



The Catholic
Archdiocese
of Edmonton

Archdiocesan Camps Renewal Project: Update 2

November 4, 2019

Reverend Fathers; Parish, School and Camp Colleagues; Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Planning for the redevelopment of the two archdiocesan camps has entered a new phase with the Archbishop's approval of a 10-year business plan for the renewal project and resumption of operations at Our Lady of Victory Camp for the 2020 camping season.

Archbishop Smith reiterated his commitment to OLVC and Camp Encounter at the first annual Archbishop's Dinner on October 4, noting that they have played life-shaping and life-changing roles in the lives of many of the young people who have attended the camps. On October 30, the Camps Renewal Committee presented His Grace and archdiocesan leaders with a concrete plan for moving forward. We are pleased to report that this plan has now been reviewed and approved. Here are some highlights:

- ❖ Work on both camps will be completed gradually, in three phases over the years 2020-2030, depending on the availability of capital funds. New models of camping are proposed for both camps, which will make them self-sustaining into the future. Both the capital construction and new programming will reflect the teachings of Pope Francis in three documents:
 - *Laudato Si*, emphasizing care for creation and an approach to stewardship that includes respect for God's gift of creation;
 - *Amoris Laetitia*, which challenges the local Church to reconsider and re-energize our pastoral approach to families; and
 - *Christus Vivus*, the post-synodal exhortation on young people.
- ❖ The plan includes a review and evaluation at the end of each year to ensure we are meeting the needs of the community and stakeholders expressed in the 2018 survey. Details of the work planned for each phase will be published in the weeks to come.
- ❖ Capital improvements will be made to both camps over 10 years, at an estimated cost of \$5 million. These improvements will include upgrades to water/sewer/power infrastructure, demolition of some aging structures, and construction of some new facilities.
- ❖ As Archbishop Smith said at the dinner: "The fulfilment of the plan will be entirely dependent upon any funds that we are able to raise from donors." We will be sharing details of a fundraising campaign in the weeks and months to come. *Without knowing any of those details*, attendees at the Archbishop's Dinner generously donated more than \$30,000 toward camps renewal. We are grateful for this sincere show of support.

- ❖ Programming will resume at OLVC in the summer of 2020; some spring and fall camping may also be offered. Registrations will open in January 2020 to give parents, parishes and schools time to plan. Initial improvements to OLVC include a new family camping area, new maintenance and storage building, and new wash facility.
- ❖ At Camp Encounter, the plan aims to introduce a broader audience to the joys of camping in a Catholic environment. This will require removal of aging structures and development of tent and RV sites for families or parish/school groups, along with new wash facilities. We anticipate reopening Camp Encounter in 2022. Also planned are cabins and improvements to the island, beachfront, and dock.

Our volunteer supporters will continue to play a vital role in the Camps Renewal Project through Stewardship Camping Weekends planned for the beginning and end of each season. We witnessed some of their dedication and commitment on September 7, when Deacon Claude Baril and 100 friends turned out for a work bee at OLVC. They put in a full day of lawn, garden and playground cleanup, removing downed trees, clearing paths, and taking down siding, roofing, and windows from unusable buildings. We are grateful to these faithful camp stewards and look forward to collaborating with all camp supporters as we move forward in this renewal.

We are grateful as well for your patience and prayers as the Camps Renewal Project proceeds. We will continue to provide regular updates as the work unfolds.

Our Lady of Victory, pray for us!

For general inquiries or comments, contact:

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In Christ,



Lucy Kaakyo
Committee Chair