Archdiocese of Atlanta hosts 44th Biennial NCCS meeting

The 44th Biennial meeting of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting (NCCS) was held in Atlanta, Ga. from April 7-10, 2016. Under the theme, “Ever Forward, Siempre Adelante,” Catholic Scouters came together to look for new ways to make Catholic Scouting a Youth Ministry across the nation.

If they were looking for new ideas to keep their programs fresh and exciting for their dioceses, they were in luck as the NCCS standing committees presented 14 different workshops that included:

- NCCS Orientation.
- Panel Discussion with NCCS Key-3
- Scouting Around the World.
- New NCCS Religious Activities.
- Fostering the Faith in Children.
- How to Use the Ad Altare Dei and Pope Pius XII Today & Who is Eligible.

BORED OF EDUCATION

- Philmont St. George Trek.
- New NCCS Web Site.
- Laudato Si.
- Membership Initiative and Retention.
- Scouting in the Catholic Church.
- Vocations: A Call for All.

The activities committee also hosted a 2016 Showcase, where dioceses from around the country displayed their best practices. This was an opportunity to network with Scouters and see what the various dioceses are doing to promote Catholic Scouting as Youth Ministry.
Chairman’s Corner
By George Sparks

Renew – Rebuild – Rejoice

Sunday, April 10th saw the closing of our 44th Biennial Conference, which from my perspective was an outstanding event. Many people put in a great deal of time and effort to make our gathering successful. Key to this accomplishment was the work of our host committee, the Archdiocese of Atlanta Catholic Committee on Scouting, our own NCCS Conference Committee and the many volunteers who made it happen! There are just too many people to recognize here and I’m sure I would get in serious trouble because I am bound to forget some of our good volunteers.

I was sworn in as the new chairman of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting at the closing executive board meeting and was put to work conducting the closing executive committee meeting. As I was conducting this meeting I began to get a deeper appreciation for the hard work put in by my predecessor, Ed Martin. Ed led the NCCS through extremely challenging times, but never wavered in his belief in the value of Catholic Scouting. The theme for this conference, Siempre Adelante (Ever Forward), was most appropriate because it reflected exactly what Ed accomplished during his three-year tenure. He kept us always moving forward. He and his partner, national chaplain Fr. Mike Hanifin, were a focused team. They made sure that we dealt with the issues which arose during their tenure, but always kept an eye on our objectives which included growing Catholic Scouting and delivering quality Catholic activities and programs for our Scouts! Both Ed and Fr. Mike were recognized at the closing banquet.

Fr. Kevin and I have chosen a theme for our term of office: Renew – Rebuild – Rejoice. We invite each of you to participate and share in this commitment, as it will take every one of us to commit ourselves to a renewal of our belief in the value of Catholic Scouting and the development of the future leaders of our church and nation. We must look to rebuilding the Catholic Scouting program in each of our units and renewing and strengthening our relationship with our diocese and communities. We must also rejoice in the fruits of our labors; the small and large successes that will be accomplished over the coming three years.

The conference will provide participants with information on Scouting as Youth Ministry and how the NCCS can support Catholic Scouting at the (arch)diocese level. In addition, participants will have opportunities to network and to earn the Jerusalem Cross. The conference is open to all registered Catholic Scouters, (arch) diocese and parish youth ministers, Scout Chaplains, clergy and members of the Catholic Committee on Scouting. To register go to Philmont Training Center website.

Scouting in the Catholic Church training participants urged to register now

Summer at the Philmont Training Center is always an exciting time. It’s also more of a great adventure if you bring your family with you. As it does every year, the National Catholic Committee on Scouting (NCCS) will host the Scouting in the Catholic Church Conference at the Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico. This year’s Scouting in the Catholic Church conference will take place from July 24 to 30, 2016.

