

A PIOUS MOMENT



John Ryan



**Pray Father, that these words that follow
breath into each person who reads them the
dedication, the satisfaction, the
disappointments and the exultations of a
program meant to lift young men's hearts
closer to your understanding. This account
is dedicated to those who committed
themselves and those who will in the future.
This we pray. Amen.**

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my wife, Debra, and my son, Patrick, who each provided immeasurable encouragement to me during this endeavor, and to whom I will be forever indebted.

Foreword

A Pious Moment is representative of many fellow scouts' efforts recorded in our archives as well as those innumerable deeds, which are only known to those who accomplished them. This history is the first installment, meant to provide the reader with a brief measure of the length and breadth of the work of the Catholic Committee on Scouting (CCS). Although we in no way attempt to claim an authoritative account, we hope that many more scouts and scouters who contributed to the preservation and nurturing of Catholic Scouting involvement will come forward to make future histories richer with their memories.

To everyone who has been so helpful, my sincerest thanks and gratitude for all you have done to make this book a reality. As my parents and the Lord know, I am not perfect, so please do not expect perfection in this work, and please tolerate any inaccuracies, as my intentions are only honorable.

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I - A Pious Moment

The moment I had anticipated was only steps away. As I stopped and knelt, that which I had sought was pinned upon me for all to see. A moment transfixed in time which would play itself over in my mind as an achievement I had committed myself to do. The crispness of his vestments, the melodious nature of his voice, the towering figure before me with bishop's mitre upon his weathered brow. He patted the top of my head as he pinned the Ad Altare Dei Award on my uniform. A slight figure for a 12-year-old, I turned from him and my glance caught the crozier, his staff, shining in all its regal majesty, as it would remain in my mind's eye for some time. I was terrified, gratified, ecstatic, proud and a little numb as I returned from my brush with the most influential person I had encountered in my young life. The Pope was in some far-off place called Rome, Father Balthasar Szarka (Father "B") was my parish priest and friend, my father was my first hero, but Bishop John Cassata was patriarch over all I really knew. It was as if I was knighted by a King from the Middle Ages before being sent to the Crusades.

I was energized by this first significant recognition of my young life. The Ad Altare Dei Award jump-started my Scout career from a year in the doldrums of being First Class, with little direction, to finishing Eagle Scout within 2½ years, being elected Senior Patrol Leader for 1½ years and serving on CCS Retreat Staff for the 1974 and 1975 Retreats. It awakened the spirituality within me and oriented my Christianity in an age when Vatican II was also invigorating the Catholic Church. However, I would be remiss if I strayed too far from the moral of my award ceremony without inviting you to follow the footsteps of an organization formed to bring me, and many other scouts like me, to

spiritual recognition. Our journey begins with the formation of the Diocese of Dallas as the first step toward Catholic Scouting.

Formation of the Diocese

Settlers in the territory, which was to be the Diocese of Dallas, came from many directions. People came from Spanish and Indian villages, families from Arkansas / Louisiana / Tennessee came along Indian trails, others came along Kansas and Missouri cattle trails, a Confederate Catholic Chaplain ministered to families in McKinney, Czech families from Galveston rode along north/south trails to Abbot/West Ennis, farmers came from Moravia and Irishmen who laid the railroad track provided the foundation for Catholicism in North Texas. Because of the influx of Catholic families in North Texas, Bishop Gallagher of the Diocese of Galveston composed notes for the recommendation of a new Diocese in 1889. His proposal was submitted to the Bishops of the Province of New Orleans and passed onto Pope Leo XIII. And so it was on July 15th, 1890, that Pope Leo XIII created the Diocese of Dallas and named Msgr Thomas Brennan as the first Bishop.¹

¹ These were the parishes and the priests in the year Bishop Brennan was installed:

Abilene – Fr. Lehane
Clarksville – Fr. Quinon
Corsicana – Fr. Donohur
Dallas – Fr. Blum, Fr. Brickley
Denison – Fr. Crowley
Ennis attended from Corsicana
Fort Worth – Fr. Guyot
Gainesville – Fr. Coyne
Greenville attended from Wylie
Henrietta – vacant

Jefferson – Fr. J Granger
Marshall – Fr. L Granger
Paris attended from Clarksville
Sherman – Fr. Vandevivere
St. Paul – Fr. Neal
Terrell attended from Tyler
Texarkana – Fr. Barbin
Tyler – Fr. Huechmeyer
Waxahachie attended from Ennis
Weatherford – Fr. Brannan

On July 10, 1892, Bishop Brennan, attended by Archbishop Janssens of New Orleans, formally dedicated St. Patrick Church in Fort Worth before leaving to report on his work in Rome. However, Bishop Brennan resigned while visiting in Rome and was replaced by Bishop Dunne. One of his first works was to build Sacred Heart Cathedral in Dallas followed by several new parishes, Holy Trinity College, St. Paul's Hospital, and St. Joseph's High School. After Bishop Dunne suffered a heart attack, Bishop Lynch became the first American-born Bishop to ascend the Episcopal throne in the State of Texas on July 12th, 1911. The Boy Scouts of America was barely two years old when Bishop Lynch summoned the First Synod of the Diocese on September 12, 1912. Among other directives made during the synod, he announced his decision to divide the Diocese into five deaneries: East Texas, Dallas, Fort Worth, Amarillo, and El Paso. Although several of these would later become their own Diocese, it foreshadowed the development of the CCS in the Fort Worth Deanery.

The second Synod of the Diocese of Dallas was held during 1934 and instructed parents and guardians that they "are bound by a most grave obligation to provide a Catholic education for their children" in those places where there exists a Catholic school. This was another contributing factor in the accumulation of eligible boys into Catholic institutions and the establishment of scout units involving boys from Laneri High School, St. Mary's School and Our Lady of Victory High School in later years.

Although the formation of the Diocese laid the groundwork for the introduction of Scouting on a local basis, it was not until there was an organized movement on behalf of the Catholic Bishops to concentrate on one youth program that scouting sponsorship grew in the church. One defining act outside the United States was responsible for this change in attitude – War!

National Catholic Committee

The First World War signalled a distinct change in America's view of society both at home and abroad. American Catholic Bishops organized the National Catholic War Council and set about identifying opportunities to contribute to the national war effort. Scouting became a vehicle to mobilize Catholic youth in a way that would show public participation in the war effort and provide direction to boys whose families might be affected. Since the Holy See in Rome supported these efforts through its wartime correspondence, the Bishops concentrated on establishing a Scout troop in every parish.

Although the number of Catholic troops increased significantly during the war, it did not continue once the war ended. However, supporters among the clergy and the recognition by the BSA that this was an avenue in which there could be gigantic growth resulted in the creation of a committee to oversee progress. With the leadership of Bishop Kelley beginning in 1923, the National Catholic Committee assisted in increasing the number of Catholic units to 4,000. Regardless, the Great Depression, World War II, and the Korean War would occur before local churches would begin sponsorship in earnest. It was therefore left to another Catholic institution to be the first.

Knight Sponsor

One organization, which seemed to complement the efforts of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting, was the Knights of Columbus.² On March 29, 1882 the General Assembly of the State of Connecticut granted a charter to the Knights of Columbus "for the purpose of rendering mutual aid and assistance to its members and their families." It was also a great day in the life of a young Catholic priest, the Rev. Michael J. McGivney, for it marked the fulfillment of his dream to unite Catholic men in a society through which they might advance the ideals of their Faith. The order was twenty years old when it arrived in Texas. The Tisonia, a privately chartered Pullman railroad car with twenty-five Knights of Columbus aboard, left El Paso on May 8, 1903 and visited Dallas, Fort Worth, Galveston, Houston and San Antonio. And so it was on May 10, 1903, Knights of Columbus Council 759 was born as the "mother" council of the Fort Worth area. The arrival of Columbiansm in Texas gave a real boost to the establishment of Catholic Churches, the proliferation of Catholic education and the recommendation of a youth affiliate for the Knights.



Foundation of Catholic Columbianism and Scouting within Ft. Worth. Knights of Columbus Council #759 Hall. 1004 Lamar. Ft. Worth. Circa 1920's.

² The Knights of Columbus is a fraternal organization of Catholic men. In general, the objectives are to provide a system of fraternal insurance to care for the widows and orphans of members; to provide fellowship among the members, to aid the cause of religion, and to perform charitable, educational and patriotic works for the benefit of their fellow men and their nation."

By the 1920's, the Texas State Knights of Columbus Convention had endorsed Scouting as its "boy guidance program" for all councils to promote. Because of these and other states' early efforts, the 1922 National Knights of Columbus Convention adopted scouting as their official youth program for boys 12-15 years of age. A Boy Life Bureau was created by the KC Supreme Council to promote and supervise this important new activity, naming as its first director the nationally known authority on boy guidance, Brother Barnabas, FSC. At the suggestion of Brother Barnabas, a Department of Boy Guidance was established at Notre Dame University by the Knights of Columbus for the training of professional leaders. Two courses evolved in the boy guidance program. First is the 10-day summer camp and secondly the 30-hour course in Boyology. Camp schools were in operation in several cities around the country. The program includes scout work, club work, Big Brother work, woodcraft, playground and athletic activities, and Columbian Squire work. The most significant part of the work is the Boy Guidance Course at the University of Notre Dame. Although it is only open to graduates, the first graduating class of nineteen received diplomas in 1926 and has since acted as leaders to over 40,000 boys. The Holy Cross Fathers and Brothers of St. Edwards University were acquainted with the work of those at Notre Dame and introduced a similar course. In fact, Texas was the first state in the union to adopt and put in execution the plan sponsored by the Supreme Council of the KC's. Unfortunately, enrollment was light and it was not continued. However, it was only a matter of time before Catholic Scouting would be introduced to the city of Fort Worth.

