

Camp St Mary of Egypt

Sponsored by the parishes of the
Northwest Deanery of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian
Archdiocese



Camper & Parent Handbook

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We are so pleased that you have chosen to send your child to Camp St Mary of Egypt (CSME) and humbled that you have entrusted us with their care, a responsibility that we take very seriously! Here, our campers have the unique opportunity to experience life in community together and to live out their faith as Orthodox Christians in the grand natural beauty of the Northwest. There is nothing quite like it!

It is our goal at CSME to create a space for youth to live in community together, to have fun and fellowship, to be outdoors and experience the natural beauty that God created for us, and to learn how to deepen their spiritual lives.

Campers are afforded the rare chance to interact with a number of clergy who are there to answer their questions, hear confessions, and to teach on the spiritual life. There are also many faithful staff in residence for the week, while engaging in fun activities together like swimming, canoeing, and many other memorable pastimes!

Now more than ever, it is critical for our youth to be steadfast in their faith and to have a clear understanding of the essence of what it means to be an Orthodox Christian. Camp is an integral time for youth to make firm their foundation (Matthew 7.24-27). Many of us have witnessed and/or experienced, one week at Camp can transform a young person's life both in the short term and in the long term.

Here, you'll find valuable information that will help you and your camper prepare for their camp experience. Please read this booklet carefully, and don't hesitate to contact me with any questions that you may have.

With Love in Christ,
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CSME 2022 Mission Statement, Program Goals, Anticipated Outcomes

CR 2.1, CR 2.2, CR 2.3, CR 2.4

Camp St. Mary of Egypt Mission Statement:

The mission of the Camp St. Mary of Egypt is to provide to youth with a living experience of the Holy Orthodox Faith in community with other campers in a peaceful camp environment. We promote the enrichment of our Orthodox Faith, growth in personal relationships with the experience of life together, provide the opportunity to learn how to take personal responsibility for themselves, their faith, and their environment, and to gain an appreciation for living in God's creation.

Program Goals:

- 1) To provide young people a living experience of the Holy Orthodox Faith
- 2) Enriching our Orthodox Faith in their lives
- 3) Practice living in community with one another
- 4) Growth in personal relationships.
- 5) Growth in personal responsibility.
- 6) Develop an appreciation for living in God's creation

Process:

- 1) Provide a schedule with a daily cycle of prayer and Church Services
- 2) Daily Christian Education Sessions provided, time for Confession, faith questions answered by Priests, direct participation in Church Services
- 3) Living, eating, praying, sharing, experiences and sleeping in cabins
- 4) Friendships made in the cabin, group participation, large group activities, services, and age-grouped Ed. Sessions
- 5) Responsible for cabin chores, church services, personal behavior, hygiene, dietary requirements
- 6) Participation in outdoor activities, Camp theme and daily focus in Ed. Sessions

Measurable Outcomes:

- 1) Take a model of Orthodox Christian daily routine home
- 2) Acquire an understanding of the Faith, the experience of Confession, comfort in getting to know and interact with Clergy
- 3) Acceptance of all people and viewing them as an icon of Christ
- 4) Lasting friendships formed in the common family of Faith
- 5) Work/chores done in acceptance and performed in love
- 6) Recognition of the Holy Trinity in God's creation

What is Camp Like?

Camp Life

Just about everything about life at camp is different from life at home! Preparing your camper with as much information as possible will help them to better adjust. Some key differences are - having a different daily schedule, sharing living quarters with others, and eating food that they may not be used to having at home. If you are sending a first-time camper, please review this section with them so they know what to expect.

