

National
Catholic
Committee on
Scouting®



Vocation Committee Handbook

A Resource for
Diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting
Vocation Committee Chair

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New Efforts and Programs

Look to see announcements new NCCS programs and resources on this page.

This Vocation Handbook is offered to present the mission, objectives and role of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting® (NCCS) and your (Arch) Diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting in the *Pastoral Plan* of the United States Council of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) developed following the Third Continental Congress on Vocations in North America, April 2003.

- **Mission - NCCS**

The National Catholic Committee on Scouting ® (NCCS) exists to utilize and ensure the constructive use of the programs of the BSA as a viable form of youth ministry with Catholic youth of our nation. (Further information on NCCS is available at web page: <http://www.nccs-bsa.org>)

- **NCCS Vocations Committee**

Chairman: John E. "Jack" Thompson, 5700 Morningside Drive, Newburgh, IN 47630-9218
(812) 853-3273(H)

Committee Advisor: Fr. Scott Woods

- **Mission – NCCS Vocation Committee**

To stimulate, promote, and advocate for the awareness of vocations within the Catholic Church through the constructive use of the programs of the BSA.

- **Message from NCCS Vocation Chairman to DCCS Diocesan Chairmen:**

All of important activities in Scouting and ministries in our Church require dedicated efforts by key individuals. Effective leaders gather knowledge, experience, and resources to focus attention on a particular activity or ministry, then develop ways to accomplish that mission. Bishop Gerald A. Gettelfinger, Episcopal Advisor to NCCS, has stated, *"The Catholic Church is fortunate to have in the Scouting movement so apt a vehicle for Christian development. It can be noted that many church leaders today, clerical, religious, and lay, have come from the ranks of Scouting."*

The NCCS Vocation Committee has been given the responsibility to provide support and encouragement for each Diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting (DCCS) to be a part of the USCCB Pastoral Plan regarding vocations to the ordained ministry and consecrated life. The Pastoral Plan was developed following the Third Continental Congress held in Montreal, Canada In April 2002. Chairs of DCCS are asked to appoint an individual to fill the position of Chair of its Vocation Committee. The NCCS Vocation Committee Handbook is a useful tool in providing information to support the selection on the Chairperson of this DCCS sub-committee.

The mission of the DCCS Vocation Chair is to create a positive environment in which a Scout may hear God's Call and begin their vocation discernment process. With the help of effective Vocation Chairs we will be better prepared to provide "a vehicle for Christian development," as noted by Bishop Gettelfinger. Catholic Scouting is recognized as playing an important role in Diocesan Youth Ministry. By adding the emphasis for Church vocations, the affirmation and discernment the DCCS and the NCCS will join with other Catholic lay organizations collaborating with the USCCB Vocation Committee in its mission of identifying and encouraging young men and women to find their greatest joy in service to the Church. We look forward to receiving information from your DCCS regarding the name, address, phone and e-mail address of the person appointed as your Vocation Chair. Your leadership and support for

this new position is appreciated. Your commitment to form an effective Vocation Committee will offer a great service for diocesan vocation office and the NCCS. As DCCS Chair, provide a letter to introduce your new Chairman to your Bishop and (Arch) Diocesan Vocation Director. This is an important step to establish a link between your DCCS Committee and the coordinated vocations efforts of your diocese.

It is strongly recommended that the DCCS Vocation Chair works closely with your (Arch) Diocesan Vocation Director to coordinate vocation awareness programs. We also suggest that the Vocation Committee to contact and work closely with local organizations, such as Serra Clubs, Knights of Columbus, and various Religious Orders or Congregations within your diocese, to secure vocational materials for distribution to scout leaders and scouts, where applicable.

Members of the NCCS Vocation Committee welcome suggestions to make this Handbook more useful and effective.

Action step: Select DCCS Vocation Chair and send name to NCCS Chair, address above.

Job Description - Diocesan Vocation Committee Chair

Selection:

A volunteer lay person appointed by the diocesan* chairman. This person should have experience with:

- Youth Ministry Church vocations formation
- Scouter Development
- The long-standing link between Catholic Scouting all vocational choices to serve the Church and their parish community

To identify a good candidate for this position contact the Vocation Director or Serra Clubs in your diocese.

Responsibilities: It is recommended that the Vocations chairman:

- Develop, schedule, and carry out Church Vocation discernment programs activities that will provide every youth in Catholic Scouting with a personal religious experience combining the basic values inherent in Scouting and the Gospel message of Jesus Christ through the teaching authority of the Catholic Church
- Work with and through chartered organizations to promote involvement in these activities by all Catholic-chartered units.
- Coordinate activities with local BSA council(s) to avoid conflicting dates
- Collaborate with the communications chairman and others to reach Catholic youth and adults in units not chartered to Catholic organizations with the hope of enlisting their participation in diocesan Scouting activities
- Build relationships with the diocesan youth ministry office, vocation director, religious communities, Serra Clubs and Knight of Columbus and parish vocation committees to aid and coordinate Scout participation in diocesan and parish events
- Give leadership to Chaplain Aide and an annual retreat for adults in the Scouting apostolate. Encourage or plan a Church vocation related component for the retreat.

Term of Office: Recommended term of office is two years, concurrent with the chairman, and should be renewable.

