



## NCCS Biennial Meeting Hailed as Highly Successful

The Biennial Conference held in April in Dallas, Texas, was very successful. Thanks to Father Randy Cuevas, Kay Davies and their Conference Committee for a job well done and a special thank you to the Diocesan Catholic Committees of the Dioceses of Dallas and Fort Worth for their outstanding assistance and support. The next Annual Conference will be in St. Louis, Missouri from April 11 – 14, 2013.

One of the key items discussed at this meeting focused on the recent criticisms of the Girl Scout and the ongoing concerns over their alleged stance on women's issues. Chairman John Halloran asked the membership to refrain from making rash decisions in regards to this issue and to consult with the NCCS leadership on any issues concerning the Girl Scouts USA. He stated that unless otherwise directed, the Catholic Girl Scouts remain part of the Diocesan Committees and are to be included in all Diocesan activities and events. All issues concerning the Girl Scouts USA are being handled by the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM), as they have been tasked to evaluate all these issues as they arise.

Plans for next year's St. George Trek at Philmont continue at full strength and Father Gerard Gentleman and Chris Manning have been working hard to prepare for the biennial Trek which will be from July 12 – 23, 2013. The local diocesan committees are being urged to help find

outstanding young men and women to attend. Because of internal issues within the Order of St. George, it looks like we will not be able to depend on their financial help and support as in past St. George Treks. Their past efforts are greatly appreciated and will be missed. See the NCCS website for details on the registration procedures.

The National BSA Scout Jamboree will be held at the new site – The Summit in West Virginia from July 15 – 24, 2013. If you are interested in being a lay staff member for the Jamboree or know someone who would make a good lay staff member, please contact Ed Martin. Thanks to Susan Barriball for being the NCCS representative to the one day Religious Relationships Task Force gathering held at the Summit.

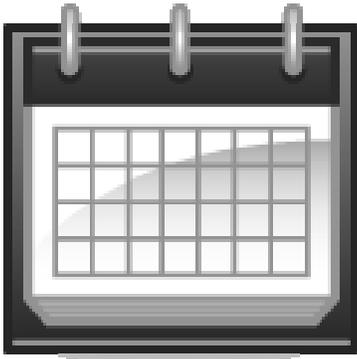


She brought back a wealth of information to allow us to start our planning process.

Both the St. George Trek and the Jamboree will require a number of Clergy to fill the required positions. If you are interested in or know someone who would be interested in staffing the St. George Trek, please contact Father Gerard Gentleman, and for the Jamboree contact Father Michael Hanifin. Most important, all NCCS members are urged to help in spreading the word and encouraging attendance for both these major activities.

Losses in both number of units and in Scout membership in Catholic sponsored units continue to be of concern. George Sparks, the Membership Chair, and his team have been working hard to overcome this trend. Bishop James Tamayo, Bishop of Laredo, Texas, who recently joined our Executive Board, will be attending the Hispanic Woodbadge Course at Philmont the week prior to our Philmont Course. The contacts he will make by his presence will go a long way in helping us with our Hispanic Initiative program. However, these few folks can't do it alone. Chairman Halloran has stated, "The success or failure of our recruiting efforts rests in your hands, directly and indirectly. We need you to be actively involved with your respective Diocesan Committees and strongly encourage them to add new units and membership and to promote Catholic Scouting at every opportunity"





## Did You Know . . . ?

By Bob Oldowski

Catholic BSA members have the opportunity of complementing their Scouting programs with the religious emblem programs available from NCCS. But what about youths who are not BSA members?

A similar series of emblems is available through the NFCYM (National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry), specifically from the NCCGSCF committee (National Catholic Committee for Girls Scouts and Camp Fire). These are the *Family of God*, *I Live My Faith*, *Mary the First Disciple (Marian Award)*, and *The Spirit Alive*.

Totally independent of the NCCS series, these address four similar age groups, and are administered through the diocesan youth ministry offices.

These religious recognition programs may be utilized by members of various groups, such as Girl Scouts, Camp Fire, American Heritage Girls and others. In addition, there are two adult recognitions available, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and St. Anne.

More information is available at [www.nccgscf.org/programs/index.htm](http://www.nccgscf.org/programs/index.htm).

