

Praxis Session Three: Prayer and Monastic Life

Objectives: Experience first-hand the prayer 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.

This can be conducted as a family session. It could also be opened to all parishioners and have the youth 'host' their parish family. Have the youth create an invitation and hand them out personally as well as putting it in your bulletin.

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 your 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 prayer and monastic life.*
- 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 for 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 to learn about prayer without ceasing.



- *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=5D8OxrSZZU8>
- *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>