A Typical day at camp

Here is a sample schedule of a typical day at camp:

7:00am	Early Bird (activities for those kids who rise early)
8:00am	Matins
9:00	Breakfast
9:45	Cabin Prep for Morning Ed. Sessions
10:00	Morning Education Session 1
11:00	Morning Education Session 2
12:00	Cabin Time
12:30	Lunch
1:15	Cabin Prep for Fun Activities Sessions (FACT)
1:30	FACT 1 (swimming, crafts, ping pong/games/music jam, climbing
2:30	FACT 2 tower, canoeing, mini-golf)
3:30	Snacks
3:45	Team Time Activities
5:00	Cabin Time
5:30	Vespers
6:30	Dinner
7:30	Evening Program
9:00	Dismissal for Younger Campers/Afterglow Social for Older Campers
10:00	Dismissal for Older Campers/Lights Out for Younger Campers
11:00	Lights Out for Older Campers

Meals and Fasting

Meals are served family-style in the cafeteria. The servings are generous and there are always second helpings available. A salad bar is offered at both lunch and dinner. Fasting rules are observed on Wednesday and Friday (no meat or dairy). For those campers with dietary issues, please see the section on dietary issues.

Camp Activities

Camp activities include:

Morning Education Sessions in which the campers are divided up into age groups for in-depth teaching sessions with clergy. Session 1 features teaching by the priests on the

focus topic of the day. Session 2 will rotate between “Fire on Father/Ask Abouna,” Stories from the saint’s lives and the Bible, a service craft, and service to the Church.

Fun Activity Sessions (FACT) take place following lunch. There are two per day and they include: swimming, crafts, ping pong/games/music jam, canoeing, mini-golf, rock wall (only with separate signed parental permission) and nature walks. Team Time follows and allows campers to get to know other campers outside of their own cabin as they participate in mixed-age teams.

Team Time breaks down barriers across the age groups and helps the older campers set a positive example for the younger campers, all while participating in exciting activities, scavenger hunts, water games, and whatever other creative activities our talented Activities Director chooses!!

After the high-energy Team Time, campers are given cabin time to rest until Vespers followed by dinner.

Evening Program features campfires with singing, the ever-popular talent show, and other surprising activities brought to you by our talented Activities Director!

Camper Code of Conduct and Camp Rules:

All campers are expected to act in ways appropriate to an Orthodox Christian setting and as those who seek to be living examples of Christ. Campers and staff alike comment year after year about the loving, positive, inclusive environment. Such an environment involves the commitment of each and every camper to follow the rules as outlined below. Failure to do so may result in a camper or staff member being sent home.

Camp Rules:

1. You will be expected to do as you are asked by those in authority, including the camp director, clergy, counselors, and camp staff.
2. When someone is speaking, you must be quiet and listen.
3. Dress modestly.
4. All campers and staff are expected to treat everyone with respect as their brother and sister in Christ. Therefore, any exclusive pairing off as a couple, or encouragement of this behavior (through talking about “crushes” or gossiping, etc.) or the formation of exclusive cliques is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
5. Smoking, cigarettes, vaping, alcoholic beverages, drugs or other illegal substances, are not permitted. (AD 16.1)
6. Knives, lighters, matches, fireworks, firearms, and other dangerous items or weapons of any kind are not permitted. CSME reserves the right to search a camper’s or staff’s belongings if any of these items are suspected to be in their possession and will confiscate such items. At the discretion of the Camp Director, these items may be disposed of or returned to the camper’s parent upon departure from camp. (AD 16.1)
7. Fighting is not permitted, including rough housing which might damage property or hurt smaller campers.

8. Swearing will not be tolerated.
9. “Raiding” of cabins is not permitted.
10. NO pranks of any kind will be allowed—on your cabin mates, other cabins, siblings, etc.
11. Taking anything that is not yours without permission is stealing and is not permitted.
12. We respect camp property as well as the property of others. No defacing or destruction!
13. All medications must be given to the camp nurse at Registration.
14. All campers must remain at camp for the entire camp session.
15. Camp fires are permitted only in a designated area at the direction of the Camp Director.
16. The signal bell will be used only by the Camp Director in case of fire or emergency.
17. Fire alarms and extinguishers are for emergency use only.
18. No pets or animals are allowed at camp. (AD16.1)
19. Any electronic items that accompany the camper for the trip to camp must be stowed in the camper’s luggage during the entirety of the time that camp is in session and may not be used. CSME is not responsible for the loss or damage of such items. If such items are found to be in use, they will be removed from the camper’s possession until departure time. We **STRONGLY** encourage campers to leave all electronic items at home.
20. Campers are not permitted to have cell phones at camp. Camp is a time to “disconnect” from the everyday world and connect with nature, God, and our brothers and sisters in a unique Orthodox Christian camp community. For those campers who use their phones for traveling, phones will be collected upon check-in on Monday, and stored until departure time on Saturday.
21. All personal sports equipment should be left at home. This may include archery equipment, bats, hockey sticks, climbing gear, or other equipment which should be handled or stored safely from others. (AD 16.1)
22. All vehicles should be parked only in the specified parking area. No camper is permitted to leave, or come and go, during the camp session. (**Staff may only leave camp with prior permission from the camp director**). (AD 9.1)

