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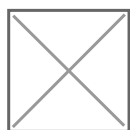


A Scout is pictured in a file photo receiving Communion during Mass while participating in Cub Scout Fun and Faith Day at St. Patrick Church in Smithtown, N.Y. (OSV News/Long Island Catholic/Gregory A. Shemitz)



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In June, the National Catholic Committee on Scouting announced it has a new name: Catholic Scouting America. While the original name will remain the same for legal purposes, the new public name is meant to both clarify and strengthen the organization's 100-plus-year commitment to faith, family and adventure through the values-based lessons of Scouting — all grounded in the Catholic faith.

Catholic Scouting America is a partner with Scouting America — known as Boy Scouts of America until May 2024 — so boys and girls in Catholic Scouting have access to the activities, programs, and resources that have shaped generations of American Scouts.

As of 2024, there were 130,888 active Catholic Scouts and leaders in 194 U.S. dioceses and eparchies with a Catholic Committee on Scouting, and Catholic Scouting service projects provided an estimated value of \$52 million in aid.

Scouts — whether Catholic or not — have the opportunity to engage in a number of religious activities, and earn several religious emblems. In 2024, 4,575 religious emblems were awarded, including Light of Christ and Parvuli Dei for Cub Scouts, and Ad Altare Dei (for Roman Catholic Scouts), Light is Life (for Eastern rite Catholic Scouts), and Pope Pius XII.

OSV News spoke with Catholic Scouting America's national chairman, Bill Guglielmi, to learn more about the fresh identity and the lasting value of Scouting membership.

OSV News: Could you tell our readers about the recent name change?

Guglielmi: We changed our "doing business name" to Catholic Scouting America because we have found through research that the National Catholic Committee on Scouting name is unclear.

When parents look up the National Catholic Committee on Scouting, a lot of times they are sent to our website that is designed just for our members — and they get confused. "What are you really doing? What is your mission?"

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So, in order to make it more friendly to people who don't know us well, we figured Catholic Scouting America aligns well with the Boy Scouts of America's change to Scouting America. It aligns more with what our mission is, and tells people what we really do.

And it ends confusion — because when I go to see people and talk to people who are not totally familiar with Catholic Scouting, they ask me, 'Do you do Girl Scouts, or do you do these other organizations?' And I say, 'No, we are chartered by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to deal with Scouting America.'"

The Catholic Church and its affiliates are the number one charter partner of Scouting America — in terms of members and in terms of charter units.

How does Catholic Scouting America interact with Scouting America?

We are advisers to Scouting America. I sit on the international and the national Religious Relationships Committee. Any decision or any discussion of duty to God or reverence in a Scout Oath or in Scout Law, our advisory bureau to Scouting America

takes part in — so we keep them on target there.

Can Catholic Scouting be a form of evangelization?

Oh, yes! We're doing that across the board right now, in many dioceses and in cooperation with other agencies within the Church.

In the month of July, we have created a novena to Our Lady of Guadalupe — to ask her guidance and her support of the nation, and the Americas in general. And right now, we have over 35,000 Catholic Scouts and Scout leaders participating in the novena.

We know it's over 35,000 because we've had requests for the prayer cards that we printed, and we're giving them away for free. It's a simple prayer, which was written by our national chaplain.

Why should a boy or girl join Catholic Scouting America?

As a long-time Scout leader, first, I would say that American youth today are yearning for something — and American parents are yearning for something — that is not tied to the internet; not tied to social media; that has an outdoor component; that is led by people who are dedicated, who are vetted, and who have undergone the necessary background checks.

It allows those kids to learn about themselves by doing things, not just looking at a screen — and it focuses on Catholicism as part of the Scouting experience.

One of the tenets of Scouting is that it is youth led — not guided. And Scouting teaches kids to exercise leadership. We listen to them as Scout leaders. We teach them leadership — and then we send them out to do the leadership. So that ties right in with Catholic Scouting.

In the (Georgetown University) Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate report "The Class of 2026: Survey of Ordinands to the Priesthood," 31% of all those ordinands had a Scouting experience. And 34% of the religious ones had a Scouting experience, and 32% of the diocesan priests had a Scouting experience.

That is a data point we are very interested in keeping — it ties with the mission of Catholic Scouting America to assist kids to discern their vocation.