



Take Part

Often times Orthodox youth are expected to play specific roles in their parishes. It is common for young people to attend GOYA meetings, participate in dance groups, and play in church basketball leagues. It is important, however, that we do not limit the involvement of youth to such activities. Young people should not be viewed as "second class citizens" when it comes to our Orthodox faith.

Through our Baptism and Chrismation we all become full and equal members of the Church. Just as adults should, young people as well must strive to live Christian lives. No matter our age we are all called to be active sacramental members of the Body of Christ.

In order to be sacramental Christians we must take part in the life of the Church. By attending liturgical services, young and old alike are joined in the Christian community of believers. It is together in this community that we are able to grow closer to God.

Simply attending the services, though, is not really enough. Everyone must participate in the services as well, and we do this by praying together corporately. Our most important participation is found in the Holy Sacraments. We are united with one another and spiritually fulfilled through Confession, Communion, and other sacramental worship. Further, we can participate in other ways such as, serving in the altar, chanting in the choir, and reading Scripture verses.

Additionally, young people should become good stewards of the Church. At first glance this may seem impossible since many youth have little, or no financial income. Stewardship, however, means more than simply giving money. True Christian stewardship is a sharing of time and talent, as well as, treasure. Young people should continue to make monetary gifts to the Church and also share their time and talent as a recognition of God's many gifts to us. Each person, regardless of age, has unique talents to offer in service to God and His Church.

Each one of us is equal in the eyes of God. Therefore, we must all participate, not just in limited roles, but fully in the life of the Church. In doing so our Orthodox Christian faith becomes an essential part of our everyday lives and we move closer to our ultimate goal, which is the Kingdom of Heaven.