References:

Program Planning Guide, No. 16-168
Chaplain's Guide in Scout Camps, No. 12038
Your local BSA Council activities calendar
Diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting calendar
Handbook for Diocesan Vocation Committee Chairman
Priesthood Sunday – webpage: <http://www.priestsunday.org>

***Note:** The designation "diocese" in this document is used interchangeably for diocese, archdiocese, eparchy, and archeparchy. The text should be interpreted to suit the local situation.

Objectives

- **Promote the establishment of a Vocations Subcommittee within the Diocesan Committee.**

During the mid-1990's while serving as Episcopal Advisor to the NCCS, Archbishop Robert Carlson gave a challenge to the NCCS. He included Catholic Scouting in the United States Council of Catholic Bishops Vocation Committee's "*National Strategy on Vocations*". The challenge to all Catholic Scouts and Scouters was to establish vocation discernment activities for Scouts. In order to meet this challenge, each NCCS was strongly encouraged to appoint a Chair of Vocations. The NCCS was to change its ad hoc Vocation Committee to a standing committee and to provide support in establishing and providing resources to DCCS Vocation Committees. The development of the Vocation Committee Handbook was soon underway. The use the ideas and resources in the NCCS Vocation Committee Handbook were to provide help to implement discernment programs and activities in local dioceses. The USCCB *Pastoral Plan* replaced the "*National Strategy on Vocations*" in 2003.

- **Provide written materials, audio and video aids to diocesan Scouters, vocations directors and local church leaders to aid them in fostering and encouraging to Church Vocations through Scouting.**

This Vocation Committee Handbook is the second edition in support the work of the DCCS Vocation Committee. Other materials will be prepared from time to time and will be posted on this web site tab. There is a list of Vocations resources available through a network of Catholic organizations published in the Appendix.

- **Provide avenues to materials and resources that spiritually strengthen families and aid them in offering vocation and leadership models within their homes.**

The family is the source of all vocations. Surveys of priests and men and women religious show that the encouragement of parents and other family members played an important part in

their discernment process. Catholic Scouting seeks to involve the family at all levels of its programs. There are opportunities to reinforce concept of the need for service to the Church and a vocation related message in programs already offered to youth using materials from your (Arch) Diocesan Vocation Director and other national vocation support groups.

- **Provide a forum to share thoughts, methods and programs that can be applied to promote vocations in all dioceses.**

All DCCS Vocation Committees are encouraged to submit information on their successful activities and programs to the NCCS Vocations Committee to be shared to benefit all dioceses. The NCCS provides a form to provide these ideas in the *Award of Excellence* program. Information about this award can be found on the NCCS website.

Annual Efforts of the NCCS Vocations Committee

The NCCS Vocations Committee is committed to providing materials, updates and communications to aid local Diocesan Catholic Committee in their efforts. The items listed below are statements of projects undertaken annually to achieve that goal. It is recommended that the local Diocesan Vocation Committees may find benefits in their efforts if like projects are initiated in their diocese.

- **Maintain appropriate relationships with other Catholic groups and organizations with vocation focus as directed by the National Chairman.**

The USCCB *Pastoral Plan* regarding vocations in the Church encourages collaboration of all Catholic groups to share resources and focus efforts to increase the number of quality candidates discerning priesthood or consecrated life. Many priests are Eagle Scouts or have had a positive experience through Catholic Scouting. The NCCS and each DCCS have a responsibility to accept the challenge to join in the process to encourage youth in Scouting to listen to God's Call in their life. (See Appendix for list of organizations that support vocations in the Church.)

- **Develop and maintain a Vocations Handbook for use in diocesan Scouting programs.**

This Handbook is a tool for DCCS Vocation Chairmen to establish programs to encourage discernment through vocation activities under the auspices of Catholic Scouting. The NCCS Vocation Committee is committed to provide continuing resources and training to help meet the challenges of the USCCB Pastoral Plan regarding Church vocations.

- **Prepare contents to supplement Scouting materials for Catholic use in parishes and Scouting units.**

The NCCS Vocation Committee is charged with the responsibility of seeking ways to present our mission to offer youth opportunities to discern God's Call while participating in Scouting activities and faith development recognition programs.

SCOUTING FORMS CHRISTIAN LEADERS

By Bishop Gerald A. Gettelfinger
Diocese of Evansville, Episcopal Liaison,
National Catholic Committee on Scouting®



The Boy Scouts of America needs little introduction. For over ninety years, Scouting in the United States alone has proven itself, again and again, to be an ideal program for both the Scouts and the adults who work with them. Scouting spans the years from boyhood to young adulthood to which boys and young men commit themselves voluntarily.

The National Catholic Committee on Scouting® is the necessary link established by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to work hand-in-hand with the Boy Scouts of America. To begin with, the Scout Oath and Law of the Boy Scouts of America embodies values and morals that are solidly Christian, indeed Catholic. Doing one's best; helping others at all times; paying attention to moral, mental and physical well-being; and striving to grow in virtue are all essential parts of Scouting.



In the Catholic Church, there is one particular aspect of Scouting that deserves special attention today. Scouting has tremendous potential for developing Christian leaders from among Catholic youth. It provides a powerful complement to the Church's ministry to Catholic youth. Scouting, under the tutelage of adult Catholic leaders, offers young people a unique opportunity to grow in faith and in leadership in the company of their peers.

In these our times many of our young men and women are struggling with an identity crisis. They sometimes find themselves uncertain and confused. Boys involved in the Scouting experience from boyhood to adulthood, and boys and girls in Venturing, have a real opportunity to come to know self in a safe and wholesome environment. They learn personal ideals that give clarity of purpose to their lives. They are able to attain skills that will benefit them for a lifetime.

