



Leader Manual for Ages 13-18

Leader notes

Thank you for serving as a Youth Leader in 2017/2018! This year's curriculum aims to help the children answer the questions:

- *In what ways are saints champions of the Faith?*
- *What tools/armor do the saints use to defend the Faith?*
- *What can we do now to become champions of the Faith?*

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 interactive sessions be interspersed or combined with the traditional sessions based on your discretion.

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 13 to 18 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. In most cases, the youth are given a space to explain concepts and main ideas after reading or learning about a saint. If you feel youth may need more explanation, ask them to answer together using the white boards or large paper, and have them all write down an answer the class is comfortable with.

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.

Allow youth to lead parts of the session. This works best if the youth knows which part they will lead the day before, and if you are able to give them some suggestions or guidance on how to

lead the discussion. Some youth may not be comfortable doing this, but positive reinforcement and encouragement may help them embrace the challenge by the end of the week.

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. 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.

Supporting the Session

Each week a Champion of the Faith will be highlighted on the Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry Facebook page. For older youth, you may share with them where to find the page and encourage them to watch for the new saint. At the start of each session, ask who the Champion of the Week was and provide a special surprise for those who can teach the others about that saint. For younger youth, have the older youth or you present the Champion of the Week. You could also share the post on your parish youth ministry/parish Facebook Page.

**** 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.

Chart paper- There are several activities that involve the use of chart paper and sticky notes. Generally, this can be used in any space, but understandably at camp there may not always be appropriate places to hang the chart paper. The instructions will refer to the chart paper but if you need to use a white board or lay the paper on a table, please do so.

High use vocabulary words- These words aren't defined in the workbook, but children will need to know what they mean; pagan, persecuted/persecution.

Lives of the saints- These stories can be gruesome. In most cases, the goriest details are not included. Even if they are used to watching or reading about violence, being in a different environment and away from home may affect a child's reaction. Remind children that the church teaches us that if you have done the best you can to follow God's will and have asked for forgiveness when you make mistakes, death on earth means returning to God. So while the violence may be unpleasant, the end of torture means the saints are joining God in heaven.

Praxis Sessions – Encourage as much participation and input from the teenagers as possible. Personal engagement will spark their interest and desire to learn and live more in their faith. Each Praxis section in the Participant Workbook provides simple questions for reflection. Allow the participants time to sit in quiet contemplation and journal their thoughts. They should choose somewhere in the area, where they can be alone and not distracted by friends or activity. Taking time for quiet contemplation helps to nurture prayer life and communion with Christ. Encourage the teens to utilize some of their journaling time for prayer.

Acknowledgments

Iconography – Archangel Icons - www.archangelicons.com (unless otherwise noted)

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

Champions of the Faith Logo Design – Elizabeth Symonenko

Saints of North America and Monastic Prayer– Little Falcons Orthodox Children's Magazine
<http://www.littlefalcons.net/>

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

Champions of the Faith

- 6 **Session One: Champions of the Faith- The Saints**
- 10 **Session Two: Training a Champion**
- 13 **Session Three: Families of Saints- Working Together to Become Champions**
- 16 **Session Four: Missionary Saints- Champions Who Spread the Word**
- 18 **Session Five: Royalty and Warriors- Champions Who Use Power for Good**
- 23 **Session Six: Clergy and Monastics- Champions in the Church**
- 26 **Session Seven: Saints of North America- Champions Close to Home**
- 32 **Session Eight: Patron Saints- Our Champions in Heaven**
- 36 **Session Nine: Can We Be the Champions?**
- 38 **Praxis Session One: Parish Patron Saints**
- 40 **Praxis Session Two: Family Icon**
- 43 **Praxis Session Three: Visiting a Monastery**
- 45 **Praxis Session Four: Gallery Walk**
- 46 ***Special Praxis Sessions to Celebrate the Centennial of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA – Champions of the UOC of the USA – created by the Ukrainian History and Education Center. These supplemental sessions will be made available in January of 2018 on the Office of Youth Ministry website – Champions of the Faith page. www.uocyouth.org***

Lesson One: History & Our Hierarchs
Suggested Month: January 2018

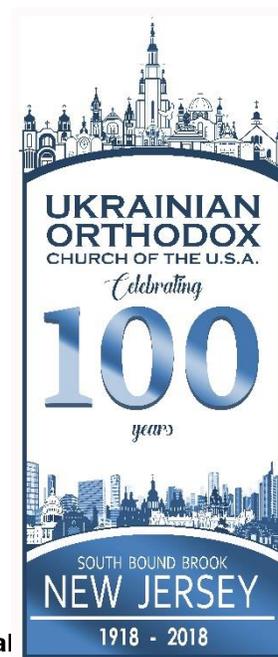
Lesson Two: The Importance of Primary Documents & Archives
Suggested Month: February 2018

Lesson Four: UOL Essay Contest
Suggested Month: March 2018

Lesson Three: Oral History Project
Suggested Month: April 2018

Lesson Five: Music in our Churches
Suggested Month: May 2018

Parish History Project
Ongoing project to be completed for display at the Metropolia Center in July 2018
Created by Kira Senedak for Diocesan Church School Camp 2017 Edited for Parish Use Natal



Session One: Champions of the Faith



Main Ideas: Seeing Saints as “Champions” of the Faith- both as examples of those living God’s will and as those promoting the Faith to others and defending it; includes briefly defining “the Faith.”

Supplies needed: Post-it notes, chart paper or white board, writing utensils, ruler, a copy of the Participant Workbook for each youth (This will be used during each session and should be kept with you sessions are completed.)

Preparation: Ask the youth to choose someone they believe is a champion and to bring in a photo of them. If they forget to bring this item, allow them time to perhaps locate a photo of that person on their phone to share.

Warm Up Activity (15-20 minutes): Have the youth present their “champion” and why they chose them. Begin the session by having youth write words that they associate with the word “Champion” on post it notes (one word per note). Encourage them to think of at least three words; the list could include names of people, adjectives that describe champions, synonyms for champions, etc. Use a large piece of chart paper or designate a space on the wall for youth to stick their notes. After all notes have been posted, have youth look at the list and then choose one word from the wall that they think is most closely connected to the idea of “champion.” They may choose to take one of their own words, or someone else’s. Each youth should introduce themselves to the group by stating their name, where they are from, and a one sentence explanation of why they chose the word.

CHAMPIONS OF THE FAITH

This year’s Office of Youth Ministry theme is “Champions of the Faith.” During your sessions, we will learn more about the saints that we look to and the ways in which they have lived as champions of the Faith. So what does it mean to be a champion? Write your class definition of what it means to be a champion here.

(10 minutes) Depending on the age of the youth, you may be more or less hands on with the creation of the definition. Older children may be able to break up into groups of twos or threes to create a definition, then combine or edit to one definition. Younger children may need you to point out similarities or common ideas on the chart paper which they can use to write their definition. Be sure that the idea of being successful appears somewhere in the definition.

SAINTS ARE CHAMPIONS



The world of sports is an easy place to make a connection to the idea of being a champion. That’s not to say that saints and athletes are exactly the same, but there are some similarities in what it means to be a champion. They use hard work and self-discipline, and the abilities that God gave to them to achieve their goals. But, the word “champion” doesn’t just apply to people who are working hard to win an event, it can also be used to describe someone who works hard for a cause that they feel strongly about. Can you think of any examples of people acting as champions for a cause?

(10 minutes) Youth can jot down a few ideas before sharing out. Ideally, there will be a variety of people and causes. Be sure to discuss the fact that celebrities are often the first to come to mind, but that “everyday” people count to such as community members who organize a “Relay for Life” for cancer research, or volunteer at an animal shelter. You may want to have a few examples ready to prompt the students if needed.

The many saints of the church are champions of the Orthodox Faith. They use the abilities and talents that God gave to them in order to carry out the teachings of the church. Throughout the year, we will look at specific ways in which each saint acted as a champion of the Faith through hard work, discipline, prayer, fasting, etc.

HOW DO YOU BECOME A SAINT? (15 minutes)

Through God's grace, anyone can be a saint. The word saint can be translated as "holy" so calling someone a saint means that you are recognizing their choice to live a life as an icon of Christ, showing His image to the world as much as possible. The Greek translation of the word "saint" or "aghios" means something like "set apart" or "separate from." Saints are set apart from the Devil and focus their life on Christ. In a way, we are all considered saints when we are baptized because by becoming a member of the Church, we renounce and separate from the Devil. What we do after our baptism also plays a role in being recognized as a saint. An athlete might make an amazing play at the beginning of a game or have a great rookie season, but if that is the highlight of their career, we don't usually recognize them as champions. What matters most is how you finish the race. Of course, there are many saints who began their lives by living in ways in which we wouldn't consider to be holy, but at some point they made the choice to separate from that way of life and dedicated themselves to following God's Will.



When it comes to officially recognizing a person as a saint, the Orthodox Church does not have one standardized procedure or list of requirements.

Historically, people were recognized as saints first by the people who knew them and interacted with them in their community. Why do journalists seek out eyewitness stories when they are reporting on an event? *(Let youth answer briefly)* We trust the stories of eyewitnesses because they were actually there. People who were close to the saint and were able to see their discipline and hard work to glorify God, as well as any miracles that God performed through the work of the saint, told their stories to spread the word. In most cases, the people we recognize as saints were recognized by the people in their area of the world first and overtime, hymns and services might be written to remember the life of the saint, churches and monasteries might be named in their memory, etc. It is important to note that these actions do not "make" the person a saint, but it is our way of recognizing their holiness that came from God's grace. You will see that people with very different ways of life are recognized as saints and that there is not one specific formula for becoming a saint. We will keep a running list of qualities that might make someone a saint, so be listening! *Have a piece of chart paper or space in the wall to keep a list of words that describe what makes a person a saint (titled "Saints are..."). Have youth write one word on the list or on a post it note now to model.*

Alternate Activity: You may replace or add this activity in at this point of the session. Below are provided a list of saints, a brief description of who they were and their icon. Show the icon (you will need to print these out or have them ready in a powerpoint.) and read the brief description and see if the participants can guess who the saint is. You may give them additional clues along the way.

