

To the 144rd Diocesan Council

Of the Diocese of the North East and Mid-Atlantic:

Report for the Committee on Young People's Work

The COYPW sponsored two events in the past year: our diocesan summer camp for youth from grades 2nd-12th and our diocesan winter camp for grades 6th-12th. There was much to be grateful for at both events. At our winter retreat, held in February at Rock Mountain Bible Camp, Fr. Jason Holloway led the teens through a study of several great characters of Faith from the scriptures. Different facets of the lives and/or ministries of Abraham, Jonah, and Mary were considered. While not at all billed this way, the overwhelming majority of attendees were young men. Please pray for them all. Though you do not know them by name, God does. Young men face temptations unknown to previous generations of Christians and they live in a society where their masculinity is strongly challenged. Pray for them to be upheld by God's grace and that the Lord would graciously grant faithful fathers, and other men as needed, to train and discipline them.

Our summer campers studied what it means to be created in the Image of God. Fr. Justin Forsberg and Fr. Jason Holloway led our campers in great, age-appropriate talks and discussions on topics related to the Divine Image. Topics ranged from what the Image is, to its marring in the Fall, the relation of the Image to marriage and ordination, and its restoration in Christ. One of our long-time campers, Oliver, indicated that he thought the Rev. Forsberg was one of the best speakers he had ever heard. And all of the students enjoyed learning various Latin, Hebrew, and Greek terms (with Fr. Justin also utilizing his ample knowledge of languages even more ancient than those.)

It is a joy to host these events for diocesan youth and their friends from other churches and those who are unchurched. We would love to see more Reformed Episcopalians at our camps though. Last summer, over half of our camp attendees were from other traditions. Kingdom work is kingdom work. I never mind that. But if you would please urge the families in your parishes to consider attending, it would be appreciated. For those parents who might feel unsure of sending their children to sleep away camps, encourage them to come as counselors. That is perfectly fine and we would love to have them serve!

Lastly, for anyone who is interested, we can host daytime guests at our retreats. If you would like to come up and spend the day with us, please let me know. You can eat with us, pray the daily offices with us, worship through singing and hearing scripturally sound messages and teaching, and a host of other activities. You will not regret it! Our next retreat is Winter Camp and will be held from February 14th-16th at Rock Mountain Bible Camp. Please advertise this event in your parish bulletins and place the flyer for it in a place where it can be easily seen. God bless you all for this!

Yours in the Divine Mercy,

Fr. Billy Jenkins