



# Survival Guide

*A Training Manual for Volunteers*

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# Introduction

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

How often have we sat in Mass, looked around, and said to ourselves, "*Where is everybody from my generation?*" Imagine a family member whom you deeply love in ICU at the hospital dying from a preventable illness. Imagine that family member as our Catholic Church. *Do you love our Church?* Do you love the Truth that is espoused through our Church in Christ? If we do not act, how can we expect anybody else to? Do we take the call to discipleship in our Lord seriously? *What do we do in our lives that will last for eternity?* Is there anything we do that is more important than bringing eternal souls to the foot of the Cross? Christ has given us the *privilege* of these challenging times to make a difference!

The light of Christ, shining through each one of us, shines that much brighter in the darkness! One hour of Truth dispels years of lies! Have you answered His call for you during this time? Have you lived to your created potential and destiny to be the greatest saint this world has ever seen?! Stand up now, consider dying to yourself, specifically your time for a week, and give the Lord and the "Body of Christ" your experience, your talents, your faith, and everything you have been built to be. *There is no one else that can replace you.* Take as many hands of those teens as you can and deposit them at the Eucharistic foot of the cross at Camp Veritas and watch our Lord perform miracles! Think of how many eternal souls might make it to Heaven simply because through pilgrimage, you gave these teens a serious opportunity to choose discipleship in our Lord. How much is a soul worth? How far are you willing to go? If you will not act, who will? If you will not act now, then when will you?

The darkness of the "Religion of Self" continues to spread through our region like a tsunami. The future presence of our Catholic Faith, that beacon of Light and Truth, that Foundation of Rock standing within the coming storm, rests on you and our teens! The time to build that foundation is now. I look forward to standing by your side in this critical battle for souls this summer!

Your Brother in Christ,

Ryan Young

Director of Camp Veritas

# What to Expect as Camp Veritas Volunteer?

We could not do it without all of you, who generously and selflessly give of your time, energy and talents to bring one more soul to the font of Grace, the Cross. We have been blessed to have all of you on the staff of Camp Veritas with the common goal of helping the teens who arrive at camp become disciples of Jesus Christ by the time they leave. It is *your* work that gets them closer to that goal every day...

## **Who we are:**

Teens come to Camp Veritas from all walks of life, from all backgrounds and many states and even different countries. Their understanding of the Catholic Faith can range from almost none at all to kids fluent in Latin and already discerning religious life. As such, the focus of the spiritual instruction at Camp Veritas is to return to the basic recipe of the Catholic Church for the past two thousand years: the Eucharist, the Rosary, the Mass, the sacraments, and prayer. We offer the teens a chance to have some fun, meet wholesome people their age, and be taught by the best teachers of the faith.

**Here is where you come in:** There are many ways you can help the mission of Camp Veritas by using your talents, but there are two main chaperone responsibilities once you get to Camp. Your skills, experience, and availability all play a part in which role for you will best contribute to the mission of Camp Veritas. The two roles are ***Mentors/Counselors*** and ***Supervision Staff***. Both roles are vital to the operations and success of Camp Veritas!

## **Mentors/Counselors:**

We know it can be overwhelming to think of being "in charge" of 10-15 kids for a whole week, but the good news is: *you are in charge of 10-15 kids for the whole week!* What we mean is that you have their ear, their attention, their trust, for a whole week, without cell phones, social media and video games to distract them.

This is your chance to be an example, a sounding board, and a guide to them during this week where their faith will be challenged, their questions will be answered, and if all goes as planned, they will have a personal, deeply changing, encounter with Jesus Christ.

You will not be expected to teach them in the formal sense, but they may walk away from the talks and instruction with more questions or they may want guidance from you about how to interpret the emotions they feel during Adoration. Your role here is to help them wade through their confusion and see the truth held within the teachings of the Catholic Church as the light through the darkness.

The teens will look to you as example of how to live a life faithful to the Catholic Church as an adult in the Faith. They will want to know how you deal with the pressures of life, relationships and peer pressure. They WANT to be inspired by you, to be led by you, and to be helped by you to become adults in the Church themselves. No pressure...

The other good news is: if you don't know the answer, someone at camp will, and they will be more than willing to help you guide your teens. The best teachers of our faith are at your side, ready to jump in any moment, day or night.