St. Moses the Black or Ethiopian

Clue: *I was a thief and murderer before I chose to change my life, follow Christ and become a monk.*

Icon: <http://www.archangelicons.com/mosesethiopia3.html>

St. Julianna of Olshansk

Clue: I lived near a monastery in Ukraine. My family was nobility. I lived a good, simple and devoted life to God. After dying at a young age, I was buried at the local monastery.

Icon: <https://i.pinimg.com/originals/42/1a/59/421a59e07fc7d3b772c69ad8f18d5417.jpg>

St. Maria of Paris

Clue: I was born in Latvia and as a young woman chose to become an atheist. Eventually, I returned to Christ and His Church. During World War II, I started a convent in Paris, aided the poor and helped Jews escape capture from the Nazis. I myself was taken by the Nazis and was killed in a concentration camp.

Icon/Photo: [https://orthodoxwiki.org/Maria_\(Skobtsova\)](https://orthodoxwiki.org/Maria_(Skobtsova))

St. Luke the Evangelist

Clue: I was from Syran Antioch and was a physician. After accepting Christ, I became one of the Seventy Apostles. Many attribute the first icons of the Mother of God being written by me. I wrote one of the Gospels and the Act of the Apostles.

Icon: <http://www.archangelicons.com/luke2.html>

St. Nicholas

Clue: I came from a wealthy family of Patra in Asia Minor. I was known to give away my wealth to those in need. I later became the Bishop of Myra and am know for defending the faith against the Arians at the 1st Ecumenical Council where I may have hit someone for telling lies about Christ. Today I am know for many miracles.

Icon: <http://www.archangelicons.com/nicholas1.html>

Holy, Righteous Ancestor of God, Anna

Clue: My father was a priest in Bethlehem. I was a simple woman who loved God and lived the best life that I could. After many years of faithfulness, God blessed my husband and I with a child in our old age. We promised to give that child back to God in thanksgiving and we did.

Icon: <http://www.archangelicons.com/anna2.html>

THE FAITH

(15 minutes) Since we are talking about Champions of the Faith, we must also talk a little bit about what the Faith is. While there is much to know about the Orthodox Faith, one guide that we can follow is the Nicene Creed which outlines the foundation of what all Orthodox Christians believe. Fill in the blanks to complete the Nicene Creed. *(Younger youth may need to do this activity together as a class, but older youth should be able to work with a partner or group of three to complete. Be sure to review the answers before moving on).*

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages. Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not created, being of one essence with the Father, by Whom all things were made; Who for us and our salvation, came down from heaven and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man; and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate and

suffered and was buried, and on the third day He rose from the dead in accordance with the Scriptures, And ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father; and He will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead; and His kingdom will have no end. And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, Who Proceeds from the Father, who together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified. Who spoke through the prophets. In One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come. Amen.

THE CHAMPIONSHIP PRIZE (10 minutes)

Usually, being named the champion comes with some sort of prize. In sports, the champion earns a medal or trophy, perhaps a parade, and often money. The saying “to the victor belongs the spoils” has been applied to politics, war, and many other areas. *(Take a minute or two to clarify this phrase. Spoil usually means something bad so be sure that children understand what it means).* If you win, you get all of the advantages and benefits that you want. The Orthodox Faith offers a very clear prize for the champions- eternal life with God.



We don't know exactly what our lives in heaven will look like, but we know that it will be with God forever. It's hard to imagine an infinite amount of time, but our lives here on earth will be just a little blip in time compared to eternity. An amazing thing about this prize is that everyone who wants to win it, can. There isn't a first place prize, second place, and so on. Instead, we all have the opportunity to be champions- God allowed us to be born and gave us the abilities that we need to meet the challenge. It's our choice to accept the challenge.

Timeline Activity- choose a few volunteers, using the ruler have teens take turns measuring the length of an inch to a few items increasing in size. For example, measure an inch of a post it note, and it will take up a significant fraction of the note. Then measure an inch against a sheet of paper, a chair, the height of a wall, and image it against the distance to the child's home. It's not important what the items are, the goal is to help them see that the same length (1") can feel dramatically bigger or smaller compared to other items, much like our lives feel like a long time, but compared to eternity they are so short. Wrap up the discussion by highlighting this point.

One way that athletes motivate themselves is to look to other champions who have achieved success in their sport. They learn from their success and from their mistakes, and they gain the inspiration to know that the challenges they are facing can be overcome. We will focus on Champions of the Orthodox Faith throughout our sessions to learn more about what they have done to work towards the prize of eternal life.

Session Two: Training to be a Champion

Main Ideas: Correlating athlete training to that of “training” as an athlete for God.

Supplies needed: Buckets, rocks, water balloons

Prayer and Fasting- the Tools of the Champions:

The church teaches us that nothing is possible without God, but *with* God all things are possible. God has given these Champions of the faith tools, or equipment to help them be successful in their journey. We’re going to try an activity to help us understand how we are supposed to use one of these tools.

Fasting Activity (10-15 minutes) Break class into three teams. Each team receives a bucket that contains some rocks. Each bucket should have a different amount of rocks. The remainder of each bucket should be filled with air-filled balloons (water balloons filled with air work best because of their size). The team lines up on the starting line and must get as many balloons as possible from the basket at the starting line over to the finish line in a set amount of time (1 or 2 minutes). Balloons must remain in the bucket until they cross the finish line to count. Do not say anything about the rocks when giving the procedure. See if the teams choose to remove the rocks in order to make more room for the balloons and to lighten the container. This can be modified depending on your space and number of youth, but be sure to read the following section to make sure the educational aspect is clear.

Fasting Helps Us to Become Champions:

Did your team remove rocks from the bucket to make more room for the balloons and to make the bucket lighter? Could you have still moved a lot of balloons without removing the rocks? Fasting works a little like this. The Church doesn’t make rules about fasting from meat or dairy because eating those things is necessarily bad for us. In fact, there are times when no fasting is required, such as the week after Pascha and the time between the Nativity and Theophany. On the other hand, just like the rocks in the bucket, we can become “weighed down” by our food. We focus on how hungry we are, or eat even when we aren’t hungry. We get distracted by how good the meal smells and forget to pray before eating, or take pictures of every meal and worry about which filter to choose or how many likes it will get on Insta-chat-book. The Church knows that these things happen, so it has built in times of the year where we empty our buckets and focus on only the good things that will help us to become Champions.



(10 minutes) Read about prayer and caring for others. Be sure that children understand the ending of the story about the three men in the wilderness.

Prayer Helps Us to Become Champions:

Orthodox Christians are taught to pray without ceasing or stopping. Our services like Divine Liturgy and Vespers have a specific order and words for prayer. We can also find specific prayers to be said at different times, to ask for specific things. Similarly to athletes who develop training routines with their coaches and trainers, Orthodox Christians are expected to develop a rule of prayer with the guidance of their spiritual father. But most prayers are written by adults and use pretty complex words. What do we do when we don’t know the right words? Take a look at the story below to hear an important message about how we should approach the tool of prayer.

Prayer - the Heart of the Monastic Life

The most important thing about prayer is not the words we use. The prayers we recite were written by the holy fathers. They help us to "talk to God". But if we don't love God and desire to come closer to Him, our prayers would be incomplete. Here's a good story based on an old legend.

A missionary bishop was traveling through a savage northern country. One day he made a day's stop at a small island. At first he thought that no one lived there, but as he walked through the dense forest, he met three very old men. They were hermits. For many years they had lived on the island alone, finding a little food in the woods and on the lakeshore and spending all their time in prayer. They were very happy to see the bishop and asked for his blessing.

"How do you pray, fathers?" he asked. One of the old men answered shyly. "We do not know any prayers. We cannot read or write, so we cannot learn any. We just repeat a prayer we made up ourselves. And this is the prayer they said: "Three of You, three of us, Lord, have mercy on us." They asked the bishop to teach them a real prayer. The Bishop was glad to help them. He stayed for a whole day on the island, teaching the three old men the Lord's Prayer. They tried as hard as they could to remember every word.

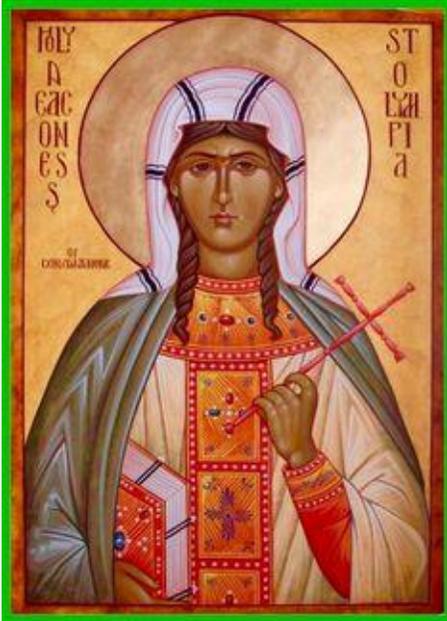
Next morning the bishop gave them his blessing and, wishing them well, continued his journey. When the boat was some distance from the island, he suddenly heard voices calling him. He turned back, and there were the three hermits, running on the surface of the water, as if it were land. "Father, Father!" they called. "Help us! We have again forgotten the words you taught us. We try and try but our words get all mixed up."

