



Antiochian Village

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Report to the Archdiocese May 2017

The following is the report that was presented to His Eminence Metropolitan Joseph at the Archdiocesan Department Head Meetings in April.

1. Change Based on Last Year's Meeting

The most significant change that came out of last year's meeting was working with Dr Anthony Bashir and Richard Robbat on developing a new mission statement for the camp (see below). We spent many hours going through the process of developing this statement with their guidance in understanding the process. In the next phase, we will be gathering together in September to work on the vision and goals as well.

2. Mission

Antiochian Village Camp transforms the lives of young people & families and nurtures their faith in Jesus Christ through Orthodox Christian community living, worship, education, fellowship, and love.

3. Execution of the Mission

The Antiochian Village Camp ministry primarily manifests itself in the following programs: Summer Camp, Family Camp, and Winter Camp. In addition, we do the following: parish visits through our Village at Home; fundraising for camp scholarships through our food booth at Fort Ligonier Days; Service Weekend where people come to camp in May and help prepare the camp for the summer season; Challenge Course Rentals and other group rentals.

Programs

• Summer Camp

The Summer Camp Program at Antiochian Village serves young people ages 9-17, who attend one of four two-week sessions. The Village provides an experience of true, Christian community and fellowship with other young believers, which has been instrumental in the spiritual maturation of many youth. The major components which contribute to this experience include:

- Daily Orthodox Christian worship with an emphasis on participation;
- A challenge toward spiritual growth through daily homilies, religious education, and relationships with counselors and fellow Orthodox campers;
- Physical, emotional, and spiritual retreat in a peaceful, predictable, and supportive environment;
- Reprieve from worldly cares and distractions in a naturally beautiful, safe, and uncluttered setting;
- Trying new experiences, gaining new skills and interests, facing fears, and learning to cooperate with new people; and
- A caring and loving staff fully dedicated to the campers well-being and growth.

*Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America
The Most Reverend Joseph
Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of All North America*

The following is the current summer camp calendar cycle:

Ongoing – develop and write Christian Education curriculum for summer camp

December (mid-month) – open summer camp registration

December – open application process for staff, volunteer and CIT (Counselor in Training) applications

January – attend Orthodox Camp and Youth Worker Conference

February 1st – staff application deadline date

February – hire head counselors and administrative assistant

February – interview all new staff applicants

March 1st – early-bird discount (all tuition fees must be paid in full to receive the discount)

March – hire summer camp staff

March – determine awarding of scholarships

March – attend ACA TriState Camp Conference

March/April – determine CIT and Volunteer Staff acceptance

April/May – begin pre-camp staff training with weekly small group conference calls

April 21-23 – Camp Work Days – Group of volunteers comes to do cabin staining & other work

May 1st – Summer Camp tuition payment deadline

May 20-22 – Service Weekend – prepare camp with the assistance of volunteers

May 25 – Arrival of Program Staff

Memorial Day Weekend (May 26-29) – Family Camp

May 29 – June 8 – Program Staff training and preparing their programs

June 2-8 – Challenge Course facilitator training; Morning Program training; Lifeguard training

June 9-17 – Staff Training

June 18-30 – Session One

July 2-14 – Session Two and Byzantine Chant Camp

July 16-28 – Session Three

July 16-24 – Iconography Camp

July 30 – August 11 – Session Four

August 11-14 – Staff Debrief weekend

Fall – camp surveys and evaluation of summer camp season

- **Family Camp**

Family Camp is an opportunity for families to get away from everyday life and spend a weekend growing closer to Christ together, in the beautiful setting of Antiochian Village Camp. Family Camp occurs over Memorial Day Weekend each spring. Family Builder sessions offer practical, down-to-earth resources for keeping our families strong. Some of our families come to meet up with families of far-away friends; others have come previously, made friends, and return to reunite; and some come with no expectations and simply wish to have a family weekend. Families leave the weekend being more connected with their faith, other families, and even strengthen the bond within their own family making memories that will be forever cherished.

- Winter Family Camp**

Over the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday weekend in 2018, we plan to hold our first Winter Family Camp. Although we are in the early planning stages, it is our hope that we will bring the best of both Family Camp and Winter Camp into a unique weekend for the family. Families will be united in prayer, education and fellowship.
- Winter Camp**

Winter Camp is a weekend retreat for campers in grades 7 – 12, held over Presidents’ Day Weekend in February. Campers arrive on Friday night and leave on Monday. Borrowing some of the favorite activities from the summer, Winter Camp includes: Christian Education, Afternoon Program, a Campfire (in the snow!), ice skating, and much more! Winter Camp also provides campers a chance to meet other youth from different regions and different sessions from the summer.
- Sacred Arts Camps**

