

Bishop Kenny seems to envision the resurgence of the Scouting movement during the late 80's when his concluding words echo the intrinsic value found in the BSA, "Through interaction with fellow scouts, through church related activities, and in the natural outdoor surroundings created by God, Scouts can experience in a powerful way the love of God and neighbors, friendship with others, and opportunities for leadership. The Catholic Church is fortunate to have in the Scouting movement so apt a vehicle for Christian development."

Tradition of the Crosses: The 1990's to the New Millennium



1995 Retreat. Rev. Joe Janiszewski celebrates mass at Worth Ranch Chapel during the 35th Anniversary Retreat.

of counselors existed for award candidates. Scouters such as Dave Callahan at St. Francis and Steve Bischoff at St. Michael's placed notes in church bulletins and organized classes to provide every opportunity for North Texas scouts to work on an award.

The decade of the 90's ended as it began with the same loyal group of CCS Officers being led by Longhorn Council Chairman Daniel Scott. James Sawey and James Ramsey managed the cook crew while Bobbi and Rich Lockwood handled registration. Ad Altare Dei Award Counselor Training was taught by Robert Connelly to ensure a properly trained group



Steve Bischoff (Retreatmaster for two 90's retreats) shakes hands with Mark Thornburg (left) and passes the mantle of retreatmaster. Mark went on to lead the last three retreats of the 1990's.

When a crisis challenges, so do the solutions that present themselves in due time. It was just such a challenge that confronted the CCS when a priest scheduled to conduct the Boy Scout Retreat was unable to attend because of unforeseen circumstances. The program went from Plan A to Plan B to Plan C. Out of these difficulties, Steve Bischoff (and later Mark Thornburg) came forward with new program ideas to capture the imagination of scouts at many of the 1990's

retreats. Steve began by making a large 10-foot cross that would symbolically represent the climax of the retreat program. Each retreat group would plant the cross in an area of camp. Another innovation was the advent of Bible Trivia, which challenged the intelligence of boys and adults regarding different aspects of the Bible. These were commonly intermingled as program fillers between each session of the retreat. Because the Rosary was not very well understood amongst the boys, Mark Thornburg originated the idea of a "Living Rosary" with lighted candles as a highlight of Saturday evening's program. Mark



1998 Retreat. Scouts plant a cross at an undisclosed location at Camp Leonard.

constructed the second cross and James Ramsey continued by creating a third cross for the final retreat of the 1990's. Solid program scripts by Retreatmaster Steve Bischoff for two retreats and by Mark Thornburg for three retreats generated quality Christian discussions by scouts young and old. The challenges at the beginning of the decade were being offset by new ideas that formed the basis for resurgence of religious programs by the late 90's.

Another constant in the efforts to maintain awareness is the tradition of manning the religious emblems booth at the annual Scout Show. If a scout or leader is not exposed

to the information at his unit, then he has the ability to receive materials and begin participation by picking them up at the Scout Show. There was once a boy from a unit chartered by a public school who approached a Scoutmaster of a Troop in Northwest Texas Council. Since this Scoutmaster always encouraged each scout to consider their religious awards and had placed a poster with all awards onto the scout hut wall, he posed a question to the leader. "What do I have to do to get the God and Country Award?" The leader replied tongue in cheek, "Change Religions" for he knew the boy was Catholic. He wondered why the boy was asking and finally got to the root of the difficulty. The boy did not know his pastor well and when he did see him, he seemed a bit gruff. Despite the boy's apprehension, the leader talked him into approaching his pastor. In a lesson learned long ago by the NCCS, the boy found out his pastor is a very nice man and earned his award besides developing a closer bond with the church. The CCS is indebted to Rich and Bobbi Lockwood for having been the perennial organizers of the Religious Awards Scout Show Booth for over a decade.

At the dawn of a new millennium, the CCS is well poised to take advantage of recent technological advances to increase the length and breadth of the program. With the help of Webmaster Jack Schwertz, the CCS debuted a new resource during March 2000. It is hoped that the CCS website will enable Catholic Scouts and units (throughout the four Boy Scout Councils within the Fort Worth Diocese) the ability to participate in religious awards and retreats by obtaining registration applications, awards information and other special event info such as the Jubilee Year 2000. All units sponsored by catholic institutions are listed so parents have the ability to ensure their scouts participate in catholic religious programs as well as attain the rank of Eagle.