The bishop stood up on the deck. He bowed low to the three old men. "God's blessing is with you, fathers," he said. "Go in peace and do not worry about the words of the prayer. God, who made you walk on water as on dry land, hears your prayers in your own words."



(Prayer - the Heart of the Monastic Life)

Reprinted from Little Falcons - "Monks and Nuns"; Vol. 9, No. 3, 2002, edited by Fr. Thomas Kazich)



Praying through our actions:

(10-15 minutes through end)

What we say and think is only part of how we will be judged. We also need to use our actions to show glory to God. Saint Olympia is an example of a saint who is a champion of the faith because she prayed and fasted, and also took care of others. Saint Olympia was orphaned and her husband who was wealthy, died soon after they were married. Saint Olympia felt that God wanted her to give her life to Him. She gave away her wealth, fasted strictly, and dedicated her time to the church. As a deaconess she spent her time caring for women and children who were poor or sick. She became a very close friend of Saint John Chrysostom who told everyone about her holiness.

Can you think of other ways that you might pray without ceasing through your actions and behavior?

_____ *(Have students jot down ideas then share with a partner before sharing as a larger group. Any answer that shows caring for others could work.)* _____

What other tools might a Champion of the faith utilize? How can you utilize these tools in your life

_(The Sacraments, especially Confession and Communion; relationship with a Spiritual Father; the Bible; etc.) Allow time for discussion._____

To end the session, have youth think about the new information and add words to the "Saints are..." chart before leaving the classroom.

Session Three: Families of Saints- Working Together to Become Champions

Main ideas: Learning about the lives of saints and identifying ways in which they were Champions of the Faith; recognizing that our family can be a source of support as we strive to be champions.

Materials Needed: Chart paper, balloons, masking tape, sticky notes, writing utensils, glue sticks, icon cards and lives of saints handouts from leader materials, copies of icons of saints mentioned in the session or plan to view them if they are included in your parish iconography.

Warm up activity (15 minutes): Break the participants into small groups and lone individuals (you may ask them who would like to work in a group and who would like to work alone or have them pick out of a hat to determine if they work in a group or alone). Tell them that they will be given a bag of balloons and masking tape. They will have ten minutes to construct a free-standing balloon tower. Remind them that a wider strong base will be beneficial. The towers will be measured to see who built the tallest.

When completed, ask the participants what the benefits of working together in a group were as opposed to working alone. Lead a small discussion about the responses, making sure a variety of answers are included (having someone to share the load, others understand where you are coming from when you feel overwhelmed and can support, individuals can focus on their unique talents, etc.). If there are negative responses, it's important to acknowledge that there are also challenges to working in a group (needing consensus instead of doing your own thing, personality conflicts, etc.) but that for this lesson we will focus specifically on the benefit. After the discussion, lead the participants back to the next section of the workbook:

In the Orthodox Church, we often recognize each saint individually on the day that they died on Earth, and returned to God. But did you know that some saints actually lived in the same family? Today's session will focus on a few well known saints, and some that may not be as familiar, who lived in a family with other saints. Can you think of saints who had other saints in their family?



Let's take a look at a family with two well-known saints. (10 minutes- read story and review answers to the follow up question)

Saints Constantine and Helen each played an important role in spreading Christianity throughout the Roman Empire and the world. St. Helen was the daughter of an innkeeper who married a very accomplished soldier of the Roman army, Constantius Chlorus, in the third century. They had a child named Constantine in the year 274. She was separated from her husband when the Emperor Diocletian forced him to leave Helen to govern another part of the empire, creating a great challenge for Helen. She lived in poor conditions with her son, but when he became an adult, many things changed. Constantine became the Emperor of the land and gave his mother a position of great power. But one thing didn't change. Helen was a Christian, even though it was not legal in those days and she had committed her life to Christ. St. Helen likely influenced her son, Constantine to issue a rule called the Edict of Milan (313) that protected Christians in the Empire. Instead of using her power as Empress to gain land or riches, St. Helen began a journey to the Holy Land at the age of seventy-seven. Over time, many of the Holy places where Jesus had taught His disciples and performed miracles had been damaged or replaced with idols from the pagans. St. Helen used her power to find, repair, and protect these sites. One of the most memorable discoveries was the Holy Cross on which Jesus had been crucified.

Saint Constantine dedicated much of his rule to the protection of the Christians. In addition to passing laws that allowed Christians to live freely in the Empire, he made the Feasts of the Church into holidays celebrated by all, built churches, and punished people who treated Christians badly. He also took care of the poor in his Empire by building places where they could find food and shelter. Constantine didn't just rule from the palace, he himself helped to build churches and collected the relics of the saints to protect them. While on the way to a battle against people who did not like Christianity, Constantine decided that he too should be baptized a Christian. Because of his efforts, St. Constantine is called Equal to the Apostles.

In what ways were Saints Constantine and Helen Champions of the Orthodox Faith? What "training" tools or talents did they use/possess?

__(Allow youth to write down an answer before sharing with a partner; be sure to emphasize the fact that at the time, many people persecuted Christians. Even though they were in a position of power to change that idea, not everyone welcomed it)_____

In the next part of this session, you will work with a partner or in a small group to create a family tree after reading the lives of the saints. Your family tree should include:

- _____ as many family members as possible based on the information in the handout
- _____ the icons provided by your leader
- _____ one or two bullet points about how each saint in the family was a Champion of the Faith

Once your work is complete, you will have a chance to view the trees for each family of saints. As you read about them, please write down one or two main ideas that you see for each family here: *Break youth up into small groups to create a family tree for one family of saints. You may need to model on chart paper so that youth have an idea of what a family tree looks like; there is a sample in the leader materials folder. Participants can be creative with how they add details and information, but it should be clear how the members of the family are related. Youth may draw respectful stick figures for members that we don't have icons for. Allow approximately 10-15 minutes to create the family tree and 10 minutes to walk around and take notes.*

An alternate activity would be to assign the participants to do research on these families of saints and have them present their completed family trees with information to one another at their next session. If you have internet available – you could utilize their phones or laptops to conduct the research or to create their family trees. Ask them to include how these saints utilized their "champion training tools" in life. If they work on these at home, they could use an online program such as Prezi to create their family tree. They could also be assigned to create a PowerPoint slide. They would then present their families trees to one another at the following session. You could compile all slides into one presentation that could be shown at the Gallery Walk. It could also be sent to the Office of Youth Ministry and posted online.

Spend the last 10 minutes in a wrap up discussion about what they made note of. There may not be time to discuss every individual saint, but use the notes below to highlight main themes.

<p>Saints Zachariah (Father), Elizabeth (Mother), and John the Baptist (Son)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Could add that <i>Mary the Birthgiver of God was a relative as well</i> -<i>Belief in God's power can be hard when things don't make sense to us (Zachariah), so showing complete trust in His power by accepting God's will (Elizabeth) is a way of being a champion</i> -<i>Elizabeth acknowledging Mary's baby as the Son of God is also an example of acknowledging His power</i> -<i>John lived a life similar to Christ (not the same) in the desert; brought others to Christ; God used John to reveal Christ as both God and Man</i> 	<p>Saints Theodota (Mother), Cosmas (Son), and Damian (Son)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -<i>Helping to train others in the faith is a way of being a champion; especially parents because if they don't teach the faith, the children may never learn about it</i> -<i>Healing others, especially in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is a way of being a champion for the faith</i>
<p>Saints Macrina the Elder(Grandmother), Basil the Elder(Father), Emmelia(Mother), (Children) Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, Naucratius, Peter of Sebaste, Macrina, and Theosebia (different accounts describe Theosebia as a sister of the other five or a wife of Gregory of Nyssa though they lived in celibacy as sister and brother)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -<i>Macrina the Elder, Basil the Elder, and Emmelia taught their children/ grandchildren about the faith which helps to keep it going and the accomplishments of the children strengthened the faith</i> -<i>Could go through some of their contributions; monasticism, protection from heresy, holy writings, serving those in need, etc.</i> 	<p>Saints Olga (grandmother), Vladimir (grandson), Boris and Gleb (great grandsons)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -<i>Turning an entire nation/kingdom to Christ</i> -<i>Choosing prayer and forgiveness when someone threatens you can be an example of being a champion for the faith (although clearly more extreme than what most of us face)</i>

****As youth exit the classroom, have them add at least one word to the chart paper from the last class that is titled, "Saints are..." They may want to take a look at the chart they completed for ideas.**

Session Four: Missionary Saints- Champions Who Spread the Word

Objectives: Understand that missionaries act as champions of the faith to those who have not been exposed to Christ; Recognize the challenges and sacrifices that missionaries must make.

Materials Needed: Items listed in the Brief Cultures Activity, Bible (just 1), Writing Utensils, Note Cards with the lives of missionary saints from Leader Materials Folder, Note Cards for Catch Phrase

Preparation: Review the Brief Cultures Activity from the Peace Corp.
<https://www.peacecorps.gov/educators/resources/brief-encounters/>

Print out the words for Catch Phrase on Note Cards

Warm Up Activities: (20-25 minutes) Conduct the Brief Cultures Activity. When the activity is complete, have youth choose one of the notecards from the pile and give them a few minutes to read over their card. Tell them that they will be reading the card out loud, so now is the time to clarify pronunciation and become familiar with the card so that their classmates can understand when they read.

When everyone has had a chance to review their card, have children read the following section and complete the activities. (10 minutes)

As you learned in the first session, to be a champion of a cause means to be someone who spreads the word about the issue and encourages others to get involved. People who go out into the world to teach about the faith and convince people to become Christians are called missionaries.



