

## **St. Andrew's Camp 2024**

### Diocesan Assembly Report

St. Andrew's Camp continues its ministry to youth and adults. Our Camp and retreat facilities provide the venue for our six week Diocesan Summer Camping Program as well as retreats for adults and events for adults and meetings.

The summer program was very successful with 136 camper weeks enjoyed over the 6 weeks of our program. The programs included Exceptional educational and fellowship activities - the program director's summary of these is attached. The program directors are looking at some revamping of the theme weeks- We will continue to offer a week for families to come together as well as a Teen week, a Horsemanship week, and three newly developed weeks-aa creative arts Adventure week to include camping skills and aquatics, a Sports week and a creative arts week include drama, art and music. More information will be forthcoming.

We also hosted a New year's Eve Retreat, a Women's retreat, A Blessing of the Lake complete with Cross retrieval in the cold Epiphany Season, and a Paschal Open House for the Upstate NY Deanery. Additionally, the facilities are used for meetings as well as parish and family gatherings. We look forward to hosting more of these in the upcoming year.

Most of us agree that youth ministry is an essential mission of this Diocese. Programs and retreats are supported by many different sources. We greatly depend on the goodwill of generous donors, including the fundraisers of parishes that are dedicated to supporting the camp. Among the contributors were St. John the Baptist In Rochester, with their annual pancake dinners and fish fry, The various galas organized by parishoners SS. Peter and Paul Church in South River and their surrounding parish associates, the pork chop dinner sponsored by St. Nicholas Church in Auburn as well as the various fundraisers in Holy Trinity of East Meadow Yonkers and Shirley, the Spaghetti and Song of the Quartet parishes of Lansing, Binghamton, Endicott and Elmira Heights. Several parishes have chosen to provide scholaships for their parishioner youth who attend camp -thus enabling more campers to experience Camp. Others have taken up collections wwhile other parish organizations have contributed annually via a line item in their budgets.

We are grateful for all of these efforts and hope that more of the Diocesan parishes will work independently or in collaboration with their nearby parishes to commit to annual giving to support this important youth ministry. We hope to develop commitments that will provide funds that can be relied on annually. On our part we are renting the facilities between camping programs and retreats through online apps. We are also always perusing grants that could match our programs.

Aanother appreciated area of support are the many volunteers who come to clean , repair, cut grass, provide gardening skills for our landscape, cook, paint, and remodel our facilities. Our complex is enlarging, thank God, and in order to continue to provide adequate facilities we need all of this help. Our cost per camper, for the camping program alone, is over 550 per week. We keep our tuition low, and provide many scholarship, but it is in fact the case that every attendee receives the difference in scholarship.

Planned improvements for this year includes improving the heating and cooling of the chapel, a walk in freezer and waterfront improvements to expand our use and enjoyment of our beautiful lake. Volunteers for these projects as well as for the maintenance of the facilities are always needed. We annually recruit counselors, many coming from our alumni as well as experienced youth leaders in our parishes and college students interested in youth ministry. . We hope that representatives to the Assembly as well as anyone reading this reports will encourage campers to experience and benefit from our camping program , will encourage volunteers ( We use anyone's skills!) and organize the needed events to raise funds for this important work.

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## SAC Horse Weeks 1 & 2 2024

Horse Week has been a standard of St. Andrew's Camp for many years. This year, we were without our beloved Horse Instructor, Tasha Federinko. The staff at the stables filled in where needed, but her joyful spirit and plucky personality were greatly missed!

Each day the campers traveled to the horse stables, learning good horsemanship and improving their riding skills. We were able to enjoy many days of electives: swimming, kayaking, crafts, sports, games and archery. Fr. Joel Brady and Fr. Ignatius Gouvain were our chaplains, offering daily religious education classes on the theme "The Lives of the Saints." We learned that our buildings had each received the name of a saint. Archangel Michael Dining Hall, St. Olga of Alaska Girls Dorm, and St. Herman of Alaska Boys Dorm. Campers participated, voting to select a patron saint for the Staff Cabin. After the camp season was over, there was a clear winner: St. Seraphim of Sarov!

The services were particularly beautiful with many campers singing and chanting the readings. A special theme night, "Saints Around the World," was prepared by the staff, as a culmination of the campers' religious education achievements. Campers dressed in costumes from around the world and "traveled" to four lands: Alaska, Ireland, Japan, and Africa. The saints they had been learning about all week were reviewed in Q & A style, and then campers ran excitedly to play a game from each land. The evening culminated in a funny but true play about St. Patrick and St. Herman's Kayak Challenge to Kodiak Island on our very own lake. A great time was had by all!

A cookout is always part of the schedule, and Horse Week campers are very serious about their hotdogs and smores! Co-Director Kristy and counselors led a rousing campfire time, filled with many musical favorites, ending with the singing of the Jesus Prayer—a highlight of the week for this director!

