Summer highlighted by Scouting in the Catholic Church Training and Philmont Trek

By Tony Madonia

The 2006 Scouting in the Catholic Church Conference was held the week of July 16 at the Philmont Training Center. There were 35 Catholic Scouter participants representing 24 dioceses and archdioceses in 20 states ranging from California to New Jersey and Arizona to Minnesota. The participants represented all levels of Scouting from Cub to Venturing to Sea Scouts, and included six priests, two deacons, and one Director of Religious Education.

Conference director Susan Barriball, conference priest advisor Father Stephen Salvador, and faculty members Bill Davies and Tony Madonia facilitated the knowledge sharing which included presentations, bible readings, and small- and whole-group discussions. The participants were divided into the faith communities named after Saints Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Paul to facilitate small group discussion and interaction. The daily topics of leadership, holiness, conversion, and worship were explored from several points of view. The first class session of the day used the National Catholic Committee on Scouting’s (NCCS) Scouter Development: Lay Apostolate for Scouters. Each faith community was assigned a facilitator, who facilitated a shortened version of the topic that included bible readings, reflection, and discussion.

In addition to the class sessions, the national Boy Scout office provided a general session each morning. NCCS Chairman Bray Barnes, and NCCS Chaplain Fr. Roger LaChance attended the Tuesday class sessions and provided the participants a chance to ask NCCS-related questions. Chairman Barnes also provided an introduction and discussion on the Knights of Columbus-NCCS membership initiative that will be introduced in August. Other guest speakers included Fr. Ray Fecteau, NCCS associate National Chaplain and Philmont Training Center Chaplain, who discussed the roles of Chaplains and Chaplain Aides, and how they support vocations; Mark Hazlewood of Programs of Religious Activities with Youth (PRAY), who discussed religious emblems of other faiths; and George Sparks and Lawrence Ray Smith of the national office of the Boy Scouts of America who answered questions on relationships with the Boy Scout organization.

Before Friday’s Mass and graduation ceremony, each participant created a “my mission planning sheet” on how they would share what they learned with those in their diocese. Course director Susan Barriball explained the Jerusalem Cross Award, which is a new program available to all who have attended the course.
This issue of The Bridge is dedicated to Scouters as special payday edition

By Mike Gannon
Bridge Editor

You may wish to consider this issue of the Bridge as the “payday” issue. Each year thousands of Catholic Scouters spend countless hours serving Catholic Scouts through their efforts at the unit, district, council, diocesan, regional and national levels.

The stories in this issue highlight some of the results from that hard work—your pay if you will. There are stories from the participants in the St. George Trek. There is a story how one Scout used what he learned in Scouting to save his brother’s life.

There is another story about a young Scout who got the thrill of a lifetime when he was asked to present a Scouting award to the President of the United States. There are photos of bishops with young Scouts getting religious awards. None of these Scouts would have had the opportunity to participate in these events and many more, without your efforts and those of your fellow Scouters. So, thanks for what you do each and every day. Your efforts really do make a difference!

History of International Catholic Committee is now available for sale

At long last, the definitive history of the International Catholic Conference of Scouting, 1920-2002 is available. This comprehensive, readable work, by Domenico Sorrentino, chronicles the fascinating link between the Catholic Church and the World Scouting Movement from its earliest days to the New Millennium.

You can get your copy by sending a check made out to OLMICCS account, for $37 (US) to:
History
c/o Father Leo LeBlanc
St. Mathew Parish
46 Langdon St.
Plymouth NH 03264

Chairman’s Message by Bray Barnes

What a great summer for Catholic Scouting!
The “Scouting in the Catholic Church” training course at Philmont was well attended by Scouters from throughout the country. The faculty of Sue Barriball, Fr. Steve Salvador, Bill Davies and Tony Madonia did a stellar job this year. Although the class time and presenters were well received and there was a lot to learn, those who attended were also able to enjoy the beauty of Philmont and its surroundings. Additionally, there were seminars conducted by the national BSA leadership that were well attended and the week concluded with a Mass celebrated by the Most Reverend Michael J. Sheehan, Archbishop of Santa Fe.

