

Camp St Mary of Egypt

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



Camper & Parent Handbook
Winter 2024

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 his/her 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 to fellowship, to experience the natural beauty that God created for us, and to learn how to deepen their spiritual lives.

Campers are afforded the rare opportunity 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. Campers also have the chance to fellowship together and engage in fun activities like fishing, boating, ropes course, team activities, 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 how 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,

Kh Kara

CSME Executive Director

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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 through concentrated time with clergy, through the experience of living together as Orthodox Christians in community, via opportunities to gain an understanding of how to take personal responsibility for oneself, one's faith, and one's environment, and by providing the space in which to gain an appreciation for living in God's creation.

Important Dates

Requests for Financial Assistance - NOV 1st

Full Payment Due - DEC 1st

Completed Online Health Form - DEC 9th*

Physician Authorization Form - DEC 9th*

*Failure to complete the online health form and/or Physician Authorization form by the due date of December 9th **will result in a \$50 fee due prior to admission to camp.** Failure to complete these forms by January 1st will result in forfeiture of your camper's position at camp without refund of fees paid.

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 (schedule subject to change)

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

7:00	Early Bird (activities for those kids who rise early)
8:00	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
2:30	FACT 2
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

Living Arrangements

Campers will live with (on average) 10 fellow campers and 2 counselors. Campers are grouped according to age and gender. While we do accept roommate requests, these are not guaranteed. **Please Note - we are unable to accommodate requests for campers with an age difference of two years or more.** One of the best aspects of the camp experience is learning to adjust to group living, making new friends, and getting along as part of a team!

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) and on Sunday prior to Divine Liturgy. For those campers with dietary issues, please see the section on dietary issues.

Camp Activities

Morning Education Sessions in which the campers are divided up into age groups for in-depth teaching sessions with clergy that include: teachings by the priests on the focus topic of the day, “Fire on Father”, stories from the saint’s lives, exploring the Bible in depth, a service craft, and service to the Church.

Fun Activity Sessions (FACT) that include: ropes course, giant swing and zip line (13 and over), crafts, ping pong/games/music jam, basketball, nature walks, fishing and boating, and more!

Team Time/Activities 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, fun team challenges, and whatever other creative activities our talented Activities Director chooses!!

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

Camper Rules and Expectations

Please read the following carefully and share with your camper(s).

Camper Code of Conduct

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 in accordance with our current dress policy. **Violation of this policy will not be permitted and campers may be sent home if they do not have appropriate attire.**
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.
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 parents upon departure from camp.
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 including prescription, OTC, and supplements must be given to the medical staff at Registration. This is a requirement of both CSME and of the facility that we are renting so NO EXCEPTIONS will be made.
14. All campers must remain at camp for the ENTIRE camp session with the exception of an emergency situation. Please no late drop offs or early pick-ups without prior arrangements being made with the Camp Director. Requests for late drop-offs or early pick-ups will be accepted on a case-by-case basis only. Failure to make prior arrangements will result in a \$50 fee applied to your account that must be paid prior to registering for a future 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.
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. All cell phones will be collected upon check-in on Monday, and stored until departure time on Saturday. ***No Exceptions will be made to this policy.***

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.

22. Displays of physical affection between boys and girls will not be permitted. This includes: prolonged hugging, kissing, sitting on laps, hand-holding, and/or any other such displays that staff determine is inappropriate. Depending upon the severity of such displays, campers may be immediately dismissed from camp.

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).

Please Note: While all disciplinary action will be taken to attempt resolution on site, the Camp Director reserves the right to dismiss campers for serious violations of camp rules. Parents will be responsible for arranging and covering costs for their camper's early departure which must take place within 10 hours of camper dismissal.

Important Info Prior to Camp

Please review the following policies / pre-camp requirements.

Fees

Balance of all payments is due by Dec 1st, or the camper's spot may be offered to those on the wait-list. **If you need financial assistance, please contact the Camp Director by Nov 1st.**

If required medical information is not completed by December 9th, a \$50 fee will be applied to the camper's registration. Applications that are not completed in full by January 1st, will result in forfeiture of the camper's spot without refund of paid fees.

Cancellation and Refund Policy

Cancellations before December 1st will receive a full refund less the \$50 deposit. After December 1st, refunds of tuition payments 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.

Campers with Dietary Issues

If your camper has a life-threatening food allergy and/or medical need for a special diet, please note it on the health form.

Camp Howard 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 food environment at camp requires that a camper knows what he can and cannot eat and has the ability to ask for substitutes when needed.

Please note: Unless your camper has an actual medical need for a dietary restriction, we ask that you 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, please email the Camp Director to discuss options.

Health Care

You and your camper must complete the Health History, Health Profile, Authorizations, and Permissions in their entirety. Additionally, a Physician Authorization Form is required in order to participate in camp activities. These forms 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 camp session to handle routine and minor health care needs. Parents of campers with special medical needs that require extra and/or specialized medical care that falls outside the scope of routine/minor health care needs will be required to stay onsite for the duration of camp. Please refer to the Health Form regarding emergency medical care. ***Campers who present to the Medical Director at any time during camp with a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, with lice, or with any other illness the Medical Director determines requires departure from camp, will be kept comfortable in the medical cabin while their emergency contact is notified. Arrangements must be made by the parent for camper pick-up within 10 hours of notification. Please make sure that you have a plan in place to pick up your camper from camp within 10 hours in case of emergency.***

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, urgent/emergency medical care, 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.

