



Christ Is Risen! Leader Plan Teenage/High School

This year, parishes are encouraged to utilize the traditional learning sessions and the praxis sessions in the Christ IS Risen! curriculum for both grade school aged youth and older adolescents. Although the traditional learning sessions are designed for youth in middle grades, the content covered in the sessions is relevant for adolescents to understand Great Lent and Holy Week, the Resurrection and Paschal Season, and the reality of the Resurrection throughout the year. The praxis session have been developed for all ages with an emphasis on family based participation. Depending on your parish dynamics, consider these options for adjusting or adapting the lessons for older youth:

- Give youth more independence in working through the lessons such as asking them to complete smaller portions for “homework” outside of your time together, provide more opportunities to pause and discuss at an age appropriate level, raise the level of challenge in the activities that are placed throughout the text and ask youth to determine alternatives to an activity if you sense that they can handle more challenge, etc.
- Give older youth the responsibility of leading a portion of a lesson for younger classmates. Ask them a week or two in advance and review how the activity will run so that they feel comfortable and know the expectations. If you have a wide range of ages in the class, divide older and/or more knowledgeable youth up so that they can lead and guide in smaller groups.

Additional activities and suggestions to support understanding of the theme for Adolescent Youth:

- Weekly Reflection & Discussion-Use a common text to supplement or deepen the conversation for older youth. One possible resources is *The Road Back to Christ: Reflections on Lent, Holy Week and the Resurrection* by Fr Stavros N Akrotirianakis (<https://www.orthodoxmarketplace.com/esss/product/the-road-back-to-christ-reflections-on-lent-holy-week-and-the-resurrection>)
This book includes daily reflections for the journey through Great Lent and Holy Week, as well as reflections to be read throughout the Paschal Season. While written for adults, most older teenagers can also relate to the messages and themes presented in the passage. One suggestion would be to choose several reflections on a particular theme such as forgiveness or Grace and have teenage youth read one reflection per week and discuss with the leader and/or the parish priest. Ask youth to pay attention to a particular aspect throughout the week following the reflection and discussion.
- Create a photo journal to reflect the theme- Christ IS Risen! throughout the year. Ask youth to use a camera or phone camera to document the reality of the Resurrection in their daily lives. This can be done in a variety of ways using apps or online photo albums, such as Google

Photos (ask youth to come up with a formula together). The goal is to take a picture and write a brief caption to describe how the photo captures the idea of Christ IS Risen! It would be useful to kickoff the idea together and brainstorm some ideas so that youth feel prepared to carry out the activity on their own. Of course while technology can often help us to share our faith with others, it is always essential to communicate with both youth and their parents to be sure that technology is used in safe ways. You might also consider asking youth to create a digital or printed display of their photos to the parish, perhaps monthly or in a culminating showcase of their work.