The mission of the Sacred Arts program is to strengthen the faith of participating campers through learning the Hymnography and Iconography of the Orthodox Church. The programs are designed to give participants an opportunity to use their God given talents for the glory of God. These camps are designed specifically for high school aged teens. Each camp focuses on a specific sacred tradition of the Church. Iconography Camp teaches campers the fundamentals of painting icons as well as the importance of a prayerful way of life. Byzantine Chant Camp teaches campers the basics of the Byzantine tones for liturgical chant, and progresses based on the campers’ abilities.
- Village at Home**

In an effort to stay connected to our campers and introduce young people to the camp experience, we have established our Village at Home program. Village at Home typically occurs on a Saturday in a parish, at the invitation of their pastor, during which we run a modified day of camp. Host parishes are encouraged to extend invitations to neighboring churches with hope of exposing as many young people as possible to the Antiochian Village camping program. Former staff members join us for the day to assist with the program.
- Fort Ligonier Days**

Each October, the town of Ligonier holds a 3-day festival known as Fort Ligonier Days, in honor of the Battle of Fort Ligonier which was fought during the French and Indian War on October 12, 1758. Antiochian Village Camp and Conference Center participates annually in the town festival with our popular Gyro booth, where sandwiches and refreshments are sold. Both full-time staff and summer staff, who travel to reunite during the weekend, volunteer and assist their time working in the food booth. Proceeds from the weekend are used to provide camper scholarships each summer.
- Service Weekend**

Each May, Antiochian Village dedicates a weekend for staff and volunteers to help clean and prepare the camp for the coming summer. Meals and lodging are provided free of charge for participants. Saturday morning and afternoon are spent working hard, and the evening is relaxed with fun and fellowship. Everyone is welcome- teens, chaperones and parents, youth advisors, adults, and alumni.
- New Year’s Eve Staff Reunion**

On New Year’s Eve, recent summer staff members of Antiochian Village gather to celebrate the New Year together. Many of our summer staff attend the OCF College Conference prior to New Year’s Eve at Antiochian Village Conference Center, and we invite them to stay and be together at camp for New Year’s Eve and New Year’s Day with the Divine Liturgy, dinner and fellowship.

- **Alumni Reunions**

For over 35 years, God has richly blessed the young people and families who enter the grounds of Antiochian Village to experience a week or two of camp. Periodically, the camp provides an opportunity for alumni to gather, reunite with friends, meet new ones, and re-connect with a place where they spent the best summers of their lives as young people. Over the course of the upcoming years, we wish to allow more opportunities for alumni reunions targeting specific groups of alumni and staff each year.

4. Performance and Results for the 2016 Camp Season

Below is the chart of our attendance numbers for last year with the previous two years for comparison:

Camp Sessions	2017 Registration	2016	2015	2014
Session 1 (one week)	46 of 46	31 of 32	35 of 35	37 of 37
Session 1 (two weeks)	222 of 222	236 of 236	218 of 219	211 of 217
Session 2	268 of 268	266 of 268	266 of 268	259 of 261
Session 3	254 of 254	262 of 262	259 of 261	259 of 263
Session 4	268 of 268	265 of 268	266 of 268	261 of 268
Byzantine Chanting Camp – 1	na	na	11 of 14	14 of 14
Byzantine Chanting Camp – 2	na	na	na	7 of 7
Iconography Camp	12 of 14	9 of 12	9 of 10	8 of 11
Total Number of Camper	1,070	1,069	1,064	1,056
Family Camp	53 Families	57 Families	33 Families	32 Families
Winter Camp (2017)		169	127	140

In addition to having our strongest attendance across the board, we received a great deal of positive feedback from our campers and parents through our surveys, cards, letters and emails. We increased our tuition going into last summer’s camping season from \$700 to \$750 for a two-week session. We also increased our efforts towards annual giving. The combination of these factors and others enabled us to operate without the assistance of the operational subsidy from the Archdiocese.

One of the things we strive to accomplish each year is meeting the needs of our staff in order to equip them for the ministry of the Church and the running of the camp. This year it was particularly challenging with some of the societal and generational changes that are taking place. We are determined to find better and additional approaches in mentoring our staff in the future.

5. Assessment of Goal Achievement for 2016/2017

Our primary goals for 2016 with the results are as follows:

1. Full enrollment for each session of camp – This goal was accomplished (see chart above), but a few spots opened up with last minute cancellations. 87 people were left on the waiting list.
2. Hiring of staff that are or will be well-trained and committed to providing an Orthodox camping experience for the young people in their care - we were able to train our staff so that they provided our campers with a blessed and safe camping experience. There were a couple of areas that we were lacking but the adverse impact on our campers was minimal.
 - a. First, we did a poor job in preparing our new nurse for the summer. After only having two nurses for the first 37 years of camp, we never had to train anyone and ending up putting our nurse at a disadvantage. To her credit, she helped us develop guidelines for preparing future nurses.
 - b. Second, with the changing landscape of generational differences, we struggled to provide the proper leadership and mentoring that a new generation of staff needed to reach their full potential.