The St. George Trek had 68 participants from 40 dioceses. Crews were led by priests and seminarians with one crew of young ladies led by two nuns. Once again this year, our Bishop Liaison, The Most Reverend Gerald Gettelfinger was joined by The Most Reverend R. Daniel Conlon, Bishop of Steubenville in hiking the trails of Philmont. One morning, Mass was celebrated at sunrise at Cathedral Rock, which was truly a memorable experience. Fr. Kevin Smith, as Chair and Austin Cannon, as Advisor, did their usual outstanding job on making sure everything ran smoothly. Knights from the Sacred Military Constantinian Order of St. George once again joined the crews at the conclusion offering their congratulations to all for a successful Trek.

Our National Chaplain, Fr. Roger LaChance and I visited the training course and were able to observe, first hand, the outstanding job that was done by the course faculty. We also spent some time in the backcountry with the Trek and attended the Sunrise Mass. It was a thrilling opportunity for us to be able to be able to see what a wonderful job all the leaders did. A very special thanks to Fr. Kevin who really goes above and beyond not only making us feel welcome, but for all he does for the Trek.

The Knights of Columbus / NCCS membership growth plan has been rolled out. 3500 K of C State and District Deputies, youth coordinators along with every BSA council and diocesan committee have received the information packets. I attended a Northwest Suburban BSA Council dinner in Des Plaines, Illinois where 25 K of C grand knights were invited. Several Knights councils were recognized as chartered partners for Scout units while others were encouraged to take up the challenge of Supreme Knight Carl Anderson to provide a youth ministry program and offered Scouting as a way to provide such a ministry to our youth.

I hope that you had an opportunity to share in one or more of these exciting events, or maybe you were active within your council with Catholic Scouting this summer. If not, you missed a great opportunity to share youth ministry to those we serve. The good news is there is a lot that is happening this Scouting year and I look forward to your participation and all that you can accomplish. Are you up for the challenge?

The Bridge is an authorized publication of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting (NCCS). It is published quarterly to provide news and information to members of the NCCS, Diocesan Catholic Committees, Youth Ministry personnel, and Boy Scout councils.

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NCCS Website http://www.nccs-bsa.org/
Participant reflections on the St. George Trek  
By Genevieve Brehl

As a Catholic teen, I’m no stranger to retreats. Since I started high school and got involved in my church’s youth group, I’ve spent many a weekend away from home, learning about my faith. But those weekends all seem to pale in comparison to the ultimate retreat, the St. George Trek.

This year, 68 teens from across the United States participated in the two-week long Trek. We spent the first couple of days in Albuquerque, New Mexico, learning more about our faith and getting to know each other. Then we continued on to Philmont, where we spent a day at base camp, preparing for our hike, and then finally got on the trail.

For crew four, the only all-female crew on the Trek, our first day was a challenge. We got a late start, not getting on the trail until around 4 in the afternoon, during the hottest part of the day. It didn’t take long for us to find a staffed camp, where we stopped to talk and brand our boots. While we were learning how to brand, it began to rain. After a while the storm began to clear up. We cheered, thanked the staff, and got back on the trail. As we walked through the mud, we noticed a rainbow shining brightly against the blue sky. We stopped to admire it, and noticed that there were actually two rainbows! It was really a beautiful sight, and an auspicious start for our over-50 mile adventure.

As we continued that day, we had a minor uphill detour in the wrong direction, and finally got to our campsite as dusk was setting in. We hung our bear bags (to keep bears out of our food and supplies) and set up our tents. One of the 6 male crews was staying right near us, and they invited us to Mass. Because we were getting in so late, the boys waited for us to get settled before beginning Mass. We took a while to do so, and wound up having Mass under the stars, with all the readings done by flashlight. As primitive as it was, I was very moved by that Mass. I thought it was the most beautiful thing for us to all worship together out in God’s country, by the light of His stars. Through the rest of our Trek, every day seemed easier. A difficult start gave us a different perspective on what could possibly go wrong at any time. By the time we got back to base camp, we had learned so much. So much about ourselves, so much about each other, and so much about our Jesus.