Training, challenging, and supporting young men and women to develop responsibility, maturity, and leadership are constant elements of Boy Scouting and Venturing. At the same time, youth involved in Scouting are called on to be independent, to grow in self-reliance, and to learn to interact with others—to experience interdependence.

Through the religious emblems program, Scouts have an opportunity to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith and to engage in regular service to their

parish churches. Through the presence and activity of Scout chaplains, Scouts have an opportunity to develop lasting friendships with priests and religious outside the customary parish and school settings. Frequently called upon to lead religious services, to help out in parish or diocesan activities, to engage in programs directed toward justice and charity, Scouts have an opportunity to experience and be a part of Church in ways that are both vital and personal to them.

I strongly recommend the highly developed, proven program of Scouting under Catholic leadership. Scouting provides adult role models as well as companionship for young people. The men and women involved in working with Scouts from the Tiger Cub to the Explorer level are an exemplary group of adults. I have seen outstanding Catholic lay leaders devote untold hours of their time and energy to Scouting because they believe that Scouting is vital in today's world. They see it as a unique opportunity for young people to grow in faith, life, and leadership. I share their vision and enthusiasm.

With all of its possibilities the Scouting program as used by Catholic leaders can assist young men and women in becoming outstanding members of their parish and school communities. Through interaction with fellow Scouts, through church-related activities, and through standing in awe of God's creation in natural outdoor surroundings, Scouts can experience in a powerful way the love of God and neighbor. They establish friendship with others. They learn of the interdependence required of one another when each other's life is at stake.

The Catholic Church is fortunate to have in the Scouting movement so apt a vehicle for Christian development. It can be noted that many church leaders today, clerical, religious, and lay, have come from the ranks of Scouting.

I encourage parents, priests, religious leaders, and teachers to support Scouting. If you have a pack, troop, or post in your parish, help in any way you can. If your parish or local church community does not have a Scouting program, please give it serious consideration. Scouting offers a rare opportunity for young people to develop as leaders, to appreciate God's creation, and to experience God's love in and through working with others. I believe in Scouting!



Most Reverend Gerald A. Gettelfinger
Episcopal Liaison
National Catholic Committee on Scouting®

Special Programs and responsibilities of the NCCS Vocations Committee

▪ Resources - National Organizations offering support for Church Vocations

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)/ Vocations Committee

Chairman: His Eminence Cardinal Sean O' Malley, OFM Cap., Archbishop of Boston
Reverend James P. Steffer, Executive Director, Secretariat for Vocations and Priestly Formation, 3211 4th ST N E, Washington, DC 20017-1194 Ph: 202 541-3033 FAX: 541-3222.
Web Page: <http://www.usccb.org/vocations>

2003 update: Pastoral Plan from the 3rd Continental Congress has been published, and is available on line - <http://www.usccb.org/vocations/summary.pdf>

▪ **Episcopal to the NCCS** - (National Catholic Committee on Scouting)

Most Reverend Gerald A. Gettelfinger, Bishop of Diocese of Evansville, 4200 North Kentucky Avenue, P.O. Box 4169, Evansville, IN 47724-0169 Phone: 812-424-5536

▪ **National Catholic Committee on Scouting®** – William Davies, National Chairman. NCCS provides timely guidance on diocesan Scout ministry needs and publicize the programs and activities of the national committees to diocesan committees. (Information on NCCS is available at web page: <http://www.nccs-bsa.org>) or E-mail: wdaviesnccs@hotmail.com

▪ **Vocations Committee** - John “Jack” Thompson jackt2@gmail.com

Updates to the Vocation Handbook will be distributed as programs are piloted and approved. Contact the Committee to share projects your Committee has developed to share resources to promote vocations. NCCS Vocation Committee: www.nccs-bsa.org/committees/committees.php

▪ **Serra International/USA Council** - Edward Verbeck, Executive Director

The Mission of Serra is to promote vocations to priesthood and consecrated life, encourage seminarians and to build the personal spirituality of Serrans. To locate Serra Clubs (Serra International-USA Council) contact the Arch/Diocese Vocation Director or Call or write to: Serra USA Council, Suite 802, 65 E Wacker PL, Chicago, IL 60601-7203, Phone: 888-777-6681 FAX: 777-6803 or Serra on the internet: <http://www.serraus.org>

▪ **National Coalition of Church Vocations - NCCV**

Sr. Diane Poplawski, OP, Executive Director, 5401 S. Cornell Ave, #205, Chicago, IL. 60615 Phone: 773-955-5453, 800-671-NCCV. The NCCV publishes an annual Catalogue of vocation related materials for various age groups for all church vocations. Printed, audio and video programs are available. The NCCV distributes an annual vocation guide entitled *Vision*. E-mail: info@nccv-vocations.org Website <http://www.nccv-vocations.org>

▪ **National Religious Vocation Conference - NRVC**

Brother Paul Bednarczyk, CSC, Executive Director, 5401 S. Cornell Ave, # 207, Chicago IL 60615. Phone 773-363-5454, <http://www.nrvc.net> Provides information regarding vocations, religious communities and other ministries related to the discernment process in a person's life.