Dress code and Modesty Expectations

Parents, please make sure that your camper respects the dress code and packs appropriate clothing in accordance with Orthodox Christian values.

Campers wearing inappropriate clothing in violation of the CSME Dress Code Policy will immediately be asked to change. If a camper does not have proper attire in which to change, parents will be contacted by the Camp Director to arrange for delivery of dress-code-appropriate clothing. Alternatively, campers may pick from a bin of clothing available in the camp office.

This process can be disruptive and upsetting for your camper so please take the time to ensure that you and your camper are aware of the dress code policy and pack accordingly. Clothing that violates the dress code in any way should NOT be packed.

Inappropriate clothing (clothing in violation of the dress code policy) includes:

leggings intended to be worn as pants (rear-end *must* be fully covered with a tunic-type top), open back tops, tops with low-cut fronts, too-tight clothing of any kind, biker/spandex shorts of any kind, shirts that expose the midriff, spaghetti-strap tank tops, short shorts (shorts should be worn a few inches above the knee), jean shorts with holes that expose the skin, sagging jeans that expose underwear/boxers, clothing bearing inappropriate logos, sayings, or advertising, excessively ripped jeans and/or jeans that with holes that expose skin of the upper legs, bikinis, speedos, and costumes of any kind.

Here are some particulars for winter-

Remember that it will be cold!

Daily wear: the best clothes to pack for daily wear at camp are a loose fitting long-sleeve shirt/sweater/sweatshirt and jeans/pants with socks and tennis shoes. Layers are always good for winter!

Church Service Attire: for daily services, camp clothing is fine, although sleeveless shirts are not allowed during church services (either boys or girls) nor are baseball caps. We will have Divine Liturgy once during the camp session, and for that we ask that you pack one nice “church” outfit—skirts, dresses, or nice pants with a blouse for girls and 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 participation in the activities - to do so, campers need to wear the right shoes. Close-toed shoes are a must for all activity sessions and Team Time Activities. Sneakers or athletic shoes are best (flip flops for showers only).

Weather and Cold Evenings: It will likely be very cold in the evenings and at night. Please pack a warm winter coat. 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 thick pair of pants. We don't want any freezing, miserable campers so please help them pack appropriately!

Camper Packing List

- Clothing & footwear for four days of camp, including one nice church outfit for Liturgy
- Bedding: one bottom sheet to cover mattress and a cold-weather sleeping bag OR sheet set & warm blankets. Although the sleeping quarters have heat, it can get drafty!
- Pillow
- Flashlight (with working batteries)
- Towels—one bath towel, one washcloth
- Toiletries (no aerosol products such as hairspray)
- 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
- Medicine: All medications/OTC meds/supplements must have the original label/pharmacy label, with your name and dosage instructions clearly marked. These will be turned into the Camp Nurse at registration as no medication or supplement 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.

Note: Any clothing/items 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. **No exceptions will be made.**
- Food/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.
- 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 Friday during registration. 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 session 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. Below 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 of 100 degrees or higher
- Lice found on camper
- Serious 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 Camp Howard directly at (503) 231-9484 during normal business hours.

Due to the short duration of Winter Camp, mail service will not be available.

Arrival and Departure

Location of Camp

CSME Winter Camp is held at Camp Howard, 11010 SE Camp Howard Road, Corbett, OR 97019. Directions can be found on the camp website:

<https://www.cyocamphoward.org/home>

Times of Arrival and Departure

Camp begins on Friday and registration is between 3:30 pm and 4:30 pm. Please make sure that your camper eats lunch prior to arrival and make every effort to arrive no later than 4:30 pm so that all campers will be registered by 5 pm. 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 Monday at 11:30 am and we request that parents pick up campers promptly as our facility contract requires us to vacate the facility at a specific time. Please keep in mind that all staff are volunteers who have devoted an entire week to providing a memorable experience for your camper. Please be courteous and make every effort to ensure that your camper is picked up in a timely manner so that staff does not have to make special arrangements for late pickups as many staff members have traveled a long way.

Check-In Process

As you arrive at camp, please park in the designated area of the main parking lot. There will be a marked, designated area for luggage. After which you can proceed to registration check-in. 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 then receive their cabin assignment, turn in any cell phones, (these will be returned upon check-out on Saturday), have their medical history reviewed, turn in medications - prescription/OTC/supplements, and screening questions asked. Please note, CSME is a "no-lice" 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.

After the health screening, campers will meet their counselor. The counselor will escort

your camper (and parent if desired) to his/her 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 weekend at CSME!

Departure/Check-Out

Camp officially ends at 11:30 am on Monday. You will meet your camper in the same building as check-in. Your camper's counselor will have a sign-out sheet for the authorized pick-up person to sign. **Your camper cannot be released until the counselor has verified the identity of the authorized person via a valid ID and they have signed the sign-out sheet.** The counselor will then return any stored cell phones and, if medications/supplements were collected upon arrival, direct you to the medication retrieval table where medical staff will be stationed to return all medications.

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!

Reference Information

CSME 2023 Program Goals/Outcomes

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