3. Safety of our campers and staff – we had a relatively safe camping session. We usually encounter a few incidents that need outside attention and this year was no different. The incidents were isolated and were not due to any negligence on the part of our staff or our facilities – they were mere accidents. One issue that did come to light is that we have a mold and mildew issue with Cabin 9/10 that we have repeatedly addressed and are unable to rectify.
4. Have sufficient funds to provide the necessary scholarships requested – we were able to assist each family that requested scholarships. In some instances, the scholarships awarded were not in the full amount requested but were usually very close. Many alumni and friends of the Village offered donations towards scholarships when asked.
5. Raise \$50,000 through our development and annual giving appeals – We have been able to steadily increase giving to support the ministry, largely through the efforts of Marek Simon, who has taken on the responsibility of annual giving. Below is a chart of donor giving since we placed an emphasis on this at the end of 2014:

Year	Annual Fund	Camper Scholarships	Capital Improvements	Restricted Funds	Total
2014	\$13,963.50	\$14,290.71	\$1,570.68		\$29,824.89
2015	\$28,818.11	\$10,000.00	\$750.00	\$1,000.00	\$40,568.11
2016	\$53,108.00	\$17,545.00	\$100.00	\$10,000.00	\$80,753.00

6. Repair and maintenance of facilities – we are still lagging in this area. Our maintenance staff addresses issues out of prioritization through necessity/crisis. We don't have the manpower to plan and address issues in a systematic approach due to the pressing needs between more urgent things at either the Conference Center or the Camp. We have scheduled a group of volunteers to come for a weekend to do cabin staining but this is dependent upon us getting cabins pressure washed and cooperative weather on our target weekend.

6. Goals for 2017/2018

Our primary goals are as follows:

1. Full enrollment for each of our sessions of camp.
2. Hiring and training summer staff.
3. Safety of our campers and staff.
4. Have sufficient funds to provide the necessary scholarships requested.
5. Raise \$75,000 through our development and annual giving appeals.
6. Repair and maintenance of facilities.
7. Replace Cabin 9/10
8. Hire a fourth full-time staff member and redistribute responsibilities.
9. Transition to a new online database and registration system.
10. Develop Vision and Goals based on Mission Statement.
11. Inaugurate Winter Family Camp in January 2018.

7. Action Plan to Achieve Goals for 2017/2018

Our primary goals are as follows:

1. Full enrollment for each of our sessions of camp.
 - a. We were sold out about six weeks after we launched registration. At present, there are approximately 250 names on our waiting lists.

- b. We will closely monitor registration and payments to determine if there may be potential no-shows or cancellations that we might weed out with sufficient time to fill these spots with people from the wait lists.
2. Hiring of staff that are or will be well-trained and committed to providing an Orthodox camping experience for the young people in their care.
 - a. We have hired our staff of 61 from the 116 applications received.
 - b. We will be launching pre-camp training with small group conference calls based off of three podcasts done by Fr Anthony, Marek & Chris.
 - c. All new staff will have modules to view through Expert Online Training, a camp online training resource.
 - d. Three weeks of on-site various training prior to the start of camp
 - e. Ongoing professional development throughout the summer during daily staff meetings.
 - f. Build relationships with summer staff prior to and during camp that will then enable better mentoring based on workshops and research regarding millennials.
 - g. Fr Anthony attended a workshop on preparing nursing staff for camp and has started implementing suggestions from the workshop.
3. Safety of our campers and staff.
 - a. Review all buildings and inspect all equipment prior to the start of the camping season, including third party inspection of all vehicles.
 - b. Review of all policies and procedures.
 - c. Train staff as it pertains to safety, including CPR and First Aide training.
4. Have sufficient funds to provide the necessary scholarships requested.
 - a. Utilize Order of St Ignatius Scholarship funding
 - b. Appeal to alumni and others for additional scholarship donations.
5. Raise \$75,000 through our development and annual giving appeals.
 - a. Mail annual giving appeal in November.
 - b. Continue to connect with alumni for donations for a variety of programs.
 - c. Cultivate relationships of potential major donors.
6. Repair and maintenance of facilities.
 - a. Hire an additional maintenance person for the Antiochian Village.
 - b. Have Fr Anthony & Tom Altimus prioritize repairs and maintenance and put together a plan to accomplish said repairs.
 - c. Hire a Special Projects summer staff member that will handle a select number of projects that the maintenance staff has not had time to address.
 - d. Recruit additional volunteers to assist with certain projects especially for Service Weekend.
7. Replace Cabin 9/10
 - a. Awaiting Building Permit from the State of Pennsylvania and final approval to move forward.
 - b. Order furniture.
 - c. After completing construction demolish old cabin.
8. Hire a fourth full-time staff member and redistribute responsibilities.
 - a. Have new person in place by the end of the summer camping season.
 - b. Reorganize overall job responsibilities for full-time staff.
9. Transition to a new online database and registration system.
 - a. Marek will work with CircuitTree to prepare for the transition.
 - b. After summer camp season, transition from FileMaker to CircuitTree.
 - c. Train full-time staff on use of new database and online registration system.
10. Develop Vision and Goals based on Mission Statement.
 - a. Assemble a diverse group of people connected to the Camp to participate in September weekend process.

