NCCS reaches half-way point in membership initiative with 127 dioceses pledging support

By John Anthony
Membership Chairman

In July, 2014, the National Catholic Committee on Scouting announced a New Unit and Membership Growth Initiative. This initiative has three major goals: to reaffirm Scouting as Catholic Youth Ministry, to increase the number of units with Catholic organizations as chartered partners, and to encourage growth in diocesan committees to strengthen and support Catholic Scouting. By getting more Catholic youth involved in Scouting, the committee hopes to empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today; draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of the Catholic faith community; and foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person.

Now, halfway through this three-year initiative, I am happy to report on the progress of these goals and call on Scouts and Scouters everywhere to help us succeed in this effort as we go forward. More than 127 dioceses have committed to participate in the initiative. Just this year, more than 70 new chartered partners have been organized by Knights of Columbus Councils and Catholic schools.

We still need to work on helping parishes understand how Scouting can help them now and in the future in developing quality leaders for their parish. Pope Francis recently expressed this about Scouting: “The parents entrust their young because they are convinced of the goodness and the wisdom of the Scout method based on human values, on the faith of God; a method that educates to freedom and responsibility.”

“Remember, we are just custodians, we are here for a very short period of time on Earth. So when you work with Scouts, make sure we pass along a good Earth and a good world and all the good values that are important.”

I urge all NCCS members as leaders in your diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting to make a commitment to use Scouting as youth ministry to youth in your diocese. You can work with your committee to promote and use Scouting programs to empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today; draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of the Catholic faith community; and foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person.

For more information and details on how to support and implement this initiative, go to http://www.nccs-bsa.org/pdf/InitiativeGuidebook2014Revision1.pdf Please share any successes you have had in your dioceses so we can share them with others. You can send them to me at jacataka@gmail.com.
Chairman’s Corner
By Edward P. Martin

¡Siempre Adelante! Ever forward! This was the motto attributed to Father Junipero Serra and by which he lived his life. Pope Francis referenced the motto during the canonization Mass held recently in Washington, D.C. It has been the de facto NCCS motto this past year and will be the theme for our upcoming Biennial Conference in April.

It’s no secret that, as a result of BSA’s changes in its youth and adult membership policies, quite a few Catholic organizations have not renewed their charters. However, during the same period of time, we achieved a goal of chartering more than 300 new units at Catholic organizations. This was the goal for our 3-year Membership Initiative. As we near the end of the second year, more than 400 units have been chartered. Ever forward!

The NCCS continues to offer its religious emblem and religious activity patch programs. Several new religious activities are being developed. The NCCS continues to offer its training programs, particularly its advanced program, Scouting in the Catholic Church, each summer at the Philmont Training Center.

The NCCS continues to provide recognition to diocesan Scouting committees, Catholic-chartered units and adults who achieve certain standards of quality and service. Ever forward!

I hope that you will join us in Atlanta next April for our Biennial Conference. There will be workshops, meetings, special presentations, and opportunities to meet others and learn new things that you can take back to your local community. Ever forward!

Pope Francis exhorts us to “Go forth! Proclaim! The joy of the Gospel is something to be experienced, something to be known and lived only through giving it away, through giving ourselves away.” In the ministry of Catholic Scouting, we give ourselves away by practicing the rituals of our faith and sharing with the young men and women in our charge stories of our faith. My thanks to all who are engaged in this way! May our celebration of Christ’s birth give us hope to continue. Ever forward!

Wishing you a Merry and Blessed Christmas
Dear Catholic Scouters,

Each year at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Assembly the NCCS and Bishop Robert Guglielmone, NCCS Episcopal Liaison, host a breakfast for the Catholic Bishops. This year the event was held on November 16th. Approximately 80 bishops attended. We were fortunate to honor three bishops at our event in gratitude for their support of Catholic Scouting. Special sets of NCCS cufflinks were awarded to Bishop Gerald Gettelfinger and Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò for their support of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting. Bishop Daniel Conlon, of the Diocese of Joliet, was awarded the Silver Saint George for his participation in the Saint George Trek as well as his support of Catholic Scouting throughout his career.

We are nearly a year and a half away from the Boy Scouts of America 2017 National Jamboree. The NCCS will be asked to provide approximately 20 priests to serve as Jamboree Chaplains. Chaplains work in various areas including Subcamp Chaplains, Headquarters Chaplains, Faith and Belief Chaplains, Hospital Chaplains, program areas Chaplains just to name a few. Catholic duties include celebrating Mass, hearing confessions, offer counseling and guidance to Scouts and Scouters. The National Jamboree will be held at The Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve in West Virginia from July 19 to July 28, 2017. If you are interested in being a National Jamboree Catholic chaplain please feel free to contact me at my telephone number: (949) 574-7400 or by email fr.hanifin@oc.rcbo.org.