(Editors note: Genevieve Brehl is a 17-year-old Venture Scout from New City, NY who participated in the St. George Trek this summer. She is a member of St. Augustine's Parish, where she is very involved in her Youth Group, which is also Venture Crew 2079. She attends Clarkstown High School North, and is also very involved with Girl Scouts. She completed her Gold Award project this spring, a Living Stations of the Cross at her parish).

By Alex Casolari

It was wonderful, that I was chosen to go on this Trek. I knew this was going to be great for leadership training, and would bring me closer to my faith and to the Catholic Church.

On the St George trek I made a lot of new friends. At first I was shy and I didn’t know anyone but Adam, the other scout from St. Louis, and he was in a different crew. So I knew no one, but when I found out who was going to be in my crew, I knew it was going to be a great week. In fact we were the loudest and most motivated crew out there! We were singing songs, showing our enthusiasm, and we were the earliest crew to get back on the 12th day ever in the St. George history! The week helped us develop good leadership skills. The challenge games brought the crew together, it made us work, and solve problems like climbing the wall, it’s a like a 12 foot wall and there was nothing to grab on to. We had to pick people up and push them up high so they could grab the top and pull themselves up. During the week we had Mass every day and said the rosary every night. One night we had adoration, it went until 12 a.m. and another night we had confessions. On this trek we had a blast! Some other the amazing things we did were black powder rifle shooting, rock climbing, pole climbing, the challenge games, and Mountain Ball which is like baseball. My favorite thing was rifle shooting because you had to say something “manly” before shooting, like “I love ponies”, or “I love to dance in a field of daisies” GOOD TIMES! I will use these experiences back at home by teaching all the fun games I learned at Philmont, and teach the leadership skills I learned on keeping a group together. I will also be able to use these skills and experiences while on staff at our Scout Retreat in September.

(Editor’s note: Alex is an Eagle Scout with Troop 829, St. Sabina, in Florissant, Mo (St. Louis). He is 17yrs old and currently working on his 2nd Palm. Alex's Eagle project was building a grotto for a statue of Mary at his former high school, Trinity Catholic. Alex changed high schools last fall to North County Tech where he is now in his senior year studying Auto Collision Repair in the mornings and attending Hazelwood Central HS in the afternoon for his academic courses.)
Young Scout earns Lifesaving Award for saving his brother’s life

By Christie L. Chicoine

Parents Credit Scout Training

Joseph McCabe will always remember July 20, 2005, as the day he saved the life of his baby brother, Riley, who was then nine months old. Another McCabe brother had removed a piece of tape from a Band-Aid adhered to his finger. He shot the tape at a wastebasket but, unknown to him, he missed. Unfortunately, little Riley didn’t. He found the piece of tape and put it in his mouth.

"[My brother Greg yelled], ‘Joe, Joe – Riley’s choking!’” said Joseph, who is 13 years old.

At the time, Joseph was talking on the telephone with his mother, who had called home to check on the boys while she was awaiting a doctor’s appointment at Holy Redeemer Hospital in Meadowbrook.

Joseph threw down the phone and rushed to his baby brother. "His face was all red. I just did the Heimlich Maneuver right away," Joseph said.

And up came the tape. "After it came out, he started laughing," Joseph said of little Riley’s reaction.

Just three weeks before his brother’s accident, Joseph had learned the Heimlich Maneuver and CPR training through the Boy Scouts. "I thank them a lot, because they give you a lot of opportunities and teach you a lot of different skills."

For his heroics, Joseph was awarded a Boy Scouts of America merit medal after the 5:30 p.m. vigil Mass on Saturday, April 22, at St. Cecelia Church.