Mid-week, campers appreciated sticking to the animal theme with field trips to the Syracuse Zoo and the Wild Animal Park—many souvenirs were purchased that day! Later that evening, we were fortunate to have Archbishop Michael visit us. We are blessed that he spends so much time with the campers, answering the questions at the Q & A session and Orthodox Jeopardy competition. The campers celebrated a beautiful Liturgy with His Eminence.

We are very thankful to have so many hard working staff and volunteers during this week, especially two of our very own SAC Board Members driving the camp van back and forth to the horse farm. It was a jam-packed week of fun and fellowship, making friendships that will last a lifetime!

## SAC Family Week 2024

Family Week is a wonderful way for children to try on camp life. And this was the largest Family Week to date, with 30 children and 20 parents! We were bursting at the seams! Starting out with an Olé! – we welcomed the many families with a lively Mexican Fiesta filled with music, crafts, dancing, strolling guitarists, and a *mucho delicioso* taco bar prepared by our cook, Barbara Knighton.

The families enjoyed a beautiful week of sun, swimming, kayaking, crafts, and fun games. Fr. Jason Vansuch, our chaplain, offered daily religious education classes, as well as daily Matins and Vespers homilies, engaging the children with many interactive sermons.

The parents enjoyed a special visit and lecture with Dr. David Ford of St. Tikhon's Seminary. He offered an informal talk on St. John Chrysostom and Parenting and then spent time with the children playing games—what a joy!

A cookout is always part of the schedule, and these new campers took to it like ducks in water, leaving no leftovers! Co-Director Kristy and counselors led a rousing campfire time filled with many silly songs and lots of smores! We ended the beautiful moonlit evening singing the Jesus Prayer in a mystical four-part melody.

Mid-week, we took a field trip to a local favorite, Verona Beach. The families and staff thoroughly enjoyed the sun, sand and mini-surf—a very relaxing day! Later that evening, we were fortunate to have Archbishop Michael visit us. The children's curious minds kept up a lively Q & A session with our beloved archbishop. The next morning, he celebrated the Divine Liturgy with all the children and parents singing the responses with joy!

As our last day was the Fourth of July, we enjoyed another campfire, serenaded by an energetic children's Kazoo Band. They performed many patriotic favorites while enjoying stunning fireworks along the lakeside. It was a night to remember, putting a confident "exclamation mark" on a fantastic week of education, worship, fellowship, and God's beautiful creation at Oneida Lake. All the families left with new friends made and hearts softened by the love and joy of our Creator!

Horse Weeks 1 & 2

Boardmembers as Drivers

## Sac Diocesan Report 2C

### Mish Mash Week

Mish Mash Week at Saint Andrew's Camp was a wonderfully blessed time with inventive, interactive, and truly unforgettable Religious Education, lead by the week's priest, Fr. Ambrose Inlow. There were also fun activities like kayaking, archery, crafts, swimming, and sports. In the evenings, there were special activities like a Mission Impossible game, a campfire with a rousing sing-a-long, Camp Clue written and performed by our talented staff, and Q & A with Archbishop Michael. The week ended with "SACs Got Talent," an enthralling talent show featuring many varied talents of campers and staff, from instrumental performances to unicycle tricks! The campers also performed a song about the Archangel Michael, from Heaven on Earth, A Musical Catechesis for Children, by Fr. Paul (Stetsenko), which they practiced throughout the week. In addition to all this, the campers had a field trip to The MOST (Museum of Science and Technology) in Syracuse and participated in the Liturgical life of the Church with twice daily services.

### Teen Program

In this year's two-week Teen Program the teens participated in many fun and uplifting activities, with the loving leadership of Fr. Martin and Matushka Denise Kraus. They got to learn about many saints, including their own patron saints, in daily Religious Education classes. There were regular chapel and prayer services held, and on August 6<sup>th</sup> a beautiful Divine Liturgy, with Archbishop Michael presiding, was served, as well as blessing of fruit, to celebrate the Feast of the Holy Transfiguration of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ.

Over the duration of the two weeks, teens helped to complete new Kayak rack for the camp, which should be very useful for years to come. They also did some weeding and gardening around one of the icon kiosks made during last year's Teen Program. Both weeks the teens also did service projects outside of camp. During Teen Week 1, they went to the Crouse Community Center nursing home, where they worked hard weeding the gardens, and then played bingo with the residents, handed out cookies, had meaningful conversations, and performed two songs. In Teen Week 2, the teens volunteered at the Samaritan Center, where they helped with many of the tasks needed for the feeding program there. This included setting up, signing people in, serving food and beverages, washing dishes, and cleaning up everything when done. Both of these service projects were wonderful opportunities for the teens to participate in the hands-on ministry of helping and serving those in need.

In addition to service projects, teen campers had a lot of fun! They had field trips, swimming, sports, kayaking, archery, campfires, team builders in the woods, indoor and outdoor games, and other exciting activities like "Chopped" (a cooking competition), and SAC Olympics. The final evening of each week featured a themed dance. The theme of the Teen Week 1 dance was Fiesta, and for Teen Week 2, it was Medieval Faire. The teens had fun dressing up and participating in the festivities at both events.