The National Catholic Committee on Scouting (NCCS)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)
REGARDING BSA’s ADULT LEADERSHIP POLICY

This FAQ resource has been developed by the National Catholic Committee on Scouting (NCCS) and the views expressed therein are those of the NCCS.

BSA’s Adult Leadership Standard

1. What was actually approved by the Boy Scouts of America (BSA)?

The standards for selecting adult leaders of the Boy Scouts of America are as follows:

Adult leadership positions in the Boy Scouts of America are open to adults who meet the requirements set forth in the Bylaws, the Rules and Regulations, and the policies of the Boy Scouts of America.

Adult leaders in the programs of the Boy Scouts of America must (a) subscribe to and abide by the values expressed in the Scout Oath and Scout Law, (b) subscribe to and abide by the precepts of the Declaration of Religious Principle, and (c) demonstrate at all times behavior that exemplifies the highest level of good conduct and respect for others and that is consistent with Scouting’s values and codes of conduct.

No adult applicant for registration as an employee or non-unit-serving volunteer, who otherwise meets the requirements of the Boy Scouts of America, may be denied registration on the basis of sexual orientation.

The Boy Scouts of America hereby adopts the following statement on sexuality and adult leaders:

Matters of marriage, family, and sexuality raise profound social, moral, and theological questions. The Boy Scouts of America has always been deeply respectful of the religious and moral beliefs of its chartering organizations, including religious organizations.

The Boy Scouts of America affirms that sexual relations between adults should be moral, honorable, committed, and respectful. Adult Scout leaders should reflect these values in their personal and public lives so as to be proper role models for youth. The Boy Scouts of America affirms the right of each chartering organization to reach its own religious and moral conclusions about the specific meaning and application of these values. The Boy Scouts of America further affirms the right of each chartering organization to select adult leaders who support those conclusions in word and deed and who will best inculcate the organization’s values through the Scouting program.

The Boy Scouts of America rejects any interference with or condemnation of the diverse beliefs of chartering organizations on matters of marriage, family, and sexuality. The message of Scouting is one of toleration and respect for different religious and moral conclusions in this matter, acknowledging that reasonable minds may honorably differ. Any effort to exclude or penalize chartering organizations based on their beliefs or policies regarding marriage, family, or sexuality is contrary to the Boy Scouts of America’s commitment to religious freedom and respect for the beliefs and convictions of its chartering organizations.

No local council may refuse to process or approve a charter application or in any way limit the participation of a Scouting unit based upon the chartered organization’s exercise of its right to select adult leaders as provided in this resolution.

The Boy Scouts of America will defend and indemnify to the fullest extent allowed by law any bona fide religious chartered organization against any claim or action contending that the chartered organization’s
good faith refusal to select a unit leader based upon the religious principles of the chartered organization is in violation of the law.

2. When does the resolution go into effect?

The resolution was effective when it was approved—July 27, 2015.

3. Why does BSA consider the resolution necessary?

The national leadership of the BSA has concluded that the BSA’s policy of excluding adult leaders based on their sexual orientation is no longer sustainable for a number of reasons. The BSA believes that changing the policy but continuing to acknowledge the longstanding right of religious chartered organizations to select leaders based upon their religious principles is the best choice for the BSA and its chartered organizations. See BSA’s detailed explanation here: http://www.nccs-bsa.org/mbrstd/ARes157/BSA-Why%20the%20BSA%20Must%20Reconsider%20the%20Adult%20Leader%20Standard%20070815%20(Distributi....pdf.

4. What is the definition of a “religious organization” for purposes of the “indemnification” described above?

The BSA has reported that it will indemnify bona fide religious chartered organizations; i.e., churches, synagogues, temples, mosques, or other places of worship. BSA has stated that bona fide religious organizations include not only organized institutions of worship, but also religious organizations, specifically including the Knights of Columbus and church schools.

Catholic Teaching

5. What is Catholic teaching on selecting individuals with same-sex attraction for positions of leadership within the Church?