The first Scouting unit registered under a Catholic institution in the Fort Worth Area Council³ was Troop 31 on January 7th, 1927. Grand Knight William Higgins of KC

³ Since the Fort Worth Area Council was the predominant council in what was to become Longhorn Council in 1949, and since we are predominantly concerned with the early CCS development, we are limiting our scope of early Catholic Scouting to the city of Fort Worth. *A Pious Moment*, our first installment, will grow to include all known Catholic units within the Fort Worth Diocese; which includes Longhorn Council, Northwest Texas Council, Comanche Trail Council and Heart of Texas Council. We hope the cooperation of scouters from the three other councils and their Council Executives will provide an opportunity to investigate the early sponsorship and successes of Catholic units in the future.

Council 759 was the Executive Officer while W.E. Corty was Scoutmaster. Undoubtedly, the popularity of the program must have soared as KC Council 759 chartered Troop 19 on March 10, 1927 and Troop 32 on March 17, 1927. Three Troops in three months! Although Troop 31 would later revert to sponsorship by St. Mary's Catholic School, it was this initial flurry of charters generated by KC Council 759 that energized Scouting under Catholic auspices in the Fort Worth area.

Although enthusiasm for the new program was apparent, training was non-existent. Undoubtedly, many early leaders were learning the program, creating their own tradition, and searching for what worked. Scouting itself was providing new programs such as Senior Scouts, Sea Scouts and Air Scouts. And so it was no surprise that a religious award program came into existence and provided the impetus of a whole new organization.

First Known Awardees

After World War I, Rev. James E. Dolan created the Ad Altare Dei Award Program as a means to further the spiritual well-being of boys. First Class Scouts would be awarded the Ad Altare Dei Cross as recognition of their service as Altar boys. On February 8, 1926, Scout Edward Thurin was awarded the first Ad Altare Dei Cross by Rev. Dolan during ceremonies within the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. The program was so successful that he presented reports to the Annual Scout Chaplains Conferences. After several attempts, Rev. Dolan was rewarded with approval by the Bishops Committee and the BSA authorization to wear the award on a Scout uniform. The program went nationwide during 1941 and was the first religious emblem offered by any denomination to Boy Scouts.



Scoutmaster John Edward "Ole Man" Gillespie at Worth Ranch. Circa 1929. (See Exemplary Scouter Section)

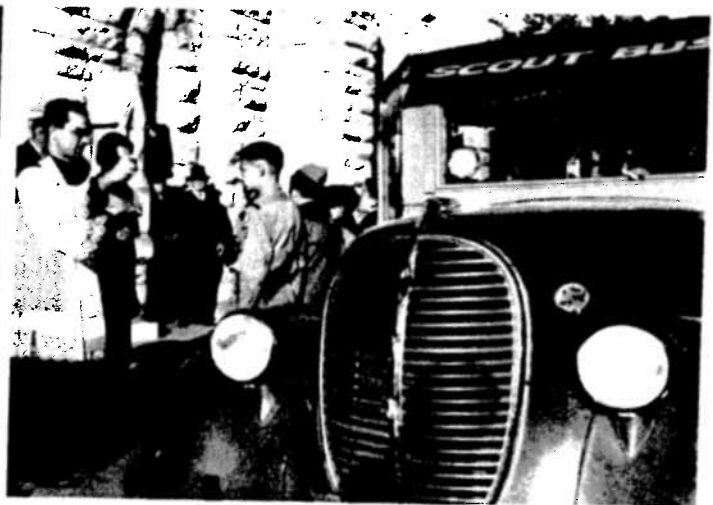
It was a cold, blustery day when the magic of scouting was born March 17, 1927 at the KC Hall on 1004 Lamar Street in Downtown Fort Worth. Although the charter reflects Charles Gomer as Scoutmaster, it was a shy but thin young man who is generally recognized as the real leadership in Troop 32 through its first forty-nine years. John Edward "Ole Man" Gillespie (See First CCS Chairman Fort Worth Deanery) had already been a scout leader of Troop 19 when he was officially registered Scoutmaster of Troop 32 during 1929.

When Troop 32 was organized in 1927, there were fewer than 2,000 scouts in the Fort Worth Area Council. The troop was made up of local boys, orphans, and a few who had transferred from other units. During an early scouting event, one of his own scouts nicknamed him "The Ole Man" and it stuck for forty-nine years. Boys would visit his home and be thrilled by stories told by his father, the last surviving Texas Ranger who had participated in the raid to return Cynthia Ann Parker from the Comanche Indians. Six-gun revolvers, Indian stories, and the presence of a fabled Texas Ranger created a larger than life atmosphere for impressionable boys. It was from this aura of adventure that Ole Man would inspire his scouts to participate in each new program that scouting offered.

As one of the first known proponents of the Ad Altare Dei program, Ole Man made it an unwritten rule within Troop 32 that each scout would attain the Ad Altare Dei Award on his way to Eagle Scout (this tradition survived until the 70's when Ole Man became infirm). The first verifiable Fort Worth Area Council awardees are identified by the Star Telegram in the Morning Edition on February 13, 1944. Pictured are Charles Bush, Eugene Witkowski, and Larry Jo Rich from Troop 32. At the time, a young cleric who assisted the troop in transporting boys out to camp, Rev. Thomas Tschoepe, presented the awards to the boys at St. Patrick's Church (Rev. Thomas Tschoepe would later become Bishop of the Diocese of Dallas).



First Known Awardees. Rev. Tschoeppe presents the Ad Altare Dei Award to (L to R) Eugene Witkowski, Charles Bush and Larry Jo Rich from T32 as first known awardees in Ft. Worth area on 2/13/1944.



Scout Bus Dedication. Circa 1940's. Rev. Tschoeppe (future Bishop of Dallas) dedicates Scout Bus used to take scouts to camp.



Msgr. O. Donoghue presents scouts Alfred Becan, Maurice Ball, and Bill Breen their Ad Altare Dei Award during ceremonies on 02/09/1947.



Circa 1940's. Troops 19 and 32 participate in ceremonies conducted at St. Patrick's Church.

We are fortunate indeed to have a pictorial record of early activities surrounding St. Patrick's Church downtown. Since the first Catholic units were located downtown Fort Worth, and since the Fort Worth Star Telegram newspaper was a great supporter of Scouting, many scouts from these units found themselves featured in the Star Telegram pictorials. One such ceremony involved Monsignor O'Donoghue presenting the Ad Altare Dei Award to each scout as they processed forward. This picture featured Alfred

Becan, Maurice Ball, and Bill Breen as scouts receiving their award on February 9, 1947. Religious award ceremonies inside St. Patrick's, Msgr. O'Donoghue dedicating a scout bus with Rev. Tschoepe (11/23/45) and flag ceremonies involving several units inside the church (11/20/41) appear in CCS Pictorial Archives for events that occurred during the 1940's. The Priest-Scout method of working on the Ad Altare Dei Award would invigorate the Scouting movement by increasing the prominence of the 12th Scout Law to that approaching Eagle Scout. It would also deepen the relationship of local churches with Scouting.

The first known senior scout unit (Fort Worth Area Council) sponsored by a Catholic Church was Ship 19 by St. Patrick's Church on September 11, 1944. The 16-foot Lightning Class Sailboat used by Ship 19 was christened the "Santa Maria" and moored at Lake Worth by Camp Shuman. Although this unit reverted back to KC sponsorship when it became Post 32 in 1952, it laid the foundation for future cooperation in the 50's and 60's.

Postwar America ushered in the "Baby Boomers" generation and Scouting was the beneficiary. While the transition from wartime economy to peacetime prosperity accompanied the return of servicemen from war, Scouting was also an outlet for many volunteers to get past the horror of war and promote the ideal of world brotherhood. The initial explosion of scouting by the KC's was tempered by World War II and led the growth of dozens of units in Catholic institutions in and around Fort Worth after the war.

The Golden Age of Scouting

There were a number of factors contributing to the local development of Catholic Scouting. Postwar volunteerism, a solid foundation of Catholic units downtown, the increase of parishes in the diocese, the patriotic image of scouting acquired during the war, the use of scouts for community events, and the installation of Bishop Thomas Gorman on August 19, 1954 as Bishop of the newly named Dallas-Fort Worth

Diocese.⁴ Because of his expertise in the craft of journalism, Bishop Gorman revived the Texas Catholic newspaper as an important communication vehicle. Once the newspaper was revived, it had little space for scouting news located within the future Diocese of Fort Worth. However, as activities and print technology advanced, it included insertions mailed to Fort Worth readers under the same banner – *The Texas Catholic*. This growth in coverage allowed such organizations as the Knights of Columbus, Longhorn Council, and scout units sponsored by individual parishes to promote and recognize their activities.

