



DIOCESE OF LANSING
M I C H I G A N

To: Pastors, Business Managers, and Parish Youth Discipleship

In recent years, the Boy Scouts of America have made several changes to their governing documents. In particular, the bylaws no longer explicitly protect a church's right to withhold membership from youth members whose personal beliefs are in conflict with the chartered organization's religious principles. Additionally, the recent adoption of the "Citizenship in Society" merit badge has created a further conflict. This required merit badge for Eagle Scouts is an exploration of "diversity, equity, and inclusion" topics; its regular references to celebrating "individuality" and different "identities" contradict Catholic teaching on human sexuality.

At the same time, with the Boy Scouts of America still resolving their bankruptcy over allegations of sexual abuse, and questions raised regarding the extent of insurance protections for chartered organizations, dioceses around the country are rethinking their affiliation with the Boy Scouts. Some have chosen to adopt facilities-use agreements with local Boy Scout troops, whereby the troop has no formal relationship with the parish and simply uses the parish facilities. Unfortunately, this option gives the parish no control over the troops, and we cannot recommend it. Maintaining a chartered troop with the parish is also not without legal risk, given the shifting insurance coverages following the bankruptcy. Some Dioceses have also chosen to disassociate from the Boy Scouts.

Given these legal issues concerning liability protection following the Boy Scouts' bankruptcy and the shifting moral values of the Boy Scouts of America, the Diocese of Lansing now recommends that parishes disassociate with the Boy Scouts. We realize that some parishes have longstanding relationships with the Boy Scouts and so, through prayerful discernment may wish to renew their charters until they can find a suitable scouting alternative. Pastors and their parishes who wish to continue chartering with the Boy Scouts do so at their own risk.

Given that other scouting organizations, such as the Girls Scouts and perhaps others, have also begun promoting ideologies contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church, pastors are also encouraged to reconsider any relationship with them.

Per recommendation from the National Catholic Committee on Scouting, the Diocese of Lansing will retain its Committee on Catholic Scouting to serve as a resource for those remaining parish Boy Scout Troops and troops and Catholic individuals in troops independent of our Catholic parishes, but who seek nonetheless to fulfill their religious emblems and activities.

Attached you will find a letter from the NCCS (National Catholic Committee on Scouting) containing some explanation of the situation should you find it helpful for reference. If you have questions, please feel free to call Brian Flynn at [517-342-2584](tel:517-342-2584) or email at bflynn@dioceseoflansin....

Below are some scouting alternatives that parishes may wish to consider.

For Boys

The Troops of St. George - troopsofsaintgeorge.or...

Trail Life - traillifeusa.com/...

Blue Knights Boys Club - beholdpublications.com...

For Girls

American Heritage Girls - americanheritagegirls....

Frontier Girls - frontiergirls.com/...

Little Flowers Girls Club - beholdpublications.com...



[Updated Statement on Charter options NCCS.pdf](#)