

March 29, 2016

Dear Form II Parents:

In just under two weeks, the Saint Louis Priory School Chaplaincy will hold the **Form II Outdoor Retreat** at CAMP ONDESSONK, a Catholic Outdoor Education Center located near Marion, Illinois, and run under the auspices of the Diocese of Belleville, Illinois. Most of the current Form II boys were at Camp Ondessonk at the beginning of Form I. The purpose of the program is to provide a natural and spiritual setting for the boys to become acquainted with their classmates in a non-academic, non-athletic atmosphere. As with other outdoor programs, they will be challenged to learn about themselves and their peers. They will sleep outside in three-sided shelters that resemble “Ewok Villages” and participate in activities which include a Teams course, a climbing wall, a hike through the National Forest, a steak dinner, monastic prayer, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, confession, and the holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

The dates for this program are April 10-12. Boys will meet at the Junior School on Sunday, April 10, at 7:45 am for an 8:00 am departure, and they will return to the Junior School by about 3:30 pm on Tuesday afternoon, at which time they are free to go home. The boys are excused from their normal classes on Monday and Tuesday. Mass at camp on Sunday evening will fulfill the boys’ Sunday mass obligation.

Camp Ondessonk is located about 165 miles from Priory, on 981 acres within the Shawnee National Forest in Southern Illinois. (For details visit [www.ondessonk.com](http://www.ondessonk.com)). In addition to the regular summer programs, the staff and facilities are used for families and groups such as ours. Camp guidelines require that we provide adult supervision. A number of adults, including faculty, monks, and myself--and certain hand-picked upperclassmen—will participate.

Transportation will be provided by two 49-seat coaches. The drive time is about two-and-a-half hours. Food and drink will not be permitted on the coach.

Due to limited capacity on the vehicles, a packing list is attached and should be specifically heeded. Please avoid packing unnecessary clothing. No cell phones or other electronics are allowed.

Each student will be charged \$245 to cover the expenses incurred for Camp Ondessonk. This charge was included on your February tuition bill. We have worked hard to keep this figure as low as possible, but if your family should find the amount to be burdensome, please speak with Mrs. Hartnett at your first opportunity.

We fully expect each Form II student to participate in this important program. Outside sport or leisure commitments should be arranged to accommodate the event. Any special needs or concerns should be addressed to me as soon as they arise. *Please know that this is an extremely important time for the Form II boys to become more acquainted with all of their classmates, with me, with the Benedictine nature of the Priory School, and especially to prepare them fully to participate in and benefit from our six-year program as they move into the high school in the Fall.*

Included with this newsletter are the necessary forms for Camp Ondessonk. **Please complete the medical form / liability waiver and return it to Mrs. Lane's office as soon as possible, but in any case, no later than Wednesday, April 6.**

Father Augustine Wetta, OSB  
Saint Louis Abbey  
Saint Louis Priory School