### UPCOMING EVENTS

*ICCS III Ecumenical Encounter*  
*Assisi, Italy*  
*October 18-21 2012*

*NCCS Annual Meeting*  
*St. Louis, Missouri*  
*April 11- 14, 2013*

*St. George Trek*  
*Philmont*  
*July 12-23, 2013*

We were all saddened to learn that one of our dedicated Catholic Scouters passed away last Good Friday. Joseph Wagner was a very active and productive Region Three chairman and shortly before his death hosted a Regional Training Conference. We would like to see Joseph's name added to our Philmont Memorial Plaque, so if you are able to make a donation in his name please send it to Nancy Watts at the National office and put his name in the memo section. Please keep Joseph and his family in your thoughts and prayers.



2012 Priesthood Sunday provides a great opportunity to have the Scouts in Catholic Units prepare a personalized card for the clergy who are in their parish, the Catholic Committee on Scouting Chaplain and their local Bishop.

Last year many Scouts and Scouters sent appreciation cards to priests who have previously served in their parish and other priests who have been especially close to their family in times of joy or of comfort in times of sorrow. Now is the time to begin planning to be sure each priest knows he is appreciated.

Unit leaders are encouraged to help their parish plan a celebration to honor priesthood in the Church. Consider planning a meeting with parish leaders to work together to build a more positive culture for Church vocations in your parish. The link below will take you to the wonderful site and give additional links to appreciation cards that Scouts and Scouters can download, personalize and print for their Packs, Troops and Venturing units to use in honoring their pastors, Scout Chaplains and Bishop.

To learn more about activities and celebrations for the occasion go to the NCCS Webpage-Priesthood Sunday: <http://www.nccs-bsa.org/ScoutUnits/PriesthoodSunday.php> or <http://www.priestsunday.org/celebration.html> (The 2012 Priesthood Sunday Website will be updated during August.) Or, you can request templates for cards at 816-356-1760 or [serrasekc@comcast.net](mailto:serrasekc@comcast.net).

For the latest information go to the  
NCCS Website [http://www.nccs-  
bsa.org/](http://www.nccs-bsa.org/)

# A Gift from the Carpenter's Son—A Scout's Tribute to his God

By **DAVE BOROWSKI**  
Catholic Herald Staff Writer

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**Catholic Herald**  
(Diocese of Arlington, Virginia)

“He doesn't do anything little,” Janine Tollis said of her son, Eric, as she walked along a path of crushed stone proudly pointing to each of the 14 Stations of the Cross he planned and helped build at the San Damiano Retreat Center in White Post, Va.



She said that could apply to Eric's father, Joe, too. Joe, a carpenter and musician, helped Eric build the stations.

Eric, a sophomore at James Wood High School in Winchester, said the idea began as an Eagle Scout project.

Local Eagle Scouts love helping out at San Damiano. The retreat center is just 2 years old, but Administrative Director John Campbell said a fifth Eagle project is in the works. Eagle Scout Michael Davis, a sophomore at John Handley High School in Winchester, just completed a rosary walk. Paving stones represent the beads of the rosary culminating with a cross of stones. It surrounds a grotto of flowers, a statue of the Blessed Mother, and benches for sitting and praying.

There are 1,080 bricks lining the 250-foot path that leads from the entrance with a statue of Christ praying in the garden of Gethsemane to a resurrection garden where a statue of the risen Christ stands engraved with the words of John, “I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

And whoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.”

But Eric's stations are impressive based on sheer numbers. More than 500 man-hours went into the project and Eric said that one day 23 people, working with wheel barrows and a bulldozer, labored to finish the project, which was completed two weeks ago.

Thirty tons of donated crushed stone were hauled to the site in three dump trucks, most of it used to line the path from the entrance to the resurrection garden. Each station has a weatherproof depiction of Christ's suffering mounted on pressure-treated lumber sunk into the earth with its base circled in stone.

The path is lined with trees that cover the walk in somber shadow until you come to the garden bathed in sunlight on the triumphant Christ.

It was the planning area where Eric excelled.

The stations are on a site that included a worn access road to the back of the San Damiano property. It was a dirt road deeply rutted by years of wheel traffic.

“When I saw the (access road) I knew I wanted to do it,” said Eric.

His mother said that he has a good eye.

“He has a way of seeing things before they're finished — like his father,” said Janine.

He estimated the total cost of the project then invited local businesses and individuals to sponsor a station. Eric figured that \$400 a station would cover expenses. That and individual donations pushed the total to more than \$7,000 and left a reserve of about \$1,000. Eric said he's going to use the surplus to help maintain the stations.

Joe is fighting a serious illness and Eric dedicated the project to him.

“I did it to honor my father,” he said.

Joe helped all the way through, giving his son pointers on how to lay the stones around the statue of Christ and how to set them in mortar.

“It's amazing,” Joe said. “I'm very proud of him.”

The 11th station — Jesus is nailed to the cross — is dedicated to Joe. Eric picked that one because his dad is a carpenter, like Jesus, and because of his painful battle with illness.

Another station was sponsored by the band that Joe plays in. The inscription on a plaque at the foot of the station is from a song that Joe wrote.

“By your blood and by your cross, you saved me from my sin when I was lost.”



# Scouting Around the Dioceses



Boy Scouts from all over San Diego County gathered at the Prince of Peace Abbey in Oceanside to attend Mass and then hear from Abbot Wright who gave the Scouts insight into the daily life of the religious at the Abbey, and their life of prayer and work. The Scouts particularly enjoyed Abbot Wright's sense of humor and the opportunity to walk and pray the Stations of the Cross, visit the garden, and experience a quick lesson on the science of beekeeping, from Brother Blaise .



Connecticut's Yankee Council hosted Connjam, a council wide camporee and Scout Show. Monsignor Richard Shea of St. Catherine of Siena Parish Trumbull Conn. celebrated Mass for approximately 400 Scouts & Scouters.



Monsignor Elvin Sunds, Vicar General and Diocesan Scout Chaplain for the Jackson, Miss. Diocese, shares his experiences as a priest and his discernment to enter religious life when he was a teen to Camporee attendees. Monsignor Sunds is an Eagle Scout.



On Sunday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, during the heart of the Lenten season, 162 elated Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Venturers gathered at Good Shepherd parish in Colleyville, Texas to receive their religious emblems award. The afternoon ceremony was led by Bishop Kenneth W. Vann of the Diocese of Fort Worth, who congratulated the Scouts on completing months of hard work, Christ-like service, and contemplative prayer. The Bishop offered the youth words of support and encouragement in the continued deepening and exploration of their faith, before bestowing the Lord's abundant blessings upon them and their smiling families.

# Vocations: Scouting... for God and for the Church

**By Christopher Kerzich,**

*Kerzich, an intern at Word on Fire and a Seminarian at Mundelein Seminary in Chicago, writes about his experience as an Eagle Scout in Boy Scouts of America. Read about how Chris' involvement in the organization influenced his decision to pursue the priesthood.*

*This article is from the Word on Fire Blog edited by Father Robert Barron.*

Many Catholics in America speak of a “vocations crisis,” or the decline in men seeking to become Catholic priests. Recently, Catholics have observed a spike in vocations wherein many talented men are beginning seminary studies. This has resulted in many seminarians throughout the country finding their communities full. Admittedly, there are many factors that affect this increase in vocations, but a significant percentage of the men ordained priests today are the fruit of one American institution, the Boy Scouts of America.

I first came to this realization when speaking to my fellow seminarians at Mundelein Seminary where many of my classmates are Eagle Scouts. As an Eagle Scout and former National Youth President of the Boy Scouts of America I admit some might question this observation, but it has been confirmed by the Center for the Applied Research in the Apostolate’s annual Survey of Ordinands to the Priesthood.

According to the survey, participation in the Boy Scouts of America by those men ordained priests has been a consistent phenomenon over the five years. Among the priests ordained in 2011, 30% or “three in ten participated in the Boy Scouts or Eagle Scouts.” In the 2010 and 2011 studies, CARA combined the groups “Boy Scouts/Eagle Scouts” in to one category. Previously, the group “Eagle Scouts” was polled separately from another group titled “Boy Scouts.”

Interestingly, those studies with the “Eagle Scout” group (2006-2009) show

on average 6% of newly ordained diocesan and religious priests climbed to Scouting’s highest rank. During the period 2006-2011, the CARA study states 30.16% of new priests were involved in Boy Scouting, but I suspect this percentage is actually higher.

The newly ordained priests highlight their involvement in Boy Scouting in a section titled, “Participation in Parish Programs or Activities.” CARA groups the “Boy Scout/Eagle Scout” group with a variety of other parish organizations including “parish youth group,” “community service,” “Knights of Columbus,” and “Catholic Campus Ministry/Newman Center.” The problem with placing the “Boy Scout/Eagle Scout” group with these other common venues of parish life is there are many Scouting units not affiliated with the Catholic Church.

For example, my Boy Scout Troop was associated with a local park district and my Sea Scout Ship was associated with a local Methodist Church. Seminarians involved in Scouting outside of the context of his parish might find this aspect of the study confusing. Therefore, I suspect the percentage of ordinands who were involved in Boy Scouting might actually be higher. What is it about the Scouting program that many of the newly ordained priests have at one time in their life been among its ranks? From my experience there seems to be three reasons for these men seeking to serve Holy Mother Church as a priest.

First, the Scouting program develops youth leaders through the ethos of “Doing a Good Turn Daily,” and in doing so, its participants become servant leaders. A Scout is instilled with the habit of serving others which eventually becomes a key aspect of his life. Many former scouts seek careers that embody serving. Therefore from the Scouting

ethos of service one can see a young man would naturally be attracted to the servant leadership embodied in the priestly vocation.

Second, Scouts embrace the connection between an internal reality being developed by external sign. Boy Scouts wear a uniform (external sign) and in doing so bear the responsibility of being called to a higher standard of conduct and stronger character (internal reality). This reality becomes ingrained in the Scout, so much so that it eventually exists with and without the uniform. Since a similar reality exists in the Catholic priest it is logical that a Scout would be drawn to this ministry.

Third, the twelfth point of the Scout Law calls a Scout to be “reverent toward God.” The program not only calls one to be a man of character but also “faithful to his religious duties.” Scouts are encouraged to dive into their faith communities and are supported by national religious committees. For Catholics, this is the National Catholic Committee on Scouting which encourages Catholic Scouts to learn more about the faith through a variety of programs. Therefore, one’s faith can be significantly developed by involvement in the Scouting program.

In the final analysis, one can see that the Catholic Church benefits greatly from the alumni of the Boy Scouts of America. Therefore, one should look to those young men involved in Boy Scouting today and encourage them to explore the possibility of becoming Priests of Jesus Christ. This could be one way to sustain the current rise in men training to become priests.

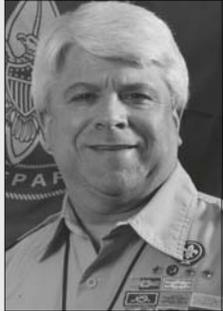
**Interview with Ed Martin, Chair-elect** Ed Martin was recently elected to be our next National Chairman, a role he will assume in April 2013. He agreed to respond to a few questions.

**How do you feel about being Chair-elect?**

I am honored to have been elected by so many dedicated Catholic Scouters and chaplains. I am humbled knowing I follow in the footsteps of so many accomplished leaders. I am anxiously looking forward to doing my best to lead the organization in continuing to fulfill its mission of promoting Scouting as Catholic youth ministry.

**What does a Chair-elect do?**

I will be working closely with National Chairman John Halloran to effect a smooth transition as he completes his last year in office and do tasks as assigned. I am continuing to serve as the Vice Chair-Finance but will be identifying someone to succeed me. I am working with Fr. Mike Hanifin and the Executive Board to develop a strategic plan that will guide us for the next 3-5 years. I am seeking out individuals who will lead us in fulfilling the strategic plan.



**What does your family think of your election?**

They are supportive. I met my wife, Stevie, after I had become an active member of the NCCS. She likes to tell people that, when we first met and she learned of my involvement with Scouting as a single, she thought I had to be either very nerdy or a “keeper”. She discovered I was both! My younger daughter works as a Boy Scout camp counselor and enjoys telling other Scouts and Scouters about my involvement with the NCCS.

**Why are you so involved with Scouting and the NCCS in particular?**

I am an Eagle Scout who benefited from the commitment of other Scouters and, in particular, my own father, who became my Scoutmaster shortly after I joined a troop. While in college, I was persuaded by a former Scoutmaster to become a religious emblems counselor. A few years later, during a Scout Sunday Mass, I heard the Scripture in which Isaiah hears the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?” Here I am”, Isaiah said, “send me!” I took that as a sign that God was calling me to make Scouting my personal ministry. Participating in Scouting, attending a high school seminary and having the support of my parents were keys to my formation. The NCCS allows me to use my knowledge of Scouting and my devotion to my faith as no other ministry can. Working with so many good priests and being able to visit different parts of the country certainly helps too.

**What do you do in your free time?**

My family keeps me busy. I have 4 grown children, one still at home and one starting college. I also have one in second grade, Hayden. I’m his den leader. I promote Scouting’s religious emphasis in my district, volunteer in my parish and with the local Knights of Columbus council. I also read quite a bit. I meditate on the Scriptures for the day. I usually have several books waiting to be read but I’m currently reading *The Book of Man* by William J. Bennett.

## It’s not too late to volunteer for the 2013 NCCS National Jamboree

Imagine 50,000 Scouts, Venturers, volunteers, and Scouting staff from all over the country, all gathered together for one big celebration of Scouting. Held once every four years, the national jamboree is a chance to camp out with friends, meet new friends, try high-adventure activities, learn new skills, and enjoy the outdoors.

2013 will be the first year this 10-day summer event will be held at the Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve in southern West Virginia. The NCCS will be there with priests serving as chaplains and with an

exhibit—as in years past—to let Scouts and Scouters alike know that the Catholic Church supports their participation and offers activities, programs, training, and recognition to enhance their Scouting experience.

Volunteers to staff the exhibit are being sought. You don’t need to stay the whole 10 days. Time will be scheduled to allow you to experience the rest of the Jamboree. You must be in good health and there is a fee. To learn more about the event, you can visit the website at <https://summit.scouting.org/>. If you are

interested in participating, you may contact Ed Martin at [martinedp@hotmail.com](mailto:martinedp@hotmail.com).





Bishop Robert Guglielmo, Bishop Liaison to the NCCS is shown with 27 of the 38 seminarian Eagle Scouts at the North American College in Rome . With the Bishop is Deacon Jason Adams of the Diocese of Savannah, Georgia who was ordained to the priesthood In June.

### **A Scout's Oath: Duty Bound to Fly**

Written by Eagle Scout Zachary T. Martin  
Troop 97 in Huntersville, North Carolina

In the Scout Oath there are three key points: duty to God, duty to country, and duty to self. Your Eagle Scout Project should be based on all three points. My Eagle Scout Project was to make a permanent Stations of the Cross pathway and refurbish the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes at Belmont Abbey College, into these three pieces.

Duty to God first is why I did my project at Belmont Abbey College in Belmont, North Carolina. While the project benefits the college and its students, I did not do my project specifically for the college. I did it for the Benedictine Monks that pray and work at the Abbey their entire lives. They give their lives to know, love, and serve God like we are all called to do.

The next part of the Scout Oath is duty to country. We are blessed to live in the United States of America. Completing projects that make our part of the world a better place to live is our duty as Americans. My Eagle Scout Project is located in the very center of the Belmont Abbey Campus between the monastery grounds and the college. The area is constantly traversed by monks, students, teachers, and visitors to the area. However, many people were unaware of the Stations of the Cross path because it was a dirt path with no markings by the walkway. It was a great honor for me to gather the scouts and leaders of my troop together to pray and work each day. A men's rosary group meets there every Monday night to pray for their future vocation, be it to the priesthood, singlehood, or marriage. I have been told that some young men even propose to their future wives at this grotto.

The final key point is duty to self. Keeping self last makes us humble. It is important for all of us to remember how much God has given us. We would not even exist if God had not created us. While I felt a sense of accomplishment when I completed the project, I know the work was for the glory of God, not for me. I challenge you, as you are choosing your Eagle Scout project to remember how blessed we are to be Catholic and think about how you can give something back to God, who has given you so much. Good luck, and may God help you to earn this lofty rank and fly like an Eagle.