I would like to announce that the incoming Associate National Chaplain for the National Catholic Committee on Scouting will be Father Joseph Powers of the Diocese of Kansas City – Saint Joseph. Father Joe has been a Jamboree Chaplain and a Region 9 Chaplain. He is a long time member of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting and is presently the Rector of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Kansas City, Missouri. He will become the Associate National Chaplain after the 2016 NCCS Biennial Conference in Atlanta.

Fr. Mike

Father Michael P. Hanifin
NCCS National Chaplain

Cooperation, development, and program are the key words in the recognition of Catholic chartered units in earning this National Catholic Quality Unit Award. The adult leadership responds to training, not only in Scouting lores, but National Catholic Leadership Development, and religious counseling. The Scouts in each Pack, Troop, Team, and Crew/Ship respond by participating in the religious emblems program appropriate to their respective Scouting program.

After completing the application, the Diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting will review all the applications in their diocese to determine if the units meet the criteria for this award. They will complete the Patch Order Form and mail it along with the applicable fee to the NCCS indicating the number of patches, banners and certificates required. The applications do not need to be forwarded when ordering the patches and certificates.

The application and recognition flyer will be available for download on the NCCS website at www.nccs-bsa.org under Unit Awards.

NOTES FROM THE NATIONAL CHAPLAIN

Dear Catholic Scouters,

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Fr. Mike

Father Michael P. Hanifin
NCCS National Chaplain

Region 15 needs help in identifying Eastern Rite Scouters

There are now plans underway to have all the Eastern Rite Eparchies review a 2016 Quality Eparchial Committee Award. The committee has an added challenge (aka opportunity) since eparchial committee members cover a huge portion of our great country as compared to diocesan committees. Each eparchy committee could grow their numbers IF they only knew who their prospective members were.

Thus, they are asking for support from all Eastern Catholic Scouters across the country to contact the NCCS Region 15 Chairman Diana Kullman at dkullman1221@gmail.com so she can establish a database and establish communications with those Scouters who could be active in Region 15, as well as their local area, and assist in serving Eastern Catholic Scouters.
44th Biennial Conference
National Catholic Committee on Scouting
Atlanta, Georgia
(Thursday, April 7 – Sunday, April 10, 2016)
(Atlanta Marriott Perimeter Center)

Make plans now to join fellow Scout Chaplains, Scouters and spouses in Atlanta, Georgia, for the 44th Biennial Conference of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting for a weekend conference. Our last conference in Atlanta was 50 years ago! The local archdiocesan committee of Atlanta is very excited about being our host committee working with the NCCS Conference Committee.

There will be a chance to attend regional meetings, the NCCS General Business Meeting, workshops (nearly 20 being offered), a Philmont Reunion Luncheon, daily liturgies and much more – as well as meet Scouters and Chaplains from Archdioceses, Dioceses and Eparchies from around the country.

Full Conference Registration Fee will INCLUDE 5 of 7 meal functions and access to 4 refreshments breaks, and the Saturday evening NCCS Pre-Banquet Reception!

Committees have been hard at work developing interesting, meaningful and useful workshops. Planned workshops include: St. George Trek, Religious Emblems Reference Manual, How to Use the Ad Altare Dei Today & Who Is Eligible, Changes in the Pope Pius XII Program, Catholic Scouting Around the World, Marketing Catholic Scouting, Membership Retention, Membership Initiative, Adult Learning Principles, NCCS Orientation, Scouting in the Catholic Church, and Vocations: A Call For All. (See page 5 for more detailed listings).

Make your travel plans! The Executive Committee and several standing committee meetings, registration and the Trading Post begin on Thursday morning, April 7th, and the opening conference Mass is Thursday at 6:15 PM. The “Showcase 2016” (Ideas Fair), Trading Post, and Regional Meetings start at 6:30 AM on Friday, April 8th, and Advisory Board has its first meeting on Friday morning. The NCCS General Business Meeting is on Saturday morning, April 9th, and 20 workshops are scheduled on Saturday afternoon, followed by a Saturday Vigil Mass for the 3rd Sunday of Easter, Reception, and Banquet. Sunday’s Prayer Breakfast, April 10th is followed by the Executive Board meeting as well as an all-day Region 14 Convocation/Training Program for Catholic Committee Scouters of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida, at which all conference attendees will be invited to register and participate!

Airlines. Atlanta’s Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport is served by Alaska, American, Delta, Frontier, Southwest, Spirit, and United Airlines.