Diane McCabe, 39, the boys’ mother, had called 911 immediately after she heard her oldest son throw down the phone. Five minutes later, the fire department came. "We were kind of mad our mom called [them] because there was no reason," said Joseph, who felt he had the situation under control. In fact, before the emergency personnel arrived, Joseph, having finished examining his baby brother, had picked Riley up and was walking him around the house.

"Then we heard the sirens," he said. The emergency personnel who arrived at the McCabe house further examined Riley, "but he was just laughing the whole time," Joseph said.

The boys’ father, Philadelphia police officer Joseph J McCabe, 41, recalled what he saw when he arrived home.

“When I got in the door, the fireman said, ‘Slow down, he’s fine. Joey took care of it.’

“I was very proud," McCabe said. “We think he’s a wonderful boy. He’s a very good role model for the other boys. We really thank the Boy Scouts for what they taught him. He knew exactly what to do.”

Diane McCabe also applauded the courage and quickness of their eldest son. “He was certified in CPR, he was a Boy Scout – he was everything you would want in a babysitter," she said.

“I heard the [phone] skid across the floor, and that was it. I did not know what was happening. [You feel helpless] when something like that happens and there’s nothing you can do. You don’t ever think anything like that is going to happen to you,” she added.

After the happy ending, Diane McCabe described Riley as “never stopping” and “full of life. He’s just a spark.” Joseph, she said, is very competent. “If I ask him to do something, I know it will get done, and right.” Her husband added that, as both a father and a member of the police force, he has always taught the boys "to look out for each other and to be really caring, even though they may seem tough sometimes.”

Joseph also had rave reviews for the Boy Scouts, through which, for the past six years, he has learned how to be a responsible young boy. “They can be strict sometimes,” he said of the Boy Scouts. “Like with the tents, if you mess up, they’re on your back, but they teach you responsibility.”

Joseph’s brothers, Greg and Matt, are also Scouts. When Riley and Ryan are old enough, they too will become Scouts, their mother said.

“[Some] people make fun of Boy Scouts,” Joseph said, “but if [something like] that ever happens to them, they might not know what to do.” Joseph concluded, “I’m grateful [to God that Riley] lived, and that there are people who want to teach kids this stuff.”
Maryland Scout selected to present award to President

By Monsignor John Brady

Life Scout CJ McWilliams was selected to represent the Boy Scouts of the National Capitol Area Council (NCAC) and present the NCAC Citizen of the Year Award to President George Bush in the Oval Office on July 18. The presentation was led by NCAC board member Bill Marriott Jr. and Scout Executive Al Lambert.

McWilliams became a life Scout on June 15, 2006 and is currently working on his Eagle rank. He is a member of Troop 457, sponsored by St. Patrick Catholic Church in Rockville, Md. He is a member of St. Francis Assisi parish in Derwood, Md. He is entering his junior year at Sherwood High School in Sand Spring, Md. and spent this past summer as a staff member at the Goshen Scout Reservation in southern Virginia.

He is the son of Larry and Kim McWilliams of Brookeville, Md. and he has a younger brother Shawn, who is also a Scout in Troop 457.

Twenty five KC Councils and two Boy Scout Councils

Illinois units gather to promote Knights of Columbus - Scouting partnerships

By Derek Hartley

The Northwest Suburban Council hosted a kickoff dinner to bring together a new membership initiative between the Knights of Columbus and the National Catholic Committee on Scouting. The kickoff brought together 25 Grand Knights of Councils throughout the northwest area of Illinois and was represented by both the Northwest Suburban Council and Chicago Area Boy Scout Councils.

