

## 20016-2017 St Paul North Royalton GOYA Agreement

Welcome to the 2016-2017 St Paul North Royalton GOYA ecclesiastical year. We are excited about seeing new faces and welcoming back our returning GOYAnS.

GOYA is a ministry of the Church, and as such shares in her ministry of salvation. Encouraging you all to grow in your faith and to grow closer to the Church and to Christ is the ultimate purpose of the GOYA. For you to grow in your relationships with one another is a wonderful and beautiful experience, which goes hand-in-hand with growing in your faith. While social events and gatherings are an important part of GOYA, and very good things, we can never forget that the calling of GOYA is far higher than to be a mere social organization. GOYA is a vehicle by which you all can mature into independent adults within a solid, Christian support network, a framework built on a solid foundation of Christ and His Church.

The adolescent world is constantly changing – it is virtually impossible to keep up with every new trend and movement of youth culture. Growing up in today’s society is a much more difficult task than it was in previous times. Our young people are being shaped by different values and sometimes destructive influences, ones that can and will define who they are and who they will become. For this reason, the positive teachings and traditions of the Orthodox Church must become a living presence in your lives. This makes our GOYA ministry not an option -- but a necessity.

In order to make GOYA a worthy and viable ministry for our young people, the Church offers us four areas by which the GOYA ministry is to be based...they are as follows:

**Worship** – Worship is the central and most important part of our lives as Orthodox Christians. One is called to actively participate in the liturgical life of the church. Some of the ways that Goya youth experience Worship is by attending liturgy, becoming familiar with the many services of our church (Paraklesis, Vespers and Compline etc), observing the Church calendar, Feasts and Fasts and serving the community with their time and talents as Altar Boys, Choir members, readers, etc.

**Fellowship** – integration of faith with daily life. By gathering together in fellowship, we experience the relationship of the Holy Trinity – the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and emulate this relationship in our life in Christ. This can be accomplished by participating in Church sponsored camps and retreats, athletic programs, ethnic dancing, volunteering at the parish or in the local community and group activities on various topics (ie movies, music, books)

**Service** – as Christ came to serve, not to be served, young people are urged to do the same by loving and serving humanity in His name. Some ways the GOYAn can experience service is by offering their personal stewardship – the giving of their time, talent and treasure – to both the church and the community. Activities such as beautifying and maintaining the church grounds, outreaching to the elderly, sick and shut-ins, supporting and participating in missions and supporting Archdiocesan, Metropolitan and Parish ministries accomplish this.

**Witness** – exemplifying the teachings of the Church in our daily lives. The GOYAnS experience Witness by living their lives through Christ and maintaining Christian integrity in all areas of life. Praying and making the sign of the Cross before every meal, making newcomers feel welcome, inviting non-Orthodox

friends to a Church service or event and educating our community and our neighbors of who we are. These are all ways that we become witnesses to the mission of Christ and His Church.

Listed below are many ways for each GOYAn to experience and integrate these elements into their lives and become active GOYAnS of St Paul North Royalton. In prior years we have discovered that we do not include all of these aspects into our GOYA Ministry. In order to reach our goals and minister to each of you properly we are asking that you become dedicated and committed members of our GOYA Ministry. By doing so you agree to participate (at the absolute least) in the recommended minimum GOYA ministry experience listed by category below:

**Worship:** (This is a very intimate relationship between the faithful servant with God. As is the responsibility of the clergy of this community, this aspect of GOYA ministry will be monitored by Fr Costas and his pastoral assistant George Athanasiou)

- You are expected to have an active liturgical life. We recommend no less than 2 Sundays per month.
- Attending other services are also important ways to enhance your liturgical life. All Goyans are asked to attend other divine services outside of Sunday Worship, major holiday services and Holy Week. (i.e. Paraklesis, Lenten Weekday Services, etc.)
- Offering your talents and services as Altar Boys/ Choir Members/ Readers, etc.
- Being registered and actively attend Sunday school

**Fellowship (Minimum of 2 recommended):**

- Metropolis Fall/Spring Retreats
- Summer camp
- Greek dancing
- Parish retreats (Holy Friday, etc.)
- Metropolis Athletics
- Actively participating in all other GOYA sponsored events & fundraisers
- Inter-GOYA Gatherings with Sister Communities

**Service (Minimum of 2 recommended):** (appropriate documentation required)

- Assistance with our annual St Paul Grecian Festival
- Volunteering at St. Hermans, Zoe House, St. Mary of Egypt, etc
- Christmas caroling at the homes of our parish shut-ins and at nursing homes
- Other GOYA group service projects, not listed above (approved by our Youth Director and properly chaperoned)
- Holy Week Readings, Palm Cross Folding, etc.
- Vacation Church School (VCS) Volunteering
- Participation in a church sponsored Mission Trip (Project Mexico, etc.)

**Witness (Minimum of 1 recommended):** (appropriate documentation required)

- Write and deliver a speech for the St John Chrysostom Parish Oratorical Festival.
- School project about our Holy Orthodox Faith
- Attending GOYA Sponsored Discussions (GOYA Brunch, Movie Night, Campfire, etc)

- Exposing and inviting Non-Orthodox relatives and friends to our Church (NOT simply bringing them to the festival)
- Write an article for the Messenger reflecting on a GOYA event (Camp, outreach, etc.)

(Note the possibilities are not limited to those listed above... proper permission must be granted for such events)

Parents, it is very important that we keep our children accountable for the commitments they make and to the commitment that was made to Christ on the day of their baptism. As guardians of our gifts from God we must also commit to them our support and building up with them the foundation of their own personal journey to Christ. Part of this is showing by example. One of the most important ways we commit our families to the Church is through stewardship of our time, talents and treasures. As a ministry of the members of St Paul, it is required that all participating families have signed and submitted their stewardship card for the current year.

**Our signatures indicate that we understand our responsibilities as a GOYAn/parent of St Paul Greek Orthodox Church, North Royalton and will fully comply with the church’s policy and adhere to any consequences sanctioned in the event that I/we have, in any way interrupted the youth program and this policy. By signing this document we also acknowledge and adhere to the St Paul Liability waiver required by our Parish Council as well as all rules and regulations set forth by our Holy Metropolis of Pittsburgh for participation in all Metropolis and Parish sponsored events.**

**We also understand that failure to reach the bare minimum recommended GOYA ministry experience will result in our exclusion from participation in the GOYA Athletics program of St. Paul and will exclude us from receiving parish scholarship for special events and Metropolis Camping Ministries events.**

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GOYAn Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Youth Director Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*\*Please retain and file your own copy of these signed documents.*

*\*Last Updated October 6, 2016*