Youth Ministry at the Dormition of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church

Hello everyone, I hope you are all doing well.

My name is Danielle Dres and I am the Youth Ministry Director here at our beloved church. In March, I was blessed to be given this opportunity--right about when the outbreak of COVID-19 began. Fortunately, with the guidance of Father Anthony and so many others, I slowly transitioned into the role. With the pandemic, came many challenges as we could no longer gather in large groups and participate the way we once did before. Through the diligent efforts made by our youth leaders, we persevered and adapted programs--such as Sunday School, Greek School, Hope/Joy, and Goya continuing the hard work we set out to.

When thinking about our Youth Ministry, the bible verse 1 Timothy 4:12 comes to mind, “Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and purity,” which directly correlates with our mission as we strive to enhance the lives of all children, bringing them closer to God, building strong relationships with each other, and educating them about the Orthodox faith and Hellenic culture. The youth is not only the future, but the present! The youth is an integral aspect of our parish, with their active participation, our traditions and Orthodox faith will continue to grow in following generations. Therefore, we must do all that we can to nurture our youth.

Through this experience, I have gained a new sense of responsibility within our community. I truly believe that I can make a positive and lasting impact by providing spiritual and social opportunities for our ministry to grow and take initiative in every endeavor. I want the Dormition of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church to be home to all people, encouraging everyone who enters to engage and find a home within our parish. I look forward to continuing to foster a safe and empowering environment for our Youth Ministry.

As we plan for 2021, we are eager to grow our community, strengthening and building more programs such as the Altar Boy Group and Young Adult Group. Additionally, we hope to put on our second annual Loving Mother Summer Day Camp, where we will operate a fun and interactive program that will include church services, dance, music, bible stories, crafts, and more!

In closing, the role of the youth in our church is that they are the church, through their participation, we change, adapt, and grow as a congregation. To carry out our mission and vision for the youth, our community must embrace and encourage them to grow at every level. Again, I would like to say a special thank you to Father Anthony for his
guidance and to all the Youth Ministry leaders and helpers whose dedication and passion truly make the Youth Ministry what it is. Thank you.