

100 Summers: Camp Stella Maris – 1926 to 2026

Foreword

By John Quinlivan

It is a rare thing for a place to shape so many lives.

For one hundred summers, Camp Stella Maris has done just that.

For generations of campers, staff, families, alumni, and friends, this has been more than a place on Conesus Lake. It has been a second home—a place of laughter, faith, friendship, growth, and belonging. A place where children are acknowledged, encouraged, and loved. A place that stays with people long after summer ends.

That is one of the remarkable things about Stella Maris. People leave camp, but camp does not leave them. It remains in their memories, their values, their friendships, and in the way they move through the world. Again and again, I have seen how deeply this place forms people.

The name Stella Maris means Star of the Sea, a title long given to Mary. It is a beautiful name for a camp on a lake, but it is more than that. A star guides. A star welcomes. A star helps people find a way. For many who come here, that is exactly what camp becomes.

This book tells that story.

Across these pages, you will meet founders, benefactors, sisters, priests, counselors, staff, alumni, and campers from different generations. Their stories are different, but together they point to the same truth: Camp Stella Maris has always been a place where young lives are shaped by faith, community, and love.

You also see something else clearly in this book. Sometimes camp is handed down.

Each generation receives something precious here. Then, in its own way, it adds to it and passes it on. Traditions endure, but they are never frozen. Each new generation makes camp its own while still honoring what came before. That is part of what has kept Stella Maris alive and strong for a century.

And there is another truth that so many of these stories reveal: Camp has a way of calling those who need it most.

Sometimes that need is obvious. Sometimes it is not. A child may come needing confidence, friendship, direction, joy, peace, or simply a place to belong. However they arrive, camp meets them where they are. It invites them in. And very often, the child who

once needed camp becomes the counselor, staff member, donor, volunteer, or parent helping make it possible for someone else.

That is how Stella Maris has always worked. It changes lives, and then those lives help carry it forward.

As Executive Director, I have the privilege of seeing both the joy that people remember and the daily work that makes that joy possible. I see the laughter on the waterfront, the songs at campfire, the friendships in the cabins, and the quiet moments of prayer. I also see the commitment, sacrifice, and stewardship required to sustain this mission year after year. Both matter. Both are part of the story.

This book is a gift because it honors that story. It remembers the people who built Camp Stella Maris, the people who sustained it, and the people who continue to bring it to life today.

As we mark one hundred summers, we do so with deep gratitude. We are grateful for those who came before us, for those who serve today, and for the generations of children who will come after us. Our responsibility is the same as theirs was: to care well for what has been entrusted to us and to make sure that this place continues to welcome, guide, and form young people for years to come.

My hope is that everyone who reads this book, whether they know Camp Stella Maris well or are discovering it for the first time, will come away with a deeper appreciation for just how special this place is.

For one hundred summers, Mary's star has guided the way.

May Camp Stella Maris continue to welcome all who need it most for generations to come.

For CSM,

John Quinlivan
Executive Director