The USCCB, in its document Ministry to Persons with a Homosexual Inclination: Guidelines for Pastoral Care (http://www.usccb.org/about/doctrine/publications/upload/ministry-to-persons-of-homosexual-inclination.pdf), has the following statements which may be applied to adults serving as leaders in Catholic-chartered units:

- Persons who experience same-sex attraction and yet are living in accord with Church teaching should be encouraged to take an active role in the life of the faith community. However, the Church has a right to deny roles of service to those whose behavior violates her teaching. Such service may seem to condone an immoral lifestyle and may even be an occasion of scandal.
- Special care ought to be taken to ensure that those carrying out the ministry of the Church not use their position of leadership to advocate positions or behaviors not in keeping with the teachings of the Church. They must not belong to groups that oppose Church teaching. It is not sufficient for those involved in this ministry to adopt a position of distant neutrality with regard to Church teaching.
- For some persons, revealing their homosexual tendencies to certain close friends, family members, a spiritual director, confessor, or members of a Church support group may provide some spiritual and emotional help and aid them in their growth in the Christian life. In the context of parish life, however, general public self-disclosures are not helpful and should not be encouraged.
6. What are some considerations relating to the question of whether promoting programs of the Boy Scouts of America avoids wrongful cooperation in an objective moral evil?

So long as Catholic entities chartering Scouting units are clear in their opposition to same-sex sexual conduct and in their support of the Church’s full teaching on both same-sex attraction and homosexual conduct, and so long as adults who are actively engaging in behavior contrary to the Church’s teaching are not permitted to serve as unit leaders, then the NCCS presently views that an institution’s involvement in Scouting can be considered morally acceptable presuming scandal is avoided. At the same time, the NCCS recognizes that diocesan bishops may come to different conclusions on this matter.

The BSA Scouter Code of Conduct (http://www.scouting.org/filestore/HealthSafety/pdf/Scouter_Code_of_Conduct.pdf) prohibits leaders from discussing or engaging in “any form of sexual conduct while engaged in Scouting activities” and requires leaders to refer all questions on sexual topics to parents and religious leaders. The clearly articulated position of the BSA is that sexual matters, including discussions about sexuality, have no place in the Scouting movement.

For this reason, in addition to an important good—that is, the formation of youth and young adults in virtue, outdoor skills, and leadership—still being deemed achievable in spite of BSA’s new policy, NCCS believes that diocesan bishops can permit Catholic parishes and institutions to charter and support Scouting programs.

NCCS offers the following further considerations to explain its current assessment and to assist local diocesan committees and Catholic-chartered units with their decisions.

1. **On cooperation:** It is always preferable for organizations associated with Catholic institutions not to cooperate with evil; however, in many areas of life it is very difficult—if not impossible—to avoid entirely any cooperation with evil. Catholic teaching holds that some cooperation with evil may be morally justifiable if certain conditions are met. By such cooperation, there is no intent to provide assistance in the commission of evil, but rather an intent to achieve a good. It can be foreseen, however, that in the pursuit of the good, some level of assistance may be unintentionally provided to a wrongdoer. Such cooperation will be morally legitimate only if the reasons for cooperating are at least as grave as the reasons for not cooperating.

2. **On scandal:** Scandal is always a possibility; however, if the Catholic chartered organization or the National Catholic Committee on Scouting issues a clear statement that summarizes Church teachings on sexual conduct outside of marriage between one man and one woman and why those actively engaged in same-sex sexual relationships cannot be leaders in Catholic-chartered Scouting units, then the possibility of scandal can be lessened, if not prevented. However, if it becomes clear that scandal or other concerns remain significant, this current assessment will need to be reviewed.

3. **On the good of youth and young adult formation:** The formation of youth and young adults is an important good that may justify cooperation with evil when the aforementioned conditions are met. In order to preserve this good, the material given to Scouting participants must not have a positive reference to, or affirmation of, homosexual conduct or the homosexual inclination itself—rather, persons always need to be affirmed for their inviolable dignity. In addition, Scouting gatherings and events need to retain an ethos that is free from relativism in the area of human sexuality.