The dinner not only introduced the new membership initiative, but also, thanked those Knight Councils that already sponsor a Scouting unit. Those recognized that evening were the Ave Maria Council #4456 sponsoring Troop 16 in Schiller Park, Ill., Holy Ghost Council # 4977 sponsoring

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Illinois Knights/Scouts Meeting
(continued from page 5)

Troop 91 in Palatine, Ill., Regina Council # 4837 sponsoring Troop and Pack 112 in Wheeling, Ill., and; St. John Brebeuf Council # 1107 sponsoring Troop, Pack and Crew 175 in Niles, Ill. Those councils in attendance were asked to step up and sponsor units of their own. Northwest Suburban Council Scout Executive Steve Taylor challenged Councils to "not only sponsor a unit, but bring together the whole Scouting family by chartering a Pack, Troop and Venture Crew." This message was followed by a call to action by the Scout Executive who asked each member to "make a difference in their community by committing to the youth."

The new DVD featuring Supreme Knight Carl Anderson was shown and that was followed by keynote speaker Bray Barnes, the National Chair of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting, who traveled from New Jersey to help kick off the initiative. Speaking about character development and the common bond between the Knights and Boy Scouts, Mr. Barnes also challenged the Grand Knights in attendance to make the call toward youth ministry development within the Catholic Church by embracing the Boy Scout family.

At the conclusion of the evening, many of those grand knights in attendance expressed a desire to sponsor a Scouting program and provide youth ministry utilizing the values of the Scout Oath and Law.

Bishop Celebrates 50th anniversary Mass for Arizona Boy Scout camp chapel

By J.D. Long-Garcia
The Catholic Sun
Diocese of Phoenix
(reprinted by permission)

Phoenix Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted celebrated a Mass to commemorate the anniversary at Camp Geronimo’s outdoor Catholic chapel with more than 60 Boy Scouts and troop leaders July 12.

“The desire of Boy Scouts in Arizona to have a Mass here on their 50th anniversary is not a small thing,” the bishop said. “It gives me great joy to be here.”

In his homily, the bishop spoke about the nature of temptation. “Being a Christian is not easy. We can’t think that,” he said. “That would be like thinking that getting to the top of the Mogollon Rim would be easy,” he added, pointing to the cliff face in plan view of the outdoor chapel.

“We need to know that on our own we have no power against Satan,” the bishop said. “We have to choose who will give us strength to resist him. Christ gives us the strength to do that.”

Troops from dioceses in Arizona, Nevada, and New Mexico participated in the Mass. “The church certainly supports Scouting,” said Father William Gyure, pastor of St. Philip the Apostle in Payson, Ariz. “If you’re very religious, they have religious badges. They help a person develop their confidence and sociability.”

Some 56 Catholic organizations sponsor 6,000 Boy Scouts in Arizona, said Father Dennis O’Rourke, the Phoenix Diocese’s chaplain to the Boy Scouts. He said Boy Scouting began nearly 100 years ago in London. Benedictine monks helped with the oath, Father O’Rourke said.

The Most Reverend Joseph A. Galante, Bishop of the Diocese of Camden, has awarded his flag to Cub Scout Pack 634, Assumption Roman Catholic Church, Galloway, NJ for the 2006-2007 year. Pack 634 was formed in November 2005. The Bishop’s Flag is awarded to the BSA unit who has the most Scouts earn their religious medals during the Scouting year. The Pack has grown to enjoy a unique relationship with their parish and support of their Pastor, Fr Mike Matveenko. Their stronger relationship is with God and they endeavor to continue Scouting with their principles of Scouting and faith as their guide.
The Catholic Committee on Scouting, Diocese of Palm Beach held their Annual Recognition Awards Ceremony on Sunday, June 4th. A special Mass was celebrated by The Most Reverend Gerald M. Barbarito, Bishop of Palm Beach, at the Cathedral of Saint Ignatius Loyola in Palm Beach Gardens. Over 100 Boy Scouts of the Gulf Stream Council and Girl Scouts of the Palms Glade Council received their Catholic Religious Emblems.

Did You Know…?
By Bob Oldowski

Fifty years ago, the Parvuli Dei became the national religious emblem for Catholic Cub Scouts.

In 1956 at the 14th National Conference of Diocesan Chaplains, the requirements for the new emblem were approved for Cub and Webelos Scouts and the new program was adopted. Although these were national standards, at that time the local diocese had the privilege of adding its own specific provisions and interpretations (but this was discouraged). This happened seventeen years after the Ad Altare Dei had been approved for Catholic Boy Scouts (1939).