Our Conference Hotel! Our group room rate at the Atlanta Marriott Perimeter Center is $99! Our hotel is located in the beautiful Dunwoody suburb north of downtown Atlanta, just one block from the “red line” MARTA Dunwoody station. The MARTA “red line” train starts in the baggage claim area of the Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport. The 25 minute ride costs only $2.50. Our hotel offers a complimentary shuttle van for the 1 block ride from the Dunwoody MARTA station. (Our room rate is good 3 nights prior and 1 night after the official conference dates, based on availability). Also, self-parking at our conference hotel will be complimentary for registered hotel guests who are also conference registrants. In-room internet access will be complimentary. The hotel’s shuttle van also provides complimentary transportation to numerous local shopping and dining destinations within a 2.5 mile radius. Our NCCS custom room reservations link is: http://www.marriott.com/meeting-event-hotels/group-corporate-travel/groupCorp.mi?resLinkData=NCC%202016%5EATLPC%60NCCNCCA%6099.00%60USD%60false%604%604/5/16%604/11/16%603/17/16&app=resvlink&stop_mobi=yes Please make your room reservations as soon as possible as the number of rooms at our $99 rate are limited and they normally are selling at $250 on weeknights!
Attending the National Catholic Committee on Scouting (NCCS) Biennial Conference has always provided participants with great benefits, such as gaining insight and information from workshops. The 2016 NCCS Biennial Conference will be no exception as the NCCS Training Committee has organized a wide variety of workshops for conference participants. Check out what’s being offered:

In addition to being the NCCS Biennial Conference keynote banquet speaker, Bob McCarthy will present a workshop, “Fostering the Faith of our Children,” in response to the recent synod on family life and his wife Maggie will present a workshop on Pope Francis’ encyclical *Laudato Si*, and the Catholic response to climate change.

Speaking of Philmont, Ben Feril, the NCCS Training Chair will discuss the benefits of Catholic Scouts attending the “Scouting in the Catholic Church” conference at the Philmont Training Center.

Marketing and membership are two key areas important at the (arch) diocese and regional level. Margaret Matarese Chair of the Marketing Committee will offer a workshop in “Marketing Catholic Scouting,” and John Anthony Chair of the Membership Committee will host a presentation on “Membership Retention and Initiatives.”

Program initiatives in religious emblems, vocations, and religious activities will also be offered. Harvey Carter Chair of the Emblems Committee will host workshops on the “Religious Emblems Reference Manual,” and “How to Use the Ad Altare Dei Today and Changes in Pope Pius XII Programs.”

In addition, Chuck Lamb Chair of the Religious Activities Committee will discuss “What’s New in NCCS Activities” and Susan Guidry Chair of the Vocation Committee will be hosting “Vocations: A Call for All.”

Want to boost your (arch) diocese or region training program? Fr. Ray Fecteau will share insights on how to enhance adult training programs in “BORED OF EDUCATION: Best Practices in adult learning.”

In addition, Augie Pfeifer from the NCCS Training Committee will present “NCCS Orientation,” a primer for Catholic Scouters who just got involved in Catholic Scouting as Youth Ministry.

The NCCS Biennial Conference workshops will round out with an update on international Catholic Scouting from Scott Harvey in “Scouting Around the World”; and a panel discussion by the NCCS Key 3” with NCCS Chairman Ed Martin, Bishop Robert Guglielmone, Bishop Liaison to the NCCS, and the current National Chaplain Fr. Mike Hanifin.
Did You Know…?
By Bob Oldowski

As our country looks at the migrants and homeless, we recall that back in 1989 the NCCS began a pilot program offering Scouting to that population. This began as a sub-committee of Membership. It was titled the Cabrini Project and was named for Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini, an immigrant, a nun who established many care facilities for immigrants. She was canonized in 1946, the first American citizen name to be named a saint.

The program formed traditional Boy Scout troops under Catholic sponsorship in non-traditional places where migrant and homeless people gathered, like urban shelters for the homeless. First successes came in New York City and San Diego. This program had special requirements since parental involvement was almost non-existent and funding was needed from outside sources. This program eventually became part of the BSA’s Scoutreach programs.

An NCCS Cabrini Project patch exists honoring this program.

Emmett Doerr scholarship applications due by March 1, 2016

Applications are now being accepted for the 2016 Emmett J. Doerr Memorial Distinguished Scout Scholarship. The National Catholic Committee on Scouting (NCCS) established the Emmett J. Doerr Memorial Distinguished Scout Scholarship to be awarded to five outstanding high school Catholic seniors who are Scouts in a BSA program and continuing their education in college. These scholarships honor Mr. Doerr, who was a dedicated Catholic Scouter and a very active member of the NCCS. Mr. Doerr received the Silver Antelope, Silver Beaver, and Saint George Awards for his service to the Boy Scouts. The Doerr family and the NCCS are continuing his legacy by offering $2,000 scholarships in his name to five distinguished Catholic Scouts.

