



Atlanta Archdiocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting

Scouting is Youth Ministry

Scouting is Youth Ministry: Catholic Scouting Teaching Values Together

Scouting becomes part of the parish youth ministry as units are operated by the parishes and with the leadership of Catholic Gentlemen. Nothing is more important than teaching Catholic values to our youths during their formative years – values that will guide them for the rest of their lives. The Roman Catholic Church has used the Scouting program since the early days of the Boy Scouts of America. It is one of the most extensive users of the BSA program. There are more than 332,136 Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Venturers in more than 9,701 packs, troops, and crews under Catholic auspices, and an equal number of youth members in other Scouting units. Scouting is used in about one-third of the parishes in the United States.

“The Scouting experience, a privileged route for spiritual growth, is a valid path that favors the total education of the person.”

- Pope John Paul II

Since 1934, the National Catholic Committee on Scouting (NCCS) has promoted and guided cooperative contacts between the authorities of the Catholic Church and the Boy Scouts of America in the United States. The Scouting program is recognized as an integral part of the total youth ministry at the diocesan level. As such, Scouting becomes part of the parish youth ministry as units are operated by the parishes, parent-teacher organizations, Holy Name Societies, and schools. The Knights of Columbus and other church-related organizations also operate units.

The Atlanta Archdiocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting (AACCOS) provides support to parishes to help Catholic youth participate in Boy Scout and Girl Scout programs as a youth ministry. The Catholic Committee on scouting also offers programs, religious medals and awards for Catholic scouts to grow in their Catholic faith and the ideals of scouting.

Membership Initiative: The Atlanta Archdiocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting (AACCOS) and the BSA launched a 2004 membership initiative. The goal of the initiative is to bring a quality Scouting program to more Catholic youth than ever before. Emphasis is being placed on organizing more units for all age groups, holding membership roundups, ensuring quality training for existing units, and securing more volunteer leaders.

NEW PROGRAM for boys and girls ages 14-20: *The Venturing program is designed to complement and enhance your existing group. You choose the elements of Venturing that best complement your program. It is designed to be flexible and fit within the framework you have created. If you don't have a youth group, it creates a framework to build on.*

Training: The AACCOS provides training for laypeople of the Catholic faith, training for people who serve as religious emblems counselors, and assistance in recruiting for parishes. All counselors and facilitators should be approved by their parish and either the Boy Scouts or Girls Scouts. Every counselor must complete the required Youth Protection, background checks, and appropriate training from their Parish and scouting.

Religious Emblems. The AACCOS promotes the spiritual phase of Scouting, provide for a religious emblems program, provide a board of review to examine all candidates for religious

emblems, and develop ways and means to communicate with Scouts of the Catholic faith in units of other chartered organizations in order to help them qualify for Catholic religious emblems. These religious emblems are:

- **Light of Christ** This emblem is given to Tiger Cub and Cub Scouts (through Wolf rank) for advancement in spiritual growth and religious knowledge. It is the first of five religious emblems available to Catholic youth involved with Scouting.
- **Parvuli Dei** This is a Christian family emblem to recognize Cub Scouts and Webelos Scouts for advancement in religious knowledge and spiritual formation. With the help of parents or guardians, the boy becomes more aware of God's presence in his daily life, especially within his home and community.
- **Ad Altare Dei** The purpose of earning the Ad Altare Dei emblem is to equip the Scout to take his place in the world as a maturing Catholic and a maturing American. With a religious emblems counselor, the boy meets requirements in eight steps covering the sacraments of initiation and the sacraments of maturity.
- **Light Is Life** This recognition is designed for Boy Scouts of the Eastern-Rite Catholic Churches. The content is based on the "God With Us" series of the Eastern Christian Formation Program to prepare the Scout to be an active member of his faith community, as well as his civic community. With the help of an emblems counselor, catechist, or priest, the Scout meets requirements in five steps covering the Holy Mysteries and Eastern Christian spirituality. The Light Is Life respects the cultural and ritual differences among the various rites.
- **Pope Pius XII** Scouts of high-school age and young men and women who are Venturers are eligible for this award. The requirements cover five units: We As Christians, Today's Vocation, Awareness of Responsibility to Self and Society, Citizenship—Home and Community, and Our Response to Faith.
- **Saint George** This national recognition is presented to any adult who is working with the Scouting program under Catholic auspices, to Catholics in Scouting units not operated by the church, and to those who have made a significant contribution to Scouting in the field of Catholic relationships. It may be given to men, women, priests, and non-Catholics.

Youth ministry is the response of the Christian community to the needs of young people and the sharing of the unique gifts of youth with the larger community. Empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today. Nothing is more important than teaching Catholic values to our youths during their formative years. Please help strengthen our community by supporting the youth ministry of Scouting. Draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission and work of the Catholic faith community.

Yours in Christ,

Tom Bender
Committee Chairman

For more information, come visit our website:

Home: <http://hometown.aol.com/atlccs/>

National: <http://www.nccs-bsa.org/>

BSA: <http://www.scouting.org/>