



Summer Camp

Opening up a new world for youth

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A leap into the unknown

Program Director, Maribel Ramos

Every year when I plan for our camp season, I think about all of the new experiences children will enjoy; not just the boat ride in Arrowhead Lake but what they will learn from stepping out of their world for a week. Leaving their community is more than “escaping” the city, but it is also the chance to explore life outside of their community away from home and family. And on their own it is a chance for them to be a kid and grow!

Kids participating in camp gain a greater appreciation of education inside and outside of the classroom. Children learn values such as compassion, sharing and respect from their peers and counselors at camp. It truly is a life changing experience for kids and anyone involved.

Every year, we visit the camp and I am always amazed and exhausted with the amount of activities kids do each day! It is hard to keep up with them, but it is a joy to see and a wonderful program to offer.

My favorite part of camp is the opportunity we are giving the children. We are increasing their chances of having a successful future because we are introducing them to a new world beyond what they experience in their day to day lives.

Sister Water, so useful, humble, precious and pure

Kids enjoy their first canoe ride on Lake Arrowhead, one of the many new experiences they will have at summer camp!



Top 5 Reasons to Support Summer Camp:

- 1. Children are around positive role models.** Counselors are trained to provide safe, fun activities for kids. They help teach children to listen while others are speaking, and encourage children to help their peers having difficulty with a project or activity.
- 2. Children learn appropriate risk taking.** Psychologists tell us children join gangs because they enjoy the thrill and adrenaline rush of doing something wrong. Camp channels that thrill into wholesome activities, like horseback riding, rock climbing and taking a night hike! Camp is an environment created with the purpose of developing youth to take appropriate risks to get the satisfaction of gaining self-confidence in doing something not all kids do. *Continued on pg.2*

After camp kids receive backpacks to start off the school year!



Get Involved

We need your help collecting camp supplies & backpacks
Are you looking for a summer service project? We need your support gathering the supplies to send kids to camp. We are looking for groups to collect, pack and distribute camping kits filled with toiletries, flashlights and water bottles. If this sounds like something you and your group would like to support, give us a call! Additional group volunteer support is needed for our Fourth Annual Back Pack Drive! For more information about the backpack or camping kit drive contact Sylvia Quintero, squintero@sfcla.org or call 213-747-5347 x 100.

1 Your donation to SFC is tax deductible as a charitable contribution. Our legal name is St. Francis Center. We are a tax-exempt, non-profit organization 501(c)3 of the IRS Code. Our Federal Identification number is **95-4479271**.

Connecting with Mother Earth

A Franciscan Tradition

Saint Francis is often referenced as the patron saint of nature and animals because of his connection with Mother Earth and his famous *Canticle of The Creatures*. Francis spent most of his life outdoors and cherished nature as a gift from God. His love and connection to the Earth is a belief that was most likely ahead of his times, and here we are over 800 years later and this ideal is revitalized today from reusable bags to public transportation campaigns.

To love, respect and appreciate the beauty of nature is an obvious ideal for most people, but for the children in our community it is not always so visible. Their connections with nature are limited to sidewalk shrubbery and scattered palm trees. The vast skyline of the Santa Monica Mountains can barely be seen from downtown LA, with buildings and smog clouding their view. The opportunity we provide kids to get out of the city and connect with nature is an investment in their future. Our camp rates increased this year but that will not stop us from sending children to summer camp because the experience they have at camp is priceless!

Founding volunteer, Helen Payne spent many nights under the stars on camping and hiking trips. She and Karl Holtsnider led several groups of young people on hikes and camping trips. They would spend days up in the High Sierras hiking, camping, and enjoying nature. Some of you reading this may have been on one of those memorable trips; there were many of them and every experience gave them a stronger bond with nature and God. While out on their trips they often hiked into camp with an altar stone to celebrate Mass in the woods.

Our Camping program goal is to leave a lasting impression on children, to connect them with nature and open their eyes to a brighter future that is out there for them, but we need your help to ensure we continue providing these opportunities for kids! If you would like to leave your legacy and love for the outdoors for generations to come, contact us at the Center to leave St. Francis Center in your will.



Founding Volunteer, Helen Payne

Top 5 Reasons to Support Summer Camp continued...

- 3. Children meet a variety of people.** Camp connects children with kids from different schools, communities, and cultures. They sleep in the same quarters and they eat the same food and they enjoy the same activities.
- 4. Children learn creativity in Camp.** Camp gets kids looking at the world with imagination, from the daily costume contests to the creative skits performed by the campfire. Creativity is encouraged and rewarded at camp!
- 5. Camp gives parents a much needed break!** Parents benefit from their kids going to camp too! A parent's job does not end at the end of the work day and when kids are sent off to camp for a week, that means 1 whole week of vacation for parents too... Well, maybe not an island getaway, but a small break from the daily challenges of parenting.

Support
Summer
Camp!



Help us send children to camp! You can sponsor a child or a portion of a child's camp fee by making a donation to St. Francis Center!

- ___\$1000 provides much needed support for Summer Camp Programs
- ___\$500 provides a camp scholarship for 1 week long overnight camper
- ___\$100 provides day camp for 2 children
- ___\$25 provides swimming lessons for 1 child

I have enclosed my \$___ charitable donation. Payable via:

___check ___cash ___credit/debit card (online or by phone)

