



ORGANIZING NEW UNITS IN CATHOLIC PARISHES



THE CHARTERED ORGANIZATION CONCEPT

MISSION STATEMENT: “It is the mission of the Boy Scouts of America to serve others by helping to instill values in young people and in other ways prepare them to make ethical choices over their lifetime in achieving their full potential. The values we strive to instill are based on those found in the Boy Scout Oath and Law.”

From a marketing standpoint, the Boy Scouts of America has a product to offer – a program (Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Venturing) and service to back up this program. Our customers are the organizations that use the Scouting program to reinforce or expand the outreach of their own youth programs and objectives. Our consumers are the youth members and families who benefit from our customers’ Scouting programs.

Therefore, it is important to recognize that, in order to be highly successful we must search out and accomplish the objectives – not only of the BSA, but of our chartered organizations. Then, and only then, will we succeed.

When approaching a parish or other Catholic organization keep, in mind the following youth objectives of the church:

- To provide a Christian forum for youth.
- To provide an opportunity for youths to engage in action projects that exemplify what it means to be a Christian in the world today.

Examples include, the informal Christian education of youth (knowledge of the religious emblems program can be helpful here) and the opportunity to engage in community and parish service. Try to determine what the particular emphasis is in the parish or organization you are visiting. We exist to serve their needs.

The basic philosophy that we are in business to serve our chartered organizations can be the key to successful salesmanship. Remember that **it is the church or organization that provides Scouting for its youth members and families. It is their unit.** It is our job to make this relationship fun and productive.

THE PLAN OF ACTION

The most important step you can take is to initiate the active involvement of the diocesan Catholic committee at diocese and council levels in all phases of this plan of action.

1. If required, a professional adviser, in cooperation with key Catholic committee members, can develop a list of potential parishes that do not already charter units, but might, if properly approached.
2. Councils within the diocese are to check this list for further refinement; i.e., need unit in area, good potential, type of unit to organize, etc.
3. A professional adviser can discuss this project with key Catholic committee members and the appropriate Scout executive to secure their support and cooperation.
4. Prior to initial visits, a Catholic relationships executive can assist local councils in recruiting and training visitation/organization teams.
5. A committee (may consist of the professional adviser, diocesan chaplain, and lay chairman) secures an appointment with the bishop of the diocese and discusses the project with him. Obtain his cooperation and commitment to send letters to the pastors of the potential parishes targeted in step 1.
6. After letters have been sent, the councils concerned follow up with visits to designated parishes. Discuss chartering and follow through with recommended organizational procedure, if response is favorable.
7. Each council is to commence a program of visitation, cultivation, and organization based on priorities, developed above. If a particular visit is not fruitful, ask to come back in about 6 months for further discussion.
8. Maintain frequent communications with newly organized units for a minimum of 6 months.

SAMPLE BISHOP'S LETTER

Dear Father _____

I would like to share with you three most informative pieces of literature concerning an important segment of Catholic youth work. These three pieces – *Scouting as Youth Ministry*, *Your Parish Can Serve*, and *Religious Emblems for Catholics* – should take very little of your time to read and could be the catalyst, and serve as a valuable tool, to expand your parish youth program.

I am interested in the Scouting program as a current, viable and useful means of serving our youth, and this I feel that I should rightly lend my assistance in its greater development within selected, parishes of our diocese.

The ideals and values stressed in Scouting are the Christian foundations desperately needed by modern youth responsibility to God, to family, to neighbor, and to the civic community. Its religious, career, and educational aspects, along with a strong commitment to form a Christian conscience in youth, are important elements of the program. It is also an effective force in developing sound adult Christian leadership through the Scouter Development Program of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting.

May I ask that you and a few of your key lay persons carefully review this material and consider the feasibility of establishing Scouting in your parish if you do not already fully support the program.

Members of the Catholic Committee on Scouting will contact you soon regarding this matter. Consider and be prepared to discuss further aspects of the program. Please give them your fullest cooperation.

Assuring you of my grateful appreciation of your anticipated cooperation on behalf of our diocesan Scouting program, I remain,

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Most Reverend _____

Bishop of _____

VISITATION GUIDE

-Things to do-

The local council and the membership committee of the diocesan Catholic committee on Scouting have joint responsibility to contact each designated Catholic organization within the council as a follow-up to the bishop letter. Suggested details follow:

1. Organize a visitation team that will include the following persons:

- Member of Catholic committee and a key Scouter (organizer)-could be the same individual
- District Scout executive

- Scout chaplain (in cases that would warrant his presence)
2. Make an appointment. Phone the pastor/organization head for a definite appointment; explain your visit as a follow-up to the bishop's letter.
3. Things to cover during visit:
- Amplify purpose of visit
 - Explain the diocesan Scouting program.
 - Discuss the relationship in Scouting.
 - Explain support given by the local council service center and the diocesan Catholic committee.
 - Discuss type(s) of Scouting unit(s) the parish/organization could support and answer other related questions.
 - Secure pastor's/organization head's support and cooperation in establishing Scouting in his parish/organization.
 - Discuss the function and purpose of an organizing committee.
 - Ask pastor/organization head to appoint an organizing committee and set a date for first meeting of this committee
 - Stress importance of pastor/organization head attending this first meeting.
 - Offer guidance in the selection of this committees membership.
 - Cover responsibilities of the chartered organization representative. See BSA publication, No. 6527A and No. 3117A, for this volunteer leadership position description.

Note: At the outset, be sure that the pastor/organization head understands that we are not asking him to personally organize Scouting or even get involved with the "nuts and bolts" of the program. What we are asking him for is his full support and cooperation in getting the program going. We will work with the people he designates or approves.

4. Be familiar with the following "door-opening" resources:

VIDEO: *Scouting in the Catholic Church*, No. 16-441

Scouting as Youth Ministry, No. 16-440

Your Parish Can Serve, No. 16-429

Religious Emblems for Catholics, No. 16-436

Vocational Promotion Through Scouting Youth Ministry, No. 16-149

A Strong Link-A Producing Partnership No. 3-188 (Knights of Columbus pamphlet)