

## ST NICHOLAS FAMILY CAMP 2007

*By Marguerite Azar*

After a long and hard organization, participants of St Nicholas family camp gathered at the Church hall awaiting the bus to take us on a fun filled journey. This camp being especially memorable as part of the 75<sup>th</sup> year celebration of St Nicholas in Melbourne. The destination was Mt Morton Lodge in Belgrave Heights just a short skip and jump journey that took forever as the bus caught the evening traffic. When we finally got away after loading up the bus and a few of the family cars due to the problem with the luggage compartment of the bus, we headed off with the blessing of Father Dimitri for a safe journey and return.

The question being asked most was, are we there yet????? How often do we hear this? But being a Friday evening the bus trip took longer than expected. When we finally arrived, in the rain, every one had to chip in and unload the bus. We settled for our evening meal after a prayer of thanksgiving to begin a weekend full of information and experiences. The evening began with getting to know each other games run by Laura Bussel, and all agreed that the indoor hockey game with the newspaper sticks was best of all.

Father Anthony together with Khoreya Clare as well as Father John participated with our leaders Rita, Nathalie and Marguerite in the learning sessions for parents, young adults, teenagers and juniors, all of which were most informative and interactive. All who joined in would agree much was gained in the short sessions.

After lunch the fun began when Ihab Banna together with Matthew Azar took over the outdoor games, while in the hall ran other events of the mind. Using much of the facilities provided by the camp site a lot of laughter was heard and lollies were distributed to all. Parents and children alike were asked to join in and each and everyone of them had a great time.

Evening meal over, once again everyone gathered in the hall as they were broken up into groups each with a theme for the night games vying for that elusive cup, the Golden Winners cup. From the old egg and spoon races to dress ups, each and everyone had a go to reach the end to win that cup. Five games or so were played all lead by Matthew and the winners were announced at the end of the night followed by what else but Arabic dance music. It was great to see all the smiles even though those eyes had not had any sleep the night before. We thought this would surely tire them, but how wrong were we.

Sunday morning they all had to be woken up to take part in the Divine Liturgy. If ever there was a sorry looking lot this was it. If only sleep was part of the camp requirement. This was followed by breakfast, pack up and the last get together as one group, to be issued with gifts of thanks from the group leaders. More fun when the flying fox was running and all ended the day with a go on the fox even those who are scared of heights. A quick lunch and the bus arrived to take us all back to our families eagerly waiting at the church for our return.

Another successful camp ended with everyone looking forward for the next time.