

March 18, 2008

Dear Parents of Holy Name of Jesus middle schoolers,

It's **Summer Stretch** sign-up time already. Please read this letter carefully as there are some important changes to the program this year.

If you are receiving this information for the first time, **Summer Stretch** is **6 weeks of faith, service and fun** for youth entering 7th, 8th or 9th grade. It is a great chance for your kids to do something meaningful, meet other kids, be mentored by faith-filled teens and adults from HNOJ and have some fun.

- We begin each morning by celebrating our **faith** with Mass at HNOJ.
- From there, we are sent in small groups to serve the Lord and each other at various **service** sites around the area (ex: Feed My Starving Children, Jeremiah Project, Mary's Place, St. Therese Care Center, etc).
- After a quick lunch back at HNOJ, we bus to our afternoon **fun** activity (ex: waterparks, bowling, etc).

Please read the enclosed **Summer Stretch brochure** for dates, times and other information.

Important **Summer Stretch clarifications** . . .

- **Kids** are now required to complete a simple application to participate – we hope to attract the kids who want to be here and therefore make the whole experience more meaningful for everyone. We intend to close registration at 100 kids.
- **Parents** are now required to volunteer – more help is needed this year since we are not using buses for our morning service sites.
 - We need 20 committed parents who will co-lead groups of 10 kids each, 2 parents to a group. Training will be provided. At least one of the two co-leaders will be with the group all six mornings.
 - We need additional drivers for the morning. Up to 20 drivers may be required each morning in addition to the adult group leaders.
 - We need 10 parents to help chaperone the afternoon activity.
- **Teen leaders** will again be assisting the adult group leaders. Two high school teens will be assigned to each group. If you have a teen that would like to help, have them contact Nate Reinhardt, nreinhardt@hnoj.org, for an application.

Important Summer Stretch dates and events . . .

- **Teen leaders, parents, and kids sign-ups** – all forms with registration fees are due by May 14.
- **Mandatory parent meeting** – pick one of two times – Mon., June 9 or Thurs., June 12 at 7:00pm – your volunteer schedule and responsibilities will be explained and handed out there.
- **Adult group leader training** will follow each of the two mentioned parent meetings.
- **Valley Fair** is the fun activity on Aug. 6, our last service day – day will end at 8:00pm.

Important rules and reminders for stretchers and teen leaders . . .

- Bring bag lunch every week
- Wear your summer stretch t-shirt every week – no short shorts
- Wear/bring tennis shoes every week – almost all service sites require them
- For water activities, only one piece swimsuits allowed
- The security of all valuables are the responsibility of the participants. Don't bring it if you don't want to keep track of it.
- Have an openness to try new things, even things that may be uncomfortable (especially at some service sites)
- Show respect for all leaders
- Have the courage to apply Summer Stretch experiences to your life

Important reminders for parents . . .

- Make sure your stretchers follow the above rules and reminders
- All adult volunteers are required to have completed the Virtus safety training.

Questions or concerns? At any time, contact Nate Reinhardt at (763) 473-7901 or nreinhardt@hnoj.org