4. **On an internal policy for Catholic-chartered units:** NCCS recognizes that the effort to have an internal policy for Catholic-chartered Scouting units will pose several problems and difficulties; however, none of these difficulties necessarily requires a removal of sponsorship. The challenges in such an arrangement do mean that Catholic leadership needs to select appropriate volunteers and/or monitor their activities.
Impact of Changes

7. How has BSA’s definition of “morally straight” changed in the light of the resolution(s) to change its membership policies?

Scouting is a youth program, and any sexual conduct, whether heterosexual or homosexual, by youth of Scouting age is contrary to the virtues of Scouting. Scouting is not the place to resolve divergent viewpoints and no member or organization may use Scouting to promote or advance any social or political agenda about sexuality.

The Boy Scout Handbook continues to define “morally straight” as “Your relationships with others should be honest and open. Respect and defend the rights of all people. Be clean in your speech and actions and faithful in your religious beliefs. Values you practice as a Scout will help you shape a life of virtue and self-reliance.” [From Membership Standards Implementation—Frequently Asked Questions for Unit Leaders, August 2013 (See http://www.scouting.org/Training/Membership_Standards.aspx)]

8. Do the BSA’s adult leadership standards eradicate legal protections obtained in Boy Scouts of America v. Dale?

No. On the contrary, the rights of the BSA and its charted organizations to select adult leaders in accordance with their values are protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, as the Supreme Court of the United States concluded in Boy Scouts of America v. Dale. BSA decided only to change the adult leader standard for non-religious organizations (2014) and to allow gay youth members (2013). The changes with respect to adult leaders does not limit or impair the ability of religious chartered organizations—such as churches, temples, synagogues, and mosques—to select leaders in accordance with their faith-based principles religious organizations have broader First Amendment protections than BSA that safeguard their ability to select leaders.

9. Do the BSA’s adult leadership standards increase the risk of litigation against other membership requirements, including the “duty to God”?

No. "Duty to God" is a core value and immutable tenet of the Scouting program. The BSA reaffirmed that "the Scout Oath begins with the duty to God and the Scout Law ends with a Scout's obligation to be reverent, and Scouting respects and defends the rights of others to practice their own religious beliefs without criticism." The BSA has defended and won several lawsuits protecting the "duty to God" requirement. And the Supreme Court in Boy Scouts of America v. Dale protected the BSA's First Amendment right to select leaders according to Scouting's values, which include the "duty to God".

The BSA has and will continue to oppose any action that threatens the BSA's right to define its own moral standards for membership or that threatens the BSA's relationships with its chartered organizations. The BSA remains committed to defending its religious chartered organizations threatened by litigation solely because of their right to select leaders according to their beliefs.

10. Do the BSA’s adult leadership standards mean religious chartered organizations will not be able to adhere to their beliefs? Will a church with ties to the BSA lose the ability to teach biblical principles of sexual morality to its Scouts and to require them to adhere to those principles? Will the Scouting program of a religious chartered organization teach sexual values and beliefs completely inconsistent with the religious organization? Will churches or other religious organizations be censored from teaching Bible-based standards for sexual morality to youth in a Scouting unit?

No. The BSA resolution affirms the right of each chartered organization to reach its own religious and moral conclusions about sexual relations between adults. Chartered organizations continue to have the right and responsibility to choose their own unit leaders according to their own values and Scouting values. The BSA reaffirmed that no Scouting unit may deny a youth membership in the BSA on the basis of sexual orientation or preference. But each chartered organization may adhere to its beliefs and...
teachings in the selection of its own unit leadership and volunteers and may use Scouting as part of its youth ministry.

11. **Will Catholic dioceses' and parishes' First Amendment rights of freedom of worship and practice be protected given the acceptance of differences in moral beliefs? Will the BSA continue to defend the right of religious chartered organizations to select their leaders and indemnify them against claims based upon their refusal to accept leaders who identify as “gay”?**

Yes. Religious chartered organizations have always had the right to choose leaders aligned with the organizations’ religious principles. That right is secured by the Bylaws of the Boy Scouts of America, the chartered organization agreement, and the organizations’ constitutional rights.