Research of Texas Catholic newspaper issues dating from its first year of publication through 1958 indicate little diocesan involvement with the award program or with Scouting itself. However, there are glimpses of individual scout troops and leaders receiving recognition that include the presence of monsignors and parish priests. One strong indication of support came in the campaign to build and dedicate a new scout hut for Troop 32 on February 8, 1953. There had never been a greater sponsorship effort by KC Council #759 than the months leading up to the dedication. Troop 32 marked National Scout Sunday by taking possession of its new scout hut adjacent to the Knights of Columbus Hall at 904 Collier Street. Sam Renner donated his time as a contractor, James Roach Sr. donated materials so that the scouts could build their own furniture, and donations obtained from businesses throughout the area helped furnish a tile floor, air conditioning and a full set of recreational materials for boys. Rev. Ernest Langenhorst spoke the following words at the Dedication and Open House. "When boys do not get their recreation and help and inspiration from the best, they are liable to get it from the worst! Through the Boy Scouts of America and the Knights of Columbus,

⁴ Bishop Lynch served for over 50 years, but when the disabilities of the aged Bishop Lynch made it necessary to appoint an heir apparent, the Bishop of the Diocese of Reno was selected. Since portions of the original Diocese of Dallas were split off into their own Diocese, and realizing the growth of the Fort Worth area would lead to a future division, Bishop Gorman requested the name of the Diocese be changed to that of the "Dallas/Fort Worth Diocese."

our boys have been offered the best in boys' leadership." In addition, Msgr. Joseph O'Donohue took the opportunity to present the Ad Altare Dei Award to nine scouts of Troop 32. As it was noted in the story, the scout hut became a favorite centrally located place to meet for area scouters.

An atmosphere of cooperation was also central to the growth of Scouting in Catholic institutions. As an example, leadership of Troop 32 assisted in the continuation of St. George's Troop 34 at several points in its history. Again, Troop 97 led to the establishment of Troop 497. Although members of Troop 32 assisted Troop 15, it later went inactive. Another example is the leadership of Knights of Columbus Council #759 using its Degree Team to establish other KC Councils within the Fort Worth and surrounding areas. Many of these same KC councils would charter new troops or become the sponsor of existing troops looking for a new home. The spirit and fellowship associated with these efforts led to the creation of an organization dedicated to instituting a consistent religious award program.

These factors offer a snapshot of the early days of the program before we have records for CCS committee work. As we progress from World War II to the Korean Conflict, The Eisenhower presidency, and the election of Pope John XXIII, we begin to glimpse the presence of a committee to help oversee the award program and to realize the beginnings of Diocesan support by the presence of Bishop Gorman during award proceedings.

Catholic Committee on Scouting – Fort Worth Deanery

Existence of a local Catholic Committee on Scouting (CCS) organization from 1941–1958 are sketchy at best. Its organization, meetings, and Diocesan involvement are not immediately known as we can only speculate that Scouters begin to feel the need to create a committee from the growth of scouting and boys' interest in the Catholic religious awards. Speculation suggests that Diocesan participation had not yet begun

on a grander scale since the Bishop does not appear in early award ceremonies covered by the media during the 1940's and 1950's. However, the installation of Bishop Gorman proved to be the catalyst for increased Diocesan support.

The Texas Catholic provides an early record of Bishop Gorman's involvement through Courts of Honor awarding each and every rank advancement at the Sacred Heart Cathedral in downtown Dallas. "There are vicious efforts being made throughout the world to remove moral and spiritual values from our lives... the scout program has placed much emphasis on building the strength to resist such materialistic forces," the Bishop said at one ceremony as he commended the work of the scouts' parents and leaders. From the article covering this event, it is easy to see scouts and parishes receiving recognition and encouragement for their efforts. This unprecedented support bred increased participation. The fellowship of the Fort Worth Deanery began to grow as a concept of its own proud accomplishments and in its interest to establish a Catholic Scout Retreat.

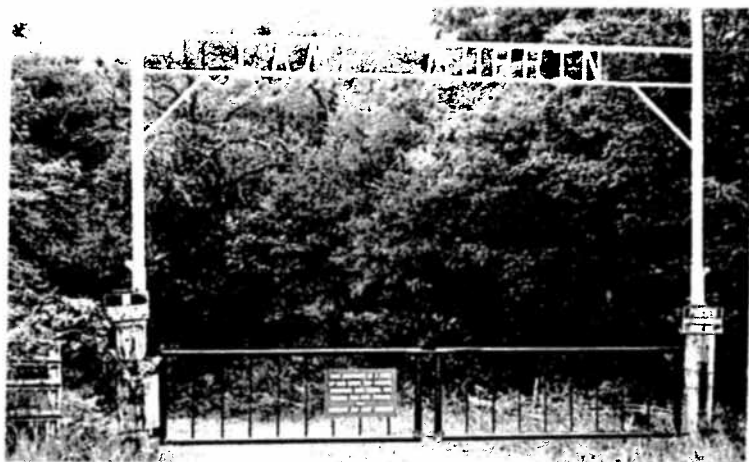
During 1958, John Edward "Ole Man" Gillespie became chairman of the CCS Fort Worth Deanery. His early efforts included assistance with the promotion and organization of religious awards in the Catholic units of Longhorn Council. George Perdue recalls Ole Man's early work in arranging "pilgrimages" required to complete a portion of the Ad Altare Dei religious award. Communication between the diocesan committee through Ole Man and the individual troops regarding boy candidates, planning Sacred Heart Cathedral Award Ceremonies, and administering any tests or reviews were all duties that Ole Man undoubtedly performed. However, it was Father William Moran who helped steer the volunteers of the Fort Worth Deanery into a deeper and highly organized committee.

Although an organized CCS became prevalent during the late 50's & 60's, individual troops sponsored by Catholic institutions had their own traditions. In keeping with the patriotic and fraternal nature of the Knights of Columbus, Troop and Post 32 would

accompany KC Council #759 for a mass celebrating fallen soldiers during the Memorial Day weekend at Old Calvary Cemetery. This was an annual tradition that included Ad Altare Dei awardees as altar boys, scouts as flag bearers, and KC 4th Degree members in full regalia. Since Ole Man's father was a former Confederate Soldier and Texas Ranger buried at the cemetery, he would relate the story of his parents to each scout.

Camp John Murrin

Ole Man passed the baton of CCS leadership to George Perdue during 1960. Although he was no longer chairman, he would serve as an integral figure of the committee until his untimely death in 1976. However, George Perdue continued the development of the first annual retreat besides having a significant donation occur during his reign. Land



Camp Murrin. Although Catholic units camped there since 1961, it was not until Tom Lovelace and Scott O'Neal's Eagle Project that it had a sign marking the entrance. Circa 1978.

was donated to the Catholic Troops of the Longhorn Council that would come to be known as Camp John Murrin. Although it became official during the summer of 1960, Troop 1 laid the groundwork many years earlier.

Although Scout Week is always a celebration of the Scouting

program, it also provides an opportunity for men and boys to see it first hand at the local level. It was one such weekend during February 1952 that Carl King visited Troop 1 while it was camping on the playground of St. Alice Parish. Scoutmaster Hack Clemens was unaware of the providence of having two visitors that day: Carl King and John Murrin. However, the offer to camp on John Murrin's Ranch and the ensuing involvement of Carl King would bring future dividends to Troop 1. The camping area seemed ideal

for Troop 1. It was only 12 miles from Fort Worth but remote enough for boys to live their own weekend adventures. The scouts could hike to the nearest ranch house for water, fish in the slow moving creek waters, or play "Capture the Flag" in the thick underbrush.

As the Scouts were careful not to damage the property, a close relationship grew between the scouts of Troop 1 and John Murrin. This relationship led to the creation of a permanent camp dedicated to the Catholic Troops of the Fort Worth area. John Murrin was contemplating retirement when he began breaking up his ranch between the Army Corp of Engineers (for the Lake Benbrook Flood Control Project), other acreage was given to his nephew and nieces while one parcel of land (approx 6.5 acres) was given to six Scoutmasters, as a campsite for scouts. The Scoutmasters, Troops and Sponsors are listed in the deed as follows:

Anderson, Harry H. T173. St. Paul's Church
Dauterive, Donald J. T422. St. Peter's Church
Gillespie, J.E. T32. KC #759
Hannon, Gerald E. T31. St. Mary of the Assumption Church
Sievers, Jerry T97. St. Andrews Church
Tout, Elbert H. T101. St. Alice's Church

On June 26th, 1960 Carl King met John Murrin at the entrance to the camp and proceeded on a brisk walk around the perimeter. Once the boundaries were identified, a map was drawn and the deed completed, the land was renamed Camp John Murrin. Although civilization has moved closer to the boundaries of the camp, it is still off the beaten path.

Retreat

Longevity of a program is often based upon the untiring vision of key individuals. The Fort Worth Deanery was already fortunate to have a legend in his own time serving as chairman during its early foundation in 1958. Ole Man was in a position of CCS leadership as a "can do" scouter who had led Troop 32 into each new innovation that the BSA would provide — Senior Scouts, Sea Scouts, Cub Scouts, Ad Altare Dei

Award Program, Air Squadron 32 and the Order of the Arrow. He was finding his way within the CCS when a young scout named Jim Sawey remembers discussions of an annual retreat at the 1960 National Jamboree.

A man of legend and innovation met a man of vision and determination when Robert E. Connelly approached Ole Man. Although a recent transplant from Buffalo, New York, Bob was already a scouter who had experienced scout retreats in his old council. When these scouters finally met, the creation of an annual Catholic Scout Retreat was born. As the first annual retreat came to fruition, the reins of CCS leadership passed to Bob Connelly shortly before his vision became reality.



Rev. Harold Helman looks on as Robert Giebs (center) and Tom Gamble set camp in preparation for the first Catholic Scout Retreat in 1961.

