SAINT BASIL OF OSTROG - WINTER CAMP 2024

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

(CYBER) ADDICTION

(OLDER GROUP)

"Our thoughts determine our lives; and so, if we are constantly distracted by worldly things, we will be unable to cultivate a life of prayer and spiritual growth."

"Addictions are a sign of spiritual sickness. The remedy is to turn to Christ in humility, to seek His help, and to live according to His commandments."

Elder Thaddeus of Vitovnica

INTRODUCTION

Greetings, campers! As we continue our Winter Camp 2024 adventure, today we will tackle the significant topic of cyber addiction. Together, we will learn what it means, how it can affect our lives, and how we can address it through faith and practical actions.

Let us begin with a short story to set the stage: Imagine a young person who spends so much time gaming or scrolling through social media that they miss family meals, prayer time, and even their schoolwork. How might this habit affect their life, their relationships, and their spiritual health?

DEFINITION OF ADDICTION

Addiction is defined by the American Psychiatric Association as a complex condition, a brain disease. People with addiction have an intense focus on using certain substances, such as alcohol or drugs, to the point that it takes over their life.

Cyber addiction can happen when someone spends so much time on their devices that it begins to hurt their relationships, health, and responsibilities.

Signs of cyber addiction may include:

- Feeling anxious, sad, or irritable when separated from phones, tablets, or laptops.
- Ignoring responsibilities such as chores or homework.
- Significant changes in eating or sleeping patterns.

Understanding these signs can help us recognize when habits become unhealthy.

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE ON ADDICTION

In the Orthodox faith, God is love, and everything He created is meant to lead us to a life in harmony with Him. Addiction happens when something takes the place of God in our lives, becoming more important than prayer, family, or faith.

Orthodox teachings remind us that recovery is not just a medical or physical process but also a spiritual one. Addiction is often a sign of a deeper spiritual struggle. Christ teaches us that healing comes through faith, repentance, and support from others.

For example, the Church encourages us to turn to prayer and to practice self-discipline. The Bible says, "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able" (1 Corinthians 10:13). This verse reminds us that God always provides a way for us to overcome challenges.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS	
1	How would you approach someone who is struggling with an addiction problem?
2	How can Orthodox teachings guide us in dealing with cyber addiction?
3	How much time do you spend using devices or playing video games? Do you believe it is too much or just right?
4	What are some healthier alternatives to spending a lot of time on electronic devices?
5	How can prayer and faith help someone overcome an addiction?
6	What role can friends, family, or the Church play in helping someone recover from addiction?

ACTIVITY 1 - ROLE PLAY	
Scenario	In pairs, take turns acting out a situation where one person helps a friend who is showing signs of cyber addiction. Focus on offering kind and supportive advice.
Objective	Practice empathy and learn how to have helpful conversations.

ACTIVITY 2 - "HEALTHY LIVING PLAN"	
Scenario	In small groups, discuss and create a list of fun, healthy activities that do not involve electronic devices. Examples might include sports, hobbies, volunteering, or prayer time.
Objective	Show your drawing to the group and explain your favorite healthy activity.

ACTIVITY 3 - BIBLE REFLECTION	
Verses to Discuss	• Ephesians 4:13 - "Till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." • Matthew 25:40 - "And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'"
Discussion	What do these verses teach us about helping ourselves and others overcome challenges like addiction?

ACTIVITY 4 - DEBATE	
Topic	"Medical treatment alone is enough to overcome addiction."
Discussion	Divide into two teams. One team argues in favor of the statement, while the other argues against it. Use examples from Orthodox teachings and relevant life lessons or observed experiences to support your arguments.

CONCLUSION

Addiction, including cyber addiction, is a serious issue that affects our spiritual, emotional, and physical health. However, with faith, prayer, and support from our community, we can overcome these challenges.

Let us reflect on how we use technology in our daily lives and ask ourselves: Are our habits helping us grow closer to God and to others? Let us commit to creating healthier habits and supporting those around us. Together, we can grow stronger in our faith and live lives that are balanced, meaningful, and Christ-centered.

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