

Report of the Committee on Young Peoples Work

To the 147th Council
Of the Diocese of the NEMA
Of the Reformed Episcopal Church

I am delighted to report that the Committee on Young People's Work (COYPW) has continued its regular regimen of retreats. Last year, the committee sponsored a week-long summer camp for grades 2-6 and 7-12 (running concurrently) and winter camp on Valentine's weekend for students in middle and high school. All events were held on the grounds of Rock Mountain Bible Camp whose staff has proved, over many years, to be helpful allies in carrying out our programs.

The winter retreat was well-attended by thirty teenagers who were taught by the Very Reverend Jason Holloway. Lessons were centered on the topic "Life from the Wilderness". Over the course of four studies, students examined the role and picture of the wilderness from both testaments, spending time especially on Israel's sojourn and Jesus' fasting. The COYPW thanks Dean Holloway for all of his efforts.

At summer camp, we had the privilege of exploring J.R.R. Tolkien's masterpiece, the *Lord of the Rings*. Our theme was "the Gospel in Middle Earth". The Reverend Mike Blitz spoke to our older campers. Fr. Mike is very gifted at weaving narration with video clips and did a masterful job presenting a good number of themes. We were also blessed to have the Reverend Jared McNabb speak to our younger students. Jared is a pastor in the CREC, and a long-time friend of Fr. Ricky McCarl, as well as a dear friend to me-albeit for a shorter amount of time. He and his family were a true blessing to our retreat.

In the coming year, we have retreats again planned for Valentine's weekend for middle/high school students (winter camp) and a summer camp planned for grades 2-12 at the end of July. At winter camp, the theme will be "The Greatest of these is Love" and will explore Faith, Hope, and Charity as gifts and virtues. We are still seeking a speaker for this event. If this topic interests you, please contact Billy Jenkins at wjenkins@loyola.edu. Likewise, for summer camp, we are still in need of two speakers. We are hoping to explore the book of Job throughout the week. If you think you would enjoy speaking on this topic and would delight in being around a great group of kids in the mountains for a week, here's your opportunity! Again, please see Billy for more information.

As always, we welcome students from any background to our camps and are always happy to have new counselors. We cannot run these programs without our tremendous staff of dedicated and caring volunteers. If you think God is leading you in this direction, please reach out at the above email address. You will not regret spending a week at camp!

Finally, allow me to thank those who work so tirelessly to make these camps a success: Allison Gillespie-Jenkins, Jason Holloway, Alena Beeman, and Mike Laur as well as all of the staff volunteers too numerous to mention, you are a gift to so many children and, I have no doubt, pleasing to the Lord in your service to him and his church.

Yours in the Divine Mercy,
Fr. Billy Jenkins