



# CAMP SANCTA MARIA

*Wholesome Recreation  
in an Atmosphere of Christian Faith*

## CSM MISSION AND TALKING POINTS

**FORMING YOUNG CHRISTIAN LIVES:** We are honored to have a role in the process of forming young Christian lives. Since our founding in 1933, Camp Sancta Maria (CSM) has been offering young people ages 8 to 16 a summer full of fun, personal growth, and spiritual development.

**WHOLE SOME RECREATION IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF CHRISTIAN FAITH:** It is not unusual for campers to have a relationship with God become real or become revived at CSM. Why? Much of it comes down to the fact that kids open their hearts while they are both away from home and in the unique atmosphere of CSM – and the Holy Spirit is then allowed to get through to them. One of the great aids to personal growth are prayer and the sacraments. **Through the decades CSM has relied on daily Mass, opportunities for Reconciliation, the Angelus, grace before and after each meal, and our Night Chapel service.** How rewarding it is both to see campers come to love this life and to see moms cry when they hear their boys sing in Church! Although we are proudly a Catholic Camp, we work hard to ensure that campers of all denominations and faiths feel welcome at CSM.

**TECHNOLOGY-FREE ZONE:** With the ever-increasing prominence of technology in our day, our mission now includes offering young people a respite in a **technology-free zone** and providing them with **wholesome recreation** centered in the physical world around them.

**OUR CAMPERS LIVE MORE FULLY IN NATURE:** Whether it is playing sports, horseback riding, learning to swim, or going on one of our outside camping trips, our campers feel refreshed and experience a sense of wonder as they live more fully in nature – a very different experience from their daily routine. Our 96 acres of wooded landscape in the heart of northern lower Michigan and the stunningly beautiful local sites that serve as our destinations for outside trips are the perfect setting for this work and for the close-knit community at CSM.

**BOTH FAITH AND FUN:** In the words of Most Rev. Allen Vigneron, Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Detroit and CSM alum, “I think it (*Camp Sancta Maria*) teaches young men, and women, a really important lesson: that there’s no opposition between being religious and having a good time.”

**OUR COUNSELORS:** Infused into all of our activities is an **atmosphere of Christian faith**. We seek to hire senior counselors who are navigating life successfully and enjoying a rich spiritual life. From seminarians to students from local universities, to students at Franciscan University in Steubenville, our counselors come to CSM because they enjoy working with youth. Their young adult lives also testify to our young people—more often by actions than by words—that the greatest joy in life comes from having a personal relationship with the Lord.

**ABSENCE MAKES THE HEART GROW FONDER:** Being away from home is another essential element that facilitates camper growth. While some of our first-time campers (and moms!) experience home sickness, this is a testimony of the attachment that comes from their love for each other. A degree of physical separation is also something that has to be experienced in order to grow. **One of the most beautiful sights at CSM is the reunion of a camper with their parents and family! Indeed, absence makes their hearts grow much fonder.** If this is one of your concerns as a mom, please let us know. We will put you in touch with one of our “veteran moms” who will help you navigate through these waters!



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**BUILDING LIFELONG FRIENDSHIPS:** Yet another element of personal growth comes from **meeting new people**. Campers live and play with some people they may have never met before. They discover that not everyone lives like they do and they have to reach out to them. **It is a very common experience for campers to form friendships that will extend over their whole lifetime.** The experience is somewhat akin to soldiers who become bonded through a common experience away from home. They become a band of brothers.

**TWO-WEEK SESSIONS:** To accomplish this growth, the standard two-week session is critical for boys. Over the years, we have come to see that it takes 4-5 days for a boy to become settled and for his heart to open. In the remaining week, their personal sense of accomplishment and their relationship with God notably take off!

**ACA ACCREDITATION:** Camp Sancta Maria is honored to be accredited by the American Camp Association (ACA). ACA Accreditation means that we care enough to undergo a thorough (up to 300 standards) review of our operation—from staff qualifications and training to emergency management.

American Camp Association® collaborates with experts from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Red Cross, and other youth-serving agencies to ensure that current practices at CSM reflect the most up-to-date, research-based standards in camp operation. CSM and ACA form a partnership that promotes summers of growth and fun in an environment committed to our campers' safety.

**TESTIMONIALS:** "Undoubtedly the best way to spend the summer." *Blaise*

"Not jut a camp, but a home." *Joseph*

"Camp is a home away from home. It is a place I can be myself." *Jeffrey*

"CSM is a family: the family who bring you back into light when you are surrounded by darkness, the family who carries you on their backs when you are broken, the family who accepts others for who they are." *Natalie*

"Last year I had a very spiritual connection to God and was able to learn so much about my faith." *Jenna*

"Camp is a religious and calming atmosphere that allows me to focus on God more." *Carson*

**CSM'S MISSION IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER:** While Camp Sancta Maria has a storied history stretching back 85 years, her mission in our day is more important than ever. As we continue to see the difficulties in family life and as a society, our children need a place to go where they can be refreshed in the real world of nature and build healthy relationships that will last a lifetime. *CSM provides them that place!*

We are also excited to see so many of our campers develop or significantly deepen their relationship with God. CSM is a gem, and since we do not receive any financial support from any of the Catholic dioceses or have our own "parishioners" to help us, we are especially grateful for your support. May God reward you for your support and generosity!