Vocation Resources (Continued)

- **National Conference of Diocesan Vocation Directors - NCDVD**

Mrs. Rosemary C. Sullivan, Executive Director, 440 West Neck Road, Huntington, NY 11743
Provides support for Vocation Directors through the shared knowledge and programs to assist in recruitment and discernment issues in our Church today. Website: <http://ncdvd.org>

- **National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry, Inc.- NFCYM**

Robert McCarty, National Director, 415 Michigan AVE N E, Suite 40, Washington, DC 20017
Phone: 202-636-3825, FAX: 202-526-7544. Website: <http://nfycm.org> Email: <mailto:info@nfycm.org>
National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) - A major youth ministry program that includes participation of Scouting, Explorer and Venturing age youth. This program is coordinated through the (Arch) Diocesan Youth Ministry Office. Each year there is a national gathering. On even number years the diocesan adult youth leaders gather. On the odd numbered years the youth and their leaders gather. The youth conference is known as NCYC. In the 2009 this gathering is in Kansas City, MO., Nov. 19-21, 2009. The NCCS is a collaborating member of the NFCYM.

- **Knights of Columbus**

Knights of Columbus have a long history of supporting vocations and providing manpower for programs and financial resources. Supreme Knight, Carl A. Anderson. Contact local K. of C. Council, Vocation Committee Chairman to obtain assistance or write to: 1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT, 06510. Phone: 203-772-2130 ext 574. Website: <http://www.kofc.org> There are a number of scout units chartered by the Knights of Columbus throughout the USA. The NCCS has representation to the Supreme Council.

- **Parish Vocation Awareness Committees (PVAC)**

Many parishes have established Parish Vocation Awareness Committees with a mission to promote in their parish an environment that encourages budding interest in priesthood and professed religious life. Identify parishes with PVAC's and collaborate with these dedicated vocation promoters. The (Arch) Diocesan Vocation Director in many dioceses has database with information on their parish vocation committees.

- **Pastores Dabo Vobis**

Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the Formation of Priests in the Circumstances of the Present Day, by Pope John Paul II - "ORIGINS" - full document is available from Serra International/USA Council. Serra on the Internet supplies catalog: http://www.serraus.org/catalog_resources/vocation-materials.htm

How to help your Catholic Scouting program become integrated with vocation discernment

- **(Arch) Diocese Vocations effort:**

Introduce yourself to the (Arch) Diocesan Vocation Director:

Request the Chair of your DCCS to write a letter to (Arch) Diocesan Vocation Director

to introduce the new Vocation Chair, ask for an opportunity to be a DCCS representative on the (Arch) Diocesan Vocation Committee, and ask about discernment activities for Scouting age youth. Collaboration at the diocesan level is critical to the success of the work of this Committee and will add credibility to your vocation efforts. (Sample letter in the Appendix)

- **(Arch) Diocesan Vocation Awareness Activities**

Vocation Directors publish a calendar of Vocation events. The events that are presented as discernment activities are of particular interest for the DCCS Vocation Committee. Request a copy of the calendar, publish items in DCCS Newsletter and coordinate Catholic Scout involvement. Encourage Troops or Scouts working on Religious Emblems to attend the Ordination of Permanent Deacons, Transitional Deacons, Priests, and the Chrism Mass to introduce them to these celebrations. Publicize DCCS vocation materials and events on the diocesan website where applicable.

- **Parish Vocation Awareness Committees (PVAC)** - Identify and collaborate with existing PVAC's, especially parishes with Scouting Units and PVAC's. Contact the Diocesan Vocation Director's Office for this information. Remember that there are Catholic Scouts in Units chartered by other organizations that deserve our support.

- **Catholic Quality Unit Award - Pope Paul VI for Catholic Chartered Scouting Units**

The DCCS is highly encouraged to complete the applications for the Catholic Chartered Unit Recognition. Meeting the requirements for this award shows that a Unit has planning and carrying out its mission and responsibilities to Catholic youth. Note: the requirement for a vocations activity. There are various ways to fulfill this part of the requirements. Consider the age group of youth to whom the program is offered. Download application: web page: <http://www.nccs-bsa.org/pdf/ppvi.pdf>

- **Youth Ministry/Venturing Crew**

The Venturing program is one of the best youth ministry programs in the Catholic Church. The potential for helping adolescent members of the Church and society to reach aims of the program is limited only to efforts of the individual Venturing Crew. The leadership training of the BSA combined with the available resources of NCCS are tools to aid in development and growth of the youth members of a Venturing Crew.

Serra International USA Council has made a commitment to aiding the local Serra Clubs and Catholic high schools in cooperation with local BSA Councils in the start up and development of Venturing Crews with emphasis on Church vocations. See the Serra information in the Appendix of this Handbook or on the NCCS website under the Serra tab.

At the parish level, Venturing Crews have the potential to provide an element of youth ministry and service to the youth group of high school age youth up to age 21. Encourage parish and diocesan youth directors to contact the DCCS or the NCCS for information about Catholic Venturing Crews.

- **Annual Catholic Scouting Retreat and Vocation Awareness Days**

Many DCCS Committees plan and present a retreat annually. This activity can offer youth an

opportunity to consider their future state of life and discern God's Call in their life. Youth want to find their special state of life and the work that will give the most joy and service to God and his people. Discovery and discernment activities that are fun can be included as one part of the annual retreat planning. Examples of Scout Retreat outlines can be found on the NCCS website under Scout Units, click on Award of Excellence tab, click on Retreat Ideas.

