



ASSEMBLY OF CANONICAL
ORTHODOX BISHOPS
OF NORTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA

Office of the Secretariat

Eastern Orthodox Committee on Scouting

Scout Sunday 2012

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On Sunday, February 5, 2012, Scouts all over the United States will celebrate National Scout Sunday. This Sunday is set aside to honor God and to remind us that we are all His Creatures and made in His Image or more precisely – to image (reflect) Him to the world.

The Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishop of the Americas has designated this also as Orthodox Scout Sunday. Through the Eastern Orthodox Committee on Scouting, the Assembly and its predecessor, SCOBA, have been actively supporting both the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of the USA since the 1960's.

Orthodox Scouts may earn one of three age-appropriate religious awards: Saint George for the youngest scouts, Chi-Rho for the “middle years”, and Alpha-Omega for the older scouts. The awards require progressively more challenging work including service projects.

The observation this year is a special one—the Girls Scouts celebrate their 100-year anniversary and the Boy Scouts celebrate 102 years. Both programs consider reverence and belief in God to be cornerstones for developing young women and men as leaders of their communities and their country.

Scouts will wear their uniforms to church—a very visible sign that they are members of the scouting organization but just as important, members of their parish.

As Orthodox Christians, we should honor our Boy or Girl Scouts and what they represent. The Scouting organization consists of young people aged 5 to 18 and adults who lead them. The youth spend time learning valuable life lessons from their leaders and also have a great deal of fun in the process. Camping, traveling, learning new skills, advancement, and high adventure all are based on a solid foundation of training and reinforcement.

The Boy Scout Pledge has twelve points: A Scout is Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, Kind, Obedient, Cheerful, Thrifty, Brave, Clean, and Reverent.

The final point – Reverent - ties the other eleven points together. Respect to family and others is important, but our relationship to God is paramount. Worshiping as we believe encourages us to live as His children. Holy Orthodoxy enables us to know, understand, respect and obey God's Will and His Commandments.

Sponsoring a scouting troop or troops is a way that a parish can offer a safe, fun and exciting learning opportunity to our young people. There are probably adults in your own parish who were Girl Scouts or Boy Scouts and have learned valuable life lessons from their experiences. They may be willing to share these with the parish children as Scout leaders.

Scouts are formed by their families—both biological and parish—in their earliest years. School teaches them how to comprehend and apply advanced reasoning skills. Scouting takes these skills and applies them to specific life experiences that will benefit them forever. As the Church, we are responsible for nurturing them and giving them Christian values that will transform these experiences and enable them to do “God's Will on earth.”

Whether your parish starts a new troop, sponsors an existing one, or encourages their young people to join another scouting troop, the results are a brighter future with more and certainly better leaders!

Read about the Eastern Orthodox Committee on Scouting EOCS on the web site:
<http://eocs.org/>

Eastern Orthodox Committee on Scouting (EOCS)

Episcopal Liaison:

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