



Antiochian Village

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GUIDELINES FOR CLERGY ASSIGNED TO THE ANTIOCHIAN VILLAGE CAMPING PROGRAM from Fr. Michael Nasser

Greetings, Brother in Christ! For over two and a half decades, God has been present at the Antiochian Village in various ways, and He has provided dynamic spiritual experiences for thousands of young people who have participated since the camp's first summer in 1979. Through His grace, the program has grown to include four two-week sessions and about 1,000 campers each summer. The camp community also includes over 50 staff who come for the whole summer and 10 or more volunteers who come for one session each, bringing our "parish" to about 320 active members during each session.

A sheet outlining a typical day at camp is attached, giving the basic schedule for the whole camp. These guidelines below are intended to provide helpful information to the Clergy who will assist in providing spiritual leadership for this community.

Meals

Please be at the Dining Hall a few minutes before each scheduled meal, as I will be counting on you to begin the meal if I cannot be present. If for any reason you are not able to be there, please notify me in advance. Ask the kitchen crew to let you know if they are ready and when they are, ask someone outside to ring the bell and allow the rest of the campers to enter.

The prayer before meals begins with the priest saying "In the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God. Amen." Before meals, you would then begin the intoning of the Lord's Prayer. Following "but deliver us from evil.", the people will immediately begin to intone, "Glory to the Father... Lord have mercy (x3). Father, bless." The blessing is the traditional "O Christ our God, bless the food and drink of these thy servants..." after which everyone will sing "Amen." During festal periods, the Apolytikion replaces the Lord's Prayer.

After meals, the priest says, "In the name of the Father..." and begins the singing of the appropriate hymn: "O, give thanks unto the Lord," at Breakfast and Dinner, and "At the Beauty," at Lunch. After the singing of the hymn and the "Glory to the Father..." the priest blesses with "God is with us through His grace and love for mankind, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages," completed by the people singing, "Amen."

Services

I will set up a rotating schedule of clergy for celebrating the daily services, typically alternating every other day. You will celebrate a full cycle (evening and morning) on your assigned days. All clergy in attendance will be invited to celebrate the Divine Liturgy. Other clergy present may be assigned some services as well.

Preaching

When serving at the morning service, you will preach as well. At the Divine Liturgy, the Homily immediately follows the Gospel. At Daily Matins, the Homily follows the conclusion of the service. I prefer the day's Gospel reading to be the basis of the Homily, from which to direct the message to the unique audience of children and young adults.

Teaching

Each morning, you will be assigned to two one-hour religious education sessions. Most often, the session will be “Ask Abouna,” an open forum for questions brought by the young people. The sessions will run from 10:00-11:00 AM and 11:15 AM- 12:15 PM. If a particular issue requires further discussion with a group, a Cabin Time discussion can be arranged with that group (see “Cabin Time” below). Any questions on location can be directed to the Christian Education Director.

Counseling/Spiritual Direction

Though we only have the young people present for a short time, a surprising depth of spiritual experience often occurs. This may require extended time for one-on-one conversations. You will find that some of the staff and older campers are seeking fairly in-depth spiritual direction. Campers, Counselors and Volunteers occasionally discuss sensitive issues with visiting clergy during confession. Many clergy who are not trained in handling sensitive issues find it difficult to help without discussing the content of confession with others. If a sensitive issue that requires professional attention should arise, please attempt to do the following:

1. Seek permission and discuss with the person the option of talking with someone who can help them to follow up on these issues and possibly refer them to someone in their area who can continue to provide guidance and support.
2. Attempt to have them talk to the Staff Support Counselor, Camp Director, and/or Camp Nurse, as they have guidelines to follow.
3. Continue to give spiritual guidance and support as needed.

Afternoon

This will often be a less hectic part of your day. If you would like to use the time to rest, please feel free to do so. You may want to use this time to be around the campers, and this can be done in numerous ways, by your choice: playing in any of the sports activities, swimming or sitting around the pool, or just walking around and interacting with the campers and staff. Often, this may be a time to set up “appointments” with the campers or staff who would like more time to talk.

Confession

The normal time set aside for confession will be the evenings preceding the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Confessions are heard before dinner, from 4:30 PM until the confessions have all been heard. You may need to arrange other times for individual appointments for confession or extended time for spiritual direction.

Cabin Time

Evening Program follows Dinner and is optional if you would like to attend and participate. Following Evening Program, cabins or groups of cabins may request your presence for a Cabin Time discussion. The cabin usually provides the topics, which generally center on contemporary issues, i.e. sex, drugs, and rock and roll, so be prepared for very frank discussions! For units 2 & 3, these discussions will run from 9:15 - 9:45 PM at the latest, and must be held in the cabin. Units 1 & 4 have cabin times from 9:45 PM until no later than 10:30 PM either in a cabin for a single cabin group or at another pre-determined location that can hold a larger group for multiple cabins.

Dress

The camping environment is by nature casual and therefore liberties are taken with clergy dress. In the services, cassock and/or *exorasson/gibbee* are to be worn. During teaching sessions, cassocks are appropriate. At other times, either clerical shirts or casual shirts are acceptable, as are shorts (except for services and teaching sessions, even if worn under a cassock). My typical daily dress is a casual shirt and long pants/sweatpants or shorts. Daytime temperatures often reach the 80-90 degree range, with even higher percentages of humidity!

Living arrangements

Session priests typically stay in the men's volunteer cabin or one of the trailers. Please be aware that our schedule requires your complete attention for most of the day. If interested, we will do our best to accommodate your family attending with you, as long as your presence will not be required at any time for caring for your children. Also, unfortunately, our budget only allows travel reimbursement for you. Please let me know if you would like to bring your family, so that we can accommodate their housing.

Thanks for your willingness and hard work on behalf of our children! I hope you find your time with us to be a time of rejuvenation for you as well.

Antiochian Village Typical Daily Schedule

(Schedule varies on days when the Divine Liturgy is celebrated)

8:00 AM	Matins
9:00 AM	Breakfast
10:00-11:00AM	Morning Program Session 1
11:00-11:15AM	Break
11:15 AM-12:15 PM	Morning Program Session 2
12:15-12:45 PM	Cabin Time
12:45-1:45 PM	Lunch
1:45-2:45 PM	Afternoon Program Session 1
2:45-3:00 PM	Break
3:00-4:00 PM	Afternoon Program Session 2
4:00-4:30 PM	Gimme Shop/Staff Meeting
4:30-6:00 PM	Cabin Time
6:00-7:00 PM	Vespers
7:00-8:00 PM	Dinner
8:00-9:45 PM	Evening Program
9:45-10:30 PM	Cabin Times
12:00 AM	All-camp curfew