

Boy Scouting of America Celebrates 100 Years Celebrating the Adventure ~ Continuing the Journey

This year marks the 100th Anniversary of Boy Scouting in America. During this time, more than 111 million active Scouts have participated in the program and over 2 million Courts of Honor have been held for Eagle Scouts. This year of celebration will capitalize on many activities across the country and within the local council. In doing so, the Scouting program remains focused on some very basic goals: Leadership, Character, Community Service, Achievement, and the Outdoors. Here's a closer look:

Boy Scouting has long been a tradition of Holy Name of Jesus Church as we charter a troop for the parish and surrounding area. All events reflect a part of the twelve points of the Scout Law. Boys from 5th to 12th grade, as well as Venture Crew members, have learned the values of Scouting and participate in numerous camping, leadership, community service, and religious programs:

Camping: "A Scout is Brave." In addition to weekend outings and summer camp at Many Point where boys learn the basic skills of cooking, hiking, first aid, backpacking, orienteering, and wilderness survival, our Scouts have gone to Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, New Mexico (a 75 mile, 11-day unguided mountain trek), Seabase (Florida Keys), Boundary Waters Canoe Area, and Northwinds Adventure (outdoor winter camping). On each event, whether large or small, the Scouts learn respect for the outdoors, test themselves physically, and experience the wonders of God's creation.

Leadership: "A Scout is Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Courteous, Obedient, and Cheerful." The Scouts -- not the adult leaders -- organize troop activities and govern themselves. All Scouts hold leadership positions and go through youth leader training and advanced programs such as the Grey Wolf Summer Leader Program. Adults are trained both at the entry level and also through the Lake Minnetonka District Scoutmaster Fundamentals; several of the troop's leaders have

also earned their Woodbadge Beads after completing an 18-month program originally designed by Lord Baden-Powell, the founder of Scouting in England. The leadership qualities and training prepare the boys not only to lead others within the troop but also for advanced education and the workplace.

Community Service: "A Scout is Kind and Thrifty" and the Scout Slogan is "Do a Good Turn Daily." We are especially proud of the troop's commitment to helping others in need: Feed My Starving Children, gift boxes for overseas soldiers, Highway 55 clean-up, church Spring cleaning, and helping Cub Scout packs are just some of the many projects that the Scouts work on throughout the year. In addition, every Scout who applies to become an Eagle Scout must plan, organize and carry out a major community service project (200-300 hours on average) benefitting a community group such as the church, local and inner-city schools, elderly residences, disadvantaged children, and those who need food and clothing.

Religious Programs: "A Scout is Clean and Reverent." Our troop is diverse; both culturally and by religion, yet the Scouts embrace that diversity and learn from each other that we are all more alike than different. Through the efforts of dedicated adult leaders, many of the Scouts earn their religious award, programs sponsored by their respective churches. At every campout there is a religious service

*On my honor I will do my best,
To do my duty to God and my country,
and to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong,
mentally awake, and morally straight.*

of some type, and all boys actively practice their faith.

While advancement from Tenderfoot to Eagle Scout is based on each Scout's goals and activity level, we are proud of the 35 boys from Troop 537 who have become Eagle Scouts since 1992, as only 4% of all Scouts achieve this rank. This accomplishment is a reflection of what one of the early Scoutmasters of the troop called "positive adult role-modeling," incredible dedication to the program and its ideals, and the lifelong experiences offered by the Council and National programs. We are extremely grateful that the church has supported the troop, and hope to continue the fine tradition for many years to come.

