary of what you worked on with the youth. This could be accomplished through handouts, email, Facebook groups, etc. You may want to include some points or questions for discussion in the home. Ask the youth to provide suggestions for how they can “take home” and live what they learned. These could be included with the parent update.

We have included a template for this correspondence. There are suggestions throughout the curriculum for activities to be completed at home and brought to the next session. We understand that many parishes struggle with consistent attendance, however, setting this as a habit and expectation may help to keep youth as involved as possible.

**** NOTES FOR SESSION STRUCTURE ****

Each session should contain an element of prayer. You may simply choose an appropriate prayer to begin and end the session, choose a tropar of a saint who you are discussing that day, or join together in a service such as evening prayers, vespers, or an akathist.

Use space and breaks wisely- simply moving from tables to the floor for a story about a saint can help keep children of this age group focused. Break times have not been specifically designated within the session instructions, however it is a good idea to include a few short breaks at times that seem right for your group. Consider staying in one place and stretching, or marching around the room for a minute just to let off some steam.

Acknowledgments

Iconography – Archangel Icons - www.archangelicons.com

Orthodox Clip Art – Orthodox Church in America Department of Religious Education
<http://dce.oca.org/resources/line-drawings/>

Christ IS Risen! Logo Design/Photography – Myr Arts

Project Sample Graphics – Mommy & Me/Daddy & Me Camp and Diocesan Church School Camp

Christ IS Risen!

- 5 Session One: Christ IS Risen!
- 6 Session Two: Great Lent
- 7 Session Three: The Cross in our Lives
- 8 Session Four: Christ in the Tomb
- 9 Session Five: The Resurrection Part I
- 11 Session Six: The Resurrection Part II
- 12` Session Seven: The Resurrection is Celebrated Every Sunday!

Praxis Sessions available in the Praxis Session Plan

Created by Kira Senedak for Mommy& Me/Daddy & Me Camp 2018
Revised and edited for Parish Use Kira Senedak and Natalie Kapeluck Nixon 2018

Session Two: Great Lent

Main Ideas: An introduction to Great Lent

Supplies needed: Lenten Photo Albums, Copies of each icon line drawing to fit in the photo album, larger copies of icon drawing (at least 8.5 x 11), brief explanation of the Sundays of Great Lent.

Preparation: Place the larger icon line drawings around your room, through the church school area or church hall. These will be used for the Lenten Journey Walk.

Lenten Journey Walk: Ask the children if they have ever been on vacation. Allow time for them to tell you where they have gone. Proceed to ask how did they get there? How long did it take? What did they do to prepare for their vacation? Use their answers to aid in your explanation of Great Lent. Explain that each of them had to go on a journey to get to their vacation. They either traveled by car, airplane or boat. Some of their trips were short and others longer. They also needed to prepare all the things they needed for their vacation and pack them up – toothbrushes, clothes, snacks, etc. Great Lent is our journey to Pascha! It is a time for us to travel and prepare for the feast day just like we travelled and prepared for our vacation.

Let's learn about the special Sundays that help us prepare on our journey to Pascha!

At this point, pass out the Lenten Photo Albums and tell them that you are going on a Lenten Journey Walk. Stop at each icon drawing that you place around the room. Ask them what they see in the icon and then give a brief explanation of the week. Pass out the corresponding smaller copy for them to place in their photo album. Ensure they have left the opposite page open for a photo of their family.

Complete the session in prayer – begin teaching the Tropar for Exaltation of the Cross.

Oh Lord, save your people and bless your inheritance. Grant victory to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries and by virtue of your cross preserve your habitation.

