If I could offer the children of today one gift

Our sense of security resides in the reality that the world of nature is a mirror of the Divine world, and that we are part of this world and have a relationship to it and to one another. If I could offer the children of today one gift, it would be the feeling of security: That feeling that they are being carried and held by people and powers above them who are tending to everything, who are attentive to them. When children are allowed to be in nature, they let themselves go. They breathe in the fresh air and feel the earth beneath their feet. The feel solid ground!. How joyous is the sound of children's voices on the grassy field! They are free and yet they are held.

I have had the honor to direct a children's summer camp for 23 years. I have watched our children come from a world of fear, anxiety, media indulgence and isolation, completely unfold and open up in the world of singing, woods, stars and sunsets. They are led by admirable young people who feel the responsibility for setting a good example for these children. They work together on their relationship to the earth and on gratitude and reverence for every living thing.

There are children who come to our camp who are "media impaired." They do not relate to others, they hardly know how to have a conversation at mealtime, or to wait until everyone has been served to start eating. They find it challenging to go along with group activities or to live in real time without being "bored."

It only takes three days for them to start creating something new. Each group has to perform a skit for the whole camp on the third day. The pressure is on. They figure out a rough story line, they find whacky costumes and they are busy! They find out without being able to articulate it, that they can create something wonderful, entertaining and funny with no help from any outside source. They can create. They weave baskets, they make journals, they make jewelry, they paint, they whittle, and they sing in four-part harmony. And they are happy!

Camp Harmony Lake is one place where children can be children again. They make friends for life, they sing all day, they laugh at the drop of a hat and they learn to live in community with others, in real time, in real space. They are offered an opportunity to pray. I cannot think of a greater gift.

This camp is on the east coast, in Kingsley, PA. Camp dates are July 31st-August 16th.

Rev. Carol Kelly

*Carol Kelly is a former Waldorf class and music teacher, now a Christian Community priest working in Hillsdale, NY. You can contact her at carolkelly.cc@gmail.com or register for camp at campharmonylake.org.