

SASM TEAM SERVICE GUIDE

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SASM Service Team Guide: Children's Sunday School Programs

Sunday School Classes:

- Cherubs (Toddler/Pre K)
- Angels (K – Grade 2)
- Saints (Grades 3 – 6)

The individual classes above are considered *Small Groups*. When they meet as combined classes they are called *Large Groups*. In Large Groups we will teach the day's theme and watch a short video; then we will divide into Small Groups to teach the lesson (same theme for all classes) at an age-appropriate level.

Please ensure that you have the contact information of both your co-servants and your kids, and that you are in weekly communication.

Our Mission:

The SASM Children's Program mission is to establish a strong foundation in the Coptic Orthodox faith. This means we will place a strong emphasis on a child's relationship with God, personally and liturgically. The Holy Bible in view of Coptic theology (e.g., doctrine, dogma and Tradition) will be emphasized. The curriculum is designed to help every child recognize his/her identity is in Christ. In these formative years, it will seek to equip our children very practically in the Coptic Orthodox faith with these fundamentals:

- (1) God loves me amazingly, and Jesus is my Savior... so *I can trust God no matter what.*
- (2) I follow Jesus... so *I need to make wise choices.*
- (3) I love God so much...that *I should treat others the way I want to be treated.*

You Are Not Just Volunteers. You Are Servants:

What's the difference? Volunteers are not generally promised compensation. But servants are. Our Lord guarantees that anyone who serves our "little ones" will not go unrewarded.

"And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward." Mathew 10:42

We are also not mere employees. Our diligence and commitment should be greater to God-- not less-- than to our earthly employers. God promises when we seek first His Kingdom, whatever more we need comes our way!

Our SASM Core Value Highlights –

1. Faithful Stewardship of Talents/Gifts

Each week we teach a Biblical Virtue through an example, interactive games, Small Group discussion, and high-energy praise songs. Let's pray together that God's Holy Spirit would either inspire or unveil the right talent at the right time for this life-altering ministry.

2. Genuine Love For Our Children

"Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these'" (Matthew 19:14). Jesus wants all children to have complete access to Him because He loves them. Sunday is where the curriculum begins. We ask God to send servants not only gifted at teaching, but also passionate about developing weekday relationships with them.

Guidelines for ALL Children's Sunday School teachers

Information about the curriculum- This curriculum has been adapted with permission by Shereen Marcus, J.D., a practicing attorney and Coptic Orthodox Sunday School director. Shereen is currently completing her Master's degree in Orthodox Theology with an emphasis in Youth Ministry. With license from 252 Basics, the adaptations incorporate Coptic Orthodox theology (e.g., doctrine, dogma, Tradition) and are currently in use at St. Timothy & St. Athanasius Coptic Orthodox Church.

The curriculum uses lessons to instill a Biblical Virtue every month. Every lesson has three parts: (1) a Bible Story, (2) a Bottom Line, and, (3) a Memory Verse. Every week's lesson reinforces the Virtue of the month.

Orthodox-themed lessons and activities are incorporated throughout the curriculum. Be sure to make time for activities that pertain. At times Orthodox-adapted lessons may replace (1), (2), or (3) above for the week. For example, when we discuss "fasting" – we will be discussing the Bible story of our Lord Jesus Christ being tempted in the desert, and the discussion of Orthodox fasting will replace the "Bottom Line" activity of the week. For Orthodox adaptations, *be sure to start with a particular activity first to ensure that there is enough time to cover the Orthodox theology.*

Supplies, Copies, and Props- We have a bin filled with school supplies, and props (for skits). ***In general, however, we need each teacher to be responsible for making sure s/he will have what is needed the week s/he serves.***

If at any time you are unable to serve your committed week, it is very important that you complete the following steps:

- **FIRST** - Try to switch weeks with someone else in your age group/service Small Group. Please keep Fr. Peter and our Servant Head informed once you switch with someone.
- If no one can switch with you, **SECOND**, contact people on the “emergency fill-in” list to see if someone can just cover your day. Please let Fr. Peter and your Servant Head know.
- If that doesn’t work, **THIRD**, contact Fr. Peter and Your Servant Head for assistance.

Please *respond promptly to scheduling requests* to ensure all Small Groups are covered every week.

General Expectations- To make our program a success we need to team up and equally commit to reliability, responsibility and faithfulness to the Lord. Also, keep your spiritual life nurtured!

- Prioritize weekly communion.
- Maintain regular Bible reading.
- Maintain guidance through your spiritual father.
- Have a spirit of love & forgiveness.

Remember, your kids are studying you too. Some will learn from what you say. Some will learn from what you do. And some will remember how you made them feel. In the words of Mother Teresa, “People may not remember what you said, but they will remember how they felt when you said it.” Understand that God made children to learn *by what they observe*.

When you are on the schedule to serve, plan to arrive a few minutes early to ensure you start on time. Review your lesson several days in advance so you are prepared and have time to pray over it. Be empowered and take ownership, helping even with ancillary details such as clean-up, or contacting a parent. Serve in genuine love to help make the program run smoothly.

Meetings/Trainings- Generally, we will meet on the first Friday of every month from 7:00 – 8:00 PM, but may skip a month from time to time to take breaks. Additional teaching & spiritual days for teachers will be scheduled throughout the year.

Roles & Descriptions

Elementary School SMALL GROUP LEADERS (Individual Classes):

- Take your role seriously and nourish your own spiritual life.
- Please take attendance using the Servant Keeper sign-in app.
- Please answer emails promptly.
- If you cannot make it to your assigned week, contact other Small Group leaders in your age group **FIRST**, to try and switch dates with one of them; **SECOND**, try to contact an emergency fill-in servant; and **LAST**, contact Fr. Peter or your Servant Head for assistance when all else fails.

- Arrive on time (immediately after adult sermon) and sit with your Small Group during Large Group Presentation.
- Email out CUE cards to Parents.
- Ensure all supplies are put away in the church storage closet and the classroom is put back in its original configuration (kids dismissal is around 12:15 pm).
- It is also HIGHLY encouraged that you meet with the other Small Group leaders to share ideas and identify areas of possible improvement.

Elementary School LARGE GROUP LEADERS (Combined Classes):

- Take your role seriously and nourish your own spiritual life.
- Please answer emails promptly.
- The SCRIPT/ Videos will be provided, but leaders must come ready, as some advanced preparation may be required.
- Arrive on time (immediately after adult sermon) and promptly set-up the room to start the Large Group. Small Group leaders will be there to assist with the kids, but room set-up is Large Group servants' responsibility.
- Ensure all props/supplies are put away after the Large Group skit is over.

Preschool TEACHERS (Cherubs- Toddler/Pre-K):

- Take your role seriously and nourish your own spiritual life.
- Please take attendance using the Servant Keeper sign-in app.
- Please answer emails promptly.
- If you cannot make it to your assigned week, contact other Small Group leaders in your age group FIRST, to try and switch dates with one of them; SECOND, try to contact an emergency fill-in servant; and LAST contact Fr. Peter for assistance when all else fails.
- Arrive on time. It is suggested that you have some activity prepared or have music playing to assist with "transitioning" the preschoolers into the room.
- Ensure all supplies are put away in the Church storage closet and the classroom is put back in its original configuration (kids dismissal is around 12:00 pm).