To see a typical schedule, look under "Supervision Staff" to the right. It is a very busy week but the graces you will receive for your efforts and time will be infinite! The goal of the supervision staff is twofold: to make sure the kids are safe, and to make sure you get breaks and time to get to know the other mentors.

For you? The reward for your sacrifice of time is priceless...

## **Supervision Staff:**

The basic premise is that WE NEED YOU! We need you to have eyes and ears around campus during the free times when the mentors are off duty to make sure the kids are safe and protected, but also following the rules. We need the extra people to maintain the staff to child ratio required by state law and Safe Environment regulations.

Camp Veritas also WANTS YOU to be there with your wisdom, knowledge, and experience to help the campers on their path to discipleship. They will look to you for guidance and direction throughout the week and your role is to help them find the truth in the Catholic Church. To us, the Supervision Staff is an essential part of the successful formula of Camp Veritas.

A typical daily schedule is shown here so you can get a glimpse into the daily life of the camp. You are "on duty" during the break times in the afternoon and during the evening "free time." Otherwise, you are free to partake in any activities you want, or stay with a particular group and help the mentors throughout the week. The choice is yours.

<b>Time</b>	<b>Scheduled Activity</b>
7:45am	Morning Prayer (optional)
8:00am/8:30am	Breakfast (shifts)
9:00am	Testimony
10:00am-12:30pm	Activity periods (3 x 40 min)
12:30pm/1:00pm	Lunch
<b>1:30pm-4:00*</b>	Activity periods with 2 breaks <b>(Supervision Staff on as scheduled 2 or 3 -4:15PM)</b>
4:15	Celebration of the Mass
5:30pm/6:00pm	Dinner
6:45pm	Exposition and Adoration
7:00pm	Catechesis (main teaching)
7:45-8:00pm	Praise and Worship/ Benediction
<b>8:15-9:45pm*</b>	Supervised free time <b>(Supervision Staff on)</b>
9:45pm	Gather as teams, Rosary and Night Prayer
10:30	Preparation for bed
11:00pm	Lights out

- **(\*Supervision Staff on during these times)**

# Training

You do not have to be fully trained before arriving at Camp Veritas. You will be sent details by email about arrival times approximately one month prior to Camp. You will arrive at Camp Veritas several hours before the campers to have Volunteer Orientation, training, a tour of the facilities, and an overview of the registration process for when the campers and parents arrive. We look forward to having you as part of the Camp Veritas team!

If, for some reason, you will not make it to the training sessions starting at 10:00am on each Sunday of the camp weeks due to a serious reason and are cleared by core staff, you can view the volunteer training video by typing the following into your browser:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hDo2elOiBj8&feature=youtu.be>.

# Orientation

**Introduction:** What follows here is a list of “Do’s and Don’ts” that on the surface appears daunting and overwhelming. However, careful adherence to the “rules” we have developed over time-tested trials will guarantee you the best Camp Veritas experience possible for both yourself and for the kids you are mentoring. It will be a hard week, especially for the mentors who are “in charge” of kids, most of whom will be unfamiliar to you. The following pages will give you loads of tips and tricks to get to know your kids better and help them experience a true pilgrimage experience, aimed at changing their lives... no pressure!

<b>The hard part... These are here to help you in your journey this week. We know it will be hard but by following the Do’s and Don’ts, your week will be infinitely easier. Good Luck!</b>	
<b>Do’s:</b>	<b>Don’ts:</b>
<b><i>Get to know your kids:</i></b>	<b><i>Don’t be tricked into thinking that you need to be friends with your campers:</i></b>
<p><b><i>Know the kids’ names by Monday afternoon</i></b>, it shows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You care about them as individuals</li> <li>• You are keeping track of them (helps with all of the discipline issues noted later, trust us!) You should know how many kids you have and constantly know where each camper is at all times.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Take time to sit together at meals and small “breaks” to get to know the kids in a more personal way you will build and accomplish:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A strong rapport with your kids. Kids respond to that effort and listen better</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>You don’t need to be friends, establish respect:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kids should know completely and consistently that you (their pseudo-parent for the week) have their best interests at heart and are therefore following and enforcing the rules FOR THEIR BENEFIT. The second the kids think they can negotiate terms or solicit your sympathy for what seems to them to be a “harsh” rule, you will lose control of the group and the week.</li> <li>• Really good parents know that you can love your kids, tend to all of their needs, encourage, help, assist, discipline lovingly, prepare them for</li> </ul>