After He had risen from the dead, Jesus returned to His friends one last time. First, He appeared to Mary Magdalene and the Myrrh-bearing women who had been brave enough to go to Jesus's tomb to take care of His body. The women were shocked to find an angel at the tomb who told them that Jesus was not there, and were even more surprised when He appeared to them on the road as they were returning home to tell the disciples what they had seen. Jesus then appeared to the Apostles and gave them their last instructions. Read Matthew 28: 16-20 and fill in the blanks:

Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. When they saw Him, they worshipped Him, but some doubted. And Jesus came and spoke to them saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen."

Have you ever been frustrated when you try to talk to someone about something that is important to you, because they aren't interested or don't know anything about it? *(Have youth turn and talk to a person sitting next to them to share an example. Ask for one or two from the group before reading on.)* What obstacles can you imagine a missionary facing when they follow God's calling to go out and make disciples of a new nation?

_____ *(Allow youth a minute or two list a few ideas then share with the class. Answers might include language barrier, being away from family and friends, cultural misunderstandings, people may not want to give up their way of life, people may resist with violence)*__

Next, you and your classmates will take turns reading from the lives of five missionary saints- Saint Nicholas Enlightener of Japan, Saint Nino of Georgia, Saints Cyril and Methodius, and Saint Cosmos of Aitolia. What makes them champions to you?

(10 minutes to convey stories and discuss. Ask the participants How much about the faith do they think the saints needed to know to teach others? Sometimes you need a collective knowledge of things to accomplish a champion effort.)

At this point you will play a game similar to Catch Phrase (10-15 minutes). Break the participants into teams to play. Following the game – ask them how this might be equated to teaching someone about the faith. Sometimes we need to practice how we would explain things of importance to others. The missionary saints needed to learn the culture and language around them so they could more easily explain the concepts of Christianity.

Utilize the following words to play Catch Phrase:

Bible, Jesus, Salvation, Communion, Chalice, Faith, Bethlehem, Sacrament, Saint, Holy, Sheep, Champion, Cross, Holy Spirit, Incense, Monk, Creed, Feast Day, Pascha, Icon

15 minutes- Finish the class by asking youth to complete three tasks:

_____ *add at least one more word to the “Saints are...” chart paper.*

_____ *write down their name and the name of their patron saint if they have one. We will use these for an activity later on so be sure to collect them. Make sure that they write down which saint if there could be more than one (e.g. John the Baptist vs. John the Theologian). If they don’t have a patron saint, they can write down the name of a saint they would be interested in learning more about, or they can write “I don’t have one.” Check in with parents if youth aren’t sure about their saint.*

_____ *Watch a video clip from either Spider Man (2002) or Lord of the Rings.*

Spiderman <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5d6rTQcU2U>

Lord of the Rings https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rCY_Hjv7vKc

Ask the participants to find an appropriate video clip, article, or book to present to the other participants with similar themes of leadership. You may want to have them check their choice with you prior to presentation.

Session Five: Royalty and Warriors- Champions Who Use Power for Good

Objectives: Understand that any power that we have on earth comes from God and a champion of the faith uses that power to carry out the will of God.

Materials needed: Depending on how you decide to conduct the activity you may need – sharpies, plain t-shirts for each participant (you can ask them to bring one for the project), pencils, paper, and black permanent marker

Warm Up Activity: 15-20 minutes, depending on class size and interest. Have the participants present their video clips, article or book they were assigned to look up at the end of the previous lesson. Have them explain this choice and how it relates to leadership and the choice of leadership. After about 10 or 15 minutes, lead a discussion about how it might feel to be in a position of power vs. powerless. Do you always get to decide if you want to be a role model or leader? Do you have to be perfect to be a leader? Can you be a flawed person and still use your power for good? Allow time for discussion.



(5 minutes to read through) Power here on earth is a gift from God that we are given so that we can use it to do more good in the world. In today's session we will learn about some saints who used the power that they were given to be better champions of the faith. As you read this next section, underline the word power anytime you hear it being read:

To begin, we need to look at the one true King and the source of all power- Jesus Christ. In his gospel, John describes the arrest, trial, and judgement of Jesus. The Jewish priests and leaders were more and more upset that people were following Jesus instead of them. They had been very powerful, but now people believed in the power of God instead of the power of men. Pontius Pilate, the Roman ruler of that area, had even more power than the priests. He was the only one with the power to put a criminal to death. When the priests brought Jesus to Pilate, they wanted him to use his power to kill Jesus. Pilate asked Jesus questions to see what He had done to deserve to be put to death. In this passage, Jesus explains to Pilate that not only is He a king, but any power that Pilate has, was given to him by God so that God's plan to show Jesus as God and man would take place.

John 18: 36 "Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.' Pilate therefore said to Him, 'Are You a king then?' Jesus answered, 'You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice.'"

The Crown of Champions

(15 minutes- Read the stories of Sts. Theodora and Mother Alexandra and ask youth to write a few words about ways in which the women acted as champions of the faith. Allow time for discussion and questions for each. You may want to have more extensive information about each of their lives on hand for deeper reflection. As an additional dimension, you may want to assign participants to research each champion further and share their findings at the



next session or allow time for them to research on their phones during the session. They can work in groups to choose the three things they found most interesting and reflects the qualities of a champion. If any of the participants have ever visited Holy Transfiguration Monastery, ask them to describe their experience.)



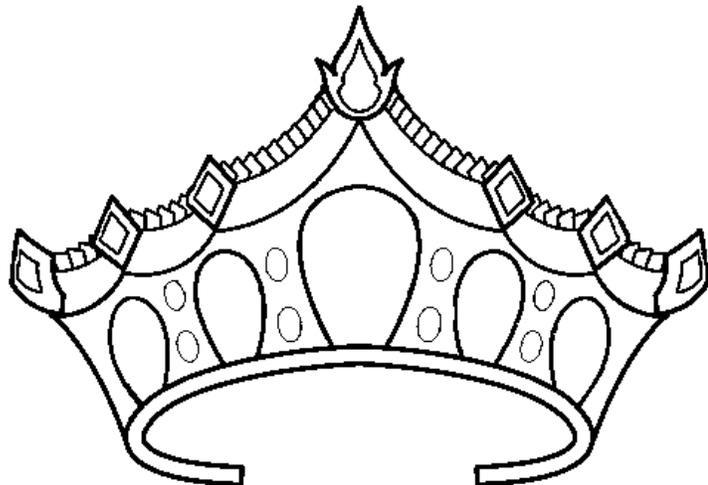
Read the two stories below, share and write down details about how the Empress and the Princess used the power that God gave to them to be champions of the faith. What “training” tools did they use?

Theodora the Empress

Theodora’s parents were Christians and they raised her to love God. She was known as a very smart woman, which came in handy when she married Theophilus, the Emperor. Theophilus was an iconoclast- someone was against the use of icons and tried to destroy them. When Theophilus died, their son Michael was still too young to be emperor so his mother ruled instead. Wise Theodora brought the bishops and leaders of the church together for a Council to solve the controversy about icons. They decided to bring icons back into the church and we remember that important decision on the First Sunday of Lent each year by bringing icons into our churches. Unfortunately, when he was old enough to take over, Michael did not agree with his mother about God and the Faith. He was not able to change the Council’s decision, but he sent Theodora to a monastery and forced her to live the rest of her life. Theodora did not mind- she finished her life surrounded by holy books so that she could learn even more about God.

Could include:

- protected icons
- lived as a nun
- read holy books



Princess Ileana of Romania

We may think of princesses as characters in fairy tales from a long time ago, but in the last century, a Romanian princess lived her life as a champion of the Faith. Princess Ileana was born in Bucharest in 1909. While she was a young woman, the country went through World War One and World War Two, and was eventually taken over by a Communist government. During the wars, Princess Ileana set up several hospitals to help take care of wounded soldiers. After the wars, she and her children had to leave the country and traveled throughout Europe and even to Argentina. They ended up in the United States and lived there until her children became adults. Then Princess Ileana traveled to France where she joined a monastery and became an Orthodox nun, taking the name Mother Alexandra. Her last move was to Ellwood City, Pennsylvania, which is less than an hour away from our camp. Mother Alexandra started a women's monastery in Ellwood City which is still there today. In addition to leading other women into the life of a monastic, she gave lectures and wrote letters and short books to teach others about the faith. Perhaps one day she will also be remembered as a saint.



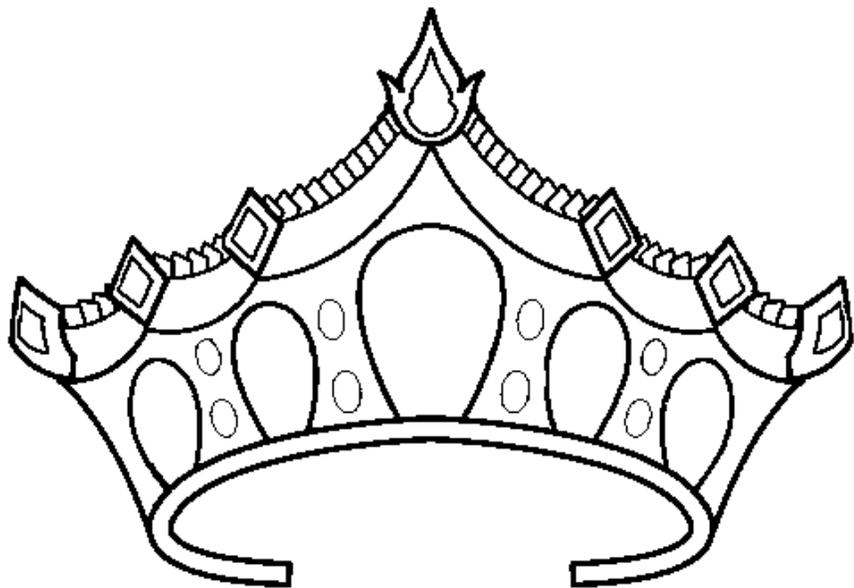
Could include:

-Built military hospitals

-raised children as Christians

-became a nun and founded a monastery

When completed – ask the participants how St. Theodora or Mother Alexandra may relate to their life?



