

Praise God! We are finally reunited! After a series of lockdowns brought by the Covid-19 pandemic, the Apostolic Faith Philippines young people have finally reunited in the face-to-face Youth camp held on July 18-22, 2022 at GP Resort in Guimba, Nueva Ecija. Everybody was filled with joy and excitement as they met their fellow campers at AFC Headquarters in Bagong Sikat in the morning and traveled all together to the venue by afternoon. Some campers have endured a 5-hour trip just to attend this much-awaited youth camp. They wanted to take this opportunity to establish meaningful relationships and make unforgettable memories. Above all, they sought to strengthen their faith in God.

Headed by camp director Bro. Jonathan Soliven together with the assigned faithful big brothers and sisters in Christ and committed organizing committee, this year's theme was anchored on Mark 12: 30-31 "Give your heart to the Lord with all your soul". The preparation for the said event started even months ago when the camp director performed an ocular inspection in the venue. According to Bro. Jonathan, God reminded him of his first ever big brother experience and the place is simply nostalgic.

After a short trip from Bagong Sikat to Guimba, the campers had started to unload their luggage and set up their own tents. Some youths are thrilled because they can relive their scouting

adventure. The caretakers were very welcoming, and the resort was said to be exclusive only for the campers during the five-day event.

During the 7 PM Opening Program, everyone was delighted to sing their favorite action songs. Behind our face masks, we knew by heart and soul that everyone was wearing their biggest smiles while singing “Smile Awhile”. Shortly after the lively singing, Rev. Lamberto Dollente led the opening prayer, followed by a short orientation on camp rules



given by no less than the camp director. Next the Assistant Youth Leader, Rev. Jamindre Torres delivered some words of encouragement to the campers. Then, Rev. Guadalupe Miranda shared a heartfelt message centered on 1 Timothy 4:12, saying God is love and He is the only true source of love.



Early in the morning, the registration committee posted the master list per group. Campers gathered in their respective cottages for the morning devotion. It was like the first day of school, everyone was given a chance to formally introduce themselves to the group. Their big brothers and big sisters prepared a short ice breaker. They read Exodus 21:33-36 – 22:1-15

which was about how Israelites suffered the consequences of their actions. The text pointed out that anyone who steals must certainly make restitution, but if they have nothing, they must be sold to pay for their theft. However, we have nothing to pay the debts for our sins. The youth leaders have impressed upon us the importance of practicing restitution. They spoke of how Jesus redeemed us from our sins and saved us from eternal damnation.

During the 1<sup>st</sup> Bible Study which focused on our HEARTS, the speaker, Sis. Ella Joyce Paragas, designed a student-centered presentation in which she asked the campers to participate in the recitations per group. Sis. Ella first addressed the more conscious manifestation of our heart's desire. She emphasized that our spiritual heart is the seat of life and strength, mind, soul, spirit, and will. According to her, the heart is an instrument through which we find and serve God. She also discussed the different love languages which are affirmation, quality time, gifts, acts of service, and physical touch. Each group representative shared what they have learned that morning.



In the afternoon, the campers showcased their artistic talents through painting on canvas. Compared to traditional art contests, use of synthetic coloring materials and ready-made paints was not allowed. Each group created their masterpiece depicting the theme, "Give your heart to the Lord with all your soul" out of natural materials found only inside the campground. Some groups picked up flowers to produce color pigments such as green, brown, and yellow. There were a few who creatively used mud and broken clay pots to paint monochromatic arts. Then, every team gave a brief description of their artwork. Although the winners for this event would only be named in the Closing Program, the four judges admitted that all the teams exceeded their expectations. The activity made us realize that nothing is too small or insignificant and that the Lord takes notice of everything and everyone.



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No one could ever discount the power of our testimonies. It is a powerful tool to proclaim what God has done in our lives. Many young people have decided to open their lives in the Evangelistic Service. Some became emotional because of the burden they had been carrying for a very long time. They have chosen to serve God under the most undesirable situations of their lives. Truly, His faithfulness shines the brightest in our darkest times.

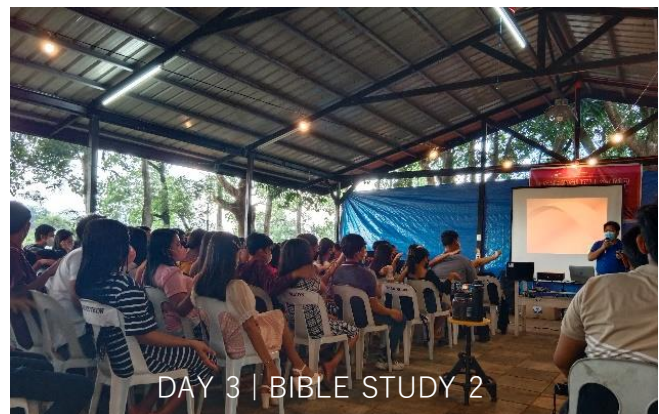
Rev. Rizaldy D. Caliboso delivered a message which was about loving the Lord with your whole being (Mark 12: 8-30). First, he encouraged the youth to utilize their talents for His glory. Second, he urged everyone to consistently devote a special time to contemplate on the Word of God. In this way, we could see His plan for us. In the end, Pastor Zaldy preached about life's treasures. The service concluded with a closing prayer followed by an altar call.