An early organizational meeting for the first scout retreat included Lee Reese, Robert Connelly, Pete Morales, Ole Man, Lupe Felipe, and George Perdue. The location for the event was an easy choice as KC Council #759 was meeting at a local country club which had plenty of open space. As a sponsor of the event, it also allowed use of the KC facilities. Since Troop 32 served as host, Ole Man became Camp Director and KC Pete Morales served on the Food Committee. Bob Connelly assisted Retreat master Rev. John Fowler for the inaugural event on March 3-4, 1961.

The patch designed by the CCS would set the foundation for a design that would be used for the next fourteen annual retreats. The central image of the patch was that of a cross surrounded by letters—“Catholic Scout Retreat ... Longhorn Council.” Since the date was left off the first four retreat patches, it sometimes causes a debate amongst recent historians on which was the first issue.

The success and enthusiasm for the first retreat fueled the anticipation for the next.

Since the retreat had drawn a large number of participants and the award program was inspiring a great number of candidates, the need for additional leadership for the retreat was integral. George Perdue became Chairman of the CCS while Bob Connelly accepted the role as retreat master or general chairman of the second retreat. This leadership framework laid the foundation for the substantial increase in scout participation for the next decade.

Our Lady of Victory High School (later renamed Nolan H.S.) would be secured as the site for the Second Retreat through efforts by Lee Reese. As Food Committee Chairman, Lee worked closely with Father Newman and Brother John Kurz S.M. on location arrangements as well as Mrs. Haubert in the high school cafeteria. Although this would be the last place that the retreat would be held at a non-scout location, it helped the retreat organization grow to a point where the committee could support an annual event at Worth Ranch for the next three years.

Ken Majka was a young scout from Arlington who attended the Second Retreat at Our Lady of Victory High School. He remembers how the scouts were separated by age and that older scouts would join groups discussing sexuality. Despite the serious nature of the talk, he wasn't old enough to grasp the total meaning of what was being said. However, because of heavy rain at the end of the day, everyone had bedded down on the floor of the school gym when "Lights Out" was announced. A few coughs interrupted the silence of the dark gym when suddenly a pebble was heard bouncing against the hardwood floor. Moments later a second pebble skittered across the floor as the silence was broken again. When the third pebble flew, it drew the ire of one unnamed adult as the lights went on. A threat "to get everyone up and run laps" was made in anger by one of the leadership as the lights were cut out once more. Since boys will be boys, it was not long before a lone teenager challenged the leadership by tossing another pebble.

Every single boy was roused out of his sleeping bag and made to run laps around the

parking lot. Boys in pajamas, sweat suits and all manner of garb could be seen shivering as they ran around midnight. After a sufficient number of laps were completed, everyone ventured into the gym. There were two lessons learned that night. 1) Never assemble the whole group in one place to sleep, and 2) never run laps at night. The rising chorus of coughing from every corner of the gym served notice that no one would get much rest that night.

Diocesan Chaplain

When Bishop Gorman adopted the Scouting program by his general efforts, his annual attendance at awards ceremonies, and increased coverage in the Texas Catholic—he appointed several Diocesan Chaplains who would be instrumental in its future—Rev.



Circa 1961. New awardees from T315
(clockwise from top left) Leonard Belota Jr., Frank
Menchaca, Fred Laux, Larry Laux.

Raymond Scott and Rev. William Moran. Their constant correspondence with leaders in the Fort Worth Deanery, the diligent records of boy candidates and the foresight to involve every single unit sponsored by a Catholic institution, was integral as a foundation for a committee that would one day act on its own authority (when the Fort Worth Diocese became a reality). They maintained a list of boy candidates through their contacts on the Fort Worth Deanery Committee. After the list was created they would occasionally follow-up with letters to the committee or to individual units to monitor the progress of these boys towards their awards.

This increased vigilance on the part of the Chaplain was unprecedented and helped raise the level of expectations amongst scouters in the Diocese as well as Longhorn Council. The Fort Worth Deanery began to see itself as an organization able to succeed administering a two-step religious award program. Adult participation within

the Catholic Troops also provided a deepening framework of leadership which lent itself to well orchestrated events. This structure began to emulate a natural progression of men from one position to another (e.g. Asst. Retreat Chairman to Retreat Chairman, etc.). Apart from someone moving out of the area, each scouter knew what he needed to do as the work was evenly divided. In addition, since George Perdue and Lee Reese were influential officers of the Knights of Columbus (KC) Council 759, it also had membership sprinkled throughout the area. KC Councils were influential in sponsoring scout units and in promoting the Catholic Scouting program. Besides sponsoring the first scout retreat, KC Council 759 was integral in providing support for an annual dinner for religious awardees, providing facilities for CCS meetings and offering majestic presence in the form of 4th Degree Knights in full regalia. Although the consistency of Diocesan support, the increase of Catholic units, the mutual interest of all Catholic scout leadership, the resources of the KC's, the unprecedented direction of a Diocesan Chaplin, the success of the first annual retreats and the growing participation in religious awards would seem to announce the zenith of a successful program, it was the selection of one man who would be the key to bringing the program to the next level fueled by the build up of a leadership structure able to meet any challenge.

Religious Scout Renaissance

When Lee Reese, a man of unique rhetoric and writing ability, became the chairman of the Fort Worth Deanery CCS in 1963, it signaled a renaissance of Catholic Scouting. His speaking ability, presence as a Master of Ceremonies at scouting



1963 Religious Awards Ceremony at Sacred Heart Cathedral with Bishop Gorman. Lee Reese (far left) awarded St. George Award as a member of Ft. Worth Deanery. Bishop Gorman (front center), is shown with recipients of the St. George award, Lee Reese Jr., Francis X. Falwell, L.H. Shaffer and George M. Kaler. On back row are Fathers R.J. Scott, John Haugh and William Moran.

events, and easy manner provided the final ingredient in what would become a vibrant scouting organization. With his leadership, the CCS became more than the organizer of religious award ceremonies, it began to take on the outward signs of a committee which could operate on its own merit.

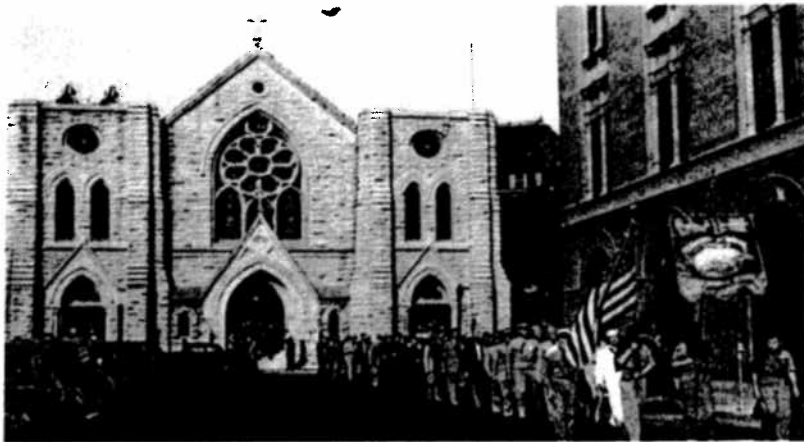
His legacy began with the 3rd Annual Scout Retreat held at Worth Ranch. There were eighteen Troops, two Explorer Posts and two hundred fifty scouts who participated as the Fort Worth Deanery began to rival the Dallas Deanery in program impact. Virtually every Fort Worth Catholic unit was participating, new Catholic units were nearing creation, and the beginnings of religious awards for Cub Scouts ensured a bright future. It was at this moment that Longhorn Council Executive Kirk Henry and CCS Chairman Lee Reese discussed ways to enliven relationships within the council. As a convert to Catholicism, Lee Reese brought the awareness of the teachings of other religious denominations and the unique ability to try something that had never been done before. On Saturday, September 9, 1964 at Texas Wesleyan University, religious ministers of all denominations participated in a banquet which would see scout religious awards presented to over one hundred scouts from forty-five religious institutions. In a letter following the event, Kirk Henry wrote, "This was the best thing that has come down the pike in many a moon and one Lee Reese, to be dang sure, has been and is one of the leading figures in getting the job done." Ecumenical cooperation was prevalent in the years following the unprecedented All Faith Religious Awards ceremony held in 1964.



Circa 1964. Rev. William Moran, Diocesan Scout Chaplain, is leading a discussion during a Catholic Scout Retreat at Worth Ranch.

One of the great wisdoms of Scouting is its acceptance of all religions. Throughout the development and longevity of our CCS for the Diocese of Fort Worth, we have been fortunate to have scouts and religious of other denominations attend and participate in CCS activities. During the 1964 Boy Scout Retreat, Methodist scouts attended

the retreat program and Rev. Erickson conducted Sunday services while Fr. Raymond Scott celebrated Catholic Mass. Similarly, in 1966, Baptist scouts attended the retreat and Rev. Moore conducted Baptist services. It was in this era of religious cooperation that Martin Cannon became the first non-Catholic scout leader to receive the St. George Award in the Diocese of Fort Worth. He was presented the award by Bishop Cassata in ceremonies during 1970. In recent years, families with more than one religion have participated in Catholic Cub Scout Retreats. With a prepared script that has been reviewed by both Catholic and Protestant ministers, Jay Krail (CCSR Program Director) has welcomed several Baptist and Methodist families to participate in retreats exploring our shared Christian beliefs. It is a tribute to Scouting's non-denominational acceptance of greater spiritual enrichment to each boy.



March of Faith. Downtown Ft. Worth. Circa 1940's. Scouts act as an honor guard while active military and KC 4th Degree members follow.

