



# TOUCHSTONE

Providing Christian hospitality, camping, and retreat programs to serve, nurture, and equip the people of God for God's work in the world.

November 2007

## Rooted in a Theology of Place

"...It was one of the magical places of the world, one of the chinks or chasms between that world and this. There were many chinks and chasms between worlds in old times, but they have grown rarer. This was one of the last: I do not say **the** last."

from *Prince Caspian*, by C. S. Lewis

This week, I was at a committee meeting at the diocesan house and someone said, "Camp Stoney should be the warm spiritual center of the Diocese of the Rio Grande."

I responded, "For the children and youth, it already is." Whether through Narnia camp or adventure camps, the way of the cross or hikes to the ridge, the children and youth of our diocese are meeting Christ in this place.

There is a long tradition among God's people of erecting altars in places where they encounter the presence of the Lord. In the Old Testament, Noah, Jacob, Joshua and many others took stones to build altars where God had helped them in times of need.

Ancient Celtic Christians talked a lot about "holy places." They knew that the nature of our faith bears witness that Jesus is a real person, in a real time, in a real place, and that our response to him is also rooted in a time and place.

And when many people over time meet God in a place, it was described as a "thin place," where the "space between heaven and earth is thin." I believe that Santa Fe—the city of Holy Faith—and Camp Stoney in particular, are "thin places."

Here at Camp Stoney, there is a history of God's people rooted in time and place who have met Jesus. I have met adults from across our diocese who attended Camp Stoney as children, and for them, Santa Fe is a holy place.

We want to invite you to make Camp Stoney your holy place. Consider using our facilities during the off-season. Our retreat house, the cottage, and the cabins are available to rent for vestry retreats, family reunions, and personal retreats. And our rates are a very reasonable way to visit Santa Fe.

Please consider making Camp Stoney part of your giving, or make a monthly pledge. By giving \$30 a month for 11 months, you can send one child to summer camp. Perhaps, you would rather help put a handicapped bathroom in one of the cabins. Whether you have a little or a lot to give, this ministry is vital to the spiritual journeys of our children and the future of our diocese. Camp Stoney can only carry on its mission if we all get involved.

Fr. Ray Simpson, leader of our Celtic retreat in August, writes in his book *Exploring Celtic Spirituality*, "Only from the security of a safe place can we move out into the endless horizons of God's universe, and into eternity."

Camp Stoney is your camp; please allow it to become a safe place, a holy place in your life, and the lives of our youth.

*The Bishop Stoney Camp & Conference Center*

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