



DIocese OF FORT WORTH
THE BISHOP'S OFFICE



MEMORANDUM

To: All Pastors, Parochial Vicars and Pastoral Administrators
From: Bishop Olson
Date: October 10, 2018
Re: Scouting in the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth

The Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth has historically had an extensive and strong association with the councils of the Boy Scouts of America. As your Bishop, I support youth programs within the diocese that firmly and faithfully reflect Catholic doctrine and morals, which are critically important. The decision whether to charter any youth program – whether it is the Troops of St. George, American Heritage Girls, the Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts, Trail Life USA or Camp Fire – rests within the prudential judgment of the parish pastor, but must meet the following requirements and standards:

Catholic scouting must be understood to be a subordinate part of Catholic youth ministry; therefore, units chartered by parishes and Catholic schools within the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth must be based on a curriculum, pedagogical structure and a statement of mission that faithfully reflects and adheres to the teachings and mission of the Catholic Church. Pastors must, therefore, be actively engaged in the selection of adult leaders and volunteers in their units. In the Diocese of Fort Worth, Catholic scout units are not external organizations with facility-use agreements, such as AA, weight watchers, ESL courses, etc. It is the Pastor's responsibility to govern the unit well, both directly and/or by delegation, just as it is for any other parish organization and outreach activity under his pastoral care and governance.

Catholic identity should be the heart of the unit's culture. This includes unit meetings, courts of honor, boards of review, camp outs, service projects, etc. Catholics should lead the unit in prayer; units must participate in Sunday Mass in uniform as a regular part of their weekend campouts and activities. While non-Catholic youth may be members, they must cooperate, and not engage in any actions or behaviors inconsistent with Catholic teachings. Cub Scout and Boy Scout units are for males only.

Only Catholic adults in good standing may volunteer. All volunteers must meet the five mandatory safe environment steps (<https://fwdioc.org/requirements>) prior to serving, which includes successful completion of diocesan Safe Environment training and certification in addition to the applicable scouting program. In addition, all volunteer leaders must receive catechetical training from the diocese. It is the pastor's responsibility, with the assistance of the Department of Catechesis of the Diocese of Fort Worth, to assure compliance. The criteria which I laid out at the Spring Presbyteral Assembly of this year, and again summarized in our recent Fall Presbyteral Assembly, must be adhered to and be in place prior to any agreement or contract signed by the pastor.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

+ Michael F. Olson

Most Rev. Michael F. Olson
Bishop of Fort Worth

THE CATHOLIC CENTER