Participation in events outside of its domain was one proof that the CCS was strong and able to extend itself beyond the limits of a committee to administer the religious program. Some

examples: Scouting for Sisters (see I-30), clean up

of Old Calvary Cemetery, involvement in the building of a scout hut (see T314), providing scout altar boys and color guards at Memorial Day Ceremonies at Old Calvary Cemetery, and many other incidental projects they were asked to participate in. Requests from the Scouting District or Longhorn Council to support an event were usually directed to a unit, but with the CCS, it was almost as if it was a separate and distinct district active on the council level for some of Longhorn and Circle Ten events. The core of experience was vast as many scouters had risen through the scouting program as boys and were now providing adult leadership for units. It was not unusual

to have ten to twenty and even thirty years of leadership in every unit throughout the diocese. In addition, many were also members of the Knights of Columbus and active in their parish so the good will between Scouting and sponsor organizations was at its all time high. When Bob Connelly succeeded Lee Reese, The CCS had come of age and its continuity was assured as Bob Connelly maintained the high standards established. This unbroken standard of excellence was validated when the Fort Worth Deanery was asked to conduct the first annual awards ceremony outside of Sacred Heart Cathedral in Dallas. In a triumphant moment of pride, Bishop Gorman congratulated the Fort Worth Deanery for its masterful production of the first annual awards ceremony to be held at St. Patrick's Church. This outward bellwether of how well the committee was organized solidified its status and guaranteed its strong continuation beyond the transition to the new Diocese of Fort Worth. Bishop Gorman held separate awards ceremonies in Dallas and Fort Worth during 1968 before the creation of a new Diocese during 1969.

Catholic Unit Legacies Begin

The quality and quantity of Catholic units was spread throughout the Greater Fort Worth area and in pockets within the Diocese. Each one bringing its own rich heritage and talents to the religious awards program. The commitment of their leadership from the 1920's through the 1950's is evident in the continuation of a vibrant program. The following are accounts of many Catholic units early trials, accomplishments and humorous adventures.

One of the most colorful units was also the first to exist as a Sea Scout group (1940's). Ship 19 Scout Charles Bush, a thin, lanky boy from Fort Worth, was the catalyst that skippered the good ship "Santa Maria" on the high seas of Lake Worth. Sea Scouts wore no preservers, as there were no safety requirements as there are today. Scouts of Ship 19 would hitchhike to Camp Shuman, board the ship and salute the Officer of the Day before setting sail on a weekend of adventure.

Regional Bivouacs were the big event for the Sea Scout Program during the 1940's. "Crews" from all over the southwest met at White Rock Lake in Dallas for a competition sponsored by local sailboat owners. Members of each Sea Scout Ship would be divided up between all the ships and would compete to see who would win the day. One scout from Ship 19 watched as the skipper of his ship drove up, exiting the car in a wheelchair and was assisted to the helm (steering wheel). Although this young scout was apprehensive about their chances, he learned that day that anyone can overcome adversity when their ship won the competition.

While Ship 19 was on one weekend voyage around Lake Worth, Skipper Bush decided to pilot the Santa Maria close to the outer buoys marking the secure water area below the runway at Carswell Air Force Base during WW II. As he steered the craft close to the buoys, two speedboats approaching from the secure area with heavy machine guns mounted on their deck suddenly took the entire crew aback. It was so unexpected that not a word was spoken as he immediately put more space between themselves and the secured area. Luckily, the military speedboats looked ferocious but never made a sound or attempted to hail the crew of Ship 19.

A 40-foot schooner named "The Betsy" was a dual masted ship owned by the Fort Worth Area Council as a result of a donation from the Governor of Texas. On a sunny day in November, sailors of Ship 19 were asked to take a group of Boy Scouts on a cruise of Eagle Mountain Lake. The weather was unseasonably warm as the Betsy set sail. However, they were at the far side of the lake when a "Blue Norther" arrived and boys began congregating around the warm engine of the ship. High winds caused water to break over the ship and ice formed on every part of The Betsy. The severe drop in temperature, force of the wind and the pressure from the sails resulted in a cracked mast. Fortunately, the crew of Ship 19 were spared any repercussions because of the swiftness of the storm and because the weather technology of the day could not have predicted the ferocity of the winds.



Pack 32. Circa 1940's. Cub Scouts repaired toys for St. Theresa's Orphanage.

During the late 1940's, St. Patrick's Church (downtown Fort Worth) and Msgr. J. O'Donoghue sponsored Cub Scout Pack 32. Boys from the Pack appear in a Star Telegram pictorial on December 21, 1949 after having repaired toys that would be delivered to St. Theresa's Orphanage. Among the nine boys who appeared, Ken Potempa and David Nichols would go on to achieve Eagle Scout. Many Catholic units through the years would also participate in good turns for the children of the orphanage until it left the Fort Worth area several decades later.



Albert O'Neal (standing far left), OA Lodge Chief dressed in Indian outfit that helped win National OA Dance Team honors during 1956.

Scouting was an outlet for many volunteers to get past the horrors of World War II and promote the ideal of world brotherhood to youth. Cooperation became common as Troop 32 adults were instrumental in the creation and continuation of Troop 15 (All Saints Church) and Troop 34 (St. George's Church). Scouts from each of the units participated in a 1951 Philmont Trek, a contingent to the 1953 National Jamboree and as Indian dancers in the national OA

Dance Team Championship during 1956. This camaraderie also resulted in an unprecedented effort by Knights of Columbus Council 759 to build a scout hut (1953) in which scouts and leaders of the area could meet.

One of the benefits of Postwar America was the influx of military men and volunteers within scouting. Many of these men had lived their whole adult life according to the

methods they had to abide by during military life. So it was inevitable that the discipline, the leadership structure and the emphasis on uniforms became commonplace in Scouting. Although many units adopted this style during the 1950's and 60's, SM Ben Ford of Troop 97 was one of the more prominent proponents of order and discipline. Initially, he ran the troop as a military unit. Occasionally when meetings were getting out of hand, he would adopt "left face, right face" drills to regain control. Each patrol stood behind their Patrol Leader (who held the patrol flag) at attention until each group broke up into patrol corners. Uniform inspections each meeting and protocol regarding display and ceremonial use of the American Flag were strictly adhered to. Ben Ford's management style, also used by many others, gradually changed with the advent of Woodbadge style leadership methods. However, Ben's influence grew T97 from a unit of thirty scouts to one, which had one hundred boys.

Although the Longhorn Council provided Worth Ranch for camping, some troops had the luxury of private camping areas. Several relationships began during Scout Sunday at St. Alice's Church resulted in the donation of Camp Murrin to the catholic units of the area. Troop 1 (renamed Troop 101) and its devotion to the Scouting code was responsible for this legacy left to the hundreds of boys who have camped along the creekbed of Camp Murrin.

As Air Power rose in prominence during World War II, Air Squadron 32 was formed during the late 1950's as an Exploring unit dedicated to this emerging science. Air Squadron 32 participated in notable activities such as scout flights from Meacham Air Field in Fort Worth to Greater Southwest Airport (close to present-day DFW Airport) in order to tour Jesuit High School and visit with priests of the Jesuit Order. Some scouts used this opportunity to complete their pilgrimage requirement for the Ad Altare Dei award.

A fresh afternoon rain had fallen as the final rays of the sun were peeking over the Tooth of Time. As the purple sunset reigned over Philmont, each boy had persevered over his

own doubts, had learned the value of teamwork, and felt the inner glow that can only be summed up in one word – confidence. Philmont Scout Ranch was the destination and Ole Man was the advisor during 1951 when senior scouts of Troops 32 and 15 visited. Under individual accomplishments, Northwest Texas Council

Nick Oeschner IV (T13) attended Philmont during 1949 as a Junior Geologist. He was one of three scouts selected from Northwest Texas Council for a geological exploration

expedition. Troop 509, Troop 97, Troop 497, and a host of other units have taken on the challenge of the Philmont mountains successfully.

Growth of the Boy Scout program was being fueled by the increase of the Cub Scout program. Since membership was growing, it was only natural that religious awards would also be extended to the Cub Scouts. When the Ad Altare Dei award had become well entrenched and the successful



Circa 1963. Fr. John Matzner, Pastor of Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish blesses a flag which has flown over the United States Capitol in Washington. Scouts of T13, holding the flag are: (L to R) Paul Pusko, John Foley, Paul Knuckley, Harold Horry, Henry Litteken, Ray Mathe and John Choens. The flag was obtained for Our Lady Q of P School at the request of John A. Bindel, OLQP parishoner, from the Hon. Graham Purcell, Representative from the 13th District of Texas. A letter of certification from George Stewart, Architect of the Capitol, was attached.