<p>when they perceive that you care about them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You will facilitate time for the kids to get to know the other campers in the group. Many children come to camp without knowing anyone else and can feel very “stressed out” and/or overwhelmed by the experience. They may not feel included unless you make a specific effort here. This is key to making the experience for EVERY camper as good as it can be.</li> </ul>	<p>the realities of life, while still being their parent. If you become “friends” with them, you will have a MUCH tougher time helping THEM in THEIR lives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We know it sounds silly and a little bit like semantics, but “friendship” implies a two-way street of caring for each other, of presumably mutual benefit... this is very and distinctly different than a parent-child relationship should be.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Small Groups?</b> We do not hold official small groups at Camp for various reasons, but you will run into many circumstances where the kids have questions after the talks. You may respond if you are equipped to deal with it. Please remember to <u>keep your answers in line with the Catholic Church</u>; if you cannot answer the questions, please refer to the many religious or trained staff present who would be more than happy to assist.</p>	<p><b>Don’t share your personal testimony before having it “cleared” by the core team:</b> This is an unfortunate one, but we have taken many parent complaints on this subject along the lines of “my kids didn’t even know what Satan-worship was until they came to your camp and the counselor was talking about how they converted”. It is hard to gauge the level of experience and knowledge of your campers especially in the first few days. Please let us help you decide if your testimony is appropriate for the campers or help you tailor it to the age group you have.</p>
<p><b>Attend all of the scheduled events on time with your kids:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is crucial to the kids for them to see that you are committed to the program of Camp Veritas. If you come and are on time, the kids will come and be on time.</li> <li>Their journey to the foot of the Cross, designed as a full one-week program, depends on their presence and engagement at <b>all</b> of the events.</li> <li>This is also crucial for us to know that the kids are being “watched every minute they are here” as is promised to the parents. You are the way we can keep that promise to the parents, who are nervously entrusting their kids to us for the week.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Don’t abandon your group:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Another tough one... We are counting on you to keep an eye on the kids at all times except for your breaks and the campers very keenly sense your disinterest in them if you are never with the group.</li> <li>You and your co-counselors need to know you can depend on each other and each one is sacrificing just as much as the other. <b>You don’t abandon your squad!</b></li> <li>Don’t be late when your free time is over. We therefore discourage leaving Camp property except in extreme need.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Maintain a positive attitude:</b> Attitude is contagious! If you are optimistic about everything, the kids will be, if you are negative, the kids will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you don’t like a particular activity, try it anyway! A key part of the program of Camp Veritas is</li> </ul>	<p><b>Don’t forget why you are there and that we at Camp Veritas can’t offer the camp without you!!!</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don’t forget you are there for the kids. It is very easy to think that socializing with the other counselors (which is also a good!) is why you are there, and that</li> </ul>

<p>encouraging the campers and staff to come out of their comfort zone, try new things, work as a team, and experience healthy competitiveness in a supportive, Catholic environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are teaching many subtle things throughout the week that may not be evident on the surface. Again, feel free to ask if you have any questions.</li> </ul>	<p>can be detrimental to the camper experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are the saints of our time, participating in a small piece of the New Evangelization, and your time with the campers may just be the very thing they need to decide to live a life of a Christian, a Catholic and a want-to-be saint.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Set a good example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some of the campers have no idea what being reverent in church is or what being modest looks like, or what putting down their cell phone looks like.</li> <li>So...YOU are their examples on HOW to do all of these things as Catholic adults living a life as part of the body of Christ.</li> <li>If you are not following the rules yourself, you are also the first thing the campers point to as a reason to NOT follow the rules themselves.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Don't be a bad example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't be constantly on your phone ignoring your kids and co-counselor</li> <li>Don't dress immodestly, (all the guidelines we give the campers applies to you as well)</li> <li>Don't talk or sleep in Mass and Worship, you need Jesus to survive!</li> <li>Don't treat the rules as a joke or something you just 'have' to enforce.</li> <li>Don't give a consequence you won't do yourself.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Follow the Safer Spaces guidelines as presented during your training:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make sure you are NEVER alone in a closed space with a minor or minors. <u>You are not to be alone in the bunk house without your co--counselor.</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Don't leave the cabins after lights out:</b> New York State Camp Law mandates that we have 2 adults in every cabin with the kids overnight without exception. Kids are not allowed to be left alone in the cabins except for extreme emergencies.</li> <li><b>Romance with campers:</b> Is prohibited under all circumstances.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Get rest!</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is so important that you are well rested. It is a very busy week and if you do not take advantage of the time to sleep, shower, eat and rest when you have it, you will not have enough energy for the kids.</li> <li>Take advantage of the scheduled "free time" to get to know each other, pray, rest, shower and get your energy back for the next round. You are the kids' "parents" for the week which any parent will tell you can be exhausting even if you take the best care of yourself. Good luck!</li> </ul>	<p><b>No Camp Romance:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Camp Veritas is not the place to foster a romantic relationship with another counselor because it is a distraction to why you are really there; to help the campers.</li> <li>Along these lines, please consider not making life changing relationship decisions (such as break ups, etc.) just before or while you are camp, because this serves as a big distraction for you, the other counselors as well as for the core team of camp.</li> <li>We do encourage you <b>after camp is over</b> to foster relationships that may have started with meeting someone at camp!</li> </ul>

