

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA



Christ IS Risen!

2018/2019

Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry

Praxis Session Plan

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Introduction

The praxis sessions are meant to give youth and their families to live out what their faith and what they have learned in the traditional session plans. Praxis is a Greek word which means “to do”. We shouldn’t just learn about our faith, we need to live it – TO DO it. Ideally the praxis session should be interspersed with the traditional session.

This curriculum calls for families to be included in most of the sessions. Be sure to inform families well in advance of dates where you would like for them to attend and participate. For families unable to participate in a session, prepare materials and handouts for them to work at home.

There are many ways to prepare for and celebrate Pascha and to live the faith. We have collected many ideas on the Office of Youth Ministry Pinterest boards. Provide this link to your families for additional ways to celebrate the Feast of Feasts!

<https://www.pinterest.com/uocofusa/oym-holy-week-and-pascha-for-parish-youth-and-fami/>

Acknowledgments

Icons – provided courtesy of Archangel Icons. Permission has been given for reproduction of icons for the projects outlined in this program. If you are in need of any additional icons, they may be found at www.archangelicons.com or Archangel Icons on Facebook. Thank you to Michael Kapeluck for his continued gift of these icons for the use of our youth.

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Praxis Session Three: Supporting Attendance at the Services of Great Lent

Main Ideas: Providing families with support in attending the services of Great Lent/Holy Week/Pascha



Supplies needed: Handouts (optional)

Preparation: Speak with your parish priest to set up times for families to arrive early or stay later after services. Ensure that these times are well advertised for the families.

Great Lent can be an intimidating time for families. In addition to already hectic schedules, they are now being called to attend additional church services. Many families don't even attempt adding to their schedule because the thought is too overwhelming.

The goal of this session (or hopefully, sessions) is to make participation in the beautiful services of Great Lent not only a possibility for families but something to look forward to!

Ways to encourage and support families so that they can participate in the Lenten Services as much as possible:

- Provide an introduction letter to your families concerning Great Lent in your parish. A sample letter is provided in the supplemental materials. Even if a family is unable to attend all services, committing to make a few is a great start! Having information ahead of time about what to expect and ways to participate will help parents to prepare themselves and their children to participate fully.
- With the blessing of your priest, designate several of the services as “teaching services.” Fifteen minutes prior to or following the service, your priest should discuss the meaning of the service and point out important moments so that children know what to look and listen for. For Pre-Sanctified Liturgies, a fellowship meal following the service is a wonderful time to discuss the service. It may be too difficult to gather prior to the services during Holy Week. Ask your priest if he can do an overview of the services on Palm Sunday or Lazarus Saturday.
- Provide materials for the family Lenten Journey Books at each service so that youth can add them to their book. This could include a coloring page or icon connected to the service or a copy of a prayer to “illuminate.” You can also provide handouts to the families on the Sunday prior to a Lenten service so that they can learn about the services before attending. If a family is unable to attend, they can still review the information and maintain a connection to the Lenten Journey. A list of resources are listed in the Supplemental Materials.

- Facilitate participation from home when appropriate: Families may live far from the parish, parents may not always be able to leave work in time to attend evening services, one parent may bring older youth to the service while the other stays at home with younger family members, etc. Provide copies of the services ahead of time so that families can read the text. For example, in the Ukrainian tradition, we split the Canon of St. Andrew of Crete into four nights. Perhaps the family can make it for one evening service. Provide them with a copy of the service and encourage them to pray one or two of the Odes with their children at home during the rest of the week. Obviously, the goal is not to replace attendance at the services with home prayer but keeping a connection to the services can encourage future attendance.