

# Scouting is Youth Ministry

## *The Vision of Youth Ministry and Renewing the Vision*

### Facts at a Glance

#### The Boy Scouts of America

The **mission** of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare young people to make ethical choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law. The **aims of scouting** are character development, citizenship training, and mental and physical fitness.



#### Catholic Youth Ministry<sup>1</sup>

“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.”

##### Essential goals:

- (1) Empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today;
- (2) Draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission and work of the faith community; and
- (3) Foster the personal and spiritual growth of each young person.”

<sup>1</sup> “Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry,” Office for Publishing and Promotion Services, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1997.

### GOALS OF CATHOLIC YOUTH MINISTRY

The goals of Catholic youth ministry match Scouting’s three aims: Character development, preparation for responsible citizenship and physical and mental fitness.

**Goal 1:** To empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today.

**Character:** Scouting’s values combine with the Gospel values taught by the Catholic Church are the basis for developing youths whose good character is based on the Gospel. The religious emblems programs offer a form of catechesis that is age- and grade-specific for each of the program phases of Scouting. Youth leadership positions in the Scout troop and Venturing crew offer provide opportunities for youths to put good Christian leadership into practice.

**Goal 2:** To draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission and work of the Catholic faith community.

**Citizenship:** The Scout unit is one type of community. The home, parish, and civic communities are others to which a Scout belongs. In Scouting programs and activities they learn how to responsible members of their various communities.

**Goal 3:** To foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person.

**Physical and mental fitness:** Scouting promotes holistic fitness. Some activities and programs are designed to develop healthful habits of diet and exercise. The challenges of learning new skills and exploring careers and hobbies through the merit badge program or high adventure activities stimulate the intellectual capabilities of the Scout or Venturer. The spiritual values imparted through the religious emblems programs, Scout retreats and the ideals of Scouting contribute to sound spiritual growth.

## History

From the earliest days of Scouting in the United States, the Catholic Church has found it a useful tool for youth ministry.

Since its formation in 1934, the National Catholic Committee on Scouting has worked to ensure that Catholic-chartered Scout units and Catholic Scouts would have appropriate resources to integrate their faith experience with their Scouting experience – A Scout is reverent. A Scout promises to do his duty to God.

While the “Renewing the Vision” document is concerned with adolescent youths, Scouting for

youths begins in the first grade and continues until the person turns 21 years old.

A comparison of the BSA Mission Statement with the vision document’s definition of youth ministry as well as a comparison of the BSA aims and the three essential goals stated in the vision document will show their compatibility. These facts-at-a-glance pages presume familiarity with “Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry.”

Scouting in the Catholic Church is a treasure that has been buried, a pearl of great price.

## RENEWING THE VISION

### ASPECTS

- ministerial and pastoral
- relational
- goal-centered
- multidimensional
- holistic and developmental
- people-centered and needs focused

### THEMES

- comprehensive
- developmentally appropriate
- family friendly
- intergenerational
- multicultural
- community-wide
- leadership
- flexible, adaptable programming

## SCOUTING

specifically for young people  
relations with families, Scouts, adult leaders  
a variety of programs to achieve the aims  
uses all 8 components of the vision document  
well-rounded response to youth needs  
addresses the individual and his needs

uses resources of local communities  
programs are grade- and age-specific  
family involvement appropriate for age  
adults of all ages and youths work together  
teaches respect for different ethnic and religious views  
churches and civic community work together  
adults and youths trained for and exercise leadership  
a variety of programs for different needs

### Meets these characteristics:

- variety of approaches
- small-group
- home-based
- one-on-one mentoring
- independent or self-directed programs
- variety of schedule options, program settings
- current technology



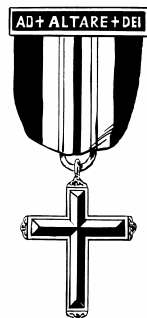
## EIGHT COMPONENTS OF YOUTH MINISTRY

*(essence of ministry with adolescents)*

## CATHOLIC SCOUTING

*(includes all eight components)*

- Catechesis..... religious emblems programs, developmentally and grade appropriate  
*Light of Christ* – Tigers, 2nd-grade Cubs  
*Parvuli Dei* – Cubs and Webelos  
*Ad Altare Dei, Light is Life* – Boy Scouts  
*Pope Pius XII* – Boy Scouts, Venturers
- Prayer and worship..... Scout Sundays, Mass when camping, mealtime prayers, prayers at meetings
- Community life ..... dens, patrols, crews, involvement in parish life, service projects
- Pastoral care ..... caring adult leaders, youth protection training, training to reflect on experiences, learning conflict resolution, merit badge program, public recognition for accomplishments
- Justice and service..... Scout law, service projects, Eagle service project, “Do a good turn daily,” wearing of uniforms reduces class distinctions, religious emblems activities teach Gospel values of justice and service
- Leadership development ..... training for and experience of leadership, youths work with youths earning Pope Pius XII religious emblem, troop conducts junior leader training, Scout council conducts junior leader training conference to teach leadership skills, Venturers receive leadership skill training
- Advocacy ..... adults work with Scouts, speak on their behalf in parish, Scout districts, councils and national level, developmentally appropriate youth protection training
- Evangelization..... religious emblems programs, Scout retreats, pilgrimages, days of reflection, Scout Sundays, Mass attendance while on weekend trips, values in Cub Scout Promise and Law of the Pack, Scout Oath and Scout Law, Venturing Oath and Venturing Code, adults witness faith to youths, youths witness to one another, outreach to unchurched members of the unit.



## Scouting's methods and the eight components

TIGER CUBS, CUB SCOUTS, WEBELOS	BOY SCOUTS	VENTURERS	EIGHT COMPONENTS
Ideals	Ideals	Ideals	Catechesis Prayer and worship Evangelization
Den and neighborhood	Patrol method	Group activities	Community life
Activities	Outdoors	High adventure	Community life
Uniform	Uniform	Uniform (optional)	Justice and service
Home and family	Adult association	Adult association	Advocacy
Achievements	Advancement	Recognition	Pastoral care Justice and service
	Leadership development	Leadership	Leadership development
	Personal growth	Teaching others	Evangelization

## ADULT LEADERSHIP IN CATHOLIC SCOUTING

- role models and witnesses to the faith in their daily interactions with Scouts
- apostles to youth
- receive extensive Boy Scouts of America training in leadership
- receive training in youth protection norms
- NCCS Scouter Development program trains adults for the lay apostolate of Scouting
- the unit committee supervises the program
- a Scouting coordinator acts as liaison between a parish's Scout programs and the pastor and parish council
- adults serve as religious emblems counselors or moderators. They are trained for this service
- Scouters stay connected with their parishes that charter the Scouting units and are active in the parish's youth ministry

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