<p><b><i>Get to know the other counselors and help each other through the week:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The staff at Camp Veritas have the biggest hearts on the planet, and are giving a week (sometimes much more) of their lives to volunteer their time for free to help another soul find Christ.</li> <li>• These are members of the Body of Christ that the Lord has put in our paths to build relationships both at camp and beyond to help you in your spiritual journey.</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Don't disagree with your co counselors or disagree with the camp rules in front of the campers:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a time for all discussions, including disagreements, but as any parent can tell you, fighting, disagreeing, or arguing in front of the kids leads to openings in your "parent armor" that the kids take advantage of in a flash. They will learn <u>quickly</u> which one of you is sympathetic to their cause and it may create negative feelings toward one of the two or three of you that will be very hard to overcome and will affect the whole group dynamic.</li> <li>• You should maintain a unified front on all things in regards to the campers for the week and feel free to bring concerns about the overall camp rules to the attention of the core team so we can help explain the "why's" behind the rule.</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Enforce the existing "rules of Camp Veritas":</i></b> Believe us; this is in <i>your</i> best interest.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have had over ten years of experience going into the formation of the rules and they are there to help you and the campers have the best week. While at the same time reducing the risk of injury, damage to property, and unnecessary complications.</li> <li>• If you do not know how to enforce a specific rule, please ask one of the veteran counselors or core team. We are more than willing to share the background behind each rule/policy should you have any questions. Use your resources! We are here to help!!!!</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Don't be tempted to bend or break the rules for your campers:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is more tempting than you think, but giving in has far reaching effects throughout the camp and at worst may put the campers at risk or undermine the Camp Veritas Program.</li> <li>• <b>Example:</b> "You guys can keep your cell phones, just don't tell anyone I said so and keep them out of sight!" Effects of this come to our attention as other counselors are getting harassed by their campers saying things like "well, BO7's counselors let THEM have their cell phones, why do they get special rules!?" <b>You can imagine how difficult this is to handle once the precedent is set.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Turn discipline experiences into life lessons:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of the things you learn early on when it comes to the difficulty with enforcing rules is that their resistance is rarely, if ever, about the actual rule itself.</li> <li>• There is usually an underlying issue the camper is struggling with, preventing them from being willing to be compliant with a rule. Getting to the bottom of the "why" can expose a potential for a life lesson that may truly help this camper for life, not just for enforcing the rule.</li> </ul>	

**Offer suggestions to the core team anytime if you feel it could help the flow of camp. Our best policies have come from our volunteers!**

- Camp Veritas is blessed to have over 500 volunteers and religious participating in various ways throughout the camp season and the off-season. In that crowd are many leaders, youth ministers, and talented individuals who run events for a living or advise the Church on matters pertaining to the youth.
- We are always open to suggestion about ways we can enhance the experience, make it more rewarding, or improve logistics and safety.

**Have a good time!** Soak in the sacraments, relax on the beach, play a great game of soccer, talk to some of the religious. This camp is for you, too!

**Pray!!!!** Ferribly and as often as possible, for the campers, for yourself, for the staff and for Camp Veritas, that we can continue this mission for souls.

