

Southeast Regional MGSOSA Retreat



January 14, 2012 marked a monumental beginning to the MGSOSA Southeast Region as approximately forty youth and six clergy gathered at St. Mary's Augusta to kick off the New Year in high spirits. The motivational event focused on the theme "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak" Matthew 26:41.

The geographical distance was not allowed to be an obstacle. The event was attended by the youth from all over the region consisting of four churches in Georgia, two churches in Florida, and one church in North Carolina. The retreat was organized by the regional MGSOSA coordinators and the Vicar, members, and youth of St. Mary's Church, Augusta.

The retreat began at 7:30 AM with Morning prayers and lasted until 7 PM. The day's activities consisted of a charitable service project which entailed cooking and delivering food to a family at a local Ronald McDonald House. The inspirational key note sessions were led by Fr. Cherian Thalakulam of the Catholic Church and Dr. Philip Thomas, a sociology professor in Paine College. Small group sessions were led by Rev. Fr. Bijo Mathew, Rev. Dn. Shawn Shaji, Rev. Dn. Subin Shaji, Rev. Dn. Josh Thomas, and Rev. Dn. Jan

Wilson. The breakout teams were very enthusiastic and everyone actively participated in the discussions. There was also a panel discussion session led by Very Rev. Fr. Mathew Thomas Edathara, and Rev. Fr. Bijo Mathew. The panel did a wonderful job answering questions about the liturgy and church doctrines. Participants really enjoyed the time and extended their gratitude to the clergy panel. At the end of the retreat the group was divided into two groups by age and asked to perform a skit that incorporated the days learning activities. This was the first time in many years where youth from all over the region participated in such a retreat.

The attendees left the retreat being rejuvenated and has grown together through fellowship and learning more about the Holy Church. Our humble gratitude goes to the parents who chaperoned the youth to and from Augusta. Without their dedication the days event would not have been as successful as planned.

Also we extend our sincere thanks to Very Rev. Fr. Mathews Edathara and the youth and members of St. Mary's Augusta for their willingness to host and coordinate the event. We are also indebted to His Eminence Mor Titus Yeldho the Archbishop of this Diocese, the MGSOSA Vice President Rev. Fr. Bijo Mathew and MGSOSA General Secretary Rev. Dn. Shiryl Mathai for their support and prayers that have gone into creating such an amazing youth fellowship.

We thank God for a fruitful retreat and pray that the year holds many more blessed events and we humbly request that you continue to pray for the youth of this diocese as we move forward.



