



THE BRIDGE

The Newsletter of The National Catholic Committee on Scouting®

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Webinars are one of many innovative ways being used to adapt to Coronavirus restrictions and move activities online

On Saturday August 29th the National Catholic Committee on Scouting conducted a webinar with more than 100 participants. The webinar covered eight topics of interest including religious emblems, Doerr scholarships, the St. George Trek and others. To see the webinar go to the NCCS website nccs-bsa.org/ and click on Catholic Scouting Academy under "videos." This was one of the first attempts to continue to operate and serve the Catholic Scouting audience in these times of mandatory closures and restrictions that limit meetings to no more than 10 people, or even prohibit meeting in any physical presence. From learning how to conduct meetings or how to conduct training, organizations like the NCCS now need to learn how to embrace, and use, key technologies.

It is essential that the Catholic Scouting family meets together in some capacity, whether to conduct emblem training, work on religious activities or conduct the basic business of the various committees. To do this these communities must now embrace the many available virtual meeting technologies. Businesses have proven the value of these resources. By implementing them in your diocesan Catholic committee you can help to keep things as close to "business as usual" as possible. Today's world can be scary, but using technology to stay connected doesn't have to be.

Where do you begin? How do you manage the process?

Before thinking through the technical aspects of a webinar or any other online meeting, identify your desired content, visuals, and length. These sessions can be about anything, but clearly defining the topic helps potential attendees know exactly what to expect and increases interest in signing up. It is also helpful to develop two or three objectives or takeaways the audience can expect to support the goal of the webinar, keeping a clear vision of what you want for attendees. While the golden rule of in-person presentations is reducing text and focusing more on imagery and graphics, the rules can be bent when it comes to an online presence. Thoughtful information,

coupled with engaging imagery creates a visually appealing experience and offers reference material for attendees to use once your presentation is over. Hosting any successful online program can be as simple as choosing one of the many platforms available and then crafting a simple conversation with a short number of slides to kick-off the discussion.

Part of every session's goal should be engaging with attendees. Engagement can come in the form of emails, polls, handouts, surveys and of course the question and answer session.

You want attendees to sign on and feel like they are a part of the experience, not just mindlessly listening to someone drone on. Sending emails ahead of the online sessions with reminders, materials and steps to using the software are always helpful, and of course a follow up thank you email continues your engagement with the audience.

Finally, dress the part ... even from home. This may seem like an obvious one, but for some it is not. Wearing your Scout uniform, if appropriate, will also impact your presentation performance, getting you in the mindset to be engaging and dynamic while presenting. Treat any online session like an in-person meeting, and you will be set.



Membership is vital to NCCS growth and mission success

By
John Doerr
Vice Chair, Finance

Initiating or renewing your National Catholic Committee on Scouting membership is important for many reasons. First, it is a key ***measure of NCCS' health*** as an organization. As our volunteers grow older, encouraging membership of young adult Scouters lays the framework for our future success. Members' input and volunteering are also a conduit for proper governance of the organization.

Second, it ***measures success*** in fulfilling our mission ***across all archdioceses, dioceses, and eparchies***. NCCS members in each diocese give our Religious Emblem, Religious Activities, the St. George Trek and Scholarship programs a chance to flourish and reach Catholic youth.

Third, ***by being an NCCS member, you also support the mission, vision, and ideals of the Boy Scouts of America***. Our membership process tracks your standing with the BSA. NCCS also needs to identify volunteers with the time and skills needed by our NCCS Standing Committees for current and future programs.

Fourth, the membership process will soon ***identify membership links*** to organizations with a similar mission, such as the Serra Club, La Red, and others. Reaching out to like-minded organizations helps NCCS promote our programs across a broader spectrum of the Catholic faithful.

Finally, your ***membership dues provide financial support*** for NCCS programs and our Program Administrator. While NCCS has a solid financial base with which to grow our mission, we still need to pay the day-to-day bills. If you haven't already done so, please initiate or renew your membership ***today!*** Please consider becoming a Lifetime member as well.