Warriors Fight for the Faith

(20 minutes- Read stories as a group or individually, then create coat of arms. Inform the participants that they will be creating t-shirts out of their coat of arms. Wrap up the last 5-10 minutes by having the youth share something about their coat of arms and why they chose to include it. If participants are stuck on what to include, encourage them to think about symbols and words they are familiar with- the Cross, images in icons like halos, angels, tropars, prayers, etc.)

Many saints were soldiers in the army of the country that they lived in. While some lived in lands where the ruler agreed with Christianity, many did not, especially in the years right after Jesus ascended to heaven. Read about the Saints George and Demetrius who were soldiers who used their power for good against evil rulers who used their power for bad.

Saint Demetrius of Thessalonica

Saint Demetrius lived during the third century in Thessalonica. His parents were wealthy and important people so Demetrius was able to have a job in the government. He was a strong soldier and good leader, so he gained a reputation. The emperor Maximian trusted Demetrius and made him head of an area of land with one main job- kill any Christians. Maximian did not know that secretly, Demetrius's parents were Christians and had raised him to be one too.

Instead of getting rid of the Christians in his part of the empire, Demetrius taught many people about the Church and brought many pagans to Christianity. When Maximian found out what was happening, he became extremely angry and threw Demetrius in jail. To distract himself, Maximian had a pagan festival. One of the events was the chance to fight a giant man named Lyaeus who was a pagan. The emperor Maximian offered a reward to anyone who could beat Lyaeus. A young man named Nestor knew that Demetrius was a Christian and he came and asked for a blessing from Demetrius before he went to the fight. Nestor beat Lyaeus, killing him with one strike, which made Maximian incredibly mad. In his anger, he ordered Demetrius to be killed. Even after he was martyred, miracles of healing and protection occurred at the site where Demetrius is buried. Sweet scented myrrh began to flow there, so he is known as "Myrrh-gusher."

Saint George

Saint George also grew up with Christian parents who taught the faith to their son. George followed in his father's footsteps and became a soldier in the Roman army. He was a strong and smart soldier and he quickly rose to high levels. He was chosen to be a soldier assigned to guard the emperor Diocletian, who hated Christians.

One day, Diocletian gave an order for his soldiers to clear all Christians out of his land. George told Diocletian that he would not follow the order and defended Christianity in front of the emperor. The evil Diocletian had George tortured and killed, but because others saw his great faith, many people became Christians.



Many royal families and military groups use symbols like a coat of arms to show what is most important to them. Now that you have read the stories of several royals and rulers who used their earthly power to glorify God, design a coat of arms that might show how a champion of the faith can use their power for good. Be sure to include both words and images.

Have youth add another word to the “Saints are...” chart.

Creating the Coat of Arms – Below is a sample that participants may use as a base. You may conduct the project in several ways.

- 1. Have the participants create their Coat of Arms on paper and then draw it on their shirts with permanent markers*
- 2. Have the participants create their coat of arms by hand drawing and scanning the image or by using a computer program. Print it on transfer paper and iron them onto the shirts.*
- 3. Have the participants design their coat of arms by hand drawing and scanning the image or by utilizing a computer program (such as inkscape or photoshop) and have the shirts printed on-line through a company such as Vistaprint.*



Session Six:

Clergy and Monastics- Champions in the Church

Objectives: Understand that monastics, clergy, and hierarchs act as champions of the faith by guiding others in the faith and praying on our behalf; recognize that we need to be willing to following their advice, like an athlete follows the advice of a coach.

Materials: blindfolds, writing utensils

It would be appropriate to pair this session with session one from the special Praxis Sessions: Lesson One – History and Our Hierarchs.

Warm Up Activity (15 minutes)- Have teens find a partner or group of three. Take turns having one partner guide the blindfolded partner through a set course around the room. Remind participants that this is easier for some people than others and this is not meant to be scary or stressful. Blindfolded partners have to agree to be led by their partner and leaders need to agree to be safe and respectful of their partners.

After completing the warm up activity, answer these questions as honestly as possible.

- What was the most challenging part about being the person who was blindfolded?

- What was the most challenging part about being the guide?

(5 minutes) Lead a wrap up discussion about the activity and the answers to the questions. Focus on the relationship between the guide and the person being guided to transition into the next topic.

(5 minutes) Read through the next two paragraphs and discuss the qualities of a good coach. You may want to write these on chart paper. Ask them to share the experience with a coach in their life and how it influenced them and why? Have they changed anything in their life due to their coach?

Monastics (monks and nuns), priests, deacons, and hierarchs (bishops) are like our guides when living an Orthodox life. If you think about the comparison we used in an earlier session to talk about champions, we are the athletes running the race and trying to get to the prize of eternal life in heaven and they are our coaches. They can't run the race or play the game for us, but they can offer guidance and advice. A coach usually has more experience than the players- they've learned what works well and they've made mistakes that they can teach you about during practice. And when you're in the middle of the game, the coach has a different point of view. They can see what's going on in front, behind, and on the sides of you and your teammates and can guide you around obstacles you can't see coming.

Today we are going to look at some examples of how we can use the advice of these "coaches" to guide us as we try to become champions of the Faith. What are some qualities of a good coach?

Leading by Example: (10 minutes) Read the story of the life of St. John and follow instructions for underlining. When you finish reading, quickly review sections that participants selected.

These leaders of the church, and especially hierarchs like bishops, are not only responsible for giving guidance, they are responsible for what happens when we follow it. Maybe one of the most well-known saints was Saint John Chrysostom who wrote many letters and books and gave many speeches to help people who were trying to live a Christian life. Not only did he share his guidance, he lived the example of his words. As you listen to words of the life of St. John, underline sections where you think he would meet our list of qualifications for a “good coach.”



Saint John Chrysostom was born in 347 in Antioch. John was raised a Christian, though not baptized until he was eighteen by Melitius, patriarch of Antioch. He wanted to live as a hermit but Patriarch Melitius refused to give his blessing for this so he served as an acolyte and then a reader. After three years of John’s urgings, Melitius finally relented and allowed him to go and live as a hermit. He went to a cave, denied himself proper sleep, read the Scriptures constantly, and spent two years without lying down. His austerities [strictness] ruined his health and his kidneys were damaged by the cold. Sick, he returned to Antioch and Melitius sent him to a doctor. He served as a deacon for six years and in 386 was ordained a priest by Flavian, Melitius’s successor. He preached in the common language of the street and his sermons touched everyone who heard them. His sermons began to draw crowds. God gave him a spiritual gift to touch people’s hearts and he was so eloquent that he would gain the name “Chrysostom,” that is “golden mouth.”

In 387 the people of Antioch held a tax revolt during which they destroyed the imperial statues. This was a capital offense punishable by death. For days the imperial soldiers executed many citizens. Bishop Flavian went to Constantinople to plead for mercy and John preached a sermon series “On the Statues,” calling people to repentance and hope in God’s eternal kingdom. The city

listened to him with renewed attention.

In 397 he was transferred to Constantinople to be the new patriarch. The new patriarch had been easy going and lax but John was not. He insisted on holiness from his clergy. He did not give or attend lavish [fancy] social parties. He sold some of the new furniture in the patriarchal residence to build a hospital. He preached against luxury and greed...

Saint John’s final words were “Glory to God for All Things!”

(excerpted from [A Daily Calendar of Saints](#) by Fr. Lawrence Farley)

(10 minutes) Allow time for discussion or questions. Ask if they can think of anyone within the church that has “coached” them. How has this influenced them? How can they be coaches for others? What attributes

of St. John Chrysostom stand out to them as a champion coach? Reference Praxis Session Three: Visiting a Monastery. Ask the youth what topics they may want to have the monastics speak to them about?

Optional Activity: St. John is known as the Golden-mouthed, for the eloquence and power of his sermons and writings. Choose a sermon of St. John, possibly the Paschal sermon. Break the sermon into parts and have the participants take turns reading the sermon aloud. Encourage them to read it as if they had wrote it and to think about the words they are saying and how they read it conveys the meaning. Allow them time to practice before presenting their section. You could also assign them to research the sermons of St. John and choose one that speaks to them. They can choose a portion of the sermon to present to the group. Allow time for discussion and questions. Ask the participants what stood out to them in the sermons? What didn't they understand?

Session Seven: Saints of North America- Champions Close to Home

Objectives: *Make connections to saints who lived in North America in the last two centuries; recognize that there is much work to be done by champions of the Faith in the places we live*

Materials: *Chart paper, writing utensils, folders with saints of North America- icons on the outside cover, life of the saint on the inside(if utilizing Activity Option One)*

Warm Up Activity (15 Minutes)- *Hang a piece of chart paper in the room with the question “How close are we to a place where an Orthodox Saint lived?” Have youth take a guess and write an answer on the chart paper as they walk in the room. Then have youth line up along one side of the wall in order- shortest distance to longest. Once everyone is in place explain that although there could be saints among us today or who have lived in near us recently, the closest known saint is Saint Alexis (Toth) of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania which is a little less than 250 miles and 4 hours away. Parishes in eastern Pennsylvania may recognize the name of the town. (This example is based on the location of the camp where the curriculum was first implemented. Adjust for your location after previewing the rest of this lesson.)*

When we talk about saints in the Orthodox Church, we often talk about people who lived hundreds of years ago. It might be hard to imagine living a life just like them because the world is different in many ways and unless you check a map, you may not recognize the names of ancient lands and kingdoms. The saints we will learn about today lived in cities that you are probably familiar with and some of them were alive when your parents or grandparents were born.