## Discipline

What a tough subject! The Camp Veritas policy for discipline is as follows:

- The first offence of breaking a rule will be given a verbal warning to correct and curb the behavior.
- The second offense of the same rule should involve a core team member of the Camp Veritas staff. Parent phone calls should be at the discretion of the core team.
- The third offense for the same issue shall result in the camper being sent home after the parents have been involved.
- Certain offenses may result in immediate dismissal from camp including: vandalism, racial comments with intent to harm, assault, sexual harassment, or threats of any kids, either verbal or physical. Any instances of these should be reported to the core team.

**Note:** While actions do deserve just consequences, corporal punishment is not allowed. It is permissible for you and your group to mutually agree to do push-ups together (you can't force your kids to do something you won't do with them) in an effort to cut out cursing or disrespect. However, this is not something you can force on your kids and should not be a way for you to simply establish authority over them.

## The Tuesday Talk

Our veteran Camp Veritas volunteers can all attest to the need for a reminder on Tuesday afternoon about why you are there. By Tuesday, you will be physically, spiritually and emotionally exhausted. It happens to all of us, no matter how many Camp Veritas weeks we have attended. Why Tuesday? By then, the kids have gotten over their initial fear of the Camp authority and start to push your buttons. They have all but figured out how to make you upset, how to push the limits of what you will enforce with the rules, and how to manipulate situations to get what they want or create drama in the group.

Your control here is essential to keeping order and peace at camp. You have to remember that these kids are just that: kids. They are like onions that we gave to you at orientation to slowly get through the layers during the week. By Tuesday, you are realizing that some of the onions are rotten on the outside and really stink. *Important to note here is that physiologically the kids are experiencing the lack of the normal amounts of dopamine they get from constant cell phone use.* However, *all of them* just need love, every last one, and may have never had anyone take a personal interest in them as little human beings.

You may be the first person in their lives to break through their tough exterior and let them be a little vulnerable to the love of Christ. No pressure!

What you need to remind yourself in the moments of stress and frustration, is that the program of Camp Veritas works! That program is time in front of the Eucharist, immersion in religious life for a week, access to the Sacraments daily and catechesis like they have never heard before.

For every Tuesday, there is a Thursday and Friday when you will see WHY you experienced Tuesday... on Friday, you will see the kids on their knees in Adoration, weeping, laying their hearts bare in front of the Lord. And you were part of what got them there. Well done!

## Red Flags

Occasionally, as you get to know your campers, and as the campers draw closer into a relationship with Christ, they may feel they need to talk to someone about things they have been experiencing. Be careful here: if they start to talk about issues that make you uncomfortable or do not know how to handle, please alert a member of the religious or core team staff to follow up with that camper. Camp Veritas is not equipped to treat matters that need therapy. There are three “red flags” that require immediate intervention from the medical or core team. These are: Suicidal thoughts/ ideas, self-harm, sexual or physical abuse, or delusional thoughts within the past 2 years. Please ask three questions: ***When was the last time you experienced these thoughts? Did you tell anyone about it? Are they getting help already?*** Any of these issues for which the camper is not already being offered help at home needs immediate referral to a medical team member or core team member. You are advised to discontinue the conversation for your protection as well.

## Medications

It is Camp Veritas policy that campers are not allowed to self-administer medication with the exception of insulin, rescue inhalers, or EpiPen. All other medications, including over the counter meds, need to be given to the medical team. Also, if your camper needs daily medications, please make sure they visit the nurse at the designated time to maintain the appropriate timing of meds and workflow for the nursing team. It is very difficult to track down kids when they miss their dose. It is **your responsibility** to make sure your kids take their meds.

**Of note:** please do not use the week of camp to alter your own medications unless specifically directed by your physician, as this can result in severe impairment and in many cases, being unable to perform your duties at camp.

## Activities

The activity matrix you will see in your folders is a small part of a big picture of the camp activities. It is a miracle of pure genius on the part of our activity director to be able to schedule hundreds of teens in tens of activities, factoring in water, no water, breaks, showers, max numbers of kids for each activity, availability of activities, and safe numbers. This schedule is a very delicate balance of well thought out pairings, avoidance of overlaps and conflicts, and best optimization and access to all activities. Long story short: switching activities or trying to attend something you are not scheduled for is almost impossible. Free periods or rainy-day activity periods can be used for talent show prep or getting to know the campers better.

## Cell phones and other electronics

The intent of the Camp is to provide an experience that will facilitate an encounter with God. A major key to our success is that we turn off the “noise” of our life so we can listen. Campers are therefore **not allowed** to have electronic distractions on the Camp premises. This includes cell phones, I-Pods, and video games. Many of our parents are also deeply concerned about pictures of their children ending up on the internet without their control or permission, and the existence of Instagram makes this a very difficult issue for us... please help us enforce this one!