- b. Coordinate weekend with Dr Anthony Bashir and Richard Robbat.
 - c. Submit end results to Metropolitan Joseph for blessing and approval.
11. Inaugurate Winter Family Camp in January 2018.
- a. Identify format of weekend.
 - b. Invite potential speaker.
 - c. Develop promotional action plan (social media, Word Magazine, Archdiocese website)

8. Staffing

Paid full-time year round staff:

Fr. Anthony Yazge – Camp Director
 Marek Simon – Assistant Camp Director
 Christopher Shadid – Assistant Camp Director
 Tom Altimus – Maintenance Director
 Denny Baird – Maintenance staff
 Tim Johnston – Food Service Management

Paid part-time seasonal Summer Camp staff positions:

Head Female Counselor, Head Male Counselor, Administrative Assistant, Camp Secretary, Camp Nurse, Assistant Camp Nurse, Nurse's Aide, Morning Program Coordinator, Afternoon Program Coordinator, Evening Program Coordinator, Arts and Crafts Coordinator, Challenge Course Coordinator, Overnight Program Coordinator, Camp Photographer, Camp Videographer, Volunteer Coordinator, Horseback Program Director, Horseback Program Assistant, Male Counselors (18), Female Counselors (24), Kitchen Manager, Food Service Assistant, Food Specialist, Kitchen Staff (6-10)

Volunteer Summer Camp Staff:

Session Priests (8 – 2 each session), approximately 60 people spread throughout the summer

Volunteer Winter Camp Staff:

Approximately 30 counselors and program staff plus another 10-15 adult volunteers

Rental Business throughout the year

Kitchen staff & Housekeeping staff from the Conference Center

9. Items Needing the Attention of Metropolitan Joseph

As often as is possible, the staff and the campers would like regular visits to the camp by His Eminence. Although every other year, the campers of session three are blessed with the presence of all of our hierarchs and the clergy of the Archdiocese, it would be beneficial for some of the other sessions to meet and receive a blessing from Metropolitan Joseph.

As for more material needs, we need to finish with the reconstruction of the cabins. To date we have not replaced any of the cabins in Unit three which is used to house our younger boys each summer. We need to construct four double cabins for the youngest boys and add a male staff cabin. We need to raise the funds in order to complete this construction.

Another project that we need a determination from His Eminence as to what will be done about a potential new church on the Village property that the camp may use during the summer. We are extremely crowded in St Ignatius Church at present attendance numbers.

We have been asked if we can accept more campers during the summer. The answer is that we are unable to accommodate any additional for the following reasons:

1. We don't have any unused cabins to house campers.
2. We don't have any more room in church.
3. We don't have any more room in the dining hall.

The question becomes, do we build at the camp to accommodate more campers or do we start new camping programs elsewhere to alleviate the demand or do we do both. A discussion with stakeholders (bishops, clergy, Board of Trustees members, parents and campers) would give us a sense as to what we should possibly explore of the options listed above or any other avenues not listed.

In conclusion, the Antiochian Village Camp continues to be a blessing to us all (campers, parents, staff, alumni, parishes, the Archdiocese, etc). We are grateful for the support of Metropolitan Joseph, our beloved hierarchs, the clergy, the Board of Trustees, the Village Council, and the Order of St Ignatius and we are indebted to our camper parents for the trust they place in our ministry and the care of their children.

Respectfully Submitted,



Fr Anthony G. Yazge
Camp Director

"This was my son's first time away from home, and two weeks felt like a long time for us! However, we were confident that he would love camp and feel comfortable there, and we knew that the staff would do a great job. Well, the experience was a very good one! I would say that the one main aspect of camp that is so very important to all my kids is that they are able to be fully immersed in the life of the Church for an extended time, and are able to meet so many other Orthodox kids. It is a rare opportunity given that in their "regular" life, they have just a few Orthodox friends. Also the love shown to them by their counselors shows them that there are many older kids who are living their faith, and gives them an example of how they too can live their faith as they grow up."

- parent of a 2016 summer camper