National Catholic Committee on Scouting



FROM THE CHAIR
Jim Weiskircher

The coronavirus has changed our lives forever. I hope that you and your family remain safe. I am impressed with how our committees are adapting to ever changing conditions.

The launch of the electronic version of Ad Altare Dei has gone very smoothly to date with the Scouts and counselors using it, and being excited with its features. During this time of limited Scout activities, it gives us all a chance to focus on religious emblems and activities. Please use these tools to help bring Catholic Scouts closer to God.

The last three months has seen the postponement of the 2021 Jamboree as well as a reduction of 40% of the staff at the headquarters of the BSA. We need to focus on what we do best and continue to find new ways to reach our youth. We are excited to have the St. George Trek on track for July 7 through July 22, 2021. Please continue to support Catholic Scouting as a Youth Ministry.

Yours in Catholic Scouting as a youth ministry,

Jim

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GO TO THE NCCS
WEBSITE AT

[www.nccs-bsa.org/
index.php/join-nccs](http://www.nccs-bsa.org/index.php/join-nccs)



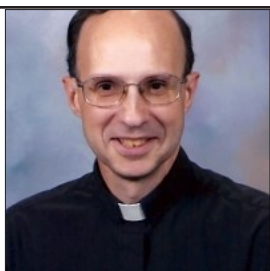
KEEP CALM
AND
RENEW YOUR
MEMBERSHIP

The Bridge is an authorized publication of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting (NCCS). It is published quarterly to provide news and information to members of the NCCS, diocesan Catholic committees, youth ministry personnel and Boy Scout councils.

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To submit items for future editions of *The Bridge* please contact Mike Gannon at scouttrain@aol.com. Photos are acceptable and should be in a jpeg format. Please ensure all people in photos are identified and the subject matter is fully described.



The Chaplain's Corner

Father Joe Powers
National Chaplain



The continuing outbreak of Covid-19 around the country is causing major disruptions to current and future Scouting activities. Many summer camps have been cancelled or shortened in duration; many Scout units made the decision to bypass camp. Restrictions in many states and counties are limiting large gatherings.

The National Jamboree, scheduled for next summer, has been postponed out of safety concerns. These disruptions pale in the face of what families, individuals and businesses are facing; nonetheless, they add to already existing feelings of despair and anxiety.

More than ever, we need to put our faith in God to see us through this crisis. St. Paul's letters tell us of how God provided him with strength and grace during his personal hardships. I encourage you to continue offering prayers and acts of penance directed towards the ending of the pandemic – and for all who are struggling with employment issues. St. George, patron of Scouting, pray for us!



The Camden, N. J. Diocese boards of review and awards ceremony for Ad Altare Dei and Pope Pius XII Scouts took on a new look this year as they took place on June 27 at the Roosevelt Scout Reservation. They were originally scheduled at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Camden, but because of Covid-19, officials thought it best to have both the boards of review and ceremony outside at the Scout camp. Fr. Paul Harte, Chaplain of the Catholic Scouting Committee and Pastor of Our Lady of Sorrows Parish, Linwood, presided at the ceremony.



New Scouts learn how to be good leaders and team players

By Edward P. Martin
former NCCS National Chairman

Recently I had the opportunity to meet with Alex (Alexandria) and Bella (Isabella) Vargo to learn about their experiences as members of Scouts BSA girl Troop 7215 chartered by St. Francis de Sales Church in Akron, Ohio. They are twins, the only children of Dennis and Beth Vargo. Dennis is a professional Scouter for the Great Trail Council, and also serves as an Assistant Scoutmaster for the troop. Alex and Bella participate in other activities, too, including drama, bowling and a recycling club.

Both Alex and Bella have earned Second Class rank and are among the founding members of the troop that was formed last summer. Having shared some of their Dad's experiences with summer Day Camp, they wanted to have more of those experiences. They recruited a good friend by telling her about archery and campouts. They told me a couple of the highlights have been earning the Rifle Shooting merit badge and participating in a council fundraiser that involved rappelling down the outside of the 19-story First Energy building in downtown Akron.