Vocation Awareness Day may be part of a Catholic Scouting Retreat or a separate event. The day should provide the youth an opportunity to interface with clergy, religious and laity from the various vocations of the Catholic Church. This interface consists of personal witnessing of the way each lives out their vocation and a period of Q and A exchange between the youth and the panel members. A typical outline of such a day may be found in the Appendix.

- **The Saint George Trek**

The Saint George Trek, although a direct function and responsibility of the NCCS Vocation Committee, the committee highly recommends it an opportunity to open vocation discernment to those who are part of trek. There has been proven positive results from those high school age Scouts and Venturers who have participated in this biennial trek at Philmont Scout Ranch. See Saint George Trek on the NCCS website.

- **Chaplain Aide Programs**

The Chaplain Aide, troop leadership office, is an official troop leadership function toward the rank of Eagle Scout. In carrying out that leadership role the scout must meet and follow the requirements set forth by the Boy Scouts of America. In that context, a Chaplain Aide in unit chartered to a Catholic parish or organization, may offer prayers appropriate to the Catholic Church. Prayers for priestly vocations, holy marriages, deacons and religious vocations are suggested as prayers shared and prayed within the context of a meeting or retreat. One such prayer maybe found in the NCCS publication, *A Scout is Reverent -A Prayer Manual for Boy Scouts and Ventures of the Catholic Faith*. Of course many types of prayers may be offered up for this or other intentions. More prayers for vocations are to be found in the Appendix of this Handbook.

- **Priesthood Sunday**

Priesthood Sunday is an effort of Serra International USA Council. Through the NCCS liaison to Serra International USA Council, we now offer this opportunity to local Scouting units to appropriately recognize and thank our priest for their service and dedication to the Church and us, the laity. Priesthood Sunday can be found on the NCCS website under Scout Units go to Priesthood Sunday tab and click on it.

Appendix:

(Sample letter to Bishop/Voc Dir. to introduce DCCS Vocation Chairman)

Most Rev.....
(Arch)Diocese of
Address.....
City, State Zip.....

Dear

The Vocations Committee of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting® has asked our Diocesan Committee on Scouting to appoint a Vocations Committee Chairman to work with the Diocesan Vocation Director to invite youth in our program to consider serving our Church as a priest or professed religious.

The NCCS Vocations Committee pointed out to us that many of the same qualities and core values that make a good Catholic Scout are the same qualities that would make good future lay leaders and priests for our Church. Our Chairman will coordinate activities for our Catholic Scouts that would create an environment in which a young person with a budding interest in priesthood or concremented life would feel nurtured.

Our new Vocation Committee Chair is, who has received information from the NCCS Vocations Committee and would like to share this information with you and your Vocation Director. We look forward to giving more support to the discernment process for our Catholic Scouts and stand ready to participate in vocation activities that are appropriate for our Scouting age youth.

Thank you for your loving service to Catholic Scouting, our diocese and the universal Church.

Sincerely,

....., Chairman

cc: Diocesan Vocation Director,,
President - Serra Club of
Vocation Chair, Knights of Columbus, Council.....
NCCS Regional Representative
NCCS Vocation Chairman, P. O. Box 11526, K.C., MO 64138

Suggested Prayers - additional prayers are available at:

<http://www.usccb.org/vocations/prayereng.shtml>

Loving and Generous God,
it is You who call us by name
and ask us to follow You.

Help us to grow in the Love
and Service of our Church
as we experience it today.

Give us the energy and the courage
of Your Spirit to shape its future

Grant us faith-filled leaders
who will embrace Christ's
Mission of love and justice.

Bless the Church
by raising up dedicated and generous
leaders from our families and friends
who will serve Your people as
Sisters, Priests, Brothers, Deacons
and Lay Ministers.

Inspire us to know You better
and open our hearts
to hear Your call.
We ask this through our Lord.

A Scouts Prayer for Vocations

God our Father, in baptism You called me by name,
and made me a member of our people, the Church. I
praise You for Your goodness. I thank You for our
gifts. Father bless your Church with love. Raise up
dedicated and generous leaders from our families and
from our friends who will serve as priests, deacons,
brothers, sisters and brothers. Send Your Spirit to
guide and strengthen me that I may serve Your people
following the example of our son, Jesus Christ, in
whose name I offer this prayer.
Amen.

Prayer For Religious Vocations

O Divine Jesus, Son of the Eternal Father and Mary
Immaculate, grant to our young people true
generosity in following Your call and bestow upon
them Your grace to persevere in overcoming all
obstacles to their vocation.

Give parents that faith, love and spirit of sacrifice
which shall inspire them to encourage their children
to be open to God's service and rejoice when a
child of theirs is called to the religious life.

Let Your example, and that of Your Blessed Mother
and Saint Joseph, encourage both children and
parents, and let your grace sustain them, Amen

Loving God, Is it I, Lord?
Are you calling me to a vocation
of ministry in the Church as
Priest, Sister, Brother or Deacon?
Or if I am already living out a life's
vocation, are you asking me to help
call others to the ministry of
leadership in the Church?
We do need men and women to help
lead us as Church, Lord. We are your
people of the valley, prairie and pines.
Speak to us Lord.
Open the minds and hearts of many
men and women to live your Word
and build your Kingdom.
Speak to me Lord.
Plant your Word within me so that
whatever you call me to be or do
I may say Yes, Here I Am Lord.
Lord here I am!
What would you like me to
do with my life?
(Pause to listen to God for a moment)
And let your Holy Spirit
guide me ! Teach me to do your
will, Lord.