Traveling through North America

(20 minutes) You may choose to use a combination of the provided activities.

Activity Choice One: *Have youth work with a partner, no more than three in a group, to find the folders placed throughout the room. At each stop, youth should read the life of the saint then add information to their chart to show how the saint was a champion of the faith. They should also label the name of the saint on the map at the end of the chart. A map with major states and cities is in the leader materials folder.*

If utilizing Activity Choice One, instruct the participants to: *Find the folder with the icon of each saint on the outside cover. At each stop, read the life of the saint then fill in the box on the right with an example of how the saint was a champion of the Faith. Make sure that you also label the place or places in North America where the saint lived his life.*

Activity Choice Two: *Have the participants play To Tell the Truth. Give information on the Saint to three teens. Have one be the saint and the other two imposters. Allow the audience to ask each questions for 2-3 minutes. Have the audience give their guess as to who the “real” saint is. Then have the “real” saint reveal themselves. You may need further information about each saint than what is currently provided.*

Activity Choice Three: *Prior to the session, assign each of the saints to a group or individual to research. They may then present the material to the rest of the group.*

Saint of North America	What did he do to be a Champion of the Faith?
 <p data-bbox="147 558 431 621">St. John of San Francisco & Shanghai</p>	
 <p data-bbox="147 936 448 999">St. Innocent, Apostle to America</p>	
 <p data-bbox="147 1329 440 1394">St. Tikhon, Enlightener of American</p>	
 <p data-bbox="147 1713 375 1772">St. Juvenaly, First Martyr of Alaska</p>	



St. John of Chicago



**St. Barnabas the
Confessor of Indiana**



St. Jacob of Alaska



St. Peter the Aleut



**St. Raphael
Hawaweeny of
Brooklyn**



**St. Alexis Toth of
Wilkes-Barre**



St. Nicholas of Ochrid



**St. Alexander of New
York**



(15 minutes) Hang three pieces of chart paper- each paper should have one of the questions below written at the top. When youth finish filling out the chart, ask them to complete the questions below, then place their answers on the chart paper. The information in the first two questions can be about a group of saints in general or about a specific individual.

After learning about the saints of North America, answer these questions. Try to include at least two examples for each question.

- What was similar in the lives of these saints and the saints from other sessions?

- What differences did you find between these saints and saints in other sessions?

- If you could visit the relics of one saint this list, who would you choose and why?

(10 minutes) Lead a wrap up discussion of the information that youth add to the chart paper. Are there any common themes? Any answers that are very different from the others? Ask youth to prepare another word for the “Saints are...”and add it to the list on the way out of the classroom.

Alternate Activity: Perhaps a visit to a site important to the life of one of the North American saints could be arranged or invite a speaker who has visited a special site, who could share a personal story with the group. For example, St. Raphael of Brooklyn is interred at the Antiochian Village in Bolivar, PA. The Antiochian Village will provide a lecture about St. Raphael and you may conduct a service at his gravesite. Likewise, St. Mardarije of Libertyville, Bishop of America-Canada is interred at St. Sava Monastery in Libertyville, IL. St. Sebastian of Jacksonville was born and raised in San Francisco, CA and St. John Maximovich’s relics may also be venerated in the same city.

In the last session of this program, you will learn about present day champions of the faith who are working in North America and around the world to live a godly life and bring others to the faith. Many of these people pray to these North American saints who laid the ground work here.

Session Eight: Patron Saints- Our Champions in Heaven



Objectives: Understand the role that patron saints play in our lives; learn about the life of the chosen patron saint to deepen the connection to the saint.

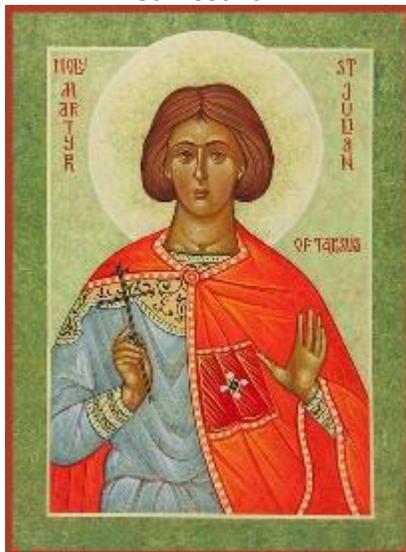
Materials: Resources for patron saint research, writing utensils, chart paper, postcards. You may order a copy of the Office of Youth Ministry icon of St. Christina and St. Julian with the prayers for youth on printed on the back. The icons are printed on glossy high quality cardstock for \$1.25 each. Contact the Office of Youth Ministry at uocyouth@aol.com to order.

Warm Up Activity (10 minutes)- Hang a piece of chart paper with the title “Patron Saints/ Named after a saint”. As youth enter the class room, have them use sticky notes to add names of places and organizations that have a patron saint or are named for a saint. Answers might include their own patron saint, names of their parish, other church properties, auxiliary organizations, etc.)

Read through the following passage and complete questions below. Have two or three group share out what they discussed. (10 minutes). For a more comprehensive life of the saints or for the intercessory prayers, go to www.uocyouth.org/patronsaint.html

Did you ever want to ask your parents or a leader for something you weren’t sure they would agree to or be happy about? Did you ever try to convince a friend or a sibling to go and ask for you? In the Orthodox Church, patron saints act as a helper or connection between God. Praying to your saint doesn’t guarantee that what you want will magically happen, but they can bring our thoughts feelings, wants, and gratitude to God for us. We each have a patron saint that we can pray to and many organizations choose a patron saint to watch over their activities. In 2015 the youth of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA selected two patron saints- Saint Julian and Saint Christina of Tyre. After reading one of the stories below, find someone who read about the other saint and share what you learned. Be sure to talk about how each saint was a Champion of the faith.

Saint Julian



The Holy Martyr Julian of Tarsus was born in the Asia Minor province of Cilicia. His mother was a Christian,

Saint Christina



The Martyr Christina lived during the Third Century. She was born into a rich family, and her father was governor of Tyre. She was a beautiful young woman

<p>but his father was a pagan. His father died when Julian was young and his mother had him baptized. Julian was arrested as a young man because the Emperor Diocletian had made it illegal to be a Christian. The rulers tried to get Julian to turn away from God by torturing him and offering him rewards, but he would not agree.</p> <p>Julian's torture continued for a year and his mother followed where he went. She finally convinced the ruler to let her visit Julian in prison. She told him that she could change Julian's mind.</p> <p>Instead, when Julian was questioned again, his mother also stood up and said that she was a Christian too. The governor was enraged and had Julian executed.</p>	<p>and many people wanted to marry her. Christina's father, however, wanted his daughter to become a pagan priestess. He locked her away in a room full of pagan idols and statues. Christina could see the stars in the sky and knew there had to be a Creator that planned and made everything in the world.</p> <p>After a lot of prayer and fasting, an angel visited Christina to tell her that she was right in believing in God. When her father came to visit and saw that Christina had destroyed all of the idols, he became very angry and sent her to be tortured until she agreed to give up on God. An angel came each night to give her strength and heal her. Her father and the other torturers were even angrier that Christina would not give in. They threw her in a furnace and when they returned five days later, Christina had not been hurt. St. Christina was eventually martyred, but many people began to believe God because they saw her faith.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what ways did Julian's parents affect his faith? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what ways did Christina's parents affect her faith?

My Patron Saint:

(5 minutes) Brainstorm a list of research questions that the youth might try to find the answers to while researching their saint. Some examples-

When is the saint celebrated?

What kind of saint is he/she (monk/nun, priest, martyrs, evangelist, holy forefather,/mother, apostle, prophet, unmercenary, confessor, angel, hermit)?

When did he/she live?

How did others treat them?

What was the most important thing to them?

Were any miracles performed through them?

Do you notice any special connections or similarities?

(20 minutes) have participants research their topic and answer the questions with specific information. Depending on the size and age of your group and their access to technology, you may choose to have them research using books and the internet, or you may preselect or create age appropriate materials for them. You may also consider finding icons of the saint.

For the next activity, you will be researching a specific saint. Please choose at least four research questions from the class list and try to answer them on the space below.

***In what ways was this saint a champion of the faith?**

If there is time, have participants share something about their saint with the group. Allow time for discussion on the saints and the topic of how can they deepen their relationship with their patron saint? Add a word the “Saints are...” poster before leaving.

End the session in prayer utilizing the intercessory prayers of St. Christina and St. Julian

Session Nine: Can We Become Champions of the Faith?

Objectives: Understand that being saintly does not mean being perfect and we should be encouraged by the amazing acts they have carried out, not discouraged; Also, to prepare a poster for a “Gallery of Saints” in the Praxis Sessions.

Materials: Chart paper, writing utensils, poster paper, colored pencils, markers, etc. paper icons, videos(optional)

Warm Up Activity (10 minutes)- Hang a piece of chart paper with the question, “Who said, ‘For my sins, I seem to fail in everything?’” ask youth to take a guess at who said this quote. It’s not expected that they would know the answer, but see if they have anything to say about who might have said it.

Let the youth know that the author of this quote is Saint Basil the Great that they learned about in the session about family saints- Son of Basil and Emmelia, brother to many other saints, and one of the greatest saints in the history of the church.