The BSA will defend the right of bona fide religious chartered organizations—churches, synagogues, temples, mosques, or other places of worship—to select leaders based upon their religious principles and indemnify them against any claim filed against them on this basis to the fullest extent permitted by applicable law. The BSA considers the right of its religious chartered organizations to utilize the Scouting program as part of their youth ministry an integral part of Scouting’s ability to preserve duty to God.

12. **Are religious chartered organizations more likely to be sued for refusing to accept leaders who identify as “gay”?**

No. Chartered organizations have not been sued in the past for refusing to accept leaders who identify as “gay” or engage in same-sex sexual conduct, and there is no basis for believing they will be in the future. Any such claim is likely to be dismissed, because the Supreme Court of the United States has made it clear that religious organizations may select their leaders based upon their religious principles. That legal principle is acknowledged implicitly in anti-discrimination laws that exempt religious organizations. A 2015 commentary claiming the opposite merely recycled inaccurate predictions from 2013 about lawsuits that never materialized. There is no legal authority or factual basis for the claim that religious organizations are now more likely to be sued for exercising their religious beliefs.

13. **Will religious organizations that accept the BSA's adult leadership standards open themselves to litigation under state public accommodation laws?**

No. Many, if not all, place of public accommodation laws exempt religious organizations, and many courts have concluded that Scouting units are not subject to place of public accommodation laws. In general, state public accommodation laws do not apply to religious organizations, whether or not they accept the BSA's adult leadership standards.

14. **Can a Scouting unit maintain its own right of expression while participating in Scouting activities with units that view things differently?**

Absolutely. Scouting units and the religious organizations that support them interact with other organizations and individuals all the time without losing or compromising their freedom of expression. Religious organizations routinely interact with other organizations and individuals that have different beliefs without being required to adopt the beliefs or values of the other organizations or individuals. As long as there have been religious organizations—such as churches, temples, synagogues, and mosques—they have held beliefs that differ from other religious organizations. The First Amendment protects the right hold different religious views.
15. If a religious organization allows Scouting units to use its facilities, will it have to allow everyone to use its facilities?

No. The mere fact that a religious chartered organization allows a Scouting unit to use its facilities has nothing to do with allowing other organizations to use its facilities. There is no legal authority or factual basis for the claim that a religious organization that associates with Scouting must allow everyone to use its facilities.

16. Does chartering a Scouting unit constitute granting use of facilities to an organization that opposes the religious beliefs of a religious chartered organization?

No. The BSA does not oppose the religious beliefs of any of its religious chartered organizations. As stated in the resolution, “the Boy Scouts of America recognizes the sincere religious beliefs and freedoms of religious chartered organizations and will not require any religious chartered organization to act in ways inconsistent with that organization’s mission, principles, or religious beliefs.” Scouting respects and defends the rights of others to practice their own religious beliefs without criticism.

17. Will religious organizations that accept the BSA’s adult leadership standards open themselves up to claims of hazing, bullying, discrimination, and coercion within Scouting?

No. The BSA will not tolerate any such accusations. Scouts and their leaders are required to be helpful, friendly, courteous, and kind, in addition to other requirements of the Scout Law. The resolution states that “The Boy Scouts of America rejects any interference with or condemnation of the diverse beliefs of chartered organizations on matters of marriage, family, and sexuality. The message of Scouting is one of toleration and respect for different religious and moral conclusions in this matter, acknowledging that reasonable minds may honorably differ. Any effort to exclude or penalize chartered organizations based on their beliefs or policies regarding marriage, family, or sexuality is contrary to the Boy Scouts of America’s commitment to religious freedom and respect for the beliefs and convictions of its chartered organizations.”

18. Can a youth member or adult leader of the BSA participate in a social or political cause that calls attention to his or her sexual orientation?