Please Note: While all disciplinary action will be taken to attempt resolution on site, the Camp Director reserves the right to dismiss campers for gross violations of camp rules. Parents will be responsible for arranging and covering costs for their camper’s early departure.

Preparing for Camp

Campers with dietary issues

If your camper has a medical need for a special diet, please note it on the health form. Ross Point Baptist Camp can accommodate certain dietary restrictions (gluten-free or dairy-free), but all meals are served family style and those campers with dietary restrictions must be able to advocate for their own diet.

For campers' safety, our policy at CSME is that campers who cannot advocate for their special diet will not be able to attend camp until they are mature enough to do so. This policy is not intended to be restrictive, but rather to protect those younger campers who cannot manage their own diets. The staff at Ross Point have been creative and gracious about providing wonderful food substitutes for those with dietary restrictions, but the food environment at camp does require that a camper knows what he can and cannot eat and ask for substitutes when needed.

Please note: Unless your camper has an actual medical need for a dietary restriction, we ask that you do not request a special diet—it creates a great amount of unnecessary work and expense for the kitchen staff for diet “preferences”.

If your camper has dietary issues, we ask that you pack eight, pre-packaged, individual snacks labeled with the camper's name and that you turn these in at registration.

Cancellation and refund policy

We understand that “life happens”, so in the event of your needing to cancel, we appreciate prompt notification. Cancellations before June 1 will receive a full refund (*less the non-refundable deposit*). After June 1, refunds may be requested in writing and will only be granted if a replacement for the open spot is found, except in cases of family emergency (not family choice). ***The deposit is non-refundable and non-transferable.***

Health care

You and your camper must complete the Health History and Health Profile, Authorizations and Permissions in their entirety. This online form must be completed along with your camp registration in order to secure your camper's spot at camp. The Camp Nurse or Doctor reviews all Health Forms prior to camp, and is in residence for the entire week to handle routine and minor health care needs. Please refer to the Health Form regarding emergency medical care.

Health insurance

All campers must be covered by a medical insurance policy. While Camp St Mary of Egypt will act as guarantor, any costs incurred by CSME in providing required treatment for doctor's appointments, prescriptions, etc. will be billed to the camper's parents or guardians.

Media consent

Throughout your camper's stay, staff members will be taking photos for the final evening's photo slideshow (a highlight of the week!). There will also be a camp photo that will be displayed on the camp website. Please know that all staff members have signed a "CSME Volunteer Staff Policy for Social Media and Websites" and take your camper's privacy seriously. By sending your child to Camp St Mary of Egypt, you are giving permission for their photo to be on the camp website.

Sending a first-time camper

If this is your child's first trip to Camp St Mary of Egypt, your preparation in advance will go a long way towards helping them have a great experience and minimize the effects of homesickness. Please visit the Parent Resources section of our website for a link with tips from the ACA on preventing homesickness.

We do ask parents to consider carefully whether their child is ready for camp. In our experience, we have found that if a child is hesitant about attending camp or does not yet seem ready, it is often in the child's best interest to wait a year. It is better to wait one year and have a camper have a positive experience, than to come too early to camp and be left with a lasting negative impression. Readiness to attend camp varies widely, especially among 9- to 12-year-olds, so please take your own child's temperament and social maturity into consideration.

