



Mike Crupi/Catholic Courier

Three-year-old Emily Baker gets a kiss from Mary Beth Recore, who met and became fast friends with the Baker family during the 2003 Single Parent Family Camp. According to program director Robin James, one of the wonders of the camp is the sense of responsibility that all of the parents in attendance feel for all of the children. At left, Teresa LaPaglia of Clifton Springs and her 6-year-old son, Matthew, dip their feet in Conesus Lake.



Mike Crupi/Catholic Courier

Amy Dickson, a parishioner of Sacred Heart Church in Auburn, gets a high five from her 6-year-old daughter, Elizabeth, after both worked on their backstroke Aug. 26.

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ning committee.

One experience from that first year has always stood out in his mind, demonstrating the need for a camp like this. One morning, Clayton noticed a little girl — whose mother was widowed — standing outside the men's room and watch-

ing him shave. As he came out of the men's room, she went up to him and said, "Hey Mister, you have whipped cream on your ear."

"She had never seen a man shaving. ... It's obvious that she didn't have the experience of having a dad," Clayton said.

Blended families — families with parents who have remarried — are also welcome at Single Parent Family Camp. These families still face many of the same problems as single-parent families, but they can also provide inspiration, hope and a "success story" for other campers, James said.

First-time camper Maria Beltre brought her son and two daughters as well as a nephew and two granddaughters who also come from single-parent households. By the fifth day, the camp had already exceeded her expectations.

"It continues to show me the goals that I have set for myself and my family. I'm learning how to be a mom; be a grandmother; be a friend. It gives me the strength to go on," Beltre said.

Her 19-year-old son, Hussain, especially benefitted from the camp experience. Hussain is usually reserved, almost to the point of being aloof, she said. At the camp, however, Beltre saw her son coaching the younger children at play and opening up with campers his own age.

"Just for those couple days that he was here, he has shown this whole other side that I've known that he has but that he's afraid to show," Beltre said.

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10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Teaching  
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