Circa 1960's. Fr. Francis Hardy presented the Parvuli Dei medals to the above Cub Scouts, Pack 34, of St. George Parish. L to R, back row, are: Bobby Bourland, Bill Gilliland, Mrs. Ray Circe, Den Mother, Fr. Hardy, Mike Wysatta and Kenneth Haidusek. Front row, L to R, are: Roy Soto, Gary Whitaker, Ron Circe, Donald St. John and Steven Behl. Kevin O'Kane who was not photographed, also rec'd the Parvuli Dei award.

emergence of the Cub Scout program was apparent, the Parvuli Dei award was unveiled during 1956 as a national Catholic religious award for Cub Scouts. Since the outset of the Cub Scout Awards program, they had always been treated on a separate level and administered within the local parish. Since the nature of scout adults participating in this program were always transitioning to Boy Scouts, there was never a cohesive group of adults available to organize. One of the early pioneers of this

award was a Den Mother of Pack 34 – Mrs. Ann St. John. Several of her Parvuli Dei “classes” appear in group pictures during the 60’s with Msgr. Hartnett of St. George’s Church, and include a number of scouts who would later excel at the Boy Scout level (Joe and Donald St. John, Ken Haidusek). For her early unprecedented work, Mrs. Ann St. John would be awarded the St. George Award before a major illness would restrict her work. Despite the emotional setback in the St. John family, her son Donald would later achieve the Altare Dei award, Eagle Scout and become Indian Dance Champion



Circa Feb. 1966. Boy Scout Week was highlighted in Wichita Falls by the presentation Feb. 13 of the Parvuli Dei Catholic scouting award to eight Cub Scouts of Pack 13, Sacred Heart Parish. Shown above with their pastor, Msgr. Vincent F. Micola, who made the presentation, the Scouts are, (L to R) Daniel Crommett, Alfred French, Patrick Mitchell, Michael Mitchell, Joseph Plorot, Steven Moore, Daniel Ruddy and Michael Honkomp.



Eight Cub Scouts received the Parvuli Dei award
Pack 434. Circa 1972. Paul Arrambide, BSA National Director, presents Cub Scouts their Parvuli Dei awards.

in the Lodge 489 Dance Team. Her son Joe would also achieve the Ad Altare Dei award, participate as a member of Lodge 489 Dance Team champions and become a founding member and Officer of one of the first Coed Explorer Posts in the Region. In another area of the Diocese, Msgr. Vincent Micola presented eight Cub Scouts the Parvuli Dei Awards as the first known awardees within Northwest Texas Council (2/26/66). Later, Cub Scouts of Pack 97 (5/27/77; 4/6/84; 5/31/69), Pack 15 (4/29/77) and Pack 180 (1981) appear in Texas Catholic newspapers. The type of recognition ceremony within each parish varied but rewarded the boys and promoted awareness of the program. Since many of the Cub Scout awardees would later achieve the Ad Altare Dei award, the general increase in participation of religious awards was ensured from the late 50's through the late 60's.

Emergence of Exemplary Unit Programs

One of the lifeblood characteristics of a good Boy Scout unit is its consistency of program and its leadership. Once a unit builds a foundation where each scout "knows how things are done," the unit has a life of its own where the boys run the program and the adults advise. As the leadership from many of the local Catholic Troops began to meet as a committee to administrate the Catholic Religious Awards Program, a tradition began to evolve which would reach heights never expected. The Committee reflected the strength of each Catholic Troop and the resolve of its leadership to raise the respect of the Ad Altare Dei Award to that approaching Eagle Scout.

Long time volunteers, such as Ole Man, were prevalent in many units throughout the Diocese. One of these perennial supporters of the religious program was Troop 152 Scoutmaster Lupe Felipe. Still another was Troop 315 Scoutmaster John Hernandez. They were instrumental in bringing Catholic Scouting and the rich Hispanic culture to the CCS from boys living in the north side of Fort Worth. On one such occasion, Lupe made an expedition to the Diocese of Houston's Boy Scout Retreat in order to experience how other scouters conducted a religious retreat program. The CCS was

looking for more ideas when they participated in a Catholic Scout Camp-O-Ree competition at Camp Strake in the morning and a Boy Scout Retreat in the evening. The pine needles cracking under their feet and the presence of a water moccasin during a canoe race made this a memorable event. The tall skyscraper trees and swampy landscape provided a sharp contrast to short stubby trees at Camp Leonard. The Bishop of the Diocese attended the event in full scout uniform and said the mass at the close of the retreat. Although this experience was illuminating, it gave attendees a broader vision where different styles of program were not immediately dismissed.

One cannot speak of leadership without mentioning the year in and year out dedication of scouters from Troop 97, Troop 497 and Trinity Trails District in south Fort Worth. Legendary scouter Bob Connelly (See Profile Section), James Sawey (See Profile section), and Dr. Sid Holleman Jr. (See Profile Section) are among many who have kept



Bob Connelly. Circa 1995. Co-Founder of Boy Scout Retreats within the diocese held from 1961 to present day.

the light of Catholic religious programs burning during thick and thin. This adult leadership, along with a presence of scouts



Circa 1975. James Sawey, left, (attendee of every retreat), and Dr. Sid Holleman Jr. (Retreat Chairman 1974/75) receive St. George Award from Bishop Cassata.

from these troops, provided the staffing for dozens of retreats and awards Sundays hosted by the CCS.

The length and breadth of the CCS was not without its participation in the time-honored traditions of the Scouting Good Turn. From 1962 through 1964, the Scouting for Sisters (Scout Show for nuns) program was held near the grounds of the University of Dallas in Irving, TX. Over 175 sisters enjoyed scout skills on one day in which CCS members from Fort Worth and Dallas participated. On the level of the individual unit, T507 assisted in polio immunizations at Jefferson High School in Grand Prairie (1963), scouts of T32 in "Get out the vote" campaign (1950's), and scores of units in the annual "Scouting for Food." During the 1990's, Pack 850 was recognized with having donated the most poundage of any pack in the Roadrunner District during its annual participation, Pack 777 planted trees provided by the Army Corp of Engineers at Silver Lake Campgrounds on Grapevine Lake and earned a conservation award while conducting needed community service, while Troop 7 scouts worked with the local Lion's Club to provide safe, convenient parking for participants of Grapefest in downtown Grapevine.

What New York was to the immigrants of the world, Scouting is to cultures and faiths of boys everywhere. However, one unit, which has personified a "melting pot" of international flavor, was Troop 314. Throughout most of its history were boys of Caucasian, Spanish, African and Vietnamese descent. Those of poor consequences from St. Theresa's Orphanage also found a home with this unique group. It was this group of scouts that were the receiving end of an unprecedented effort by the CCS to build a scout hut on the grounds of Holy Name Church. Once built, it was furnished with a storage room, benches and a fireplace before the Bishop dedicated it in the early 60's. After James Farek took over as Scoutmaster, a friend of his from a new troop in the Como area asked if his unit could accompany Troop 314 on a campout. Both units traveled to Benbrook Lake and camped near the beach before beginning a conservation project. They spent all morning working side by side clearing brush and

piling it up for the Army Corp of Engineers to take care of. However, a storm blew in during the afternoon and dumped torrential rains down upon the scouts. As the scouts waited for the rain to subside, the leaders noticed the lake water was approaching their tents as well as cutting them off from the roadway out of the camping area. They hurriedly packed their personal belongings, left the tents secured and drove out before being cut off by the rising water. As they drove out, their hearts sank as they watched the neatly stacked piles of wood reduced to floating limbs scattered over the entire area. On another occasion, the troop had wandered outside the confines of the Worth Ranch fence line near the shores of the

Brazos River. It was a long time practice of the troop to choose one scout to lead the troop and keep an eye out for "snakes." However, most boys disregarded the snake threat as another unnecessary adult safeguard. After taking a break, SM Farek requested one boy be "point man" to look for snakes as they made their way back out of the wilderness area. There were so many volunteers that he devised a scheme to narrow the choice to one boy. Once organized, they began to hike single file down the trail singing and talking towards the Worth Ranch Boat Docks. Suddenly, the "point" man spied a snake not fifty yards from where they started as it began to cross the trail. The nonchalant hikers quickly turned to white eyed alert scouts with a new appreciation for adult warnings.

John Wayne emulating the characteristics of Davy Crockett in The Alamo, Tom Cruise taking on the characteristics of a heroic fighter pilot in Top Gun, or Luke Skywalker following the good vibrations found in the force, are heroes worthy of outward



Circa 1971. Harry K. Werst, President of Longhorn Council, joins Frank Artega, a boy from T314, representing the 250,000th Boy Scout registered within Longhorn Council since 1920.

recognition. So too are scouts looking up to scout adults who have achieved great things in the Scouting Program. In an effort to recognize those adults who have earned religious awards as boys, Bob Connelly proposed a square knot to be worn by adults. Besides recognition, this has an added effect of giving religious awards added prominence and allows a presence seen by the young boys looking up to their scout leaders. Young men wishing to emulate the accomplishments of their leaders is another way to invigorate the Scouting Religious Award Program. The BSA acknowledged the intrinsic value of this recognition when it officially approved the religious knot during 1969.



Ole Man Campsite Gateway, Worth Ranch, Longhorn Council

A special relationship had grown between Longhorn Council Scout Executive Kirk Henry and Ole Man Gillespie during the 1960's. When Kirk Henry heard that Troop 32 was secretly working on a 40th Anniversary celebration that would honor Ole Man's devotion to Scouting, he became a very special part of it by approving the creation of a new

campsite at Worth Ranch. On Sunday June 30, 1968, Ole Man Gillespie Campsite was dedicated to a legend in his own time at his favorite camp. Sunday services were celebrated by three of his Eagle Scouts: two Catholic priests and one Baptist Minister.

Although the CCS follows Roman Catholic Theology with regard to program, there have been some men who have transcended the boundaries of religion and patriotism in molding young men. Frank Pellizzari Jr., Scoutmaster in Breckenridge and a scouter of Comanche Trail Council, is a "man for all seasons." W.G. "Bud" Arnot, Chief Justice of the 11th Court of Appeals in Eastland, recalled how Pellizzari stressed faith in God and went to great lengths "to eat only fish on Fridays when we were camping out." On trips, scouts also went to Mass with him, "no matter what religion."