Packing List

Dress code and modesty expectations

Parents, please make sure that your camper respects the dress code and packs appropriate clothing as described below.

While camp is, by nature, informal, Christian modesty should be your guiding principle when packing. Excessively revealing clothing should not be packed as any camper wearing inappropriate clothing will immediately be asked to change. Inappropriate clothing includes but is not limited to: open back tops, tops with low-cut fronts, too-tight clothing, half shirts, shirts that expose the midriff, spaghetti-strap tank tops, short shorts (shorts should be worn a few inches above the knee), low-cut waistlines, clothing bearing inappropriate logos, sayings, or advertising, and tank-top-style undershirts.

Here are some particulars--

Daily wear: the best clothes to pack for daily wear at camp are a loose-fitting t-shirt and either long pants, capris, long shorts, or knee-length or lower skirts.

Swimwear: we prefer one-piece swimsuits for girls, but understand that some girls need to wear two-piece "tankinis" due to size issues. If this is the case, we ask that the tankini shows no bare midriff (athletic styles are fine). Again, when packing a swimsuit, please consider our overall modesty policy.

Church Service Attire: for daily services, camp clothing is fine, although sleeveless shirts are never allowed during church services (either boys or girls). We will have Divine Liturgy once during the camp week, and for that we ask that you pack one nice “church” outfit—skirts or dresses for girls, pants and nice shirt for boys. There will be time to change into regular “camp clothes” after Breakfast on Liturgy day.

Footwear: part of the fun of camp is all the activities and you need to wear the right shoes. Close-toed shoes are a must for all Activity Sessions and Team Time Activities. Sneakers, athletic shoes, or water shoes with a back-strap are best (flip flops are best kept for showers).

Weather and Cool Evenings: since it has been known to rain during camp, it’s a good idea to pack something for the rain such as a hooded sweatshirt or jacket as well as a pair of long pants. Evenings can be cool, so these same garments can keep you warm for campfire and evening activities.

Camper Packing List

*Clothing & footwear for six days of camp, including one nice church outfit for Liturgy

*Bedding: one bottom sheet to cover mattress and a sleeping bag OR sheet set & blankets

*Pillow

*Flashlight (with working batteries)

*Towels—one bath towel, one beach towel, one washcloth

*Toiletries (no aerosol products such as hairspray)

*Sunscreen

*Hat/Head scarf for sun protection

*Insect repellent (non-aerosol)

*Lip balm

*Reusable water bottle: this is mandatory as there will not be cups available for water.

*Small backpack for afternoon activities: to carry sunscreen, water bottle, towel, etc.

*Medicine: All medications must have the original pharmacy label, with your name and dosage instructions clearly marked. These will be turned into the Camp Nurse at registration as no medication of any kind, either over-the-counter or prescription, is allowed in cabins. The exception is for those that require an asthma inhaler, or epi-pen for severe allergies.

*Laundry bag: All campers should bring a laundry bag in which to accumulate dirty clothing. There are no laundry facilities at camp. Clothing left behind will be donated to a local charity.

What **not** to pack: **Please see our Camp Rules for a comprehensive list**

*Money: we have no camp store and CSME is not responsible for replacing lost funds.

*Cell phones: we do not encourage campers to bring cell phones to camp and CSME is not responsible for any lost or damaged cell phones. For those campers who use their phones for traveling, phones will be collected upon check-in on Monday, and stored until departure time on Saturday.

*Snacks: (unless your camper has a dietary issue and then we ask you to provide eight, individual, pre-packaged snacks labeled with their name).

*Electronics: CSME does not allow electronics at camp and is not responsible for the loss or damage of any electronics brought to camp. Please see Camp Rule #19

*Jewelry or expensive clothing

*All tobacco and vaping products

*Alcohol, illegal drugs and paraphernalia

*Dangerous implements, weapons (including, but not limited to: knives, axes, fireworks)

*Any illegal substances

*Personal sports equipment

*Animals and pets of any kind

During Camp

Visiting Camp

You will have the opportunity to meet our staff and tour the camp facilities on Monday during registration (1-3pm). However, because campers often become homesick when they see a parent or family member, we ask that there be no other visits to camp during the regular camping session. No unauthorized visitors are allowed at CSME during the entire duration of camp.