Under the BSA’s rules and regulations, a youth member may appear in uniform at a nonpartisan and nonpolitical gathering in a way that gives him or her the opportunity to render service in harmony with his or her training in the Scouting program. The BSA is required to avoid involving the Scouting movement in any activity of a political character, and Scouts and their leaders may not participate in single-issue or social advocacy events or activities outside of the Scouting program in a way that suggests the BSA endorses that activity or event. Each youth member is free as an individual to express his or her thoughts or take action on political or social issues but must not use Scouting’s official uniforms and insignia when doing so.

19. What will the BSA do to limit discussions related to personal sexuality in Scouting?

The BSA already has training and policy guidance on the issue as well as a code of conduct prohibiting any form of sexual conduct as part of BSA activities, which includes discussions or advocacy on sexual matters. Advocacy on social and political causes inconsistent with the program is prohibited and may result in the revocation of registration. Adult leaders are trained to refer youth members to their parents or religious advisors to discuss any matters related to sexuality, and the BSA encourages religious leaders to counsel youth in the units they sponsor as part of their youth ministry. The BSA’s youth protection program prohibits any leaders from one-on-one contact with youth and requires two adult leaders on all outings and activities. Adult leaders are prohibited from engaging in any type of sexual activity while participating in any Scouting activity. These guidelines collectively serve to help monitor conduct and detect adult leaders who may attempt to engage in inappropriate conduct with youth.
20. Will the next update to the Family Life Merit Badge approve of same-sex relationships?

BSA has not announced plans for making any changes to this merit badge. It is expected that, whenever any merit badge or rank requirements affect the religious beliefs of any of its chartered organizations, they are reviewed by BSA’s Religious Relationships Committee. Through the BSA Religious Relationship Committee, we will inquire if the sponsors of the Family Life Merit Badge, or any other merit badges, and rank requirements will update requirements for the BSA to be consistent with its membership standards.

Providing a Safe Environment

21. What action will the BSA take if adult leaders engage in inappropriate conduct, such as public displays of affection with a member of the same sex, at Scouting activities?

First, in addition to the BSA code of conduct, units may establish limitations on the conduct of adult leaders. Units may remove an adult leader who refuses to abide by the unit’s expectations. The BSA may remove from the program or a leadership position any adult leader who fails to demonstrate the emotional, educational, and moral qualities required of Scout leaders. Just as it has been in the past, inappropriate conduct by leaders of any inclination, whether heterosexual or homosexual, will not be tolerated. Conduct will continue to be monitored, and inappropriate conduct may serve as grounds for removal.

22. How should Catholic-chartered units deal with situations in which it is concerned about the safety of its youth?

All Scouts and Scouters are to practice the skills learned in Youth Protection Training. The video, A Time to Tell, introduces the “three R’s” of Youth Protection (i.e., recognize, resist, report) and should be viewed by Boy Scout troops annually (http://www.scouting.org/Training/YouthProtection/BoyScout.aspx). Similar programs exist for Packs, Crews, and Sea Scout Ships. Parents are welcome to participate, along with the pastor, to present and affirm appropriate behavior.

When the behavior of another Scout or Scouter makes an individual uncomfortable, that individual should know to leave the situation and report it to the proper authority. Ultimately, unit leaders, in consultation with parents, must use their discretion to ensure the safety and comfort of the youth members in their charge. As always, a bona fide religious chartered organization may also remove unit leadership and unit volunteers for actions inconsistent with its own values and beliefs.

23. How will the BSA enforce the code of conduct at multiple-unit events, such as camporees and summer camp?

The BSA has policies on the enforcement of membership and conduct standards, and it is the duty of every Scouter to take action if they see violations of youth protection or code of conduct standards. As is the case today, the council Scout executive will continue to be responsible for initiating action to revoke the membership of a youth or registration of an adult leader who violates youth protection or code of conduct policies. However, it is the obligation of every leader if they “see something to say something” by reporting inappropriate conduct.