While you attend the conference with Scouters around the country, your family members will have a great opportunity to experience the magic of Philmont with organized programs for every member of your family from young children to your spouse! There are programs for Small Fry, Cowpokes and Cowgirls, Ropers, Deputies, Sidewinders, Mustangs, Broncos, Trailblazers and Mountain Trek for teenagers and young adults. To find out more about these categories, go to the PTC web site at PhilmontTrainingCenter.org.

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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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To submit items for future editions of The Bridge please contact Mike Gannon at scouttrain@aol.com. Photos are acceptable and should be in a jpeg format. Please ensure all people in photos are identified and the subject matter is fully described.
Dear Catholic Scouters,

I would like to start off by thanking the Archdiocese of Atlanta’s Catholic Committee on Scouting for hosting such a successful 44th Biennial Conference. Our NCCS Conference Committee, headed by our own Fr. Randy Cuevas, did a marvelous job of planning and execution second to none.

I am honored to be your National Chaplain for the next three years. My hat is off to Ed Martin and Fr. Mike Hanifin for a job well done even in the midst of very challenging times. I hope I can live up to the example Fr. Mike has set for the office of National Chaplain.

George Sparks and I are ready to get started. We want to build on the past accomplishments of the NCCS by Renewing the Vision of Scouting as Youth Ministry; rebuilding the number of Catholic Scouting units that were lost to the restructuring of some of our partners; and rejoicing in the work and ministry to be done. We need to “Serve the Lord with gladness.” Let’s have some fun doing the work of the NCCS by doing it together. We should work as a team and collaborate with one another and give the credit to God.

On another topic, when I returned from Atlanta I found out I have Osteoarthritis in my left knee and will need to have a full knee replacement sooner than later. The surgery is scheduled for June 15. I may not be able to be at Philmont this summer depending on recuperation time, but please be assured of my prayers for the Chaplaincy program and the success of the Scouting in the Catholic Church conference. I would ask that you say a prayer for me for a full and speedy recovery. Have a great summer and travel safely.

Peace and Prayers,

Fr. Kevin Smith

Notes from the National Chaplain

Father Ray Fecteau was honored with the Brother Barnabas Founders Award at NCCS Biennial meeting

At the 44th Biennial Conference Father Ray Fecteau was honored with the Brother Barnabas Founders Award. He became only the 17th recipient in the history of the NCCS to receive the honor.

The Brother Barnabas Founders Award is a special recognition for long and meritorious service that has significantly affected the course of Catholic Scouting. Brother Barnabas, F.S.C., a Brother of the Christian Schools, was credited with creating the formal association between the Catholic bishops of the United States and the Boy Scouts of America that is now known as the National Catholic Committee on Scouting. In addition, he worked with the Knights of Columbus to help develop their Squires program.

Father Ray Fecteau was deemed worthy of the Brother Barnabas Founders Award for reasons that include not only his 40 years of continuous service to Catholic Scouting with more 25 years of that time as an Executive Board member, but also significant contributions to the development of programs and practices that have survived the test of time. His passion for excellence in Catholic Scouting and dedication to retaining the church’s traditions in the programs and organization of the NCCS have directly and positively affected the organization’s direction, programs and membership over the years.

He has spent the past 20 years working with the Executive Board in a variety of positions. First, he served as advisor to the Religious Activities committee where he co-authored a Tiger Cub Big Idea Know Your Faith. This program was created to serve the spiritual development needs of Tiger Cubs prior to the development of the Light of Christ religious emblem. It was also forwarded to the BSA Cub Scout Committee for their consideration.

Father Ray is the founding pastor of Visitation Parish in Darnestown, Md., where he has served since 1991.

Father Ray Fecteau receiving the Brother Barnabas award from Most. Rev. Robert Gugulelmone, Bishop Liaison to the NCCS.
At the NCCS executive board meeting in April the Board approved signing a Memorandum of Understanding with Learning for Life to promote various NCCS programs. Learning for Life will promote the National Catholic Committee on Scouting religious activity program in the Catholic schools they serve. In turn, the National Catholic Committee on Scouting will promote the Catholic School Companion lesson plans to local dioceses.