Our goal in learning more about the lives of the saints was to see that with God’s grace, anything can be done. Many of the saints faced very difficult challenges, but they are rewarded with the prize of eternal life in heaven. Sometimes, it can be easy to feel discouraged. How could I ever give up everything I have, or live in a desert cave, or be harmed because I am a Christian? One thing that is important to notice about the saints that we learned about this year is that there is not just one correct way to be a saint. Some saints lived in caves while others lived in palaces. Some wrote and spoke about the faith in public while others quietly lived a life of caring for others in secret. Some saints were Christians all of their lives and others converted as adults. As we said at the beginning of the year- it’s important to run the best race or play the best game that you can, but how you finish is what matters the most. So how will you run the race when you get home? What can we do now to make sure that we finish strong?

Are you familiar with any of these Orthodox organizations? Many of them have ways to get involved no matter your age or where you live.

You do not need to read the whole description as a class, youth can skim and share other ways that they know of to try to be a champion of the faith. There are some wonderful video produced by FOCUS NA (<https://www.youtube.com/user/focusnorthamerica>), IOCC (international orthodox christian charities), and OCMC (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VO9AbyshWmk>). Select and show some of the videos. Allow time for discussion.



International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) is an Orthodox organization that gives aid to people who are in need around the world. One of their programs helps people in poor countries learn how to farm in better ways so that they can grow more food for themselves.



FOCUS North America (Fellowship of Orthodox Christians United to Serve) is an organization that helps people in our country. One of their programs provides back packs full of food for children whose families do not have enough food to eat.



Orthodox Christian Mission Center sends teams of missionaries to other countries to teach about Christianity. Some missionaries take short term trips for a few weeks, while others live away from home for months or years.

Many of these organizations offer opportunities for faithful to get involved such as the IOCC Health Kits or the FOCUS North America Backpack Program. Ask the youth to do some investigation of Orthodox organizations and present options of how they can get involved. Have them choose a project to participate in.

A Gallery of Saints:

(Rest of the session) We will try to hang these posters at our Parish Gallery Walk, so please encourage youth to do their best work. If they aren't sure what to include, please offer paper icons, the stories of the lives of the saints that we used this week in other sessions, etc. Some included the tropars for the saints, which they could include as well. We can look information up online so children shouldn't feel like they can't chose a saint because there isn't enough information. You may also consider having youth brainstorm ideas at the end of the previous session or gather items for "homework."

For this age group, you may want to encourage the teenagers to use various artistic mediums to create their piece for the gallery. They may use a computer graphics program, painting, drawing, or the method described above. Perhaps you could create a sample that will inspire them in their work.

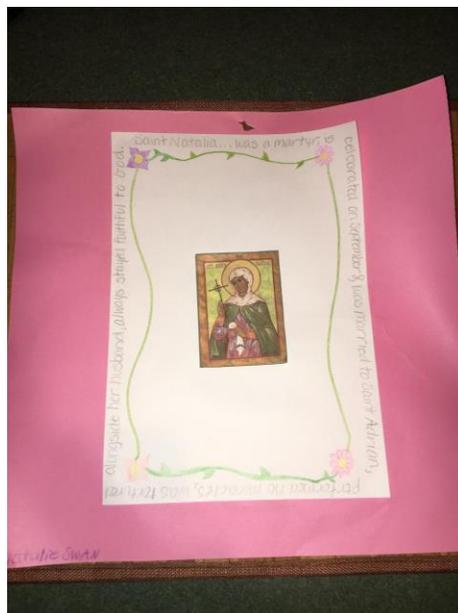
To help us remember the Champions that we studied, our last activity will be to design a "Gallery of Saints." You can choose a saint that we studied, your patron saint or a saint that you already know a lot about, and design a champion poster to hang in the gallery. The information that you should include is listed below, but you should be creative about how you display the information. Use the area on the back of this sheet to plan out your poster.

Your poster should include:

___ an icon of the saint if possible, or a sketch of something related to the saint (for example, a cross made of vines could represent Saint Nino)

___ a brief summary of the life of the saint, including what makes them a Champion of the Faith

___ a sentence or two that explains why you chose to present the saint



Praxis Session One: Parish Patron Saints

Objectives: Make connections to saints and our parishes – why we place our parishes and parish organization under the protection of saints.

Materials: Photos of your parish, icon of your parish patron saint, life of the patron saint, poster board, glue sticks, sharpies/markers, additional materials for decoration of the project. Ensure you have read the Notes for Session Structure, concerning the Praxis Sessions.

Preparation: Compile a list of parish organizations past and present that were under the protection of particular saint. An example of this would be, St Olga's Sisterhood. You may have to conduct a little research to discover when certain organizations in your parish were inaugurated and perhaps even why that particular saint was chosen. If you are able to locate any photos of the organization during different time periods that could add to the session.

Invite one or two individuals from the organizations to come and discuss what that parish organization does and how they serve Christ's Church.

Conduct a brief discussion with the participants concerning patron saints. Ask them to convey what they learned about patron saints in session eight. Ask them why they think parishes and parish organizations choose a certain saint to be named after? Allow time for discussion. You are looking of the main themes:

- We hope our parish or organization can emulate the same attributes of that saint – for example, St. Romano's may be the patron saint of your parish choir group or St. Basil may be chosen as the patron of the men's organization for his work with the poor.
- We hoped that the saint would guide the parish and the organization.
- We hoped that saint would intercede for us

Now, take some time to go review the photos, icons and lives of the saints for your parish and parish organizations. As you go through this process, you may be able to provide the participants about the good work your parish organization have conducted through the years.

If you could have guests from parish organizations present, allow them 5 minutes each to present information about them and their ministry. (You may want to give them a few of the topics already discussed to be sure they cover the connection to the patron saint)

Allow the participants time to create a presentation board for with the photos, icons, and information learned that will then be displayed in the parish. They may also create a version with a program of their choice to be place on the parish bulletin, website and/or Facebook page. Encourage them to take photos of their work and post them on Instagram. This is a good opportunity for the teenagers to mentor and work with younger youth and children of the parish.

While working, ask the participants how the members of the parish and parish organizations hone their champion skills while working in their parish ministry?

Submit the electronic versions (or take a photo of the presentation board) and submit them to the Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry to share with the whole church.

Provide the participants with the handout about St. Andrew's Society of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA. You may also download and print out their brochure

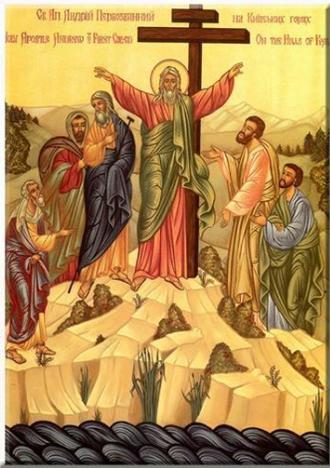
<http://uocofusa.org/files/sections/StAndrewSociety/HumanitarianBrochureFINAL.pdf>



St. Matrona Sisterhood of
STS. Peter & Paul in Carnegie, PA

SAINT ANDREW'S SOCIETY ТОВАРИСТВО СВ. АНДРІЯ

A religious and charitable organization of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA providing humanitarian assistance to the needy and supporting church related projects in Ukraine.



Релігійна та благодійна організація Української Православної Церкви США, яка надає гуманітарну підтримку бідним та підтримує церковні проекти в Україні.

SAINT ANDREW'S UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX SOCIETY
СВЯТОГО АНДРІЯ УКРАЇНСЬКЕ ПРАВОСЛАВНЕ ТОВАРИСТВО
UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE U.S.A.

Saint Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Society was founded in 1990 by the faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA as a religious and charitable organization.

As an integral ministry of the Church, the Society's philanthropic mission focuses on providing humanitarian assistance to the needy and supporting church-related projects in Ukraine. Since its founding, the Society has raised over 1.3 million dollars towards the support of religious, educational and humanitarian projects.

Saint Andrew's Society Mission supports:

- the Christian spiritual rebirth of the Ukrainian people and reverse the consequences of Soviet militant atheism;
- the efforts of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in re-establishing the universal principle of humanity, justice, charity and tolerance;
- the rebirth of the persecuted and devastated Church in the former Soviet Union.

Saint Andrew's Society fulfills its mission and vision by providing:

- humanitarian aid to the needy, the orphans, the elderly, and the refugees in Ukraine;
- financial and logistical assistance to seminaries in Ukraine and scholarships for theological students to study abroad;
- publications of religious literature, assistance towards medical projects and church restorations.

Українське Православне Товариство Святого Андрія було засноване в 1990 році вірними Української Православної Церкви США як благодійна та релігійна організація.

Як невід'ємне служіння Церкви, благодійна місія Товариства зосереджена на гуманітарній допомозі потребуючим та підтримці проектів пов'язаних з життям церкви на Україні.

Від початку свого заснування, Товариство збило понад 1,3 мільйони доларів на потреби релігійних, освітніх та гуманітарних проектів.

Місія Товариства Святого Андрія підтримує:

- відродження Християнського духовного життя Українського народу та ліквідацію наслідків руйнівного Радянського атеїзму;
- намагання Української Православної Церкви відновити загальні людські принципи гуманності, справедливості, милосердя та взаємної толерантності;
- відродження Церкви, яка була переслідувана та знищена Радянським Союзом.

Товариство св. Андрія виконує свою місію та мету надаючи:

- гуманітарну допомогу бідним, сиротам, людям похилого віку та переселенцям на Україні;
- фінансову та організаційну допомогу семінаріям на Україні, та нагороджуючи стипендіями семінаристів, які вчать за кордоном;
- допомагаючи видавати релігійну літературу, підтримуючи медичні проекти та відновлюючи храми.