Page 3- Pastoral Plan for the Third Continental Congress on Vocations

Congress on Vocations to the Ordained Ministry and Consecrated Life in North America has replaced the "Future Full of Hope - National Strategy On Vocations." These programs are under the direction of the United States Conference on Catholic Bishops, Bishops' Committee on Vocations and Bishops' Committee on Priestly Formation. **For more information on the Pastoral Plan go to the USCCB Vocation Committee webpage: <http://www.usccb.org/vocations/summary.pdf>**

Serra and Scouting

Scouting in the Catholic Church

What is Catholic Scouting?

Boy Scouts of America - Scouting is the world's largest youth organization. Within this organization, under the auspices of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting® (NCCS), there are more than 490,000 Catholic boys and adults. Scouting through NCCS helps strengthen and extend the Church's work with youth. The three major programs offered as youth ministry by NCCS working through regional and diocesan committees are

- Cub Scouts - serving boys age 7 - 10
- Boy Scouts - serving boys age 11 - 18
- Venture Crews - serving boys and girls age 14 - 21

There are 9,587 units chartered by Catholic organizations in the United States. The youth in these units participate in faith development programs offered by the NCCS. These age appropriate programs, religious emblems and annual retreats, augment the religious instruction that Catholic youths receive through Catholic schools and religious education classes.

These programs draw together the support of the family and the parish community to offer an opportunity for Catholic youth to develop their faith and relationship with God.

What Church Organizations work with Scouting?

Under the authority of the (Arch)bishop, Diocesan Catholic Committees on Scouting (DCCS) are organized and training is provided by the NCCS through a Regional Chairman. Each DCCS is made up of trained volunteers and a Chaplain appointed by the Bishop.

What Church Organizations work with Scouting?

Under the authority of the (Arch)bishop, Diocesan Catholic Committees on Scouting (DCCS) are organized and training is provided by the NCCS through a Regional Chairman. Each DCCS is made up of trained volunteers and a Chaplain appointed by the Bishop. In addition to the programs for youth, the NCCS provides training for Catholic Scouters as youth ministers in their role as Leaders for Catholic Scouts and Scouting units. NCCS Web Page:

www.nccsbsa.org

How the Program Works

What Scouting activities does DCCS offer?

Units which offer a quality program, provide training for youth and adults, and include a vocations awareness program each year earn the Catholic Quality Unit Award Pope Paul VI Recognition for Catholic Chartered Units. Serra Foundation has encouraged this recognition by funding this recognition. Faith development activities include

- annual Scout Retreats or vocation camporees
- field trips to a seminary
- community-parish based service projects
- training sessions for spiritual and apostolic formation of the Scout Leaders
- youth and adult vocation workshops
- participation in Bishop's Campaign for Human Development
- Religious Emblems Programs
- Adult Recognition for Catholic Youth Ministry
- St. George Trek - 10 day Hike/Retreat for Scouts with Priests and Seminarians

How can a Serra Club or an individual Serran assist the DCCS and Catholic Scouts?

In 1995 Bishop Robert Carlson promoted the National Vocations Strategy. In that program he challenged all Catholic Organizations to collaborate and become directly involved in raising awareness of the shortage of priests and men and women in religious life. An important aspect of that Strategy is focusing on vocation awareness for youth. To respond to Bishop Carlson's challenge the NCCS developed a standing Vocation Committee. Each DCCS Chairman is encouraged to have a Vocation Committee whose Chairman collaborates with the Diocesan Vocations Director and Serra Clubs to promote discernment activities through Scouting to increase awareness of Church vocations. Serra can

- Invite the DCCS Chaplain and Vocation Committee Chairman to be speakers at your Club meetings
- become trained Religious Emblems Counselors and work with the DCCS Religious Emblems Committee
- work with non-Catholic Units in your parish to assure Religious Emblems are offered these Catholic Scouts
- assist in organizing, provide funding and support for the annual Scout Retreat; encourage a vocation awareness component
- become active on the DCCS; offer to serve on their Vocation Committee

(Continue Serra and Scouting)

- sponsor a Bishop's Troop Award -Trophy / Flag / Patch to the Catholic sponsored Unit with the best program of religious activities
- invite Catholic Scouters, members of DCCS, to be Serrans
- provide financial support for a Catholic Chaplain at a BSA/Council Summer Camp
- ask local BSA Council officials to consider employment applications from Seminarians for Summer Camp Staff or canvas their executive board members, business leaders for summer employment for seminarians.
- distribute vocation prayer cards to Units that emphasize being open to God's Call to serve the Church
- offer a scholarship for a youth to attend St. George Trek at the Philmont Scout Ranch

A Theology of Vocations - Reprinted with permission of Serra USA Council,
Executive Director - Edward Verbeke, from the Serra USA C Parish Vocation Resource Manual

A Theology of Vocations

Go into the whole world and make disciples of all nations.

Matthew 28:19

VATICAN II TEACHES THAT EVERY CHRISTIAN HAS A PERSONAL CALL (vocation) to holiness and to contribute to the mission of the Church to go into the whole world and make disciples of all nations. This is the common Christian vocation that is rooted in the baptism of each person.

The vast majority of Christians are called to correspond to this vocation in the ordinary circumstances of their daily lives as young people, students, workers, husbands, wives, parents and member of society without any way feeling the need to become involved in organized Church ministry.