The *Catholic School Companion* was created as a supplement to the Learning for Life character education program specifically to reinforce the teachings of the Catholic Church. The K-8 lesson plans discuss the eight character traits taught in the Learning for Life program as they relate to the Old and New Testaments, the writings of various Saints, John Paul II, and the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

The High school program focuses on justice, prudence, fortitude, and temperance. Also at executive board meeting, a motion was approved that allows Explorers to earn the Ad Altare Dei, Light is Life and Pope Pius XII awards.

Congratulations to the following individuals who were (re-)elected to positions on the NCCS Executive Board and were inducted at the end of the Biennial meeting!

- **James Weiskircher** - National Chair-elect
- **Ben Feril** - Vice Chair
- **Gerard Scanlan** - Vice Chair
- **John Meakin Jr.** - Region 1 Chair
- **Msgr. James Lang** - Region 2 Chaplain
- **Fr. Michael Santangelo** - Region 3 Chaplain
- **Msgr. John Brady** - Region 4 Chaplain
- **Paul Bell** - Region 5 Chair
- **Fr. Mark Carr, S.J.** - Region 7 Chaplain
- **Dr. James Rice** - Region 8 Chair
- **Charles Raimond Sr.** - Region 10 Chair
- **Roselito de los Reyes** - Region 11 Chair

**NEWS NOTES**

Bishops in support of Catholic Scouting

Clockwise from top left - Archbishop José H. Gomez celebrated the religious emblem presentation Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in downtown Los Angeles; Troop 283, sponsored by St Margaret of Scotland Catholic Church, Diocese of Wilmington, Del. participated in the seventh Catholic Youth Ministry Pilgrimage with Bishop Francis Malooly; Scouts and Scouters received recognition at Court of Honor in Diocese of Youngstown. Msgr. James Kolp, Region 6 Chaplain, was recognized with diocese’s Lifetime Achievement Award, with Bishop George Murry officiating; and Bishop Robert McManus celebrated the annual Scouting awards Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Paul in Worcester, Mass.

**Cardinal Dolan receives BSA Silver Buffalo award**

Cardinal Timothy Dolan, Archbishop of New York, in receiving the award from Mike Surbaugh, BSA Chief Scout Executive and Robert Gates, BSA National President; said the Church in the United States, which sponsors Scouting units for nearly a quarter-million young people, sees the Scouts as a “virtue-driven organization” and an “ally” in ministry to youth. He cited the Scouts for creating a space where to speak about God, religion, and faith is not treated as an alien concept. “We live in a culture that is trying to drive religion to the periphery,” the cardinal said. “It’s at the heart of what we do.”
Six Awarded $2,000 Emmett Doerr Scholarships

The National Catholic Committee on Scouting (NCCS) is pleased to announce the winners of the Emmett J. Doerr Memorial Distinguished Scout Scholarships for 2016. The recipients are: John Edmond Draper, a student at McDonogh School in Owings Mills, Maryland, Archdiocese of Baltimore; Christopher M. Femando, a student at San Marcos High School in San Marcos, California, Diocese of San Diego; Sarah Darci Fields, a student at John Paul II Catholic High School, Tallahassee, Florida, Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee; John Klooser, a student at Marquette University High School in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Archdiocese of Milwaukee; Ryan Carmen Pantalone a student at Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake High School in Burnt Hills, New York, Diocese of Albany; Michael F. Walker, a student at Seton Home Study School in Front Royal, Virginia, Diocese of Las Cruces.

The Emmett J. Doerr Memorial Distinguished Scout Scholarship program was established thirteen years ago by the family of the late Emmett J. Doerr, who was an active member of the NCCS.

