

2023-24 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding provides an agreement between the Catholic Diocese of Arlington, the parish, and the scouting leaders identified on the following page commencing September 1, 2023 and ending September 30, 2024. Because within a parish program all bear similar responsibility to witness to Church teaching on essential matters of family and morality, this agreement applies to Catholic and non-Catholic leaders in all parish scouting-like/outdoor adventure organizations (e.g., American Heritage Girls, Camp Fire, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Trail Life, Troops of St. George, etc.).

Catholic scouting can contribute immeasurably to a youth's spiritual development and appreciation of God's role in a youth's life. Scouting, in a Catholic context, should promote healthy personal and spiritual growth, leadership, and an appreciation for, support of, and commitment to God, community, and country. Scouting has had a profound impact in many parish communities and we believe it will continue to do so in our parish community. The Catholic scouting religious recognitions and activities offered by our parish and youth ministry programs should be an important part of unit activities and complementary to the formal religious education and other youth ministry opportunities offered within the parish.

To support these youth, **the Diocese agrees to:**

- Provide training to those interested in religious recognition programs;
- Provide information to help scouting leaders share information about religious activities, emblems and other religious recognition with their units;
- Provide information about spiritually engaging activities for youth and adult scouting leaders;
- Support a diocesan committee on Catholic scouting to provide guidance to units and support for religious programs;
- Provide guidelines related to youth safety and protection to be followed by scouting units (in addition to any required by the scouting organization).

To support these youth, **the Pastor or Administrator agrees to:**

- Support this scouting or outdoor adventure group;
- Consider requests for space, support and financial assistance;
- Encourage the Director of Youth Ministry and scouting leaders to collaborate as appropriate in youth outreach and development;
- Consider his or a designee's participation in scouting activities (Mass for scouting, retreats, unit activities, etc.);
- Review and consider for approval the adult leaders of the scouting program(s) operating on the premises of the parish or school with the understanding they will lead in accord with the policies and procedures of the Diocese and parish;
- Review any concerns related to the scouting programs' alignment with Catholic teachings and diocesan policies and procedures.

To support these youth, **as a Scouting Leader in our parish's Catholic unit I agree to:**

- Observe and act consistently with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church on matters of faith and morals, including, but not limited to matters related to respect for human life, human sexuality, and marriage;
- Ensure that all leaders and volunteers also observe and act consistently with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church on matters of faith and morals, including, but not limited to matters related to respect for human life, human sexuality, and marriage;
- Observe and abide by the policies, objectives, aims and practices of the Diocese and this parish and/or school;
- Observe and abide by all policies and protections put in place by the parish and Diocese related to child and youth safety and protection, including ensuring that leaders and volunteers are in full compliance with the diocesan child protection policies;
- Notify scouting youth and parents about scouting-specific religious activities and recognitions available to them (more information can be found at www.arlingtondiocese.org/youth-ministry);
- Request the permission of the Pastor or Administrator prior to taking any youth to an event or discussion or making use of materials in which it is likely that the topics of abortion or human sexuality will be addressed in a manner contrary to Church teaching;
- Be alert to the possibility that situations may arise (at the parish or in another locale) in which youth or leaders may be exposed to materials or a speaker or other person whose message is contrary to Church teachings; avoid such situations to the extent possible; and promptly report to the Pastor or Administrator any such situations which do occur;
- Provide a signed copy of this agreement to the parish.