If there is any reason to communicate with parents at any time, the Camp Veritas staff will contact them immediately.

Should a call home be needed following the Wednesday of camp (except Summit Lake Location which does not have reliable cell service but has a land line for emergencies) campers can use staff cell phones or the office phone to make a quick call home. Why Wednesday? Teens whose minds are not in the present and that are distracted by matters at home are less likely to engage in the great relationships and activities that are being provided to them at Camp Veritas. If this is followed, we guarantee a dramatic reduction in homesickness!

In short, we want the teens to fully engage in camp. For some parents, this separation may be difficult. Camp Veritas would love extra volunteers for the week if closer contact is needed.

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## Camp Veritas Rules

1. Campers may not leave the grounds of Camp Veritas (Lake Placid, Clongowes Wood College, Summit Lake Camp, Camp Lakota or Mount Saint Mary College) at any time unless escorted by Camp Veritas Staff for specific off-campus activities. Campers must get their chaperone's permission if they wish to leave their group's area/activity.
2. Campers are not permitted to enter the housing quarter's area of the opposite gender – No exceptions. Campers must be in their assigned quarters by curfew and respect "lights out" times.
3. Modest dress is expected. Shirts must remain on outside bathing/swimming activities. No halter-tops, plunging necklines, spaghetti straps, belly-shirts, two-piece bathing suits (unless there is no belly showing), or clothing with inappropriate language/logos. No muscle shirts or undershirt tanks. Shorts and skirts must reach mid-thigh **and** past your fingertips or longer. Also, if it looks like it is painted on, it is not appropriate for our camp! We would be more than happy to lend some of our awful lost-and-found clothing to be used as an alternative! 😊
4. Inappropriate behaviors will not be tolerated.
5. Cigarettes, e-cigarettes, all forms of vaping, alcohol, and illegal drugs are not allowed. (Note: as Marijuana is still illegal under federal law, Camp Veritas reserves the right to dismiss anyone for the use of Medical Marijuana if it is deemed to be of any sort of risk to staff or campers, if this is a personal concern, please notify medical staff and provide your Doctor's note)
6. **WEAPONS POLICY:** Camp Veritas recognizes the importance of a safe environment. Possession of weapons in the camp setting is a threat to the safety of camp and staff (*with exception of any security or police presence with lawful license to carry*) and is prohibited by law. **Weapon:** The term shall include, but not be limited to, any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, brass knuckles, mace, firearm, shotgun, rifle, and/or any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. "Look alike" or replicas of weapons will be treated as a "weapon" for purposes of this Camp Policy. (Laser Tag equipment will be clearly marked as the only exception to this policy)
7. **No Cellphones or electronics:** The intent of the Camp is to provide an experience that will facilitate an encounter with God. A major key to our success is that we turn off the "noise" of our life so we can listen. Campers are therefore **not allowed** to have electronic distractions on the Camp premises. This includes cell phones, I-Pods, and video games and tablet readers. If there is any remote reason to communicate with you at any time, the Camp Veritas staff will contact you immediately. Note that the Camp Veritas Chaperones will have a cell phone available should a call home be needed following the Wednesday of camp (except Summit Lake Location which does not have reliable cell service but has a land line for emergencies). Why Wednesday? Teens whose minds are not in the present and that are distracted by matters at home are less likely to engage in the great relationships and activities that are being provided to them at

Camp Veritas. In short, we want the teens to fully engage in camp. For some parents, this separation may be difficult. Camp Veritas would love extra volunteers for the week if closer contact is needed.

8. Each camper is responsible for keeping track of his or her belongings. Camp Veritas will not be held responsible for lost or missing items.
9. Although many teens desire romance, the primary objective of Camp Veritas is to develop a relationship with God. Physical signs of affection at Camp Veritas are limited to hands on backs or shoulders only, if needed.

## **Camp Veritas Policies**

### **Cancellation Policy:**

Cancellation requests must be made in writing to Camp Veritas by contacting Regina Scott-[enrollments@campveritas.com](mailto:enrollments@campveritas.com). If you cancel at least 30 days before camp begins, you will receive a refund. Food must be purchased after that point, and therefore, no refunds are issued for cancellations received fewer than 30 days prior to the start of camp. “No shows” on the day of registration will be billed.

