



## National Catholic Committee on Scouting®

P.O. Box 152079 • Irving, TX 75015-2079 • (972) 580-2114

January 19, 2021

Dear Diocesan Chairs and Chaplains,

The Boy Scouts of America have updated their Charter Partner Agreement. The new agreement has two changes which are of particular interest to us in the Catholic Church.

First, the BSA spells out much more clearly what both the local Scout council and the chartered partner are responsible for. Second, the BSA declines insurance protection for intentional or criminal acts. (The purpose for this is to assure that chartered partners are vigilant in selecting, training and supervising adult Scout leaders, as well as reporting any suspected criminal acts, just as we do with all adults who work with our youth.) The coverage basically remains the same as the old contract.

We have been able to affect a change in the Charter Agreement. Today it reads “Charter organizations must utilize the Scouting program to accomplish specific objectives related to one or more of the following: youth character development, career skill development, community service, patriotism and military and veteran recognition, faith-based youth ministry”. Instead of being last because it is the 12<sup>th</sup> point of the Scout Law, youth ministry will be second because of its importance. This will help to point out to the pastor when he signs the agreement that Catholic Scouting is a Youth Ministry.

The potential of Scouting as a means of youth formation in the faith requires conscious attention. As the chartered partner, the local parish or school owns the Scout unit. This has often not been clear to pastors, youth ministry leaders, and Scout leaders.

The role of the Chartered Partner Representative is critical. That person (either a staff person or volunteer) is supposed to assure, with Catholic-chartered Scout units, that the Scout program is a true youth ministry. Among other things, he or she encourages prayers at the beginning and ending of meetings, earning of the religious emblems, and supports the activities of the local diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting. There is a four part, one-hour training program available for Catholic Charter Organization Representatives that helps to explain how Scouting can be used as a youth ministry of the Catholic Church: Chartering to a Catholic Institution SCO\_275, Reaching Youth through Scouting SCO\_276, Your Role as a Catholic COR SCO\_277, and Catholic Scouting under BSA Standards SCO\_278. It is offered on-line through the scouting.org training web site. Every Catholic Charter Organization Representative will be required to take the course. Charter Organization Reps will have until May 1<sup>st</sup> to complete the courses. After that date, Catholic units will not be able to re-charter until this COR training is completed.

In April 2020, the National Catholic Committee on Scouting released a “Guide to Catholic Scouting”. This document helps the chartered partner and Chartered Organization

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Representative understand the structure of Catholic Scouting. It is available on line at <https://www.nccs-bsa.org/index.php/guide-to-catholic-scouting>

Of course, your own support of Catholic Scouting as Youth Ministry is important. The National Catholic Committee on Scouting is available to assist Catholic units and your diocesan committee.

Yours in Catholic Scouting as a Youth Ministry,

Jim Weiskircher

Rev. Joe Powers

National Chair 2019-2022

National Chaplain 2019-2022

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