Eligibility Requirements:
Must be a practicing Catholic
Be a full-time high school senior
Be a registered young man or woman actively involved in a Scout Troop, Varsity Scout Troop, Venturing Crew or Sea Scout Ship.
Must have earned the Ad Altare Dei or Pope Pius XII Religious Award
Earned the Eagle Scout Award, Silver Award Summit Award or Quartermaster Award
Provided service to your church, community, school and Scouts

For applications or more information:
Download an application at http://www.nccs-bsa.org/national/EJDoerrScholarship.php
Email: nccs@scouting.org
Call: NCCS-Program Assistant at NCCS (972) 580-2114

The deadline for all applications is March 1, 2016.
Members of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting attended the National Catholic Youth Conference held in Indianapolis from November 19 to 21. In addition to staffing an information booth at the conference, George Sparks and Ed Gargiulo participated in a panel discussion on how Scouts can use their Eagle projects as evangelizing tools.

More than fifty dioceses were represented and our own Bishop Bob Guglielmone, Father Ray Fecteau and Father Dennis O’ Rourke were there representing Catholic Scouting.

If you are in Region 8 (North and South Dakota and Minnesota) or know of a great Scouter in that region who would make a good region chair, then please let John Halloran, the NCCS Nominating Committee Chair know. You can reach him at colhalloran@hotmail.com

The Current Region 8 Chair, James Rice, does not plan to continue when his term is up in April 2016. The committee is working on the ballots and hopes to have a name and short bio for that person before they go in the mail by the end of the year. Your assistance is appreciated.

For further information on Catholic Scouting go to:
http://www.nccs-bsa.org/
or
Find us on Facebook

THE ULTIMATE INTERNATIONAL SCOUTING EXPERIENCE

By Scott Harvey, NCCS International Committee Chairman

Father Jacques Gagey reported on the Jamboree activities by International Catholic Conference of Scouting (ICCS) in the last edition of The Bridge. I would like to share the Spirit of Unity “Wa” I experienced while in Japan.

One of the meanings of WA is peace. When you attend a World Scout Jamboree you see groups of young people arrive as citizens of their countries. After two weeks of living together and sharing their cultures they are truly transformed to citizens of the world. I often think that adults of this world could learn so much from the way these young people embrace the Spirit of Unity.

I was privileged to represent the ICCS along with two Scouts from each of the 180 countries in attendance at the Jamboree at the ceremony marking the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima. It was very moving to see the epicenter of the blast has become a Peace Garden. World leaders spoke on the importance of peace in the world. Japanese Scouts passed out flowers to all who attended. Again I could only think of how much adults could learn from these young people. During the past few weeks I have been reminded of how unfortunate we are to not have adults learn from the young people in the Scouting movement. Father Olubiyi James Kayode James from Nigeria, Father Jacques Gagey from France, Eva Chabot from Kenya and Georges El Ghorayeb from Lebanon are Scouting friends impacted by senseless terrorist attacks. Oh, mankind could only learn from the Scouts who live Scouting as Lord Baden Powell envisioned more than a century ago!

Scout Sunday set for February 7, 2016

Scout Sunday is set for February 7, 2016 to celebrate the anniversary of the founding of the Scouting program. Parishes that already celebrate the lives of their Scouting families may find the information at the web site below helpful to enhance their present liturgy.

For ideas on how to organize a Scout Sunday in your parish go to http://www.nccs-bsa.org/pdf/ScoutSunday.pdf
Duty to God

All Catholic Scouts whether they are Tiger Cubs, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts or Venturers have the opportunity to earn Religious Emblems to exhibit their spiritual growth within their age-appropriate scouting programs.

“Light of Christ”
Is to help the Cub Scout develop a personal relationship with Jesus. With the parents’ active assistance & participation in this program, it is hoped that the Cub will come to see Jesus as a real person and his friend.

“Parvuli Dei”
(Children of God) emblem is to help young boys explore a wide range of activities in order to discover the presence of God in their daily lives as members of their families & parishes.

“Ad Altare Dei”
(To the Altar of God) program is to help Catholic Scouts of the Roman Rite develop a fully Christian way of life in the faith community. The program is organized in chapters based on the seven sacraments.

“For more information on how to use these programs”
nccs-bsa.org / emblems or contact us at 972-580-2114

“Light is Life”
A program developed for scouts of the Eastern-rite Catholic Churches. Light is Life respects the cultural and ritual differences among the various Eastern Catholic Churches. (Vocations)

“Pope Pius XII”
The program deals with different life choices (single, married, religious, ordained), occupations and ministries in the church as calls from God.

National Catholic Committee on Scouting
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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED