



THE BRIDGE

The Newsletter of The National Catholic Committee on Scouting®

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NCCS serves as title sponsor for 2021 National Catholic Youth Conference

By Jim Weiskircher

In the past, the NCCS has had a booth at the National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis that was between 100-400 square feet with 4-5 members of the Executive Committee manning the booth. With a small booth, it is difficult to stand out and get the attention of youth and youth directors walking by.

In April, the NCCS Executive Board approved the funding of a five-year marketing initiative. The campaign theme is *Catholic Scouting is Faith Family Adventure*. Our goal is to promote Catholic Scouting as an integral form of youth ministry in parishes and dioceses across America. The 2021 NCYC gave us the opportunity to be the title sponsor. Because of Covid restrictions, only 12,000 were allowed to attend in person. There was a virtual element to the weekend where 2,200 viewed from home with dedicated content just for them.

Father Roger Lopez OFM, a NCCS Philmont chaplain, along with 2021 Doerr scholarship winners Elaine Smith and Joseph Bowers, all Eagle Scouts, officially opened the NCYC on the main stage on Thursday night. The 30 second ad on Catholic Scouting *FAITH FAMILY ADVENTURE* was played on the big screen along with the three sharing Scout experiences and how it had impacted

their lives while growing their faith. Elaine and Joseph were our ambassadors for the weekend and hosted the Pyramid game on Friday night. Elaine, Joseph, and Father Roger were in the studio taping when they were not on the main stage. Fr. Roger hosted a 20-minute workshop called “Living Laudato: Catholic Scouting” which will be put up on our website this month.

You could not miss our message of Catholic Scouting. There were 50 pop up banners strategically placed throughout the convention center and Lucas Oil Field, as well as our overhead banners. Our 2,500 square foot booth was directly off the center section with the USSCB and NFCYM booths close by. It was manned by 25 NCCS members proudly wearing their scout uniforms.

The main booth was highlighted by the Eagle Wall of Fame which featured photos of all Scouts in attendance that had earned the rank of Eagle, Quartermaster, Summit, or Gold Award, including several bishops and priests. These Eagle Scouts were presented with a special Catholic Scouting neckerchief that was tied in a friendship knot. They were asked to wear the neckerchiefs all weekend as a badge of honor. Participants were engaged in several team building games and rewarded with light up Catholic Scouting logo yoyos. Adult youth

ministers had a chance to win one of two 70” smart televisions, tents and lawn chairs that were used in the booth, for their parishes.

Bishop Daniel Conlon, our episcopal liaison, along with Fr. Gerard Gentleman, Fr. Mark Carr SJ, and Fr. Jason Adams shared the benefits of Catholic Scouting with bishops and pastors attending. Catholic Scouting sponsored the Friday evening Mass with Bishop Conlon and the papal nuncio, Archbishop Christophe Pierre, concelebrating, with our Associate National Chaplain Father Gerard delivering the homily.

We also had access to the VIP suite at Lucas Oil field. This gave us the opportunity to meet with Board members and regional chairs for the NFCYM and discuss Catholic Scouting in a relaxed atmosphere. I was proud of the contribution of all of our representatives at NCYC and look forward to becoming more involved with the NFCYM in promoting Catholic Scouting as a Youth Ministry.



**CATHOLIC
SCOUTING**

NCCS elections set for 2022 with February deadline for Silver St. George nominees

This year one third of the 15 regional chair and chaplain positions will be open for election. In addition, two of the five vice chair positions will be up for re-election, as well as the National Chair-elect. The NCCS region chairs and chaplains serve three-year terms while vice chairs serve two-year terms. The nominees for National Chair-elect are Bill Guglielmi and Kathy Polowski.

Regions 1, 5, 8, 10 and 11 will have elections for Chairman and regions 2, 3, 4, 7 and 13 will have elections for Chaplain. All voting members will receive a ballot to elect the Vice Chairs and National Chair-elect. The NCCS voting membership consists of all diocesan chairmen and chaplains, plus NCCS Executive Board and NCCS Advisory Board members. Ballots for the region positions will be sent to those voting members in the respective regions.

Contact information for current NCCS officeholders may be found at: <http://www.nccs-bsa.org/index.php/nccs-contacts>.

Nominations are being sought for the Silver St. George award. They are due to nccs@nccs-bsa.org by February 14, 2022. All nomination forms and eligibility requirements may be found here: <http://www.nccs-bsa.org/images/pdf/Silver-St--George-Nomination-Form-2018.pdf> or by calling 972-580-2114.



National Catholic Committee on Scouting



FROM THE CHAIR Jim Weiskircher

Looking back over the past several years, much of our efforts has been focused on starting new units and trying to meet new challenges created by National BSA. At times, we have failed to provide the tools for units and committees to promote Catholic Scouting as a Youth Ministry.

In 2020, we released the Guide to Catholic Scouting. This year, Rich Donovan from the Archdiocese of Newark, put together a Guidebook for Pastors, that can be easily modified for use by individual dioceses or archdioceses.

Early this year, the Executive Board approved a new marketing effort aimed at attracting families to Catholic Scouting. This effort is being led by our Marketing and PR committee with Jason Wolz and Father Roger Lopez, OFM at the helm. Our NCYC sponsorship has been coordinated by John and Julie Doerr. Rounding out the steering committee were John Anthony, Father Gerard Gentleman, Bill Guglielmi, and Father Mark Carr SJ. This group has worked tirelessly to reestablish Catholic Scouting as a viable form of youth ministry. Our agency, Saint Pio Media, has far exceeded our hopes and goals. I would like to thank each of them for their determination and drive to lead our efforts.

We have identified items to keep the momentum moving forward. In January, we will be making the pop-up displays available for units and committees to promote Catholic Scouting FAITH FAMILY ADVENTURE. The NCCS will be providing the displays at 50 percent of our costs to Catholic units and committees. We will continue to look for ways to promote Catholic Scouting through social media as well.

Please come to our biennial meeting in Chicago in April, 2022. We will look for building on the momentum that has been generated as title sponsor of NCYC and need your support to do that. We have reduced the cost of attending the meeting to make it affordable for all. With hotel rates skyrocketing across the country, the cost for a room is only \$119 in Chicago for a Hilton hotel. Please lock in your room quickly to guarantee this rate. I hope to see you there.

Yours in Catholic Scouting as a youth ministry,

Jim

47th Biennial Conference National Catholic Committee on Scouting

Join fellow Scout Chaplains, Scouters and spouses in Chicago, Illinois, for the 47th Biennial Conference of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting. Our last conference in Chicago (Schaumburg) was 16 years ago! The local archdiocesan committee of Chicago is very excited about being our host committee in 2022!

Chicago, Illinois

Thursday, April 21 – Sunday, April 24, 2022

Hilton Rosemont/Chicago O'Hare

Details at <http://www.nccs-bsa.org/index.php/biennial-meeting>

Emphasis needed to help ensure religious emblems bring Christ to Scouts

by
**John Savage, Chair
Emblems Committee**

The first point of the Scout Oath and the last point of the Scout Law are both about Duty to God. Yet few units encourage their Scouts to earn the religious emblem of their faith. As I write this I'm reflecting on our mission of bringing Christ to our Catholic youth and the part we play in making sure this happens.

One of the best tools we, as Catholic BSA leaders, have to further our mission is the NCCS Religious Emblems program. These are designed to be age appropriate and true to the teaching of the Church. But many leaders and Scouts don't even know they exist. For those reading this who may not be aware of the emblems program, let me list them here:

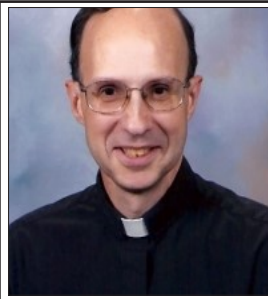
Light of Christ—for Tiger and Wolf Cub Scouts. This program is done in the family with the parents as leaders.

Parvuli Dei—for Bear, Webelos, and Arrow of Light Cub Scouts. This program is also done in the family with the parents as leaders.

Ad Altare Dei—for Scouts BSA, Venturers, and Sea Scouts in grade 7 and older. This program studies the 7 Sacraments. This is for Scouts of the Roman Rite. It requires a trained counselor.

Light is Life is the Eastern Rite emblem which is done instead of the Ad Altare Dei. Scouts interested in this emblem should contact the Region 15 chair or chaplain for more information.

Pope Pius XII—for Scouts BSA, Venturers, and Sea Scouts in grade 9 and older. The program looks at vocations, both to religious life and, in the broader sense, calls from God that cover marriage, forms of



The Chaplain's Corner

**Father Joe Powers
National Chaplain**

This is the time of year when many Catholic Committees and Youth Offices are planning recognition ceremonies for recipients of youth religious emblems. It is important that we also recognize adults as well. They do not have to be registered with BSA or be a Catholic. The main criteria are that they exemplify the ideals of Catholic Scouting with their gifts of talent and time. The diocesan Bronze Pelican and the national St. George Emblem can be awarded to deserving adults on any level of the Scouting program: Pack, Troop, Crew, or Ship.

A special "thank you" to everyone for the tremendous work in organizing NCCS's presence at this year's NCYC conference – especially John Doerr. It is more important than ever to promote Catholic Scouting and the positive impact it can – and does – have on our young people.

BSA plans to hold a National Jamboree in 2023 (July 19-28). Father Gerard has asked me to organize NCCS's presence. Our youth and adults will need the presence of Catholic priests for Mass, confessions, and counseling. Please pass the word to the priests you know to contact me if they are interested in serving.

May the blessings of Christ be with you and yours during this Advent and Christmas season.

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.

**NCCS National Chair
NCCS National Chaplain
Chair, Marketing and Public Relations
Advisor, Marketing and Public Relations
Editor
NCCS Webmaster**

**Jim Weiskircher
Father Joe Powers
Jason Wolz
Father Roger Lopez
Mike Gannon
Roselito de los Reyes**

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.

work and many other things that help achieve a Christian life. A trained facilitator, approved by the diocese, is required.

Let's encourage all our Scouts to earn their age-appropriate religious emblem. We help them grow in faith while we, as leaders, continue to Do Our Duty to God.

Remember, if you have trouble finding the workbooks in your local Scout Shop, they can be ordered directly from NCCS at <https://www.nccs-bsa.org/store/product-category/workbooks/>.

If you have questions about the programs feel free to contact me at NCCS-Emblems@comcast.net



Catholic Scouting highlighted at 2021 National Catholic Youth Conference

The 2021 National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) was an exciting, four-day experience of prayer, community, and empowerment for Catholic teenagers and their adult chaperones. The schedule included general and concurrent sessions addressing a wide variety of topics including forgiveness, Catholic spirituality and prayer, global issues, sexuality, and leadership. There were also opportunities for liturgy and special activities such as concerts, exhibits, and a thematic activity village. The National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM) sponsors NCYC and Catholic Scouting was the Title Sponsor for this year's event.





Bishop Daniel Conlon, our episcopal liaison, along with Fr. Gerard Gentleman, Fr. Mark Carr SJ, and Fr. Jason Adams shared the benefits of Catholic Scouting with bishops and pastors attending. Catholic Scouting sponsored the Friday evening Mass with Bishop Conlon and the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Christophe Pierre, concelebrating with our Associate National Chaplain Father Gerard delivering the homily. Christian worship artist, PJ Anderson, enhanced the Mass with his beautiful voice.



Did You Know...?

By Bob Oldowski

(NCCS Historian)

Way back in 1954, the NCCS began planning and developing a training program for Catholic lay leaders in the ideals of Scouting. At the 1960 biennial NCCS conference, a Scouter Development program was initiated. In 1965, the first edition of the Scouter Development Handbook was offered, and more than 3,300 copies were distributed. The course was offered to diocesan committees. An ideal course would be conducted over a weekend. The program took on a new emphasis in 1974 when the first Catholic Scouting course at Philmont took place. It was a key, multi-day topic. It brought out how leaders could share ideas with each other and in turn work with the young Scouts on their religious emblems. It also prepared them to return home and conduct the program in their own dioceses.

Over time the course was periodically revised and the name of this course changed. For a few years, it was known as “Scouter Development: Lay Apostolate Formation for Scouting”. Currently it is titled “**National Catholic Leadership Development**”. The NCCS Training Committee manages this program. It is currently integrated within the “Scouting in the Catholic Church” course held at Philmont.

It is also available to diocesan committees for their use. The Facilitator Manual is available at <https://www.nccs-bsa.org/index.php/diocesan-resources/national-catholic-leadership-development>. For more information, contact Chris Murray at chris.murray3@yahoo.com.

Training Committee outlines focus for upcoming year

by
Chris Murray

Training has been challenging during the Pandemic as with most other Scouting activities. On the unit level we have the e-Learning for the Chartered Organizational Representatives (COR's) which was not impacted and is an area of future potential. We had a successful class of fourteen for Scouting in the Catholic Church at Philmont. We are unsure of how many Diocesan/Regional sessions of National Catholic Leader development were delivered this year. The most dramatic success was having Scouting in the Local Church delivered virtually over nine days to 70 attendees. This is the largest participation that we have had for any program!