Each of the six $2,000 scholarships recognizes outstanding Eagle Scouts or Venturing Silver Award recipients who are registered in a program of the Boy Scouts of America. This year’s winners were chosen from more than 120 applicants from across the country based on a number of criteria including service to their home parish, leadership in their Scout units and other school or community organizations, letters of recommendation and their scholastic record. “We are honored to recognize these six outstanding Catholic Scouts for their achievements as they certainly serve as role models in their communities,” said Bill Davies, NCCS Vice Chairman for Finance, who oversees the scholarship committee.

Religious emblems a key part of many diocesan programs

Listed below are the top dioceses in presentation of religious emblems. These dioceses each presented more than 200 religious emblems during 2015.

Special thanks go to the respective diocesan committees, their religious emblems counselors and coordinators for bringing this many more youth to a better understanding of their "duty to God"!

Chicago - 782
Rockville Center - 684
New York—563
Los Angeles - 518
Cincinnati - 422
Milwaukee -385
Galveston-Houston - 382
Arlington (VA) - 324
Detroit - 285
St. Paul-Minneapolis - 258
Dallas - 223
Newark - 223
Baltimore - 218
Rockford - 210
Kansas City - 202

Volunteers are needed to staff the NCCS booth at the 2017 BSA National Jamboree. If you are interested, please Email nccs@scouting.org or call 972-580-2114.
Did You Know…?
By Bob Oldowski

A Jubilee Year is a significant event within the Catholic Church. This Jubilee Year of Mercy (2015-16) has us recall the 1950 Holy Year Jubilee when Scouts from America journeyed to Rome. A professional Scouter, A. A. Kirk, working in Chicago assembled a troop of 25 Scouts and leaders from 14 states and they made a 53-day pilgrimage to Rome. He termed this the “National Jubilee Boy Scout Pilgrimage.” While in Italy the group was received in a private audience by Pope Pius XII at his papal summer residence at Castel Gandolfo.

Two years later, 1952, A. A. Kirk was named as Director of Catholic Services in the Relationships Division of the BSA, located then in New Jersey. As such he served as the executive secretary to the Catholic Committee on Scouting. He held this position until he retired in 1966 and returned to his home in Dubuque, Iowa.

Jerusalem Cross Recipients Recognized

During the 44th NCCS Biennial Conference, the following Catholic Scouters were recognized during the Philmont Luncheon for successfully completing requirements for the Jerusalem Cross. Requirements for earning this award includes attending the Scouting in the Catholic Church course at the Philmont Training Center and successfully delivering a mission project that serves the needs of parish youth ministry or diocesan Catholic Scouting community. Well done!

John Anthony, Diocese of Fort Worth, Texas

Joe Bouley, Diocese of Salt Lake City, Utah

Dinah Cowen, Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, Texas

Erin Gallogly, Diocese of Honolulu, Hawaii

Kyle Holtgrave, Diocese of Springfield, Illinois

James F. Hughes, Diocese of Grand Rapids, Michigan

Gina Keating, Diocese of Phoenix, Arizona

James Pitney, Diocese of Worcester, Massachusetts

Christopher G. Murray, Archdiocese of Washington, DC

I-r
Ben Feril, PTC Course Director, John Anthony, Diocese of Fort Worth, Texas, James F. Hughes, Diocese of Grand Rapids, Michigan, Joe Bouley, Diocese of Salt Lake City, Utah and Christopher G. Murray, Archdiocese of Washington, DC
New Mexico Scout earns four religious awards and 142 merit badges

Thomas Donlin, a Byzantine Catholic member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, Albuquerque, N.M., where he is an altar server, has earned 142 merit badges. Donlin is a member of Troop 395, chartered by the Shrine of St. Bernadette, Sandia District, Great Southwest Council. He has been an active Scout for 12 years and has earned the Light of Christ, Parvuli Dei, Light is Life and Pope Pius XII religious emblems.

He currently serves as Troop 395’s Leave No Trace trainer. Donlin is a brotherhood member of Lodge Yah-Tah-Hey-Si-Kess. He has received the Medal of Merit for Lifesaving, 12 Eagle Palms, the World Conservation Award, and the National Medal of Outdoor Achievement. His remarkable achievement was recognized during a Court of Honor on Jan. 27.