The things they didn't expect to learn were how to be good leaders and team players. Bella now serves as the unit's Chaplain Aide, a position in which she has conducted vesper services and invocations at troop meetings. She also has learned about the religious emblem and activity programs and says she will promote those within her troop. Both Bella and Alex report that they are learning that their involvement in Scouting is teaching them how to overcome challenges, experience new things, and make new friends. They are grateful that BSA has extended membership to girls and that their church has chartered their unit.

Benjamin Rawald - Texas Scout who earned every award in Scouting and Venturing, named recipient of \$5,000 Emmett J. Doerr scholarship

The \$5,000 recipient of this year's Emmett J. Doerr Memorial Scholarship is Benjamin Rawald of Del Rio, Texas, Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA and the Archdiocese of San Antonio, Texas, Benjamin says, *"If you can volunteer for it, sign me up! Why do I do all these things? Because my head and my heart tell me to do so. A Scout pledges an oath to serve his God, His country, other people, and himself. I am just following my version of the Scout Oath and I know that I am doing the right thing."* As a member of both, Sacred Heart Church in Del Rio, Texas and St. Francis at Laughlin Air Force Base, Ben has served as a Youth Group Leader, altar server, Vacation Bible School teacher, and lead usher.

Ben is passionate about conservation. For his community, he completed five conservation-based community service projects totaling thousands of hours and involving hundreds of volunteers to bring national attention to conservation. His projects included recycling plastic bags, printer toner cartridge recycling, butterfly migration, wetland refurbishment, and the effect of invasive species on his city's local creek. These projects helped him earn the prestigious Silver Hornaday Award.

At such a young age, Ben's accomplishments are formidable. Since he started Scouts, he has volunteered over 5,000 documented hours of community and conservation-based service and not only achieved the rank of Eagle but was the first to earn the Summit Award in his Venture Crew.

In 2019, he was recognized by Scouting and Boy's Life Magazine for receiving every earnable rank, merit badge, award, and medal in both the Scouting and Venture Programs, including the Hornaday Conservation Award and the Dr. Albert

Einstein Supernova Medal. He was the Texas VFW Scout of the Year, received the 2020 Texas Environmental Excellence Award, and Operation Homefront's Air Force Military Child of the Year for scholarship, volunteerism, leadership, extracurricular involvement, and other criteria while facing the challenges of military family life.

For his Eagle Scout Project, Ben researched, created, and developed a one-hour DVD documentary for the Laughlin Heritage Museum LLC in Del Rio, Texas to preserve the local military heritage. To complete the 1,906-hour project, he raised \$5,000, and trained 15 retired -

military adults with the computer skills needed to finish the project. He has also assisted 32 other Scouts with their Eagle Scout projects. Ben is dual enrolled at Brackett High School and Southwest Texas Junior College. Along with National Honor Society and being a Student Council Rep, he participates in Future Farmers of America, varsity weightlifting, and marching band. At Southwest he is on the Student Activities Board and in the STEM Club. He plans to attend Lake Washington Technical Institute followed by the University of Washington's Paul G. Allen School of Computer Science and Engineering.



Emblems programs are thriving in time of Covid-19 pandemic

by
John Savage,
Emblems Chair

This is a great time for your Scout to earn a religious emblem. Emblems are available for girls and boys in Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturing, and Sea Scouts. Light of Christ and Parvuli Dei can be done in the family—no counselor required. Many dioceses allow virtual meetings and many Ad Altare Dei, Light is Life, and Pope Pius XII counselors are holding virtual sessions. Contact your local Catholic Committee on Scouting for more information. Diocesan contacts can be found on the NCCS website.

In addition to the Scout Shop (www.scoutshop.org), there's a new way to get your religious emblem workbooks—the NCCS store at www.nccs-bsa.org/store/. Be sure to check it out the next time you need a workbook for Light of Christ, Parvuli Dei, Ad Altare Dei, Light is Life, or Pope Pius XII. Remember that Pope Pius XII workbooks—both Participant and Facilitator—are ONLY available in the NCCS store.

