



Office for Youth & Young Adult Ministry
Archdiocese of Newark, NJ



St. John Paul II Youth Retreat Center / CYO Sports / Catholic Scouting / PJH / Summer Camp

Monday June 15, 2020

Dear Parents,

I hope you and your family are doing well during this unprecedented time. We have been monitoring for months now the rapidly evolving situation around COVID-19 and the impact it is having on our state and community. Our highest priority is always for the health and well-being of our campers, volunteers and staff.

When Governor Murphy announced a few weeks ago that Day Camps could in fact operate we had hope for the summer. As a state licensed summer camp, we must follow all guidelines issued by the NJ Department of Health. On Monday June 8th the NJ Department of Health issued new guidelines in light of Covid-19. These new guidelines for this summer would **DRASTICALLY** change the way we could run our camp program.

All campers would need to be grouped into a “pod” of 10 children with one staff member. Those “pods” could not change campers and could not mingle. For our campers ages 7-12 there could be no “signing up for classes”. Campers would not be able to change activities every hour as we have done for over 15 years now. Contact sports would instead need to be “drills only”. Masks would need to be worn by campers and staff all day long. The numbers allowed at our pool would be cut by over a ½. Meals could not be self-serve or buffet – with an emphasis on encouraging parents to pack lunches instead for their children. Absolutely no trips, or outside guests allowed. Staggered arrival and departure times for campers would also need to be implemented.

All of this would be on top of the required daily screening, temperature checks and rigorous cleaning of not only facilities, but all equipment (arts and crafts, computers, video games, sports supplies, etc) that would need to be done.

After spending the last few days reviewing these guidelines, after responses from Archdiocesan Officials and along with our own business analysis for the camp, **we have made the VERY difficult decision to cancel the 2020 CYO Summer Day Camp season.** This is not something we took lightly. However, with so many questions still in light of the Covid-19 pandemic we felt it was the best decision for all.

This decision is heartbreaking for me as the Director of the Summer Camp Program. We know how valuable time at the CYO Day Camp is for the youth in our community and the lifelong benefits it provides to our youth, family and community. God will provide and we have confidence in a brighter tomorrow. We will continue to move forward with hope and faith here in the Office for Youth & Young Adult Ministry.

On the back of this letter are detailed “next step” instructions we are asking of each family. These include information on an opportunity for our 12-year old’s that were going to “age out” this summer, to move what your payments to next year and secure your child’s spot already, or to request a refund. **We ask that you PLEASE COMPLETE this as soon as possible.**

Please know I empathize with the disappointment that you must be feeling at this time. This would have been our 29th season of CYO Day Camp, and my 23rd summer as the Director! Still, better days are ahead. We will be praying and focused on planning for a fulfilling 2021 camp season, anticipating the smiling faces, laughter and friendships that make such wonderful CYO Day Camp memories.

We here at the Office for Youth & Young Adult Ministries are praying that God’s goodness may keep you and your loved ones healthy and blessed during this difficult time.

Rich Donovan
Associate Director, Office for Youth & Young Adult Ministry
CYO Summer Camp Director

NEXT STEPS for CYO Day Camp Parents

With the unfortunate cancelling of the 2020 CYO Summer Day Camp Season we want to start making plans already for 2021.

We ask you to please go to the summer camp page on our website
www.newarkoym.com/cyodaycamp

Once there you will see a link for **2020 CYO Day Camp Parents**.

We ask you to click on that

The page will ask you for a password.

The password for the page is: **campparents2020**

Once on the page you will need to fill out some basic information.

You will eventually be asked the following questions

-would you like to roll your payment for the 2020 camp season over to the 2021 Camp Season. This will give you a guaranteed spot. Next year we would contact you to simply fill out a new form and choose your weeks. But your child's spot would be set!

-would you like to request a full refund on what you paid for camp this season. Next year you would need to re-register and would not have a guaranteed spot.

For our 12 year olds that are "aging" out of camp

**There were about 20 campers registered for this year that would turn 13 after camp ended, and would not be eligible to return to camp next year. FOR ONE SUMMER ONLY we will let them return to camp if you desire so they can get at least one more year of camp. We WILL NOT be taking any additional 13 year old's.

We do not take 13 year old's as Counselor in Training (CIT's). This program does not start until a teen reaches 14 years old.

If you have any issues filling out the online form please contact

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