Praxis Session Two: Family Icons

Objectives: *Link the individual patron saints of our family members to represent your family unit within your home church*

Materials: *Print out of the Christ the Vine line drawing(be sure to print it a size that could be placed in any standard size frame), copies of icons of your family patron saints, scrapbooking papers, glue, specialty markers or stickers, copy of St. Macrina/Family Icon, copy of family icons, and family collection jar*

Preparation: This is a family session, so be sure to choose a date where families can attend. Begin in prayer – perhaps the session could take place following Vespers with a meal provided. You may have to have some of your notes or materials from session three and nine. Ask the families to submit the patron saints for each person in their family so that you may have copies of their patron saints ready for the project. Ask each family do some research prior to attending by locating the life of each of their saints and bringing it with them to the session. This session may be done together between all of the various age groups.

Ask the youth to discuss what they remember learning about patron saints and families of saints. You may have to have some of your notes or materials from session three and nine. Ask the families to present at least one thing they learned about their patron saints.

Allow families time to choose their materials and pass out icons.

While the families are working, show the example of a family icon from Archangel Icons. Suggest that this could be a wonderful goal for each family to commission an icon. Show them a sample family collection jar, where they can collect funds to purchase their family icon. There are several examples of family icons on the Archangel Icon website www.archangelicons.com

Ask the families if they would be willing to bring their completed icons to the Gallery Walk at the end of the year. Have them write a paragraph to accompany their family icon, detailing what they learned during this session.



St. Marcina the Younger and her brothers St. Basil the Great, St. Gregory of Nyssa, and St. Peter of Sabaste
Icon courtesy of Archangel Icons



Sample Family Icon courtesy of Archangel Icons (you may find additional examples at www.archangelicons.com)

Praxis Session Three: Monastic Life

Objectives: Experience first-hand the life of our monastic communities

Materials: Needed materials will depend on how you will conduct this session. You may need to arrange transportation, food and gift of love. You may need access to internet and a computer.

There are three options for this session:

1. Visit a local monastery
2. Invite a monk/nun from a local monastery to visit your parish
3. Skype with a monk/nun
4. Watch a video from YouTube about monasteries

Depending upon the option that best fits your group, you will proceed with preparations for the session.

Some tips for arranging the first three options:

- Obtain a blessing from your priest to visit the monastery or invite a monastic to speak to the youth
- Ask you priest if he would like to make first contact with the monastery or if he would prefer someone on the youth team to do so.
- Confirm with the monastery if they would permit a visit from your group and if one of the monastics would be able to speak to the group or if the abbot/abbess would give a blessing for one of the monastics to visit your parish to speak to the youth.
- If visiting the monastery, be sure to ask what their practice is for dress and ensure all youth and chaperones know of the requirements.
- Discuss with your priest what an appropriate gift of love would be for the monastery or the visiting speakers.
- Ask the speaker to discuss monastic life and perhaps to touch on our topic of becoming champions of the faith. If their monastery has a patron saint – perhaps they could discuss that saint and why they were chose for that monastery.
- Review with the youth proper etiquette while visiting the monastery. Here is an article from Orthodox Family Life to add in the discussion
<http://www.theologic.com/oflweb/inhome/monk01.htm>

After your visit to the monastery or receiving a visit from a monastic, arrange time with the youth to discuss their experience and answer questions.

If you are unable to conduct the first three options, there are several options of witnessing monastic life online. Below are a few suggestions, take time to discuss the video with the youth expanding on any areas or interest or fielding any questions.



- ***One Day in the Life of a Men's Monastery*** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rxZqfd-0smM>
- ***Desert Monks: The Brotherhood of St. Anthony in Arizona***
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gTqNx7nXJQI>
- ***A Visit to the Holy Mountain*** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5D80xrSZZU8>
- ***Mysteries of the Jesus Prayer*** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rfEVpsauqgc>

To locate Orthodox monasteries in the United States

<http://www.assemblyofbishops.org/news/2017/new-atlas-of-american-orthodox-monasteries-now-available>

Praxis Session Four: Gallery Walk

Objectives: Provide the youth with the opportunity to share what they have learned with their family, parish and local community

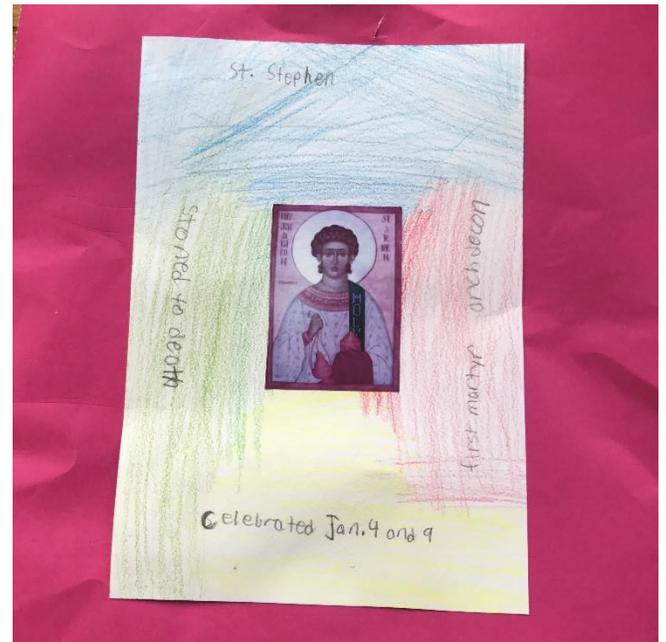
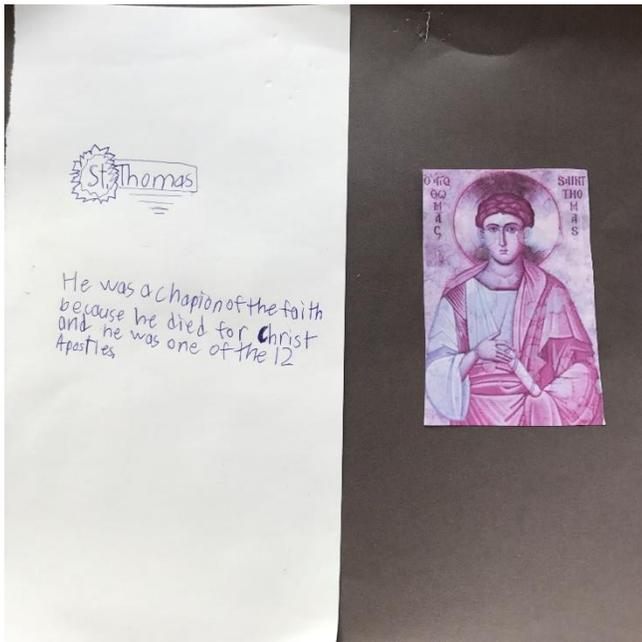
Materials: Items to create a gallery showing at your parish, refreshments, publicity

Ask the youth to help you plan and execute a Gallery Walk to display the work they produced in the past year. Items that may should be included: Family Icons (Praxis Session Two), Champion Saint (Session Nine), Parish Patron Saint Display (Praxis Session One), UOL Essay Contest Entries, A Saint is... poster, and the Parish History Project.

You may also decide to have the youth sing the hymn learned for the Music in Our Churches Session. Conducting the Gallery Walk after Great Vespers or Divine Liturgy would be an ideal time. However, you could choose another time and ask your priest if you could celebrate an akathist or moleben prior to the event. This event may be opened to the greater Orthodox community and/or your local community.

Have the youth split up jobs, such as:

- Refreshment coordination (possibly even wait staff)
- Greeters
- Program creation
- Display Team
- Decorations & Signage
- Set-up and Break-down
- Publicity



“Champions of the Faith” Celebrating 100 Years of Ukrainian Orthodoxy in America

Published by the
Consistory Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry and the
Ukrainian History & Education Center (Somerset, New Jersey)
(2017-2018)

Objective:

In conjunction with the Centennial Celebration of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA, which is taking place in parishes throughout the United States from September 2017 until September 2018, the Office of Youth Ministry is partnering with the Ukrainian History and Education Center (Somerset, New Jersey) to provide materials and lesson plans to be utilized in the parishes to educate the youth of the parish of the history of the Church in America, as well as celebrate this historic event.

This teacher’s guide provides five (5) lesson plans, each with suggested activities to use in the parish and regular youth ministry program. Each lesson plan can be tailored to fit any age group. The sessions will be made available in January 2018 on the Office of Youth Ministry website, Champions of the Faith page – www.uocyouth.org.

In addition to the monthly lesson plans, we ask all parish youth to create a poster board (tri-fold board) documenting the history of the parish which will be placed on display at the Metropolia Center during the celebration in July 2018 (see “Parish History Project” for further instructions). In addition, these boards can be displayed either before or after July in the home parishes, showcasing the work of the youth. It is our goal, that through the lesson plans, the youth of the parish will learn more about their home parishes, as well as the history of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the USA.

This teacher’s guide is supplemental to the exhibits at the Metropolia Center which document the history of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA.

Shepherding Ukrainian Orthodoxy in the New Land: The Metropolitans of the Church
On view September 2017 until June 2018

Ukrainian Orthodoxy in the New Land: 100 Years in the United States of America
On view July-September 2018

The exhibits are on view at the UHEC Library Gallery and the Cultural Center (135 Davidson Avenue / Somerset, NJ 08873). Contact the Center for exhibit hours, guided tours, and/or to schedule “The Immigration Experience” Workshop for school groups (info@ukrhec.org or call 732-356-0090)

