

In an effort to better coordinate the religious awards program of the three main organizations for boys and girls, Rev. William Moran formed the CCS for Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Camp Fire Girls in the Dallas/Fort Worth Diocese. This new organization was formed during the late 60's and operated as an umbrella group over the CCS Fort Worth Deanery and the programs for girls. Under this organization, the program for the annual awards ceremony was held on March 31, 1968 at St. Patrick's Co-Cathedral in Fort Worth. Although the girls did not receive any awards that day, dozens of medals were presented to boys from both Fort Worth and Dallas as well as Girl and Boy Scouting adult awards. Once the new Diocese was formed, this umbrella group faded from view as the CCS operated on its own. However, this concept would be resurrected during the 80's when all boy and girl organizations within the Diocese would combine into one ceremony for the Bishop to present religious awards.

### **Creation of A Diocese: New Traditions Begin**

The adoption of a counselor/scout method from the Priest/Scout method was intended to expand the length and breadth of religious programs to that of employing greater numbers of volunteers to administrate the development of scouts themselves. The materials were ready, the first counselor training was held on August 29, 1970, but the complexity and time to finish the program had increased. Since the commitment required almost a year of work with a counselor, it demanded a greater desire on the part of a boy in order to ultimately achieve the goal. In addition, the increased status of the Eagle Scout award was playing against boy's enthusiasm for religious awards. Fewer awardees from fewer troops caused a declining presence and the lack of tradition within every unit of supporting the awards. Rev. Miller, the first Diocesan Chaplain of the new Diocese of Fort Worth, was faced with several unprecedented challenges without any proven method to overcome them. However, the strength of the retreat program and the excitement of a committee, which controlled its own destiny, continued to fuel boy and adult participation. Despite generating a handful of awardees

on an annual basis, new innovations were finding their way into the Boy Scout Retreat Program.

The first sign that things had changed was the exclamation “High School Girls at a Boy Scout Retreat!?” Rev. James Miller, a newcomer to Scouting at the beginning of his duties as Diocesan Chaplain, was not afraid to try something new and creative. Recently, Fr. Miller was reminiscing and chuckling to himself as he related the feeling of shock felt by leaders in every unit. However, as in many innovations, the initial credulity changed to acceptance with open arms. The boys responded to the new format, the leaders acknowledged that there were other types of retreat formats (prior retreats were traditionally serious adult style sessions), and the CCS adopted an open mind to the future. This truly was an era where new traditions could be written.



Rev. James Miller

One of the more unusual trips a unit might partake would be the unpredictable current of the Rio Grande River. Although mankind has harnessed some of its peculiar ways, it can still be a challenge for inexperienced canoers. Scouts of Troop 615 from St. Maria Goretti Church in Arlington took the challenge in the late 70's and started their trip near a small river village named Lajitas. Scoutmaster Ben Klosel, Jack Chambers, and Bill Tatsch were among the adults who set camp the first night near the mouth of Santa Elena Canyon near Big Bend National Park in south Texas. Young scout Tompkins remembers the roar of the rapids inside the canyon as it rained during the evening. He quickly turned his canoe over and slept beneath it as the raindrops clanged against the top of the canoes. As twenty canoes were loaded up next morning, each veteran canoer made ready for traversing one of the toughest canyons they were to face on the trip. Since the river made an “S” through the canyon, you had to be sure and stay close to the bank or slam into the canyon wall. Unfortunately, one canoe hit the wall and boys and belongings were thrown out and swept downstream. Tompkins beached his canoe and

swam after the swamped canoe floating half filled with water down the stream. He righted the canoe, helped the boys get back into their canoe, and pulled on a line some other scouts threw from shore to pull them to safety. This quick action saved possible injury as the infamous "Rockslide" rapids lay waiting further on down the canyon. When the group arrived at the Rockslide rapids (100 yards in length), they surveyed the path of the river through boulders as large as houses and carefully laid out a course that would eventually take them half a day to accomplish. After a week of canoeing and camping, each scout had a greater appreciation of nature and the teamwork it took for the whole group to accomplish a rigorous goal.



An Eagle Scout and Ad Altare Dei Awardee, Rev. Joe Scantlin celebrates his second mass as a priest at Worth Ranch Todd Campsite with scouts of his boyhood troop. Circa 1950's.

As a Cub Scout in Pack 32, a Boy Scout in Troop 32, an Eagle Scout, An Ad Altare Dei Award recipient, a Philmont Trekker in 1951 and Pastor of a Lewisville parish for many years, Rev. Joe Scantlin returned to Scouting as the Diocesan Scout Chaplain during the 1970's. His great love for Scouting was apparent as he said his second Mass as a priest at Worth Ranch with the Troop he had camped with so often during his earlier days. Later, after his work as a Diocesan Chaplain, he was

instrumental in ensuring the survival of Troop 32 when its membership had dwindled to two active scouts. He was pastor of Holy Family Parish when he offered the Troop co-sponsorship and provided a meeting place that helped the Troop survive until it found a new home in Keller, Texas. Because of his contribution to Scouting he was awarded the St. George Award.

Ever since the movie "Brian's Song" in the 1970's, America has been aware of the

scourge of Cancer. Some of our most beloved Scouters have been claimed by it. When Ole Man Gillespie had cataract surgery and cancer in the 70's, scouts drove, cooked and assisted him in his declining years. He made it an introductory joke to everyone he knew when he said "I'm blind in one eye and can't see out of the other!" The "coke bottle" glasses, the cane and the growing pain could not keep him away from the boys he led until he couldn't bear it any longer. His funeral was marked by an Eagle Scout Color Guard, celebrated by Eagle Scout priests, and eulogized by his first Eagle... Judge A.L. Crouch.

E.L. "Buck" Rogers was a rather gregarious fellow and a contemporary of Ole Man. His easygoing manner and unusual wit made him beloved of many. To kids he was fun and to adults he had wonderfully humorous stories. For several decades, his service as cook at scout retreats and as Chairman of the CCS were marked with genuine success. A great loss to Scouting was felt when Buck succumbed to cancer during the late 80's.



Circa 1971. Richard Kervin holds St. George Award aloft as Bishop Cassata and Buck Rogers smile into camera.

In another instance, Christian compassion found its way to T509 when the Willett family was struck by cancer. Scouter Tom Willett was an Assistant Scoutmaster who served as the Troop EMT (Emergency Medical Technician), First Aid MB Counselor and Safety MB Counselor. Food Baskets, cards and regular contact were all provisions made by their Troop Committee. Undoubtedly, there have been literally hundreds of stories of similar deeds of charity done by anonymous persons to the betterment of all.

Although service to others has been one of the outstanding hallmarks of Scouting, assistance to its own is one of our own unheralded practices. When T7 began (1980)