24. Will there be additional training on acceptable conduct for adult leaders?

BSA training and council- and unit-level supplemental training already establish the expectations for leader conduct. Those trainings can and will be modified to deal with a variety of contemporary issues based upon experience so as to maintain the high standards of conduct the BSA has established for leaders, including changes in policy, bullying, and prohibited discrimination.
25. At summer camps and outdoor Scouting events, how should a Catholic Scout respond should a Scout leader make fun of, or belittle, aspects of the Scout’s Catholic faith?

Youth shouldn’t be so engaged by an adult. Such adult behavior is unacceptable and should be reported. According to BSA’s Youth Protection policies (http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/HealthandSafety/GSS/gss01.aspx.), physical violence, sexual activity, emotional abuse, spiritual abuse, unauthorized weapons, hazing, discrimination, harassment, initiation rites, bullying, cyberbullying, theft, verbal insults, drugs, alcohol, or pornography have no place in the Scouting program and may result in revocation of membership.

26. How should a Scout leader respond should a Scout raise a question of a sexual nature?

If a youth raises a question of a sexual nature, he should be referred to his parents or to his religious leader.

The Mission of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting (NCCS)

27. What purpose does the NCCS serve for the Catholic Church?

The purpose or mission of the NCCS is to utilize and ensure the constructive use of the program of the BSA as a viable form of youth ministry with the Catholic youth of our nation. To do this, we cooperate with the bishops of the United States, relating to the USCCB through a Bishop Liaison. Each diocesan bishop must decide how Scouting will be used in his diocese.

28. What is the relationship of the NCCS to the USCCB?

The National Catholic Committee on Scouting (NCCS) is a Church committee of concerned Catholic laity and clergy which is advisory to the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) and relates to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) through its Bishop Liaison with the NCCS. The NCCS seeks to sustain and strengthen the relationship between the BSA and the Catholic Church and to work cooperatively with the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM) and various other groups involved in youth ministry in the United States.

29. Are the leaders of the NCCS affiliated or compensated by the BSA in any way? Are the leaders of the NCCS strictly voluntary positions? Are the leaders of the NCCS solely focused on BSA activities or do they have other duties within the Catholic Church for which they are compensated?

Members of the NCCS Executive Board, of which there are about 50, are all required to be registered members of the BSA. They all serve voluntarily without compensation; some in elected positions. NCCS members consist of laity, clergy and vowed religious. (See also http://www.nccs-bsa.org/national/Bylaws.php for more details.) There are the following exceptions, all of whom are non-voting members:

1. The NCCS Episcopal Liaison from the USCCB
2. The NCCS employs a Program Assistant that works out of the BSA National Office.
3. A liaison from BSA’s Community Alliances Division

30. Who would support the Catholic youth in Scouting in their pursuit of doing their “duty to God” if the NCCS could no longer support the mission of the BSA?

It would be the responsibility of the youths’ parents (as it is now) and the local unit leaders to insure their members pursue their “Duty to God” and a “Scout is Reverent”.

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31. How might the NCCS maximize its input with the BSA, express its concerns to BSA, have greater influence and input on similar proposals? What is the communications process for the NCCS to influence such decisions? Why can’t/won’t the NCCS exert more influence over the direction of the Boy Scouts of America?

The National Catholic Committee on Scouting provides input via its representation on the Religious Relationships Committee of the Boy Scouts of America. A Memorandum of Understanding exists to express the mutual interest of both the NCCS and BSA to work cooperatively with each other to promote Scouting within the Catholic Church.

32. What assistance might an alternative youth-serving organization receive from the NCCS for its Catholic members?

The mission or purpose of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting (NCCS) is to utilize and ensure the constructive use of the programs of the BSA as a viable form of youth ministry with the Catholic youth of our nation. This mission is authorized by a Plan of Cooperation between the BSA and the Catholic Bishops of the United States (now USCCB) in 1934. We have no intention of extending this liaison role to other youth serving institutions at this time. As such, training and religious emblem programs (see links 1 and 2 below) developed by the NCCS are specifically for, and made available only to, programs of the BSA. The NCCS materials are protected by copyright. However, our religious activity programs (see link 3 below) are such that anyone may participate in them. Diocesan Catholic committees on Scouting use the programs of the NCCS with Catholics registered in the BSA.