The electronic version of the Ad Altare Dei workbook is now available in the NCCS store. It is designed for use when in-person meetings cannot be held but may also be a useful record-keeping tool for counselors holding in-person meetings. NOTE: Some dioceses may not allow the use of this option. Contact your diocesan Catholic Committee if you are interested in this option. In addition, special training is required before starting. Be sure you have the required authorization and training before ordering.

International Catholic Scouting continues to offer opportunities to connect with Scouts around the world

By Phil Krajec,
NCCS International Committee Chair

Given the ongoing international health emergency, the 6th World Scout Interreligious Symposium that was to have been held in France this past March has been postponed indefinitely. Similarly, the November 2020 World Council of the International Catholic Conference of Scouting (CICS-ICCS) has been postponed until a yet to be determined date in 2021.

However, these unfortunate cancellations do not mean that all International Catholic Scouting has been put on hold.

The International Catholic Foundation of Scouting (FICS) provides financial assistance for the promotion and the development of faith for Catholic youth in scouting. NCCS Finance & Scholarship Vice Chair John Doerr and Phil Krajec participated in the Annual Board Meeting of FICS held by videoconference on February 29. The Board thanked NCCS for its generous financial and logistical support of the ICCS booth and activities at the 24th World Scout Jamboree last July. During the meeting, John Doerr was nominated and unanimously elected to serve as FICS Vice Chair.

The ICCS Inter-American Region covers North, Central and South America and the Caribbean. Jerry Scanlan, Victor Laguna and Phil Krajec participated in a Regional & World Committee meeting via Zoom in June. The purpose of the meeting was to find ways to enhance the presence of ICCS among member Scouting organizations and to provide the Vatican with information about the status of the relationships between ICCS and the local associations. NCCS also offers several international recognitions that can be worked on by youth and adults individually, within families or small groups. The International Awareness activity is designed to promote understanding about Scouting and Catholicism in other countries and how it might differ from Scouting in the United States. Medallions, pins and patches bearing the ICCS insignia may be earned by demonstrating awareness of Scouting in the Catholic Church throughout the world.

The Martyrs of Canada, the United States and Mexico program was created to encourage participation in the World Scout Jamboree that was co-hosted by the Boy Scouts of America, Scouts Canada, and Asociación de Scouts de México last summer. To earn this patch, Scouts and leaders are asked to complete several requirements and activities to learn about what it means to be a martyr, and what it takes for Catholics to defend their faith and “take up the cross daily.” Participants learn about the Gifts of the Holy Spirit by reading about and discussing the lives of martyrs, while praying for God's help so they might live their lives like those they studied. See the NCCS website for more information on these activities.

Can't travel? Take advantage of time at home by connecting with other Catholic Scouts around the world. Groups such as ICCS-CICS, Scouts et Guides de France, Les Scouts du Liban, AGESCI and CICS ICCS Inter-American Region all have presence on social media. You'll see that Catholic Scouting is alive and thriving despite the pandemic.



Eagle Scout - Trey Sprecher - who addressed "Scouting's impact on me" with Georgia state Senators is awarded \$4,000 Emmett J. Doerr Scholarship

Thomas "Trey" Sprecher III, of Marietta, Ga, member of Catholic Church of St. Ann in the Archdiocese of Atlanta, was awarded a \$4,000 scholarship by the National Catholic Committee on Scouting (NCCS) through the Emmett J. Doerr Memorial Scout Scholarship Fund.

Trey truly embodies the idea of service leadership. When asked what volunteering means to him, he says, *"It's helping make lunches for kids who would otherwise go hungry. It's tutoring the mom, whose second language is English, to learn a computer programming language. It's each Memorial Day, for over a decade, helping place American flags at the graves of over 18,000 U.S. Military who made the ultimate sacrifice. I know I make a difference in my community."*

At St. Ann's, he is a member of the youth group, has assisted with the Christmas Basket Program, St. Vincent de Paul food drives, parish festivals, Women's Guild Craft Shows, and has made knot rosaries for missions, cancer patients, and US Military.