The purpose of the dedicated ministry of priests, religious and committed laity is to support all the faithful in lining out their Christian vocation, thereby contributing to building up the Church and bringing about a more human way of life in society.

--- From the Consultation Document for *A Future Full of Hope: A National Strategy for Vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life*, NCCB Committee on Vocations 1996

THE CHURCH MUST RECLAIM ITS SENSE OF SACRAMENT. In order to address the vocation concerns of the church, we need to recapture and reclaim and part of our identity; namely, the sacraments are central to what makes us unique. Ordained priesthood is a sacrament that brings a very special and essential gift of life to the community, the church. Priests who feel good about themselves and about their priesthood will, naturally, want to invite others to share in and continue their work. We need to fully embrace that vocation ministry is connected to (the) mission of the Church. Ordained and laity must work together. There needs to be serious responsibility of revitalizing the mission of the church.

--- Archbishop Pio Laghi, Prefect of the Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education,
at the NCCB National Symposium on Vocations, June 1998

IT IS HELPFUL TO THINK OF THREE ASPECTS OF VOCATON:

The first is the common Christian vocation in which all members of the Church share by reason of Baptism and Confirmation -- the vocation to love and serve the Lord and proclaim his good news to others.

The second is vocation in the sense of state of life, whether clerical or religious, matrimony of the life of the single person in the world. Each of these involves important, distinct specifications of the common vocation.

The third is vocation in the sense of a unique personal calling, the particular response to

Page 2 - Theology of Vocations (continued)

Jesus which each individual, and only he or she, is asked to make in the special circumstances of his/her life as defined by vocational commitment in each of the first two senses.

It is clear in this perspective that every member of the Church lives in a rich and challenging vocation context which define and orient his/her life in all its dimensions.

--- Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, Chicago Catholic, January 7, 1983

FROM THE BAPTISMAL PRIVILEGE FLOWS THE ROLE OF INVITER as privilege and responsibility that belongs to each member of the body of Christ in encouraging others to consider their Christian vocations. Each member of the parish has the responsibility for encouraging others in living their Christian Vocation and presenting the options of priesthood and religious life.

--- From the Consultation Document for *A Future Full of Hope: A National Strategy for Vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life*, NCCB Committee on Vocations 1996

SINGLE AND MARRIED LAITY, RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR PRIEST live the common Christian vocation in special ways, but each special vocation ways, but each special vocation shares certain elements: It is the Father's choice, it comes from him and in his gift, it derives from the Church, it finds fulfillment in the Church, and it is given as a service to the Church.

---- *From Pastores Dabo Vobis, 35*

A Theology of Priesthood - Reprinted with permission of Serra USA Council, Executive Director - Edward Verbeke, from the Serra USA C Parish Vocation Resource Manual

A Theology of Priesthood

Every high priest is taken from among men and made their representative before God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins . . . No one takes this honor upon himself, but only when called by God.

--- Hebrews 5:1-4

THE PRIEST HAS A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST. "By the sacrament of orders priests are configured to Christ, the Priest, so that as minister of the head and coworkers of the Episcopal order they can build up and establish His Whole Body which is Christ."

---- Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, # 12

THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF THE PRIESTLY MINISTRY ARE:

- a) to proclaim the Gospel;
- b) to preside over the sacraments and liturgy, and
- c) to build up and serve the community which in turn serves the world.

---The Report of the Bishops Ad Hoc Committee for Priestly Life and Ministry, p.25

THE MINISTERIAL OF HIERARCHICAL PRIESTHOOD of bishops and priests, and the common priesthood of all the faithful participate, "each in its own proper way, in the one priesthood of Christ." While being "ordered one to another," they differ essentially... While the common priesthood of the faithful is exercised by the faithful by the unfolding of baptismal grace --- a life of faith, hope, and charity, a life according to the Spirit, the ministerial priesthood is at the service of the

common priesthood. It is directed at the unfolding of baptismal grace of all Christians. The ministerial priesthood is a means by which Christ unceasingly builds up and leads his Church. For this reason it is transmitted by its own sacrament, the sacrament of Holy Orders."

--- Catechism of the Catholic Church, #1547

A Theology of Religious Life

*He went up the mountain and summoned those whom he wanted and they came to him.
He appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) that they might be with him and
He might send them forth to preach. . . .*

--- Mark 3:13-14

THE CONSECRATED LIFE, DEEPLY ROOTED IN THE EXAMPLE AND TEACHING OF CHRIST, the Lord, is a gift of God the Father to his Church through the Holy Spirit. By the profession of the evangelical counsels the characteristic features of Jesus --the chaste, poor and obedient one – are made constantly "visible" in the midst of the world and the eyes of the faithful are directed toward the mystery of the Kingdom of God already at work in history, even as it awaits its full realization in heaven. In every age there have been men and women who, obedient to the Father's call and to the prompting of the Spirit, have chosen this special way of following Christ, in order to devote themselves to him with an "undivided" heart. Like the apostles, they too have left everything behind in order to be with Christ and to put themselves, as he did, at the service to God and their brothers and sisters. In this way, through the many charisms of spiritual and apostolic life bestowed on them by the Holy spirit, they have helped to make the mystery and mission of Church shine forth, and in doing so have contributed to the renewal of society.

--- *Vita Conserata*

THE STATE OF CONSECRATED LIFE is thus one way of experiencing a "more intimate" consecration, rooted in Baptism and dedicated totally to God. In the consecrated life, Christ's faithful, moved by the Holy Spirit, proposed to follow Christ more nearly, to give themselves to God who is loved above all and, pursuing the perfection of charity in the service of the Kingdom, to signify and proclaim in the Church the glory of the world to come.

