



## Camp Agape Spends a Week at Camp Wright

by Mikki Baile and Nancy Hastings

They came bravely and defiantly to experience camp at a new location. What is this Camp Wright? Is it safe? Who are these counselors?

What will I eat? What will I do? Will I be able to do it? They came from their world to Camp Wright - a world where they survive by bravado, disappearing, fighting, and hiding all emotion. A world where they have very little, are never a priority to anyone and are often pushed aside.



Our sixth year of holding camp for children with an incarcerated parent had begun. As usual there were high and low

points. Some children had a difficult time transitioning to the structure, while others blossomed.

One of our oldest campers will be part of Camp Wright's counselor-in-training program next year.

God blessed us with two beautiful sunsets

over the Bay. The children smiled, many of them were seeing the sight for the first time. They talked excitedly about it the next day.

One evening Father Moyer - Father Mike to us - found a quiet place by the water. When he looked out, he saw some of the kids kayaking on the Chesapeake

Bay and thought how wonderful it was to see that peaceful sight, something many of them probably



never dreamed of doing a week before.

Of course, there were meltdowns and the usual amazing needs. One little girl's flip-flops



(probably the only shoes she owned) broke while playing tennis, so shoes were purchased. Another child had one pair of long pants

and nothing else, so shorts were purchased. These needs are the easy ones to meet. Much to our frustration and sadness, some needs could not be met by a week at camp. Terribly damaged children,



raw emotionally and in pain, were among us. Sometimes a hug would help. In other cases, it will take years of intensive counseling. We don't like to think about this, but



you can't help but see it.

As they left camp pulling black plastic bags, which served as their suit cases, across the grass to the parking lot where the bus waited, they proudly wore their new backpacks full of school supplies. They were exhausted and quiet. Some may have



been concerned about arriving home or about starting a new school year; some were probably wondering what was going on at

the place where they would sleep that night.

A week at Camp Agape brings out joys and sorrows in all the volunteers. We pray for guidance and strength each day. But, at the final Eucharist when the children walked forward to receive communion, we knew that God was in our midst, and we prayed that she will watch over the children until our Christmas party, when the Agape family will be reunited.

The annual Camp Agape Christmas party will take place on Saturday, December 7, from 1:00 to 4:00 pm, at the Cambridge YMCA. At the party, the Agape children

swim, play games, eat pizza, do crafts, and select and wrap presents for their family. Most of all, they enjoy seeing each other. Volunteers are needed as drivers and for the party. Small, new or gently used gifts are needed for the gift table, and of course donations are welcome.



For more information on ways you can participate, please call Mikki Baile (410-708-6624) or Nancy Hastings (410-221-7892).



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