



February 14, 2024

Dear Rev. Frs. And faithful,

Christ is in our midst! Last Fall Fr Michael Shepherd informed me that he was overcommitted and need to step away as Camp Director. He worked tirelessly to recreate documents that were lost in the transition and to work with Fr John Parsells (Orthodox Web Solutions) in moving registration into the 21st century through the creation of a new website since the old one was basically a shell. We are grateful for his labors and that of the team he developed.

Mr. Daniel Peck, a school teacher from St. Michael's in Wilmington, DE made a tremendous impact upon the youth last year at camp and they absolutely love and adore him. Consequently, Dan is now our Youth / Camp Director. He is building his team and worked tirelessly to revise the Youth Website and it is now fully operational. Please give Daniel your full support as he continues to develop the overall camp / youth program and build his team (dipeck@gmail.com)

By the Grace of God, our teens enjoyed a wonderful time of fellowship, worship and exciting indoor and outdoor activities at the Winter Retreat organized by Patrick O'Leary of Holy Apostles this past weekend. We are also discussing a Fall Youth Retreat at Refreshing Mountain and expect an even greater turnout. We are blessed to have mature adult leadership willing and ready to serve our Lord Jesus Christ and are building relationships with our children. Our youth are completely comfortable to sit and talk at length with our loving counselors and staff. We have youth anxious to gather with one another, engage with us as clergy, the dedicated faithful and our adults willing to develop opportunities for them to do so! Will we not support this?

Registration for Summer Camp is now officially open and we are also seeking volunteers. Please encourage your youth to register ASAP. Once again the Diocese will cover the cost for our own Diocesan Youth as we receive an email from our clergy stating the full name(s) of your youth and indicate the family is in good standing. Please send the email to Dioceseoepa@gmail.com. As we are hoping this approach is encouraging parishes to create a line item for youth ministry, we ask each parish to consider making a donation to assist us in covering the cost for our youth for the Camp and retreats. Summer Camp is budgeted for \$46,900 and the Winter Retreat cost approximately \$13,000 and the Fall retreat will likely be more with a larger attendance and not currently within our budget. We also have \$2,000 budgeted for the Heavenly Hosts program. Let us all work together for the building up our Church and strive to keep our youth connected with the Church. Donations may be sent to the Diocesan Office earmarked Youth Ministry. If we refuse to invest in our youth we have no basis for complaint of them leaving us.

God is Good and blessed us with wonderful, loving and respectful youth, dedicated and mature Christian leadership, staff, counselors and volunteers. With the number of youth participating we need more clergy and lay people to step up and offer their gifts and talents to enable us to have the best possible camp and retreat programs. May our Lord bless the work of our hands.

Your Unworthy Father In Christ,

+ Mark

+ MARK, Archbishop of Philadelphia and the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania



325 N. Walnut Street * Bath, Pennsylvania 18014-1201
Telephone: 484.281.3406 * <http://www.doepa.org> * Email: dioceseoepa@gmail.com
Chancellor: V. Rev. Raymond Martin Browne * Mobile: 570.906.1388
Diocesan Treasurer: Mark Linnahan * treasurer@doepa.org

"Thou hast made us for Thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in Thee." Augustine