Passionate about both volunteering and STEM, Trey combines these interests through a partnership between Interact (Rotary), FIRST Robotics, Go Baby Go, and East Cobb Robotics that develops affordable mobility chairs for children with disabilities. During the summer, he has led Robotics Camps for children of US Service Personnel at Dobbins Air Force Base and has volunteered at events sponsored by the Boys and Girls Club and the Kennesaw National Battlefield, where he has assisted with Memorial Day flag placement.

At school, Trey is a member of Pope High School's National Honor Society, Community Service Club, the Key Club, Red Cross Club, and is President of the Interact Club. He has earned a Community Service Varsity Letter for his many hours of service.

As a Scout, Trey's Eagle Scout Project redefined the idea of community, as he reached out to the Mayor of Rockwood, Missouri, roughly 700 miles from his home in Georgia, where five generations of his family had been active community members. Through his conversations with the Mayor, he discovered that the city park, which was named after his great grandfather, needed updates. He organized

67 volunteers, who completed 750 service hours to install new signage throughout the park, enhance the landscaping, and restore picnic tables, park gates, and car stops. His project was so successful it earned him the Glenn A. and Melinda W. Adams National Eagle Scout Service Project of the Year Award for Atlanta. Trey has held many leadership positions, including Assistant Scout Master and is a member of Order of the Arrow, Scouting's Honor Society.

He was also recognized in a ceremony at the Georgia State Capitol for having earned 138 badges and addressed Georgia Senators about Scouting's "Impact on Me." Trey plans to attend Kettering University for engineering.



A complete list of Emmett J Doerr Memorial Scout Scholarship eligibility requirements and application information can be found online at <http://nccs-bsa.org/index.php/college-scholarship>.

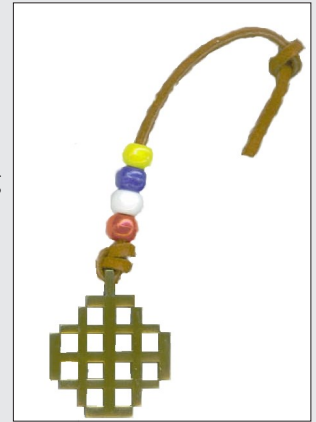
Did You Know...?
By Bob Oldowski
(NCCS Historian)

The NCCS has an interesting challenge and commitment program that few people are aware of.

Since 2003, when completing the “Scouting in the Catholic Church” course at the Philmont Training Center, participants are presented with four beads and given a challenge: Develop and deliver a mission project that serves the needs of your parish youth ministry or diocesan Catholic Scouting community.

Upon completion, prepare a project description and forward that to the NCCS office along with three signed letters. These should be from a representative of your parish or diocese, from someone who benefitted from your project, and from you with an evaluation of your project and how you carried it out.

Those successfully completing their project are awarded the **Jerusalem Cross**. This is presented at the NCCS Annual Meeting at Eastertime, or at a later, appropriate presentation. In the past 16 years, there have been 145 crosses awarded. More information, including lists of those who earned this recognition, is posted on the NCCS web site.



Using the Coronavirus shut down in a positive way

By Theresa Dirig
Religious Activities Chair



The Fort Wayne-South Bend diocese had regular evenings of learning about the lives of the Saints or Mary that were highlighted in the NCCS Religious Activities program. When the country was quarantined early last spring, the diocese decided to try to find a way to continue the evening learning sessions. The Fort Wayne/South Bend Diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting, working with the diocese, decided to develop traditional learning sessions “virtually.” With the assistance of Our Sunday Visitor, they were able to do just that as the Sunday Visitor had the technology and willingness to assist. In April of this year, nearly 300 people tuned in for a webinar on St. Faustina and the Message of Divine Mercy. An additional 200 signed up to receive a recording after the webinar. The Fort Wayne/South Bend Diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting coordinated the event with Our Sunday Visitor (OSV), which said that this was the largest webinar that they have hosted.

Father Anthony Gramlich, the rector of the National Shrine of the Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, presented the main message. Then, the participants were able to pray the chaplet of Divine Mercy with Bishop Kevin Rhoades of the Fort Wayne/South Bend Diocese. Catholic Scouts and Catholic school students from around the country were also able to ask questions of the presenter.