Frank Pellizzari Jr.

Arnot, A Baptist Deacon whose grandfather was President of Hardin-Simmons University explained, "I was very fortunate to grow up in Breckenridge and have a role model like Frank Pellizzari Jr." Arnot, who at the age of thirteen became the youngest Eagle Scout in the nation in 1964, owes no small debt to a man who saved soles (Frank was a shoe repair man) for a living. It took a man of his stature to help establish a foothold in Comanche Trail Council for religious Scouting programs in the Diocese of Fort Worth. Since Comanche Trail Council is divided between the Diocese of San Angelo and the outskirts of the Diocese of Fort Worth, it is a council that does not have a catholic unit as a CCS foundation in the area. During the 60's, long distance phone calls, long hours in a car going to CCS events, and timely communication were all part of trying to maintain the presence of the CCS in Breckenridge. Frank made a religious awards program come alive with twice the effort and half the resources than those living in Fort Worth.

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)

with virtually no equipment and 18 Tenderfoot scouts, many of the families could not afford the expense of new uniforms and the basic equipment necessary to belong. So Ernie Doclar and Raul Chavez initiated a program where notices in the St. Francis Sunday Bulletin prompted donations of used scout uniforms and equipment. When boys from St. Theresa's Orphanage and the Lena Pope Home were members of T32, sponsor and individuals of KC 759 would always respond to specific requests to help provide a young boy with the essential needs.

New Era Peaks, Declines and Re-Emerges

The great successes of the 60's and early 70's could not have foreseen the coming challenges of the 80's. There were a number of factors influencing this trend. The core of leadership in the CCS and Catholic units was declining as long time Scoutmasters began to "retire" after decades of leadership. The baby boom of the 50's provided the huge increase in boy participation in the 60's and 70's but dropped precipitously in the 80's. The war in Vietnam, the loss of available clergy, the drop in United Way funding to the BSA, and the divorce rate were all harbingers of tough times. Scouting was not alone as membership and participation in the Knights of Columbus also felt the impact. Since the leadership and experience of long time Scoutmasters could not be replaced, and the commitment of the new leadership to the CCS was not as strong, the religious awards program also faltered. As Diocesan Chaplains were reassigned, their diligence could not match earlier days as the burden of priests was becoming too great. With the structure of the CCS faltering and the failure of Catholic units rising, attendance dropped and annual awardees were under a dozen. Since there were not as many priests, the program was in a fundamental crisis.

Great challenges often draw the talents of great leaders. The first woman chairman of the CCS, Irene Herring, had already been involved in Catholic Scouting several years before taking the helm during the 70th Anniversary of Scouting in 1980. She had begun her Scouting career as Den Mother before becoming Scout Assistant, Co-Roundtable

Chairman and perennial member of the CCS. Being Woodbadge trained, she also used these principles to adopt new innovations to a program that was faltering. Everywhere one turned, the challenges to scouting itself were unprecedented to a program that was second to none during the 1950's. However, the openness to new innovations was integral for turning the tide. Scouter development adult training, combining Cub, Boy Scout and Girl Scout awards ceremonies, travel to outlying churches to present awards, and maintaining contact with religious awards counselors throughout the diocese were all necessary for the program to prevail.



Circa 1973. Medical Officer Irene Herring (future CCS Chairman) serves as an injured subject for scouts Tom Smith and Tom Perdue at 1973 Scout Show.

When a boy is on the trail to Eagle, he witnesses the recognition of his peers each step of the way during every Troop Court of Honor. When the CCS realized this natural reinforcement on the Troop level could be brought to the



Circa 1985. Fifteen Muenster Cub Scouts receive the Parvuli Dei Award from CCS Officers during ceremonies held at Sacred Heart Church in Wichita Falls, Texas.

religious awards on the Diocesan level, work was underway to combine Cub Scout, Girl Scout and Boy Scout religious awards ceremonies. During 1986, this important



Circa 1985. Four Muenster Boy Scouts receive the Ad Altare Dei Award in ceremonies held by Bishop Joseph Delaney. (Two girl awardees are also from Muenster)

innovation began another tradition that would reap the goal of increased Ad Altare Dei awardees in later years. However, the desire to expand the program to outlying areas of the Diocese demanded unprecedented effort. Buck Rogers, James Sawey, Rich Lockwood, and Bill Miller were among local CCS members who traveled to Muenster and Wichita Falls to present religious awards in order to invigorate the program and encourage participation. These early efforts in the 80's paid off in record numbers of scout awardees during the 90's. Because of this

effort, it is not uncommon for a boy to achieve two Cub Scout and two Boy Scout religious awards while obtaining their Arrow of Light and Eagle Scout Award.



Scout Sunday. Circa 1993. SM of Troop 13 Fred Novak and scout J.W. Pogue finish setting a model campsite on the grounds of Sacred Heart Church in Wichita Falls.

One of the greatest moments of Scouting is also amongst the holiest. Scout Sunday has become a way to recognize the many adult volunteers, the hard earned awards of each boy and also serve as an opportunity for each scout to participate as altar boy, reader, greeter, or Eucharistic minister while wearing scout uniforms in their

parish. On February 7, 1993, Scoutmaster Fred Novak and scout J.W. Pogue appeared in the North Texas Catholic after building a model campsite on the church

grounds of Sacred Heart Church in Wichita Falls. St. Andrews Church (T97), Holy Family Church (T101), and St. Francis (T7), have celebrated the same occasion for decades as a chance to show off Scouting spirit and invite new members. On Scout Sunday during 1980, adults of St. Francis (Grapevine) set up camp, cooked biscuits on



COR Ernie Doclar (left) and SM of Troop 7 Dave Creeger accept the Pope Paul VI Unit Recognition from Bishop Joseph Delaney during 1989 Annual Award Ceremonies.

a stick and bacon on a rock while answering prospective members questions. With Fr. Balthasar Szarka singing the praises of Scouting in his sermon, T7 went from inactive status and zero members to active status and eighteen new scouts the next evening. Louis Mathews, an Eagle Scout from 1919, came out of "retirement" and told the new boys of the early days of scouting while giving a few camping tips. Another time-honored practice is the Father/Son Camping Weekend where sons can impress their fathers with skills learned in the outdoors. During T507's acknowledgement of Scouting Anniversary month in 1963, Scoutmaster Bill Lepenski combined forces with Explorer Post 196 for a weekend of Father/Son camping skills at the Ed Adamcik farm in south Grand Prairie. After a day of scout skills and training, Ed Luloff was inducted into the troop during an evening campfire full of comedy skits and group songs.

Another shining light of the period was the appointment of a Diocesan Chaplain who had been a member of T97 and was awarded the Ad Altare Dei Award during 1964. Fr. John Hennessey, the second Ad Altare Dei awardee to become Diocesan Chaplain, inherited a program which required a Herculean effort to survive the challenge of the 80's. It is a tribute to his knowledge of Scouting, to his invaluable work and presence that the religious award program did not go inactive.



Circa 1982. Catholic Scouts and Scouters were honored April 18 in special ceremonies at St. Pat's Cathedral. Recipients of awards included Ad Altare Dei Awards were Carlos Flored, Curtis Boemer, Kenneth James, Andrew Martinez, David Heise, George Berry, Stephen Lucas, Charles Rhodes, Paul Herrera, Jeffrey Lanzaarotti and Derek Percy. Earning the Pius XII award were Tony Miller, David Miller and Tony Moosey. The St. Elizabeth Seton award went to Mrs. Peggy Hart and Father John Hennessey and the Bronze Pelican award went to Father Hennessey, Father Bill Paiz, Douglas Gardiner, Father Karl Schilken and Arlen Voldness. The St. George award was presented to Anne Mack and Bill Lauree.

The ultimate Scouting fellowship is had by each scout who has ever had the opportunity to participate in a National Scouting Jamboree experience. Steven Spielberg, President Bush, Shuttle Astronauts, Olympic Athletes, Country and Western Singers, Miss Teenage America and a host of legendary personalities drop by to

visit the 40,000-scout campsite once every four years. Perennial Retreat Cook and future CCS Chairman, Buck Rogers, was selected Scoutmaster of the 1977 Longhorn Council Contingent Troop 582-2. Scouts of Troops 32 and 34 participated in the trip that continues to live large in the hearts of each boy. Torrential rains flooded half the Jamboree site but left T582-2 relatively unscathed. Recent Olympic Decathlon Champion Bruce Jenner walked through their campsite, Miss Teenage America posed for pictures with them, and a couple of scouts were treated to an exclusive concert by Burl Ives. Before the Jamboree, scouts visited the Gettysburg Battlefield, the Smithsonian and walked the streets of Washington DC like their predecessors did forty years earlier. Speaker of the House Jim Wright, took 160 Fort Worth scouts on a tour of the Capital Building and had a picture made on the steps that appeared in the Longhorn Council Pacesetter. Scout Correspondent, Brian Hedgecoke, was awarded a Jamboree Typewriter for his stories sent home. However, one scout from a fatherless family wanted to attend but may never have gotten the chance because finances were tight. When KC 759 Grand Knight Baldwin "Baldy" Stanton heard of this predicament, he got up in the middle of a closed KC meeting and made a speech about the qualities

of this one scout and that his dream was to attend the National Jamboree with his friends. They passed the hat and a young man's wish came true. Before the 1977 Jamboree, the tradition began when Ole Man Gillespie and scout A.L. Crouch attended the First National Jamboree (1937) and participated in a parade (which included President Franklin Roosevelt), witnessed the Worth Ranch Trek Cart involved in competition, and an Arena Show in the shadow of the Washington Monument. Frank Pellizzari Jr, a participant of this same Jamboree from Breckenridge Texas (Comanche Trail Council), was an Eagle Scout entrusted with the responsibility of running the Cowboys and Indians portion of the Arena Show. Every participant from Comanche Trail Council had constructed a full Indian costume and performed according to Frank's direction. After WWII, scouts of Troop 32 and Troop 15 went by train to Irvine Ranch, CA for the 1953 National Jamboree where they were visited by movie stars, participated in a massive outdoor mass with the Archbishop of Los Angeles while enjoying the company of contingent troops from every country in the free world. The 1960 National Jamboree was also the 50th Anniversary of Scouting where eight scouts from Troop 32 and Ole Man Gillespie (Quartermaster) were part of Longhorn Council Contingent Troop 58. Frank Donnelly, a young "Steven Spielberg," learned how to use a 16mm movie camera and caught Vice President Richard Nixon as well as President Eisenhower on tape during their visit to the Jamboree in Colorado Springs. It was during this Jamboree that discussions were initially held regarding the very first Boy Scout Retreat.