### **Attendance Policy:**

In order to ensure the safety of students and in the interest of adhering to Safe Environment Guidelines, students are not permitted to leave and return once camp begins. Camp is structured to provide the most enriching experience for the students, and we strongly suggest participants commit to the entire week. However, if for serious reason, you need to drop your child off late or pick them up early, please notify us in advance at [enrollments@campveritas.com](mailto:enrollments@campveritas.com) or 845-705-7920. In the event that a child becomes homesick or ill while on retreat, students are advised to notify staff and parents/ guardians will be contacted.

### **Visitor Policy:**

In order to ensure the safety of students, once camp begins only staff who have satisfied Safe Environment requirements are permitted on site. Clergy, religious, parish staff, or other pastoral leaders interested in observing what happens at camp may contact Maggie Watkins at [admin2@campveritas.com](mailto:admin2@campveritas.com) or 484-320-7069 to make arrangements for a visit, which typically takes place on Thursday evening (Wednesday evening for the Florida camp). All visitors must obtain a visitor’s pass and be escorted by a member of Camp Veritas staff at all times.

## **About Camp Veritas**

## Organization

- Camp Veritas is a non-profit organization incorporated in the State of New York and organized exclusively for the purpose of inspiring and forming young Catholic teens into disciples of Jesus Christ. Camp Veritas is faithful to the teachings of the Catholic Catechism and to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church.
- Camp Veritas has been approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops for listing in the Official Catholic Directory, which is also known as the Kenedy Directory. Camp Veritas is recognized by the IRS as a non-profit 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. This classification allows donors to claim their contributions as tax-deductible.
- Every person involved with Camp Veritas is entirely volunteer. They give of their time, talents, energy and knowledge with the common goal of bringing our teens to the foot of the Cross in the Eucharist.
- Camp Veritas is a one week sleep away pilgrimage experience for teens going into 7th grade through 12th grade. The recipe is play-and-pray with a full immersion in the Catholic Faith through sacraments and activities.

## Facilities

- Camp Veritas rents space from existing facilities owned by other organizations.
- Starting in 2008 and every year thereafter, Camp Veritas has reserved in late August, for one week, the facilities of Camp Lakota, an existing campsite located in the foothills of the scenic Catskill Mountains. This camp is located near Middletown New York, just 90 miles North of New York City, and 55 miles West of Poughkeepsie. The Camp Lakota facility is situated on 200 beautiful acres of land in Wurtsboro, New York, with access to the magnificent spring-fed Masten Lake which facilitates an array of water activities. The camp has a heated swimming pool, sporting fields, a beach volleyball court, basketball courts, go-carts, a climbing wall, a roller hockey rink, and a ropes challenge course.
- We then expanded to a facility that can handle even more campers; Mount Saint Mary College in Newburgh, NY. Mount Saint Mary College was founded by the Sisters of Saint Dominic in 1959, but the Mount has been an academic presence in Newburgh since 1883. This facility boasts a beautiful campus on a hilltop in Newburgh with views of the Hudson River. It's less than a mile from the intersection of the New York State Thruway and Interstate 84, and just a few blocks from the entrance to the Newburgh side of the Beacon-Newburgh Bridge. The Mount Saint Mary College location has a beautiful new all-weather athletic turf field for soccer and six new tennis courts. They also have a competition-sized pool, indoor running track, and beautiful dorm room style accommodations for our campers. They boast a generous indoor space for our catechetical instruction, testimonies, and praise and worship. This is a sneak peek into the lives of students who attend MSMC and for them, the experience costs \$38,000 per year!
- In 2014, Camp Veritas answered the call to open a location in Maryland and found Summit Lake Camp in Emmitsburg, MD. This beautiful camp offers many of the aspects of an outdoor camp such as hiking, challenge courses, soccer and other field sports, swimming

and a small lake for boating. The facilities there provide a comfortable, air-conditioned experience for the campers and staff.

- In 2015, Camp Veritas extended overseas to Ireland! We currently rent the facility at Clongowes Wood College in Co. Kildare for the Camp Veritas week. The campus has stunning grounds located just outside Dublin in the heart of the Irish countryside.
- In 2018, we headed South to the Sunshine State of Florida, where we hosted Camp at the beautiful lake-side grounds of the Lake Placid Camp and Conference Center.