1) NCCS Training Programs: http://www.nccs-bsa.org/training/DiocesanTraining.php

33. What assistance might an alternative youth-serving organization receive from a diocesan Catholic committee on Scouting for its Catholic members?

In some dioceses, the chaplain appointed by the bishop to work with the Catholic Committee on Scouting may also work with Catholic Girl Scout committees and other diocesan Catholic representatives of youth-serving organizations. These organizations, as members of the National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM), have access to programs developed by the NFCYM.

34. Should religious organizations disaffiliate themselves from BSA, what role will the NCCS play in finding other chartered organizations for the affected members?

It is the role of local Scout council executives to assist affected units in finding accepting chartered organizations. The diocesan Catholic committee on Scouting may assist with units formerly chartered to Catholic religious organizations seeking a new chartering relationship. Likewise, the committee may seek to find a Catholic chartered organization for a unit that has lost its charter from a non-Catholic religious chartered organization.

35. Should parents consider leaving BSA and/or consider joining a different youth-serving organization?

Parents of Catholic youth members of the Boy Scouts America can be confident that their family's faith and values will continue to be respected given the BSA'S Membership Policy change. Parents are encouraged to allow their sons and daughters to continue to be members of the Boy Scouts of America and parishes are encouraged to continue chartering Catholic Scout units as part of their youth ministry efforts.
36. Should the NCCS consider forming a similar program that has a singular Catholic focus?

The mission or purpose of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting (NCCS) is to utilize and ensure the constructive use of the programs of the BSA as a viable form of youth ministry with the Catholic youth of our nation. NCCS leadership has considered forming a similar program that has a singular Catholic focus, but discerned that our service is a ministry to which many were called and that the need to support youth in programs of the BSA is not going away.

37. What can I do to turn this into a positive for Catholic units?

You can help by insuring your unit(s) have good leaders who are appropriately trained, have good ties to their chartered organization and utilize the activities and programs of the NCCS. Alternatively, you can take an active role in promoting activities and religious emblems that will help to show that Catholic Scouting is youth ministry.

38. What can the diocesan committees do to help provide and counsel units in reducing the impact of the BSA decision?

The diocesan committees should reach out to all Catholic units in their diocese to help provide the programs, tools, and training to strengthen their units. This needs to be offered on a regular basis as new individuals become leaders every year.

39. In other countries, Scouting is organized into religious associations. Might this be a model for the United States?

No. Currently many chartered organizations are not religious but rather civic, fraternal, and community-based.

40. Is it appropriate for Catholics to use Scouting to evangelize youth in the faith?

When an organization chooses to charter a unit, it does so because its values match those of Scouting and it wants to take advantage of the youth-serving programs the BSA offers. The Scouting program, when chartered to a Catholic organization, should take on the values of the Catholic faith. Scouting fulfills all the characteristics of a program of Catholic youth ministry when it utilizes the activities and programs of the NCCS and becomes involved in the community life of its Catholic chartered organization (see http://www.scouting.org/filestore/membership/pdf/522-451/522-451_low_english.pdf).

While a Catholic-chartered program may be open to youth of other faiths, the experience should be similar to that of someone attending a Catholic school or participating in a Catholic sports program where the Catholic faith is practiced. It's our calling as Catholics to practice our faith and thereby evangelize all those with whom we come into contact. This isn't the same as encouraging someone to convert. The NCCS offers the program National Catholic Leadership Development to prepare Catholic Scouters to better offer their talents and charisms in the service of the Church.

41. How is Scouting a program of Catholic youth ministry?

42. What have been the responses of bishops to-date to BSA’s new adult membership policy?

From the Most Reverend Robert E. Guglielmone, Bishop of Charleston:

From the Most Reverend Richard F. Stika, Bishop of Knoxville:

From the Most Reverend R. Daniel Conlon, Bishop of Joliet:

From the Most Reverend David D. Kagan, Bishop of Bismarck: