NCCS LOOKING AHEAD

One of the highlights of the 2003 Executive Board meeting in Memphis was the presentation of an evaluation of the state of NCCS operations by a long-range planning committee. This committee, comprised of 11 NCCS Board members and headed by Bray Barnes, was tasked to study the operations and direction of the NCCS to identify emerging issues and make recommendations for improvement and continued growth.

"We have put together a road map, if you will, that will help us influence the changes we can expect, rather than simply be influenced by change," said Barnes. "We want to make sure we know where we are going in terms of meeting community and church needs." In addition, although this started out as a long-range plan, according to Barnes, "it grew into a vision statement. As such, the chairman has now asked each NCCS committee to review it and determine how they can implement it as their long range plan."

To accomplish this task the group reviewed seven areas: relationships, finance, chaplaincy, programs, administration, membership, and vocations. In each, the group evaluated the issues and made recommendations for improvement in each area.

In the relationships category the group had recommendations in three areas: within the church hierarchy and with other church organizations; with the Boy Scouts of America; and with international Scouting. These included recommendations to work with the National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministry to establish links with the National Catholic Girl Scout/Campfire Committee; numerous proposals to solidify the working relationships with the Boy Scouts of America at all levels (national, regional, council); and establishment of programs to promote Scouting at the international level.

In the area of finance, the group had recommendations dealing with endowment development, the annual appeal, and identifying other sources of funding. The committee felt that if the NCCS wanted to make a real impact on youth ministry though Scouting, there must be a total commitment on all members of NCCS to contribute not only their treasure, but their time and talent as well.

There were numerous recommendations coming from the group regarding the chaplaincy. These included proposals to better define the chaplaincy and who is eligible to fill that role; support and training available for chaplains; and development of communications programs to encourage bishops to be supportive of the ministry of Scouting in their diocese, as well as getting the message out on our religious emblems and Scouter development programs.

In the area of programs the group stated that all aspects of the NCCS structure must be geared to support first-rate programs and there were nearly two-dozen specific recommendations to enhance the religious emblems programs; to develop complete retreat and "good turn" service programs for use at the diocesan level; to support the Scouter Development: Lay Apostolate Formation program and the annual Philmont training program; actively promote international attendance at the St. George Trek and in turn greater U.S. Catholic Scouting participation in international events; and finally encourage more Catholic (Continued on page 8)

NCCS Mission Statement

The National Catholic Committee on Scouting (NCCS) exists to utilize and ensure the constructive use of the program of the BSA as a viable form of youth ministry with Catholic Youth of our nation. The NCCS is a committee of concerned Catholic Laity and Clergy which is advisory to the Boy Scouts of America and relates to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) through its NCCS Episcopal Liaison.
The NCCS held its annual committee meetings from April 22-26, 2003 in Memphis, Tenn. The following is a summary of significant actions and reports.

In 1934, the BSA and the Catholic Bishops of the United States approved a Plan of Cooperation that formally established the NCCS. This document was modified and reaffirmed in 1968 and in 1999 the NCCS further approved bylaws to establish its working structure. The Plan of Cooperation will be reissued without the organizational content now moved to the bylaws and several references will be added to clarify the relationships and authority of the NCCS.

The Long-Range Planning Committee presented its evaluation of the state of NCCS operations and recommendations for improvement. Committee and regional leaders were asked to use this study to set the goals and plans during their meetings. Copies of this vision statement may be obtained from Barb Nestel (reprinting cost) or soon as a download from the NCCS website.

The Catholic Membership Initiative is continuing to roll out. Regional leaders have all been asked to set regional goals and encourage diocesan committees to participate. John Ribar, Father Don Hummel, and Ed Gargiulo were invited to discuss the initiative at two Relationships workshops at the BSA annual meeting in May.

New editions of the Light of Christ and Parvuli Dei religious emblem activity books with Spanish text will replace the English only editions in the Fall of 2003.

The Executive Board approved the NCCS 2003 budget of about $250,000.

Activities to require youth leadership background checks and assure safe environments appear to be increasing in most dioceses. There is a general lack of coordination among dioceses and youth serving organizations (BSA, GSA, NFCYM, Knights of Columbus, etc.). Bishop Gettelfinger addressed these concerns at his luncheon on Wednesday of the annual meeting. It is very important that we understand the crisis of youth protection in our dioceses and be prepared to participate in diocesan training efforts. The entire executive board received BSA Youth Protection Training during their meeting on Friday.

The NCCS will encourage age appropriate Venture Crew participation in World Youth Day 2005 with diocesan youth organizations. The NCCS will not sponsor a national contingent to attend WYD 2005 in Cologne, Germany.

The NCCS Executive Board approved appointments as follows.

To the Executive Board:
Bill Davies – Membership Standing Committee Chair
Pete Huber – Training Standing Committee Advisor
John Halloran – National Vice Chair for Finance
Father Dennis O’Rourke - Advisor to Finance Committee
Gordon Stiefel – Religious Emblems Standing Committee Chair
Father Roger Strebel – Religious Emblems Standing Committee Advisor
George LeCrone – Region Chair replacing John Halloran in Region 5

At-large members re-appointed to three year terms:
John Coughlin, Reginald Grier, John Condon, Robert McCarty

To the Advisory Board: Joseph Simon

The following resolutions were approved:
- The NCCS believes that the Learning for Life program can be a valuable tool for Catholic Schools as long as the program is accompanied by organized lessons on the Catholic moral teachings that are the underpinning for decision making and moral behavior. It must be understood that the use of Learning for Life in Catholic Schools should have the approval of the diocesan Catholic School office or its equivalent.
- The NCCS will send a letter commending the service of Catholic military chaplains in the current conflict.
- A new Rosary Patch Program by the Religious Activities Committee as a four year program with new patch designs and requirements in each year
- The NCCS reaffirms that it will continue to support Catholic Chaplains at Philmont with new vehicles as needed. The NCCS will immediately return to the pre-1996 process for vehicle funding and provide vehicles to Philmont on its own.
- All Religious Emblems Counselors and Facilitators must have current BSA Youth Protection Training unless the local diocese requires other specific youth protection training or certification.
- The NCCS shall take such actions necessary to convert the Eastern Catholic Churches Committee from a standing committee to a fifteenth region of the NCCS.
- The NCCS annual meeting will be held in the second week of Easter. (April 19-24, 2004; April 4-9, 2005; etc.)

Bylaws changes were approved by the executive board to clarify the following:
- NCCS regions will be aligned to the USCCB regions (Region 4a becomes 4 and 4b becomes 14),
- BSA registration is required for NCCS membership
- Procedures for removal are clarified

Standing Committee Leadership for 2003-4
Chaplains: Father Weber/Bridgeman
Conference: Kosiba/Father Donald
Eastern Churches: Dillenberg/Father Michael
Finance: Halloran/Father O’Rourke
International: Father O’Rourke/DeStefano
M&PR: Greene/Father Manchas
Membership: Davies/Father Rachford
Religious Activities: Simons/Father Walters
Religious Emblems: Stiefel/Father Strebel
Training: Father Fecteau/Huber
Vocations: Radford/Father Oberle
Nominating: Oldowski/Father O’Rourke

The next meeting of the NCCS will be our Biennial Conference (meetings of the general membership, executive board, and national committees, etc.) in St. Louis on April 19-24, 2004.
In June of 2002 the Catholic bishops adopted the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People to establish a national policy for all those involved in the Church’s ministry to youth. The NCCS is fully supportive of these pioneering efforts to mandate safe procedures and environments for youth ministry. We are also gratified to see that leadership standards and training are a key part of this plan as is the screening and selection of volunteer leaders.

The Boy Scouts of America has been at the forefront for more than fifteen years in their policies and practices to protect youth through standards and practices, leadership checks, youth and adult protection training. The NCCS has fully supported these efforts and, with the USCCB, stood firmly in support of our rights to set leadership standards and select leaders appropriate to the goals of Catholic youth ministry.

With the desire to implement suitable policies for protection in each diocese there is also a risk to Scouting, and all youth ministry. We rely on adult volunteers to deliver our programs and we will experience losses associated with placing barriers before qualified men and women of truly good will. Now, more than ever, retention of qualified leaders and the recruitment of additional volunteers must be on the agenda of every diocesan Catholic Scouting committee. Dioceses are implementing plans for professionally performed criminal background checks similar to those implemented by the Boy Scouts of America for all new leaders in April 2003. It is my expectation that this will soon become the standard for all BSA leaders as well. With 127,000 adult leaders serving in Catholic Scouting units in 2002, the financial cost is significant. It is my hope that the qualification processes can be made uniform across the country and that we can recognize the leadership credentials from collaborating associations.

Safe environment plans being developed in every diocese will also hold us more accountable to follow Safe Scouting procedures for which many of us have already been trained. Scouting events, including emblems counseling; special liturgies; and retreats, will have to be staffed by qualified leaders and diocesan policies will have to be understood and implemented. This should not be a new burden but an opportunity for experienced, Scout trained leaders to teach the tried and true youth protection practices already in our practice.

In January we launched our Catholic Membership Initiative with the BSA with a primary goal to institutionalize Scouting as a Catholic youth ministry. This effort must be at the forefront to help us to retain and recruit Catholic adults into a comprehensive ministry for youth. As a reader of this newsletter, you must have an association with Catholic Scouting. Get out your copy of the Membership Initiative guides (Barb Nestel 972-580-2114) and read them. View the CD, all of it, and discover where you can put it into practice. The future of Catholic Scouting depends on you NOW!

