

St Nicholas Family Camp, 2013

The children had a great time

What a fantastic camp did the Sunday School children and their families have this year. It was rich in activities and games that no one had the time to do anything else. We felt that the Holy Spirit was strongly manifested in the joy and peace that we all experienced. The children were divided into 3 groups: St Anthony, St Catherine and St Mary of Egypt. The competition between the groups was hot but the love between the children was much hotter. All the children can't wait until the next camp, so keep alerted to the next year's camp dates, and know if you go to one camp you will never stop going to all of them, they're addictive!!

A mum's perspective by Diana

As mums we loved the campground and its surroundings. We were observing the power of our children ready to be let out. We first checked the cleanliness of the area. There were clean bathrooms, showers and toilets and had running water. Together with our chef in residence, Khalil Toumeh, the kitchen was ours to prepare and provide best healthy food. We cannot deny that our food ingredients contained extra speciality: Love and Care.

The scene of the campfire circle was magnificent. Our children were standing around enjoy eating the marshmallows while hearing the crackle of the fire. Later on as parents, we respected the silent of the night; we were gazing into the fire and watching the flame that was an inspirational companion to recount our little stories.

As Christian Orthodox families spiritual life was also the essential aim for our gathering. We prayed together. Children lived and told their own stories. They experienced a time of relaxation, love, trust and joyfulness.

We would encourage other families to join family camp and get back in touch with their real selves. It is a good opportunity to experience the new vibrant spiritually life liveable in camps as Christian families.

Adult Bible Studies at camp

The parents who were at camp this year attended two sessions in which we discussed The Sermon on the Mount, Christ's teaching that is found in Gospel of St Matthew, chapters 5, 6 and 7. We read through the three chapters and talked about the implications of these teachings in our daily lives. We were comforted and challenged by the verses we read, such as "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted" (Mt 5: 4) and "Do not be anxious about tomorrow ... Sufficient for the day is its own trouble" (Mt 6: 34).

The second session concluded with a video clip showing a Rwandan woman forgiving a man who, as a young boy, had attacked and killed her son. That was a moving and example of what is perhaps the most challenging of Christ's teachings: "Love your enemies" (Mt 5: 44).

Sunday School News

In Sunday School, the children participate in religious and fun activities that enrich them in their faith and strengthen their relationships with their peers. Many new friendships have formed which have extended to the parents who are now also participating in the activities. All who attend look forward to the time spent together as one family. They get the opportunity to show and use their talents and practice new life skills.

In addition to the camp we had a very good start of the year. The first term was full of exciting lessons and activities for our children to grow in wisdom and stature. Many new friendships have formed which have extended to the parents who are now also participating in the activities. We have had visits to the Monastery in Geelong, Spotswood science Museum, St Barbara fun day and the annual Christmas presentation and family camp.

We are looking forward to spending Anzac Day in the church to practise the sacrament of confession, so we can celebrate Easter in the way Jesus wants us to be, cleaned and renewed. In addition to confession, we will have lots of games, so come and join us.

A new group for teens

St. Nicholas' Young Youth Group continues to meet weekly every Sunday after the Liturgy. Discussions focusing on learning more about our Christian Orthodox faith and how to apply it in our every-day life. Over the past few months we discussed our "identity" and what it means to be young Orthodox Christian in the 21st Century. We learnt about Sacraments and how they contribute to our identity and continue to strengthen our well-being, in addition to finding out about some of the Orthodox and Liturgical symbols. Discussion often focuses on social situations that apply to a young person's life. We invite anyone over the age of Thirteen to join on Sundays.

The Sunday School Leadership group

