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## **Summer faith flourishes at Franciscans first summer camp for boys**

Father Joseph Christensen, FMI, and the candidates of the Franciscans of Mary Immaculate held their first Boys JMI Summer Camp for ages 10 through 17 Aug. 7 through 14. The JMI Camp, or Juvenes Mariae Immaculate — Youth for Mary Immaculate — started and ended with a noon Mass. There were 26 boys who participated for the eight continuous days of faith and fun.

Camp was held at the St. Francis Friary, Warsaw, N.D., and St. Stanislaus Church was used by them for prayer, instruction in the faith, and for eating.

“It worked out very well for the first year of JMI Camp; and the boys were a wonderful group and excited about being here,” said Father Christensen, camp director. Nathaniel Wiegrefe helped out, along with his brother, Matthew, and the three candidates, Michael Pelletier, Dennis Narlock and Kevin Wanner. Father Christensen gave instruction in the faith to the eager young men.

The JMI Camp offers boys the opportunity to be inspired, to learn the faith, to love the faith and to live the faith. They also were informed about the gift of total consecration to Jesus through Mary as a means of evangelization, which is the work of St. Maximilian Kolbe.

The campers also spent time exploring the Scriptures to become more familiar with the Word of God. The youth learned how to pray, while enjoying great summer fun, such as swimming, games, sports, tubing and campfires. Their days included the lofty experience of otherworldliness: the holy Mass, holy hour of eucharistic adoration and Benediction with rosary, and a nightly Marian procession to the Blessed Virgin Mary Shrine before bed.

“We also had the opportunity to honor our Lord with a Eucharistic procession around the three altar stations outside the church,” said Father Christensen. Speaking of bedtime, the boys enjoyed the experience of sleeping in a large military tent and using a military four unit shower, thanks to the National Guard members, who set them up for the camp.

“We look forward to offering the JMI camp next year, and even extending it to a two-week experience,” Father Christensen said, “and hopefully lots more boys will be able to enjoy growing in their faith in a fun setting.”

*Father Joseph Christensen is superior of the Franciscans of Mary Immaculate and served as camp director.*