FROM THE CHAIR

by Ed Gargiulo

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EVERYONE CONTRIBUTED

51% of the boys in Troop 66 in Martinsburg, W.V. earned the Ad Altare Dei Religious Award this year. The troop is sponsored by St. Joseph Church. Congratulations to all eleven young men and Religious Emblems Counselor Bernie Denker.

Catholic sponsored Pack, Troop, and Crew who meet criteria set forth by Bishop John Yanta and the Diocesan committee.

In 2001 Bishop Yanta requested a Scout Mass be reinstated in the Diocese of Amarillo to correlate with National Scout Sunday. The 2001 Mass was celebrated at Our Lady of Vietnam. The last two years the Mass has been celebrated at St. Lawrence Cathedral. Catholic scouts and leaders from the diocese are invited to attend to represent their units.

Bishop Yanta designated Father Scott as celebrant this year, making the Mass a true Scouting affair. Father Scott attained the rank of Life in Scouting. Bishop Yanta encourages a higher calling for the Catholic Scouting program in the diocese.

On Sunday, February 9, 2003 Catholic Scouts gathered for a Diocesan Scout Mass at St. Lawrence Cathedral. The celebrant was Father Scott Raef. Chaplain Robert Smith and Catholic Scouts participated in the celebration. Scouts from Pack 88, Troop 88, Troop 112, and Pack 503 were in attendance.

Marian McKnight, member of the Diocese of Amarillo Catholic Committee on Catholic Scouting presented the Bishop’s Trophy award to representatives from Pack 88 and Troop 88 of Amarillo. This was the first presentation of the Bishop’s Trophy, an annual award to a Catholic sponsored Pack, Troop, and Crew who meet criteria set forth by Bishop John Yanta and the Diocesan committee.

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Memphis, Tenn. – Six Catholic Scouters were awarded the Silver Saint George Award at the recent conference of the National Catholic Committee (NCCS) on Scouting. They were recognized for their significant service to Scouting in the Catholic Church at the national level. Recipients of this award were:

Reverend Donald Hummel from the Archdiocese of Newark, N.J. Father Hummel is currently serving as the National Chaplain, a position he has held since 2001. He was recognized for his continued service to the NCCS including his leadership as the Region 3 Chaplain and Advisor to the Membership Committee, and his work in spearheading the first NCCS membership initiative. He was a leader of the first St. George Trek at the Philmont Scout Ranch and was on the Philmont Chaplains Staff from 1982 to 1998.

Mr. John Hammerschmidt from the Archdiocese of St. Louis, Mo. He is currently serving on the NCCS Advisory Board and was recognized as a major contributor to the Religious Emblems committee since the mid 1980's, including five years as the chair. Mr. Hammerschmidt also served as the Region 9 chairman for three years, and as the course director for the Philmont training course in 1998.

Reverend Stephen Salvador of the Diocese of Fall River, Mass. Father Salvador has served as a Scout Chaplain for 25 years at various state, regional and national events. He served as a sub-camp chaplain for the 1993 National Jamboree, and course chaplain for the Philmont Training Course in 1995. He was elected Chaplain of NCCS Region 1 in 1995 and was recently elected to his third 3-year term. He serves on the NCCS Executive Board.

Reverend David Vincent of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. Father Vincent first became involved with the NCCS in 1976 and has continued his service since then. He served on the NCCS Finance and Chaplains Committee, and now serves on the Advisory Board.

Mr. Michael J. Shyne from the Diocese of Metuchin, N.J. Mr. Shyne first joined the NCCS in the 1970s and has served on the NCCS Executive Board since then. A long time member of the Conference Committee, he was recognized for his many contributions as a Scout leader, including his service as a Boy Scout Council executive and member of the national BSA staff.

Ms. Irene Herring of the Diocese of Fort Worth, Texas. Ms. Herring has been an active member of the NCCS since at least 1985 when she became an Executive board member. She served as an advisor to the former Scouter Development committee, later serving in the role of chair. She was named to head the Training Committee in 1991, a position she held for six years. She also served on the Conference Committee and in 2000 was elected to the NCCS Advisory Board.

The Most Reverend Gerald Gettelfinger, Ordinary of the Diocese of Evansville, Ind. and Episcopal Liaison to the NCCS presented the awards, which are named in honor of the Patron Saint of Scouting and are awarded to recognize exemplary service to the National Catholic Committee on Scouting.

Bill Davies received the Silver Antelope Award from the Western Region. Bill is a NCCS Vice Chair.

Father Dennis O’Rourke received the Silver Antelope Award from the Central Region. Father O’Rourke is NCCS Past National Chaplain.