A significant event in the Catholic church both locally and in the Vatican occurred during the 1980's. Pope John Paul II was elected as the first non Italian Pope in decades, Bishop Joseph Delaney replaced Bishop John Cassata within the Diocese of Fort Worth, and five scouters were recognized as having attended each of twenty-five Boy Scout Retreats (1961-1985). The 25th Anniversary Retreat (1985) was a high water mark in the history of the CCS as Bishop Delaney celebrated mass during the retreat.



Bishop Joseph Delaney

As the first Bishop to celebrate mass during a retreat, he reaffirmed his concern for today's youth and reminisced on his own activities as a Boy Scout.

Since Bishop Delaney was entrusted with the leadership of our Diocese during 1981, he has been one of the most active supporters amongst public officials in the area. In his homily during the 1993 Annual Religious Awards Ceremony, he expressed his appreciation saying "Without your long hours and great effort, the Scouting Program would not be possible in the Diocese," He went on to say that the work of Christ in Scouting is served by sharing the Good News with each boy. The Bishop addressed



Circa 1946. Eagle Scout and Ad Altare Dei awardee Joe Schumacher (now Msgr. Schumacher).

the honorees, "It is fitting that we celebrate the awards and the commitment of the recipients to serve one another. Appreciate what it means to be a child of God. In what people see you do and say will they find the presence of Christ. These symbols stand for the commitment to share Christ's love with others, and to fulfill Jesus' command we must serve others as he has served us." He continued speaking for vocations, "I trust that God will call some of you here to the priesthood or religious life." Truly, it is a fact not lost in the diocese that Fr. Joe Scantlin, Fr. Tim Thompson, Fr. Robert Wilson, and Msgr. Joseph Schumacher were all scouts as boys, and have served many communities around this diocese.

"Never break a promise to a kid" was one motto that John Hernandez recalls as longtime Scoutmaster of Troop 315 sponsored by All Saints Church in Fort Worth. His steadfast devotion to this policy, along with the promise to go camping once a month, offered several moments for him to reconsider. His convictions may have realized a moment of doubt as he watched his scouts cook tacos in the snow more than once. However, in retrospect, the satisfaction it gave young boys to overcome the elements helped give each scout the confidence to achieve greater

things. As Scoutmaster of Troop 315 one of the greatest achievements of his scouts lives was overcoming obstacles to win 17 Presidential Awards at District Camporees. Just like the summer camp in 1985 that was over 106 degrees, another significant challenge was not enough to hold back the desire of young men striving to be their best.

As Senior Scouts achieve Eagle Scout and the Ad Altare Dei Award, they look for bigger challenges worthy of their confidence. Troop 509 focused on a virtually unknown program amongst Texas Scouters – Florida Sea Base. The degree of interest was so great that they filled two sailboats. They flew into Miami and went through initial orientation as each sailboat had an experienced captain while the scouts made up the crew. Both groups stayed overnight on their 45 foot Morgan Class sailboat as they sailed their way to Key West Florida. After touring the city, they sailed back to Sea Base and enjoyed snorkeling amongst small barracuda and an eel. One last adventure was had by one sailboat as the experienced captain ran aground on a sand bar.

A particularly poignant message was written by Bishop Advisor Kenny to the NCCS during the beginning of scouting re-emergence. "Many of our youth today are struggling with an identity crisis and problems that growing up in these times often create. Boys involved in Scouting experience, and girls as well in Exploring, have a real advantage in coming to know themselves, in establishing clear and personal ideals, and in attaining skills that will give direction to their lives." Bishop Kenny promoted the aims of the NCCS and its local CCS affiliates by clarifying the religious dimension in Scouting. "Through the religious emblems program, scouts have an opportunity to broaden their knowledge and understanding of their faith and to engage in regular service to their local churches. Through the presence and activity of Scout Chaplains, scouts have an opportunity to develop personal relations with priests and religious outside the customary church and social settings." In addition, boys and leaders are "Frequently called upon to lead religious services, to help out at the parish or diocesan activities, to engage in programs directed toward justice and charity, the Scouts have an opportunity to experience and be a part of the church in ways that are both vital and personal."

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 Janiszeski 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 Connely 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 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.



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

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 Janiszeski (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.



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

During 1998, the CCS became aware of one unit, which was resurrected by a

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

themselves at the Last Supper with Jesus Christ. Fr. Lawrence Gould, St. Francis Cabrini pastor, celebrated Mass and invited our Cub Scout "Choir" to perform the "Awesome God" song using hand signals after the beginning of Mass. Cub Scouts assisted by presenting the gifts during the Sunday readings, and bringing their Last Supper poster boards forward and placing them on the altar.

Patches and awards were presented recognizing the Pack with the most attendees (Pack 434), those who drove the farthest (Penny Webb - Burkburnet; Nystrom family – Muenster), and a plaque of appreciation thanking the congregation of St. Francis Cabrini for the use of their facilities.

Lone Star Trade O Ree (LST)

When David threw the moneychangers out of the temple in the Old Testament, the concept of money became an instant dilemma – Was it good or was it bad? The CCS has always been politically correct and answered, we don't know because we don't have any! However, the rise of other scout programs competing for the same pool of boys has required the CCS to "put our best foot forward" with a clear, concise message in order to retain and increase participation. Since there is a cost to educating new Cub Scout families, reaching Boy Scouts active in non Catholic units, and communicating the high spiritual quality of a retreat program, the board of the LST agreed to change the direction of its fund raising dollars to that of religious Scouting programs.

What is a Trade O Ree? During the year 2001, this event will celebrate its 14th year of successfully raising funds. Initially, the LST was founded by John Ryan to help ease the burden of local boys traveling each summer to Philmont Scout Ranch. Since 1987, boys from twenty troops, twenty-two packs, and a couple of scouts flying in from Japan have all benefited. Although scout memorabilia is its primary interest, the LST has expanded to provide eleven years of Cub Scout Akela Conclaves, memorabilia coaching sessions, a youth auction (giving away \$300 worth of patches), Beanie Baby

Extravaganza (1999-2000) and a Pokemon Night during this last year. During the last two years, funds have provided a Cub Scout Retreat Video featuring every participant at our 1998 event. This video serves as a promotional tool to educate families (new to Scouting) on what a retreat is. Cloth for 200 neckerchiefs, retreat camperships, Jubilee 2000 Patch, and assisting in the cost of publishing this history are among the many uses of our hard earned dollars.

The LST and the CCS owes a debt of no small proportion to Fr. Ken Robinson and the St. Francis of Assisi Community (Grapevine) for its willingness to provide a location for this event. In addition, free advertising from the American Scouting Traders Association (A.S.T.A.), a nationwide club of scout memorabilia collectors, continues to be another key factor in the success of our mission. Finally, Troop 7 must be thanked for providing tasty grilled hamburgers "with all the fixin's" for over a decade of service to the Roadrunner District and the CCS.

The Sign of Peace for the 1999 Boy Scout Retreat was barely given when thoughts of the Year 2000 40th Anniversary Retreat began coming to mind. Scouter Pat Burke came forward and began work on the concept of our next retreat with the theme "Faith Through the Ages." Early church development (Mike Wuller/Daniel Scott), "Flaming" Board, symbols of the church (James Ramsey/Mike Thornburg), history of the Bible (Pat Burke), Retreat Jeopardy, and a Living Rosary were all being finalized by the Boy Scouts while a Cub Scout "Reconciliation" script (Jay Krail), healing re-enactment (Chris Sohn) and selecting music for mass were all a part of a



Circa 1996. Scouter Pat Burke (top left), joins Yvette Crumley, Molly Carr and Genni Sayers in preparing the music for retreat mass.

summer planning meeting. Mrs. Terry Spitler volunteered her guitar accompaniment as the CCS practiced the "Children of God" song and discussed a few ideas for the anniversary dinner on Saturday night of the retreat.

This is not the end, it is only a signpost on the highway we are all traveling to improve and enrich our own understanding of our faith. Like the words of Thomas Jefferson, "Dreams of the future are better than the history of the past." Our optimism and the ability to reach scouts across the universe of the web, the inspired program innovations from new scouts to the CCS, the solid foundation and tradition of those gone before us, and the excitement that a new century promises are all indicators that what we approach before us is greater and brighter than what we have left behind us. Carpe Diem.

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