A second webinar was held in June. Reverend John Broussard of the Fathers of Mercy was invited to share the story of the only American approved Marian Apparition – Our Lady of Good Help in Champion, Wisc. Many households joined virtually and questions were answered, and knowledge shared.

In addition, Sister Lucia Richardson a Sister of Saint Francis of Perpetual Adoration joined the group and lead them in the Litany of Our Lady of Good Help during the COVID-19 Pandemic. This session was also recorded and will be available on the website for Our Lady of Good Help.

The group is planning future webinars, learning about Kateri Tekakwitha and Solanus Casey, but specific dates are not finalized yet. Look for updates on the NCCS Facebook page.

For information on how to plan and develop this type of program please contact me at tscoutlady@yahoo.com.

A VOCATIONS REFLECTION
BY
Bro. Andrew J. Kosmowski, SM

In the last column, you read about the low numbers of men and women who profess final vows in a religious congregation who state that Catholic Scouting was influential in discerning their vocation. You may have felt saddened reading that and wondered what the National Catholic Committee on Scouting can do. That is a significant question, one that neither Fr. Casals, S.J., nor I are ignoring as we are both Eagle Scouts and perpetually professed members of different religious orders.

One way we can help is to encourage you to ask your Scouts about considering this vocation. According to the National Religious Vocation Conference 2020 Study on Recent Vocations on Religious Life (link below), nearly 70% of those who enter religious life have thought of this vocation before the age of 21. Most of these received encouragement from people they trust. This means that we are well situated in promoting vocations to religious life.

One barrier that I believe we as Scouters have is that we think this conversation will be awkward. In the Scouts BSA program, Scoutmaster conferences and boards of review are essential parts of rank advancement. These are convenient times for gentle encouragement. Ask if they have ever considered this, even if it was when they were five years old and never since then. Explain why you think they would make good consecrated men and women to serve our Church.

As an example, "I noticed how compassionate you were when some younger Scouts had difficulty setting up tents; have you thought about becoming a Brother/Sister?" You will have given a specific setting and a specific trait we value in our religious. Do not push any further after this simple yes/no question as you are sowing seeds into different types of soil. Despite the discomfiture this may cause, it will be worthwhile in the end. Also take this time to urge them to complete the Pope Pius XII religious emblem.

The next few columns will focus on ways we can foster vocations in Scouting and in our parishes. Hopefully, they will help you with ideas to encourage our youth to consider religious life.

<https://nrvcc.net/publication/9180/article/21258-nrvcc-overview-2020-study-on-recent-vocations-to-religious-life>

Priesthood Sunday, as celebrated by the Serra Club, is this year on September 27. Encourage your Scouts, no matter the unit, to write or record a thank you message to their pastors for their unique service to the Church. As you may recall, this is an activity for the Ad Altare Dei religious emblem.

SAVE the Dates for NCCS National Training in 2021:

The NCCS has two national-level courses planned for 2021 to support individuals with all levels of experience, not just registered Scout leaders or members of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting. They are the Scouting in the Catholic Church (SiCC) and Scouting in the Local Church (SiLC) courses. We have had Youth Ministers, Chaplains, and Diocesan staff attend these programs. If you are new to the National Catholic Committee on Scouting, then you should plan to attend at least the SiCC in 2021. This is our premier adult training course appropriate for those involved with Catholic Scouting at the unit/parish, diocesan, regional, and national levels.

If you have recently come to Catholic Scouting as part of a local Diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting, then we recommend attending our SiLC course. In this course you'll have the opportunity to network with other Diocesan Scouters working within their local dioceses to help local parish programs and Catholic Scouts better use the Scouting program to foster their Catholic faith growth. Spending a week in March in the Florida Keys during March is added treat to your potential experience.

SCOUTING IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

July 18-23, 2021, at the Philmont Training Center, Cimarron, New Mexico

SCOUTING IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

March 2-6, 2021, at BSA's SEA BASE, Islamorada Florida