Advisory Board members Jack Peterson (Central Region) and David Garrison (Southern Region) also received the Silver Antelope at the same BSA meeting.
The NCCS has been asked to identify Catholic Boy Scouts to participate in a Youth Congress on November 13-16, 2003 in Houston. The National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministry will host the congress as part of its annual conference and has indicated their desire to have two Boy Scouts from each NCCS region attend the Youth Congress as delegates.

According to Tom Nishikubo of the NCCS Executive Board, each Diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting should nominate local deserving Scouts to attend and forward their names on to their Regional chairman. The regional chairs will then select the top two candidates and forward those names on to NCCS.

There is a deadline of August 1, 2003 to have the names submitted, so Diocesan committees are urged to select their candidates as soon as possible. Details concerning the Congress and the Scout's attendance will be forwarded to those chosen later in the summer.

Contact your local diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting or the Regional Chairman for further details.
During the next several issues, an attempt will be made to introduce you to some of the people who make up this body called the National Catholic Committee on Scouting. This issue will focus on the Executive Committee. Next to attending the Training Conference in Philmont, your best bet to re-energize your enthusiasm and re-charge your ideas-vault, is to allocate the time to attend the Biennial Conference in St. Louis during the week of April 19-24. Begin making plans now to come and meet all of us. Share your ideas. Be part of the big picture for the week or part of the week. Find out what is working all around the nation, meet the authors of the religious emblems programs. Attend the Liturgies concelebrated by 50 priests. Come and share. Come and join.
The Executive Board

Edward P. Gargiulo - Chair
Father Donald K. Hummel - Chaplain
Bishop Gerald A. Gettellinger – USCCB Episcopal Liaison
Barbara Anderson
Monsignor James B. Anderson
Bray B. Barnes
Father James Blaine
Betty Bridgeman
Raymond D. Broussard
James A. Burgen
Monsignor Joseph A. Carroll
John W. Condon
John M. Coughlin
Father Randy M. Cuevas
William E. Davies
Monsignor John K. Dermond
Joseph V. DeStefano
Frank Diaz
Marge Dillenburg
Father Michael L. Donald
Donald Ellefson
Father Raymond L. Fecteau
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Monsignor Anthony T. Ferrero
Robert Freville
Michael R. Gannon
G. Cecile Greene
Monsignor Robert E. Guglielmone
Peter J. Huber
Bert Johnson
Robert W. Jones
Frank Koller
Monsignor James R. Kolp
Michael J. Kosiba
Father Roger S. LaChance
Father Leo A. LeBlanc
George C. LeCrone
Father Lawrence L. Manchas
Edward P. Martin
Robert J. McCarty
Father Leo McDowell
Father David Michael
Father Daniel L. Mode
Father Charles F. Morgan
David A. Moskal
Robert H. Nelson

The Advisory Board

Frank P. Rossomondo - Chair
Father Leo A. LeBlanc – Chaplain
Thomas Anderson
Robert C. Bogart
Monsignor John Brady
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Austin E. Cannon, Jr.
Peter Casey
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Robert A. Cunningham
Anthony V. Ehmann
Albert Feliksa
Father John Fischer
David L. Garrison, Jr.
Reginald C. Grier
John Hammerschmidt
Irene W. Herring
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William Kelly
Judy K. Kosiba
James Ladner
Monsignor James LaRocque
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Joseph B. O'Brien
Jack Peterson
Samuel J. Reggie
Gerard Rocque
Michael J. Shyne
Joe Simon
Marvin L. Smith
Truman Stacey
Ellie Starr
John E. Thompson
John Turo
Ron Turo
Father David P. Vincent
Father Gregory S. Weider
James W. Y. Wong
Scouter and Scout attendance at NYFCM conferences.

There were numerous recommendations made in the administrative areas primarily relating to determining the customers of NCCS and then identifying how to best meet their needs. It also includes several specific recommendations on facilities and full-time staffing support that may be necessary to ensure the organization is operating with maximum efficiency.

The membership area also merited close attention and as a result there are a number of resolutions relating to promotion of Scouting as Youth Ministry; organizing and strengthening diocesan committees; and recruiting, training, and utilization of adult members.

In the final area of vocations, the committee had several specific recommendations on how to develop a fuller awareness of vocations in Catholic youth through Scouting programs, particularly in developing a vocations committee in each of the diocesan Catholic Committees.

At the conclusion of their presentation, members of the Executive Board and regional leaders were asked to use the study to set their goals and plans during upcoming meetings. "We have asked the standing committees, the regional and diocesan leadership, and all Catholic Scouters to read the study and then use it to guide goal and objectives setting for their organizations. There are many challenges, but if we want to continue to ensure we are offering the best program for Catholic Scouting then this is a critical first step," said Ed Gargiulo, NCCS National Chair.

Copies of the report are available through the NCCS office (for a small fee for reprinting) or as a download from the NCCS website.