--Catechism of the Catholic Church, #916

THE APPROPRIATE RENEWAL OF RELIGIOUS LIFE involve two simultaneous processes:

- 1) a continuous return to the sources of all Christian life and to the original inspiration behind a given community, and
- 2) an adjustment of the community to the changed conditions of the times.

It is according to the following principles that such renewal should go forward under the influence of the Holy Spirit and the guidance of the Church.

--Decree on the Appropriate Renewal of the Religious Life, #2

BY A "LIFE PERFECTLY AND ENTIRELY CONSECRATED TO [SUCH] SANCTIFICATION," the members of the institutes share in the Church's task of evangelization, "in the world and from

A Theology of Religious Life Continued

within the world," where their presence acts as a "leaven in the world." Their witness of a Christian life aims "to order temporal things according to God and inform the world with the power of the gospel." They commit themselves to the evangelical counsels by sacred bonds and observe among themselves the communion and fellowship appropriate to their "particular secular way of life."

Literature:

Vocation Resource Catalogue - NCCV - Free copy of this annual publication available. Contact: National Coalition for Church Vocations, 800-671-6228, Sister Diane Poplawski OP, Executive Director or by Email <mailto:info@nccv-vocations.org>
Mailing address: 5401 S. Cornell Ave, #205, Chicago, IL 60615

NCCS Literature from the web page:

16-162

Vocational Workshop for Adults - How can Scouting Leaders be more aware of the vocational aspect of Scouting? Learn how to conduct a short workshop on this topic. Hard copies available from NCCS or print from the web page: <http://www.nccs-bsa.org/pdf/n16-162.pdf>

16-149

Vocational Promotion through Youth Ministry - Scouting has been the field where vocations have been both planted and nourished, only to be harvested later. This resource gives dioceses some suggestions on how Scouting can promote vocations. Hard copies available from NCCS or print from the NCCS web page: <http://www.nccs-bsa.org/pdf/n16-149.pdf>

NCCS/Serra International Vocation Programs

The NCCS and Serra International USA Council are working in cooperation with each other in promoting priestly and religious vocations within Scouting in the Catholic Church. There are a number of vocational programs, resources and growth opportunities offered to Catholic Scouts and Venturers in Catholic and BSA units. Listed below are some of the current offerings;

- **Venturing Crews in Catholic High Schools**, a new and excellent way to promote Venturing and open the path for vocation discernment. This an extra-curricular activity that has been successful in Catholic high schools across the country. For more on this go to the Serra website and investigate the potential.
http://www.serraus.org/resources/vocations/venturing_CatholicHS_serraclub.pdf
- **Priesthood Sunday** is a Serra project that is open to Scouts at all levels. It provides the Scouts and their leaders to offer support and recognition to their parish priest and those priests that touch their daily lives. Priesthood is the last Sunday in October annually. To learn more visit the Priesthood Sunday on the NCCS website:
<http://www.nccs-bsa.org/ScoutUnits/PriesthoodSunday.php>
- **Eagle Scout Priests** Finding and cataloging priest who are Eagle Scouts is a project of the NCCS Vocations Committee. The Committee began this project in 2005. The Committee continues the search for those men who were influenced by their Scouting experience to follow the trail through life as a priest. Read about this Eagle Scouts on the NCCS website:
<http://www.nccs-bsa.org/pdf/2005NCCSVocationsEaglePriests.pdf>

USCCB- The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

The USCCB website offers more aids to support your work as the chair of the Diocesan Vocations Committee. There is an excellent video entitled **Fishers of Men** and a number of **Vocations Prayers**.

- Fishers of Men – the video on-line can be found at the following website:
http://ccc.usccb.org/video/fishers_of_men/wmv
- Vocation Prayers – prayers to foster vocations can be found at the following website:
<http://www.usccb.org/vocation/prayereng.shtml>

NCCS VOCATIONS AND SCOUTING HANDBOOK **(EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK REPORT)**

This Handbook is a resource for Catholic Scouters who have accepted the responsibility as DCCS Vocation Committee Chairman. The NCCS Vocation Committee mission is to provide you with support for your work of introducing vocation promoting ideas, programs and support for Scouts discerning a vocation to serve the Church. It is a workbook in progress.

This revised Handbook is our on going effort in supporting the **Pastoral Plan** on the vocation challenge to NCCS and Catholic Scouting. Your commitment to use this Handbook to create a more positive view of vocations is essential. You can make a difference through consistent programs that will provide a nurturing environment for a budding vocation interest. The NCCS Vocations Committee invites your views and additions to be included in future updates to the Handbook.

Tell us about your success and new ideas:

Tell us your frustrations:

Name: _____
Address: _____
_____ Zip _____
Phone: _____ (day or night) FAX: _____
E-mail: _____
Region: _____ Arch/Diocese: _____
Current Position in Catholic Scouting: _____

This program needs and deserves your help. Consider joining the NCCS Vocations Committee or volunteer to work at the Regional level to help train Diocesan/Council Catholic Committees on Scouting Vocation Committee Chairman. To share your concerns or for more information on how you can support this effort: **Committee Chairman:** John E. "Jack" Thompson, 5700 Morningside Drive, Newburgh, IN 47630-9218 or call (812) 853-3273 E-mail: jackt2@gmail.com