The best way to start our day is to have a quiet moment with God. At 6 AM, everyone gathered in their designated cottages to meditate on God's word. They read Exodus 22:16-31 which focuses on purity and Exodus 23:1-9 on social justice. Their observations of social injustices were useful for the flow of ideas. Their big brothers and big sisters enumerated provocative scenarios that could trigger backsliding. After that, everyone in

the group gave their thoughts about the unfair treatment of the world. As Christians, we are directed to be the catalyst for both social and spiritual change.

For Bible Study 2, campers gathered in the open hall. The speaker was Bro. Edwin Sanchez. He brought the topic "Mind", specifically the mind invaders. He presented some interesting data about the use of social media. We were surprised by the amount of screen time we allot for a day. He said that this was very alarming for us Christians to spend our time browsing the internet. Excessive use of cell phones robs us of our time and makes



us unproductive Christians. Truly, this bible study was an eye-opener to the youth as they examine themselves.



The activity that afternoon was the Biblelympics hosted by Bro. Marvin Baldonado and Sis. Eloisa Villarta. Through Biblelympics, the youth's knowledge of the bible was put to test. The young people were challenged to answer biblical questions starting from easy, average up to difficult level. In this activity, each group was not only challenged mentally but also physically. Questions were given to each group if and only if they were

able to finish the given task. The team-building event created a deeper sense of camaraderie among the participating groups.

We had the night of talents in the evening. This was one of the most memorable and thrilling activities in the youth camp. Again, this was their moment to showcase their hidden acting skills. Everyone did an amazing job as they incorporated music, drama, some action, and comedy into their presentations. Some stood out



and seemed very natural under the spotlight. There was one group that creatively added some spoken poetry to their heartfelt production. Overall, the judges were very much grateful for the wonderful performances of our talented youths and surely everyone enjoyed the presentations.



The first activity for Day 4 was the Color Run. The campers assembled in front of the resort which was the starting block. They need to complete a track distance of 4 kms and have their shirts covered by paint. The Org Comm poured down different colors on their white shirts and even made some designs out of them. The challenge of

the race was for all the members of the group to arrive simultaneously. Afterward, Rev. Jamiandre Torres used the Color Run as an object lesson to challenge the young people to reflect on the spiritual race set before them.



Bible Study 3 which centered on the “Soul” was discussed by Bro. Jomar Aban. He reminded everyone that we are tripartite beings – with body, spirit, and soul. He emphasized the importance of our soul as it will one day be judged by God. And because of sin, our default destination is hell in eternity. But because of God’s mercy and grace, we can go to heaven if

we repent, forsake our sins and believe and accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior. At the altar call, the Holy Spirit filled the place. Many young people were saved, sanctified, baptized, and re-anointed with the Holy Spirit. Truly, God is at work!

One most anticipated activity during youth camp is the Amazing Race. Each group is obliged to finish the 10 stations packed with different challenges or tasks needed to be accomplished. Some demand physical strength, some need mental abilities, and other tasks require the use of senses. Nevertheless, the young people surely enjoyed the activity. A tiring yet fulfilling activity indeed.



During the night, the young people worship the Lord through Songs of Praise. Every group was given a song to sing and in between, some young people gave their testimony on how God changed their life. Every youth has a story to tell, but they all have something in common, and that is, that



they found God and have accepted Jesus as their Savior. Moreover, it developed a deeper sense of fellowship among the youths as they genuinely shared their hard-fought battles. The night was filled with songs of praise as everyone lifted their voices singing praises to our Lord. They sang with all their hearts, not minding

whether they were in tune or not, what matters most is they sang heartily unto the Lord.

It was Day 5, everyone woke up early to start the activity called the Trust Walk. Each member of the group being blindfolded groped as they hold tightly onto the rope while being distracted along their journey. Their task was to stay focused to reach their destination which is to meet the Lord at the altar of grace through prayer. So as not to be lost, they must follow their big brother's and big sister's voices who were guiding them. The TRUST



WALK was so designed to help the young people realized the importance of being keen on their spiritual walk with God, to stay focused on God and be ready to meet Him when He comes for His own and be with Him in heaven. Everyone successfully reached the hall to pray but there are those who seemed to have a stone heart that they couldn't just let go and give their lives to the Lord. But God is so good! Many young people got saved, sanctified, and baptized by the Holy Spirit during the altar call.



At 9:00 am, the water baptism was facilitated by Rev. Jamindre Torres and Rev. Josefino Aban. Everyone witnessed with joy as each one of the 50 candidates for water baptism was baptized which shows and publicly proclaims that they are already born again, and they are now willing followers of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. These young people came from different branch churches and many of them expressed their interest in

serving the Lord using their talents.



The days went by quickly, our youth camp reaches its final activity which is the closing program. It is evident in the face of every single youth that they don't want the youth camp to end just yet but we need to go back to our own places and stand in our ground with the help of the Lord and having the word of the Lord and the testimonies as our inspiration to continue serving our Creator. The closing program started with

the singing of short choruses followed by an opening prayer, and the closing remarks which were given by our camp director. Three of the campers were given a chance to share their experiences and reflections during the span of the camp. At this point, the awarding of rewards in the different activities conducted was given to the group that excelled in every task. Applauses and cheers



echoed in the hall while the awarding was going on. Then, certificate of participation was awarded to each participant. Of course, the closing program will not be completed without singing the song “Smile Awhile”. After that, Rev. Miguel Carganilla led the closing prayer.

The Youth Camp 2022 with the theme “Give your heart to the Lord with all your soul” was successfully conducted with 181 participants from different branch churches in the Philippines. We owe the success of the Youth Camp to the Lord. All glory belongs to Him!