"Parvuli Dei" is Latin meaning "Little Children of God". Latin was the language used in the Mass in those days, and things Catholic were often called by their Latin term.

The award is a silvered bar with the inscription "Parvuli Dei" from which is suspended a silvered, diamond-shaped medal bearing a likeness of the Holy Family.

The original requirements were stated in a small reference book. The boy was instructed to keep a log book also. In 1986 at the biennial in Kansas City, the NCCS expanded the Parvuli Dei booklet into a record book.

In the early years a boy did not have to be Catholic to earn the Parvuli Dei. It was stated: "If a Cub Scout of non-Catholic faith desires to participate in this [Parvuli Dei] program, he may do so with the permission of his parents." This was allowed because Cub packs often had boys of other denominations, and other faiths didn't implement similar Cub programs until later years. The Parvuli Dei Record Book was subtitled "A Christian Family Program for Cub Scouts". This was changed in 1986 since other faiths had now implemented similar emblems.

When Scout knots were introduced, Cub Scouts at first were not allowed to wear the religious emblem knot. Instead, the boy could wear the bar portion of the medal above the left pocket of the Scout uniform until the Ad Altare Dei emblem was earned.

A total of 1,644 Parvuli Dei emblems were presented during the first year of the program's operation.

In 2004 there were 10,582 emblems presented. In the 50 years of existence, approximately 500,000 Parvuli Dei emblems--half a million--have been earned and presented.

Priesthood Sunday to be Celebrated on October 29
By Homer Radford
NCCS Vocations Committee

Many of us wear multiple hats in Catholic Scouting and are active in our parish community. This message is sent on behalf of the NCCS Vocations Committee about the 4th annual Priesthood Sunday.

Priesthood Sunday, Oct. 29, 2006, is a special day set to honor Priesthood and affirm the priesthood in the life of the Church in the United States. It is a call for parishioners to honor Christ as Priest and the men who were called to be his priests on earth. It is also a day to honor all religious and to focus on the importance of vocations.

With the help of informed leaders, Catholic Scout Packs, Troops and Venture Crews can make a special effort to involve youth to make appreciation cards to be presented after Mass on the October 29th or at an event planned in their parish.

As informed leaders in your parish and Scouting Units we ask you to make Priesthood Sunday a celebration in your parish community and in your Scouting Units.

Go to: http://www.priestsunday.org/ for more information

Please give the NCCS Vocations Committee some feedback, photos and suggestions on how to make Priesthood Sunday 2007 more user friendly and share your experience and the comments of your pastor.

One word of encouragement…some pastors are sensitive about the appearance of a celebration that is parish based to give them a "pat on the back" planned by the pastor. Please help overcome this by sharing the main purpose of Priesthood Sunday. We, the Church, are honoring the holy Priesthood and ask families to appreciate the priesthood. We want to create a positive culture in the parish community that will encourage a young person to be open to hearing God's Call.
Father Ray Fecteau discussed the roles of chaplains, chaplains aides and support of vocations.

The 35 participants were divided into five faith groups, Mark, Matthew, Luke, John and Paul for their class work.

The Philmont Experience is more than just the 24 hours spent in class during the week. Each day Philmont offers entertainment including horseback rides, bus tours, and visits to local museums.

The Most Reverend Michael J. Sheehan, Archbishop of Santa Fe, presided over the Friday afternoon Mass and graduation. The Mass was concelebrated by the six priest and two deacon conference participants, conference priest advisor Father Salvador, and associate National Chaplain Father Ray Fecteau.


Watch for information and registration in The Bridge and on the NCCS website.

Conference director Susan Barriball, (not pictured) conference priest advisor Father Stephen Salvador, and faculty members Tony Madonia and Bill Davies facilitated the knowledge sharing which included presentations, bible readings, and small- and whole-group discussions.