By Ed Martin

Twenty-eight Catholic Scouters attended this year’s session of the Scouting in the Catholic Church training conference at the Philmont Training Center in the Sangre de Christo mountains of northern New Mexico from June 21 - 27. The class included one priest, one seminarian, one permanent deacon, and four diocesan chairs. The Tucson diocese had three representatives, and the Toledo (Ohio), Lake Charles (La.) and Orange (Calif.) dioceses each sent two. All but three regions were represented.

Susan Barriball led off each day with a dimension of Scouter Development: Lay Apostolate Formation for Scouting. She was followed by Father Ray Fecteau’s peppy presentation on related catechetical topics. John Halloran delivered presentations on various aspects of NCCS structure and programs. Course Director Ed Martin finished each day with a review of the related components of youth ministry from Renewing the Vision. Attendees received a colored bead reminding them of each day’s theme. Each presenter’s track complemented the others in preparing attendees to promote Scouting as Catholic youth ministry.

Attendees were provided the opportunity to hear from, and talk to, several other NCCS Executive Board members, BSA professionals and active Scouting volunteers, including NCCS Episcopal Liaison, Bishop Gerald Gettelfinger, who was present the entire week; Bill Davies, NCCS National Chairman; Mark Hazelwood, CEO of P.R.A.Y.; Charles Holmes and George Sparks of the BSA Community Alliance Team; Dr. Lawrence Ray Smith, chair of the BSA Relationships Committee; and Rabbi Rachmiel Tobesman, who was serving on the Philmont chaplaincy staff.

Wednesday was family day and attendees had time off from class to venture out on their own - whether with family or friends - to explore some of the backcountry, area historic sites, or even the remodeled St. James Hotel in nearby Cimarron. Some stayed in tent city to make handicrafts or just relax.

By the end of the week, session attendees had experienced fun times, made new friends, and most importantly, had lots of interesting information to take home and apply in their home parishes and dioceses. Talk had already begun on what activities they would do to earn the Jerusalem Cross to complete their string of beads and the journey they started when they arrived at Philmont one week earlier.

It has been five years since the Scouting in the Catholic Church course was revised and re-positioned as the NCCS advanced training program. Minor enhancements and adjustments have been made since then. At this summer’s course, Father Ray Fecteau, the National Chaplain, who oversees the program, announced that the program is accomplishing its purpose and is ready for at least another five year run in its current format.
The Chairman's Message

It is hard to believe that summer is winding down. Students will be in school and Scouting units will be kicking off their fall program in just a few weeks.

Now is the time to finalize the unit plans for this year. I want to emphasize a number of NCCS programs:

- Emblems – Are your counselors trained? In addition, now is the time to set up your recruiting and training processes.
- Gold Medallion and National Quality Unit Awards – Complete all the 2009 requirements and submit the paperwork to your local diocesan committee.
- Trained Leaders – Are your leaders trained and prepared to offer a quality program to the Scouts?
- Priesthood Sunday is October 25. What plans do you have to recognize your parish priest on this important day?

Keep in mind that next year will be the 100th anniversary of Scouting in the United States. Let's start this celebration with a great Scout Sunday service next February that will last throughout the year.

It seems like a long way off, but it isn't too late to start planning to attend the National Catholic Committee on Scouting Biennial Conference to be held the week of April 12 through April 17, 2010 in Richmond, Virginia.

Please take a few minutes to review the newly updated NCCS Web Site. The Marketing and Public Relations Committee has done an outstanding job of redesigning this new updated website.

NCCS order forms now updated

The NCCS order forms have been updated to make them more standardized and easier to understand. Effective immediately, only the new forms will be accepted. Please make sure you always download the latest forms before you submit your order, so there will be no delay in processing your request. To get the most recent forms click on the “Order Forms and Literature” link on the left menu bar on the NCCS website nccs-bsa.org

NCCS 2010 meeting in Richmond

Will be held at downtown Omni Hotel

The Omni Hotel in downtown Richmond, Va. is the location for the 2010 NCCS Biennial Conference April 12-17, 2010. The hotel room rate will be $109 a night. The address for the hotel is 100 S. 12th St., Richmond, VA 22319. The phone number is (804) 344-7000.

According to the hotel website you'll enjoy superb business amenities, accented with touches of rich American history and the most elegant of guest accommodations, with views of the James River and the city skyline. Perhaps best of all, dining, shopping, and entertainment options are available right outside the hotel’s front doors. The Omni Richmond Hotel is just 8 miles (15 minutes) from Richmond International Airport.

Priesthood Sunday

October 25, 2009

Priesthood Sunday, is a special day to honor Priesthood 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. Catholic Scout packs, troops and venturing crews are encouraged to make a special effort to involve the youth in programs of making appreciation cards to be presented after Mass on the last Sunday in October or at an event planned in your parish.

What can I do?

If you are a parishioner, a member of the parish staff, a lay minister/leader or a Catholic Scouter, call some friends and organize a group to spearhead the celebration. Go to the www.priestsunday.org for some ideas, then plan your own way of honoring the priest(s) of your parish.

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.
Did You Know . . .?
By Bob Oldowski

NCCS has had a newsletter for many years. Our news publications began in 1937 and then were called the *Chaplains Bulletin*. The title and format changed over the years, but generally stuck to a quarterly publication. Eventually it was produced in cooperation with a member of the BSA Relationships staff.

In the summer of 1992 NCCS resumed full responsibility for publication and the name was changed to *The Bridge*. Publication continued on a quarterly, though irregular, basis.

The newsletter was revitalized in mid-1998 and has continued strong since. A copy now also gets posted on the NCCS web site soon after distribution. Editors for the past thirty years included Truman Stacey, Father Jim LeBar, Father Tom Cronin, Chris Hoelle, and Mike Gannon.

A spin-off monthly newsletter, the *eBridge*, began distribution via e-mail beginning November, 2006. Karen Stone and Tony Madonia have been the editors. The last edition was sent April 14, 2009 and now has been superseded by a new, bulletin approach to getting information to our audience.

Then in April 2008 the Chaplains Committee under Father Mike Hanifin began an occasional e-mail newsletter directed to chaplains. Déjà Vu!

To subscribe to this new electronic bulletin system or the chaplains newsletter, sign on at the following Internet site: [http://www.nccs- bsa.info/NCCSnews/?p=subscribe&id=1](http://www.nccs- bsa.info/NCCSnews/?p=subscribe&id=1)

The National Catholic Committee on Scouting will begin advertising in the Catechist magazine starting with the September 2009 issue. It should reach catechists, pastors, priests, youth ministers and other parish members in mid-August.

This is the introductory ad illustrating to readers that Catholic Scouting is more than what people traditionally think about Scouting. In future ads, we will introduce some of the many programs and activities we support. One of the main uses of the Catechist magazine is to find new and exciting activities to work on with youth. It is always our goal to provide information about everything we do, so parishes and youth ministers might look at Scouting as a way to improve their youth ministry. The ad image can be found on the NCCS home page at: [www.nccs-bsa.org](http://www.nccs-bsa.org) In addition to this advertisement, the September issue will also have a short article about our Footsteps of American Saints program.