Cub Scout Inaugural Retreat

In an age when the World Wide Web has opened up a universe of knowledge to anyone who wishes, you would think there would be fewer opportunities to create what was not there before. However, in Scouting, you ask a question...."There's been a Boy Scout

Retreat for thirty-seven years, why can't we have a Cub Scout Retreat?" ...and you find yourself tasked with answering your own question. So during the 1997 Boy Scout Retreat, discussions between Longhorn Council Professional Advisor Jay DeRose, NCCS member Irene Herring, and John Ryan introduced the concept for a Cub Scout Retreat.

An article soliciting volunteers in the North Texas Catholic generated a phone call from a recent transplant from Los Angeles, CA, Jay Krail. Jay already had experience in conducting two Boy Scout Retreats in Los Angeles so he became Program Chairman and began work on a retreat script with the theme of Baptism. A second article soliciting help generated a call from Susan Schwertz. As a thirty-year Girl Scout volunteer, she brought a different perspective to an unprecedented program. As a special way to commemorate the inaugural retreat, Susan sewed 200 white neckerchiefs as a gift to all participants to symbolize the white cloth given to newly baptized babies.



1998 Retreat Mass. Cub Scouts have just received a white cloth neckerchief symbolizing their participation in the Baptism Retreat during September 1998.

Jay's idea of the sacraments combined with John's idea to provide a Cathedral Patch ultimately resulted in a five-year cycle of retreats forming a seven patch cross. A Tiger Cub could start with his first year and reach a greater understanding of the sacraments before completing his seven patch cross as a 2nd year Webelos.

On Saturday September 26, 1998, the Catholic Cub Scout Retreat started with Jay Krail "drafting" adult facilitators while John Ryan, Jack Schwertz and Irene Herring organized the Cub Scouts. The first session consisted of boys getting to know the rest of their group in a "trust" session. After this discussion, the 170 Cub Scouts gathered in the Camp Leonard campfire ring for a reenactment of the Baptism of Jesus Christ. The Gospel of Matthew (3:13-17) and Luke (3:3-22) was brought to life in front of each boys eyes as a lively discussion followed.

Fr. Joe Janiszski (St. Andrews Church Parochial Vicar) said mass and spoke about caterpillars becoming butterflies as an analogy about the Sacrament of Baptism that was used earlier in the day. After Mass, awards and patches were distributed to scouts from twenty Packs before the close of the retreat with a survey by all participants.

As part of the effort to communicate the value of the religious Scouting program, pictures and video from that day were produced into a Cub Scout Retreat video for each participating family. As religious questions regarding Scouting come up throughout the year, the Cub Scout Retreat staff is able to send the video to help promote greater participation and reach families all over the Diocese.

According to statistics maintained at BSA National Headquarters, the most fragile of all Scouting units is the Cub Scout Pack. It has the highest failure rate from causes such as lack of steady sponsorship, untrained leadership, or the annual exodus of Webelos Scouts and adults bridging into Boy Scouts. Where adult leaders can participate in a Boy Scout unit from age 18 until death, an adult leader who becomes experienced in the

Cub Scout method usually stays a maximum of five years (Tiger - Webelos). Often, trained leaders are not replaced with experienced adults so that the quality of the program erodes. These and other issues contribute to Packs folding or becoming inactive. The NCCS approved the Golden Bow Award for these kinds of circumstances when individuals come forward to rescue a unit on the brink of folding or one, which is almost inactive. During 1998, the CCS became aware of one unit, which was resurrected by a



1998 Golden Bow Award. Pack 180 received the Golden Bow Award during the Inaugural Cub Scout Retreat in 1998.

family unfamiliar with Scouting, when the Redden family took leadership training, reestablished sponsorship and brought their own program innovations to Pack 180. Pack 180 had the 3rd largest group of scouts at the Cub Scout Inaugural Retreat and has been credited with reinvigorating the religious scout program within St. Rita's parish. The Golden Bow Award and a patch for each scout were presented on September 26, 1998 for ensuring the adventure of Scouting.

As a part of the continuing efforts to promote the Cub Scout Retreat outside of the Fort Worth area, Susan Schwertz handed out a few video copies to those parents from outside Longhorn Council who were at the Religious Awards Sunday on March 7, 1999. As a result of this effort, Penny Webb and her son were our first participants from Northwest Texas Council. They woke before dawn and drove three hours to join 179 scouters for the 2nd Annual Cub Scout Retreat held on September 25, 1999. Scouts from twenty-seven Packs arrived at St. Francis Cabrini Church in Granbury, practiced the "Awesome God" song while Jay Krail trained additional Facilitators for the Eucharist Retreat. Cub Scouts began by conducting a "trust" session, enjoyed the reenactment of the Last Supper and used paper supplies, poster board and crayons to draw