Six named as Silver St. George Recipients recognizing significant service to NCCS

Six NCCS members were awarded the Silver St. George Award at the biennial meeting in Atlanta. This award is the NCCS recognition for dedicated members who have worked hard and diligently for many years at the national level, and whose accomplishments in carrying out the youth-serving mission of NCCS have been especially significant. They join 95 previous recipients who have been recognized since the awards inception in 1997.

Bishop James Tamayo of the Diocese of Laredo is recognized as a champion of the Scouting ideals and the positive impact that scouting can make in the Dioceses and Parishes. He has served on the Southern Region Executive Board for 4 years and has served on its Advisory Board since 2008. Also in 2008 he became the founding member of the BSA National Hispanic Initiative, which morphed into national Council All Markets Strategy Committee.

Fr. Michael Weglicki has served on the NCCS Vocations Committee, Advisory Board, and as the Advisor to the Activities Committee. In 2011 he became the Region 5 Chaplain. In addition to attending a number of our Annual / Biennial meetings, he has staffed 5 National Jamborees and is his Council Summer Camp Chaplain since 2011. Fr. Mike also has been the Diocesan Scout Chaplain since 1985 and a member of his Council’s Executive Board since 1992.

Eagle Scout Barry Ekle has been in Scouting for more than 45 years and currently serves on the Southern Region Executive Board, Southern Region Sea Scout Commodore and the BSA National Relationships Committee. In 2011, he was appointed to serve as the NCCS Contracts Administrator.

Eagle Scout Ben Feril has been active on the Northeast Region Sea Scout Committee and in his council. He has served on two Wood badge Staffs and as a Course Director for Sea Scout Sea badge. His involvement with the NCCS includes Diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting Chair for three-year, Region 4 Chair for two years, and was just installed as a newly elected NCCS Vice-Chair.

Eagle Scout Jim Shivers has been involved in Scouting for more than 45 years. He has served on Diocesan Committee since 1984, serving four years as Diocesan Chair. Jim had been a member on the NCCS Religious Emblems Committee for 5 years and is finishing up a three-year term as the Region 11 Chair.

George Sparks was a BSA Professional Scouter and he was the BSA Advisor to the NCCS for many years. Up on his retirement from the BSA, he remained active with the NCCS as a volunteer. He took on the arduous task of revamping the Membership Initiative trying to have programs that would help stop the drop, improve retention and grow new units and membership. Three years ago he was elected at the Chair-Elect and has been responsible for overseeing the Initiative he has worked so hard on.
The Miter Society is an NCCS recognition of financial support for the St. George Trek. The Miter Society is so named to honor our current and former Bishop Liaisons. The history of our Bishops’ involvement in our NCCS programs and operations has been distinguished to say the least. Through their own loyalty, dedication and personal hard work, our Bishop Liaisons have helped forge a stronger relationship among the membership of the NCCS, while showing their support and encouragement with and among the priests of the NCCS.

The Miter Society recognition consists of a black and gold polished medal suspended from a dark green ribbon. Green is the color proper to a bishop. Engraved on the medal is an image of the Philmont Arrowhead, an easily recognizable image of Philmont, with the bishop’s miter superimposed. Each medal is consecutively numbered, but without limit.

Receiving the Miter at the 2016 Biennial include, Laura Ray, Joe Bouley, Frank Diaz, William Jenkins, Mary Ellen Yeomans, George Sparks, Hunter Piper, Fr. Leo LeBlanc, Chris Murray, Kevin Hennessey, Fr. Mark Carr, Phil Krajec, Gerry Quinlan and Dr. James Rice

Each award represents a generous contribution of a minimum $1,000. If you’d like to make a contribution in your name or to honor someone else, please see out NCCS web site for detailed information on making your gift.

SUPPORT THE ST. GEORGE TREK WITH A DONATION TO THE MITER SOCIETY