## Spiritual Program

- The daily spiritual activities at both locations include the Mass, scriptural Rosary, Adoration, confessions, education, and personal testimonies.
- The structured spiritual program is led by Priests from the Archdiocese of New York and is supported by the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, the Sisters of Life, and the Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal. Other Religious groups have been becoming involved as well.

## Safe Environment Considerations

- There are separate sleeping areas for males and females. The Camp Veritas chaperone policies are in accordance with the Safe Environment Program policies of the Archdiocese of New York.
- To ensure the personal safety of the youth, every Camp Veritas adult chaperone submits to a background check and attends a Safer Spaces training session designed by the Archdiocese of New York.

## The Safe Environment Programming

- **Camp Veritas is committed to following the Safe Environment program of the Archdiocese of New York.** As part of the program, you will be required to watch the “Safer Spaces” video prior to being able to work with the campers directly if you are a new chaperone only. If you miss this chance at orientation, you may watch the video online before or after you arrive at camp by following the instructions below:
- Once we have received and submitted your background check form, you may watch the "Safer Spaces" Video ahead of time by following the instructions on the [Archdiocese "Safer Spaces" online link](http://www.archny.org/pastoral/safe-environment-program/online-training/). (http://www.archny.org/pastoral/safe-environment-program/online-training/) You will be asked 3 questions to register and will need to use the following answers:
  - 1. Institution/school is **Camp Veritas**
  - 2. Program you will be serving is **Religious Education**
  - 3. Position is **Volunteer**

- We will show the video for those who still need to view it on the first day of Camp Veritas week during Chaperone orientation. Come prepared to watch it and sign the form per regulations.
- At Camp Veritas, we strictly follow all of the rules and regulations involved in the Safe Environment program. These rules will be incorporated into your training with us, but should you need to reference a specific policy, please use the following link for the full Policy Manual published by the Safe Environment office:  
[http://www.archny.org/media/files-sep/Safe Environment Policy Manual 05162014.pdf](http://www.archny.org/media/files-sep/Safe%20Environment%20Policy%20Manual%2005162014.pdf)

## Camp Veritas Resources

### Core Team Contacts Camp Veritas 2020

Title	Name	State	Phone	Secondary Phone	Email
<b>Director/CEO</b>	Ryan Young	NY	845-266-5784	845-415-7105	<a href="mailto:Ryan1@campveritas.com">Ryan1@campveritas.com</a>
<b>Chief Operating Officer</b>	Elizabeth Young	NY	845-266-5784	845-416-1582	<a href="mailto:Enroll2@campveritas.com">Enroll2@campveritas.com</a>
<b>Executive Assistant</b>	Maggie Watkins	PA	484-320-7069	443-941-5130	<a href="mailto:Admin2@campveritas.com">Admin2@campveritas.com</a>
<b>Music Director</b>	Kevin Donovan	CT	203-512-5349		<a href="mailto:kd3@hotmail.com">kd3@hotmail.com</a>
<b>Activity Director</b>	Jeff Bates	NY	617-538-8334		<a href="mailto:Jbates@netrotex.com">Jbates@netrotex.com</a>
<b>Medical Director</b>	Mary Allen	NY	347-920-0033	718-231-1066	<a href="mailto:mmamma1111@hotmail.com">mmamma1111@hotmail.com</a>
<b>Chaperone Coordinator</b>	Catherine Shembri	NY	845-527-6764		<a href="mailto:volunteer@campveritas.com">volunteer@campveritas.com</a>
<b>Enrollment Coordinator</b>	Regina Scott	NJ	845-705-7920		<a href="mailto:enrollments@campveritas.com">enrollments@campveritas.com</a>
<b>Parish Groups Coordinator</b>	Deanna Sweeney	NY	845-299-5560		<a href="mailto:dmalin@hvc.rr.com">dmalin@hvc.rr.com</a>
<b>Spiritual Content Coordinator</b>	Jen Edwards	NY	845-663-1689		<a href="mailto:Jenhenedwards@gmail.com">Jenhenedwards@gmail.com</a>

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

*Please indicate that you have read the **Training Guide** by signing and dating the form below and return it to a member of the registration/leadership team.*

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (*print name*), acknowledge that I have received a copy of the *Camp Veritas Survival Guide Training Manual*, and that I will read it and any annexes provided and adhere to the guidelines presented therein.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_