Reflecting on these activities last year and a half, we will focus our attention and time to the following levels of training:

e-Learning: individual, online, basic “fast start” training expanded from Chartered Organizational representatives to all unit and district leaders, parents, pastors and parish staff, Youth Ministers, Council staff, and Diocesan staff. Our hope is to create recognition for successful completion of these programs.

National Catholic Leadership Development (NCLD) – Encourage diocesan leaders to continue to deliver at the Diocesan level to all the above and promote it as an optional “basic” training. We will work to create recognition for successful completion of the program.

Scouting in local Church (SILC) delivered virtually by followed by a one day in person session at sites around the country as an optional “advanced” training.

Scouting in Catholic Church (SICC) delivered in person at Philmont by senior NCCS members to Regional and Diocesan CCOS leaders, Council Scout leaders and staff, as well as diocesan staff and youth ministers.



We need your help for the National Catholic Committee on Scouting to take the next steps in our Catholic Scouting Faith Family Adventure. campaign by contributing to our **2021 Annual Appeal**. More than ever, we need to promote the family values found in our two great traditions, the Catholic Church and Scouting. We can do so only with your support. To donate go to: <http://www.nccs-bsa.org/index.php/contribute> and click on the Donate button.

NCCS scholarship winners present positive image

by
Julie Doerr

Elaine Smith and Joseph Bowers, two of the 2021 Doerr Scholarship recipients, served as Youth Ambassadors for Catholic Scouting this year at the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) in Indianapolis. Along with Fr. Roger Lopez, OFM, they opened the event the first night on the main stage in front of 12,000 plus attendees and hosted the NCYC Pyramid Game the second night. Smith and Bowers also represented Catholic Scouting and NCCS in the live streaming portion of NCYC and at the Catholic Scouting booth. These two young, energetic Eagle Scout Scholarship recipients presented a positive message to everyone about the importance of Catholic Scouting as Youth Ministry and the difference it has made in their lives.

Now it's your turn to make a difference! We need your assistance to identify qualified scholarship applicants and encourage them to apply. Please remind applicants that NCCS is awarding nine scholarships totaling \$25,000 in 2022 and the application deadline is March 1st. In addition to the seven Doerr Scholarships totaling \$20,000, the \$2,000 Bill and Kay Davies Scholarship and the \$3,000 Frank Parater Scholarship have been added. Applicants only need to fill out one application to be considered for all scholarships. Please encourage younger Scouts to work toward earning the Religious Emblems, the Eagle Scout, Summit or Quartermaster Awards and providing service to their church, community, school and Scouts to become qualified to apply for the scholarships. Complete eligibility requirements and the 2022 application are available on <http://www.nccs-bsa.org/index.php/college-scholarship>



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

Advent is a time of waiting for Christ's birth. Catholics can enter into this season through many means, including adding different figures of their nativity scenes to the stable at different times, such as the Christ child on December 25 and the Magi on January 6. This is done to remind us that we celebrate major events on certain dates that Jesus entered into our sense of time.

Let this serve as a calendar of various vocational events that you can keep in your prayers in a special way:

February 2: World Day of Consecrated Life.
February 13: World Marriage Day
March 8-14: National Catholic Sisters' Week
May 1: Religious Brothers' Day
September 25: Priesthood Sunday

Your parish or (arch)diocese/eparchy already may be planning an event for these days. See how you can get involved. Perhaps your units can set up tables. If you learn that your parish has no plans to celebrate these, encourage at least a prayer for vocations in the respective group on these days in the universal prayers (i.e., prayers of the faithful) on the nearest Sunday.



Brother Barnabas Award presented to Past National Chair George Sparks

On November 24th, George Sparks, past National Chair was presented with the Brother Barnabas Award at a Zoom presentation with members of the executive board in attendance.

The Brother Barnabas Founders Award is a special NCCS recognition for long and meritorious service and is presented to those individuals who have significantly affected the course of Catholic Scouting.

Brother Barnabas, F.S.C., a brother of the Christian Schools, was involved with youth work in the New York City area for his entire life. He was a driving force in the early years of Catholic Youth ministry, founding one of the earliest Catholic Troops at St. Patrick's Cathedral in 1912. He wrote an original plan of organization in 1926 and is credited with creating the formal association between the Catholic bishops of the United States and the Boy Scouts of America. The National Catholic Committee on Scouting is a product and now the steward of this relationship.



From left to right granddaughter Elle, Son George, Jr., daughter Sarah and wife Sue.