Contact with your camper

The active camp schedule prevents regular contact with your camper. Outgoing calls may be allowed at the discretion of the Camp Director, and only for urgent matters. Receiving or placing phone calls during the camp week disrupts the program and often makes homesickness worse, so we do not allow them except for emergencies. If your camper suffers serious injury or illness, you will be notified promptly.

Here is a list of when you'll be notified by CSME:

CSME "Parent Notifications"

Parents will be contacted by the Medical Director or the Camp Director and may be asked to pick up their camper in the event of:

- Pre-Camp – Health Profile/History deficiencies or concerns
- Camp—Health Profile/History incomplete, or parental permissions not granted
- Camper medical emergency

- Medical outcome of treatment
- Non-emergency diagnostic services, rehabilitation services or specialist services are needed
- If a camper presents to the MD for a health complaint and previous permission was not given for administering stock medications
- The discretion of the Medical Director due to camper illness
- Fever
- Nits found on camper
- Extreme violation of the Rules
- At any time, to relay information about their campers physical or mental health, or other incidents of concern as deemed necessary by the Medical Director or Camp Director

Should a serious need to communicate with your child arise, please contact Kh Kara Vollman at 425.420.8778 or call Ross Point Baptist Camp directly at 208-773-1655 during business hours.

Mail service is available at Ross Point, so you can send mail to your camper:
Camper Name, c/o CSME, Ross Point, 820 S Ross Point Rd, Post Falls, ID 83854

Arrival and Departure

Location of Camp

CSME is held at Ross Point Baptist Camp, 820 South Ross Point Rd, Post Falls, ID 83854. Directions can be found on the camp website.

Times of arrival and departure

Camp begins on Monday and registration is between 1pm and 3pm. Please make sure that your camper eats lunch prior to arrival and registration at camp and make every effort to arrive no later than 2:30pm so that all campers will be registered by 3pm. If you have a first-time camper, you will want to arrange to arrive with enough time to meet your camper's counselor, tour the camp, etc. Camp ends on Saturday at 11:30am and we request that parents pick up campers promptly as our facility contract requires us to vacate the facility at a specific time.

Registration Process

As you arrive at camp, please park in the designated area of the main parking lot. Luggage may be placed along the side of the main lodge building while you continue to the registration desk. Here your camper will be checked in and you'll be asked to provide the name of the person who has your authorization to pick up your camper on departure day. Your camper will only be released to this authorized person upon departure on Saturday.

Your camper will then receive their cabin assignment, turn in any cell phones that were brought (these will be returned upon departure check-out on Saturday) and visit the Nurse/Dr. screening area. Here, their medical history will be reviewed, medications will be turned in, and screening questions asked. Please note, CSME is a "no-nit" camp.

Your camper will not be allowed to attend camp if they have lice. Likewise, they will not be able to attend if they have a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher. There are no exceptions. After the health screening, campers will meet their counselor. The counselor will escort your camper (and parent if desired) to their cabin. Here, they will meet other campers as well as their second cabin counselor. At this point, parents are free to leave, and their campers are now in the care of their counselors and will begin their fantastic week at CSME!

Departure/Check-out

Camp officially ends at 11:30 am on Saturday. Please be ready to meet your camper in their cabin at this time. Your camper's counselor will have a sign-out sheet for the authorized pick-up person to sign. Your camper cannot be released until this is signed by the designated person. The counselor will then return any stored cell phones and then your camper is released to your care.

Safe travels and may the Lord Bless your camper to take home the love shared, the joy expressed, the growth in faith, the friendships formed, a deeper understanding of what it means to be an Orthodox Christian, an appreciation for God's created world, and the memorable experience of being part of the community of Camp St. Mary of Egypt.