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PARADISE OF THE SPIRIT: RETREAT *BY THE LATE BISHOP YOUANNES*

"It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth. Let him sit alone and keep silent." Lamentations 3:27-28

Retreat is emptying the heart and mind from all worldly cares. The correct meaning of retreat is that it is a retreat with God: the mind is void of all cares, the heart is void of every desire and movement except for the desire of the holy love to the Beloved Jesus. The place is empty without people where you can hear the voice of solitude. When the soul is quiet and has all these conditions, then it cries from inside, "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev. 22:20) Then it hears the answer, "The Lord has come and is calling for you." (John 11:28)

Jesus did that when He retreated with the Father. "Everyone went to his own house. But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives," (John 7:53) where He used to spend the whole night in prayer. He used to be in retreat with the Father. When His disciples had scattered, every man to his own, He told them, "I am not alone because the Father is with Me." (John 16:32) Henceforth, the Lord Jesus has set for us the correct principle for the holy retreat. It is a unity with the Father. We must learn how to get away from the hustle and bustle of the world, its noises and problems and be alone in retreat, singing the beautiful song, "My Beloved is mine and I am His." (Song of Solomon 2:16)

St. Isaac said, "If you do not sit down everyday for one hour with yourself and think what wrong you have done and when you fell, and straighten yourself, then do not count this as one of the days of your life. Love solitude, for therein is life for your soul. Through quietness, you see yourself."

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH SUMMER TRIP TO ST. MINA'S *JUNE 28-30, 2007*



The retreat center is a wonderful place to meditate and relax. The placid pond provides a tranquil atmosphere to help us vacation from our busy, demanding, daily lives. The view of nature helps us to meditate on the Word of God and to retreat from the wars we fight on a daily basis. When the youth group visited the retreat center, they took time with Abouna Mina to meditate on the Word of God and to enjoy the few days that they spent together. They all went on a water-rafting experience that helped them to laugh and forget about their daily troubles. It was an experience that renewed everyone spiritually and mentally. The retreat center is suitable for all ages. No matter what state of mind you are in, it eases you in ways that you wouldn't expect, whether you need simple relief from school or major

tranquility from a boss at work. There is always a message being delivered when a person opens their mind and tries to understand the message God is trying to provide. Meditation is an important part of life; without it, it would be hard to continue our everyday lives successfully. It's almost as important as living life itself, if not more.

If you know anyone who is not currently receiving this newsletter and would like to receive it, please send their information to info@stminaretreatcenter.org

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EVENTS AT ST. MINA'S

- ❖ October 4-6 Family Retreat
- ❖ October 8-10 St. Mark Christian Academy Trip (3rd & 4th Graders)
- ❖ November 1-3 Family Retreat
- ❖ November 9-10 Post-Graduate Retreat
- ❖ November 23-25 Family Retreat (*St. Mina's Feast*)
- ❖ December *Retreats Available by Appointment*

IN THEIR OWN WORDS: THE 3RD & 4TH GRADERS...

ST. MARK CHRISTIAN ACADEMY (OCTOBER 8-10, 2007)

A compilation of the experiences of St. Mark Christian Academy's 3rd & 4th Graders

My favorite part of the Retreat Center was catching the frogs and playing in the lake. I kept falling into the water and getting muddy! We got to make s'mores and roast hot dogs. I had fun! I got to go on a golf cart around the forest. I also got to go to the church. Father gave us oil. Something I would like to share is when I dissected the owl pellet. My pellet had two animals in it: a rodent and a shrew! It was so cool. I would like to share how cold it was and how beautiful it was. My favorite part of the retreat was catching frogs. I had the biggest frog and named him Jumpy. Something I would like to share with other students about the Retreat Center is that the lake is so beautiful and the golf carts are really fun, especially when Abouna goes really fast when we were racing! I would like to share that the Retreat Center is a nice place to get closer to God and it has St. Mina's relics!

