



Capitol Area Council, Texas



Chaplain Handbook
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Introduction

The materials presented here are made available by the CAC Chaplain Corps. The materials have been placed here as a reference and resource to other Scouts, Chaplains and Chaplain Aides.

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Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Manual for Chaplains	4
Manual For Troop Chaplain	5
Manual for Chaplain Aides	9
Troop Worship Opportunities	10
Scouting And Religious Organizations	12
A Scout's Duty to God and Country ©1998-99	12
The Bedrock of Scouting Values	13
Local Council Relationships Committee	26
Other Resources	27
Prayers	27
Youth Protection Materials	27
Ethics and Morals	27
Prayers	28
Counseling and Parental Helps	28
Child Grief Counseling	29
Counseling and Parental Helps	30
Roundtable Materials	32
Graces, Prayers, Songs, Services, and Closings	32

11/17/04 Version 2.1- Added new sections in Manual for Troop Chaplain, more resources, CAC website references, reformatted

Manual for Chaplains ^{1[1]}

To serve as a chaplain or chaplain aide is a unique opportunity for ministry. While serving in these offices, you will have the opportunity to help Scouts as they grow, both physically and spiritually. Modeling, mentoring, and offering faith-based experiences are some techniques to be used.

Use this manual to help you become better oriented to the duties, responsibilities, and opportunities of chaplaincy service in Boy Scout troops. In it, you will find helpful information and resources to help you better perform your duties.

Declaration of Religious Principle

The Boy Scouts of America maintains that no member can grow into the best kind of citizen without recognizing an obligation to God and, therefore, recognizes the religious element in the training of the member, but it is absolutely non-sectarian in its attitude toward that religious training. Its policy is that the home and organization or group with which a member is connected shall give definite attention to religious life. Only persons willing to subscribe to this Declaration of Religious Principle and to the Bylaws of the Boy Scouts of America shall be entitled to certificates of membership.

^{1[1]} BSA manual Chaplain & Chaplain Aides, 2002 reprinted with permission

Manual For Troop Chaplain

The troop chaplain is an adult who may be a troop committee member, the executive officer of a religious chartered organization, or serves in another leadership capacity. It is customary that the religious leader, or an appointee of the chartered organization, will serve as chaplain if the troop is operated by a religious organization. A troop not operated by a religious organization may select a chaplain from local members of the clergy.

The chaplain should

1. Provide a spiritual element for campouts and troop meetings
2. Provide spiritual counseling when needed or requested
3. Provide opportunities for all boys to grow in their relationship with God and their fellow Scouts
4. Encourage Scouts to participate in the religious emblems program of their respective faith
5. Be familiar with the chaplain aide section of this manual
6. Work with the troop chaplain aide to plan and conduct an annual Scout-oriented religious observance, preferably during Scout Week in February

Outreach Opportunities

After housing and schooling needs are met, one of the first contacts a new family has in the community is with a Scouting unit. As new troop members are registered, you will learn of their religious preferences or interests and can extend an invitation to join your congregation in worship, or you may direct them to other opportunities for worship in the community. ***At no time should the chaplain proselytize.***

Praying in a Group

When present, members of the clergy or chaplain aide may be asked to lead the troop or other Scouting units in prayer. If the group consists of members with mixed beliefs, or if the beliefs of the group are unknown, then prayers should be of an interfaith content. However, if the group is of like belief, then it is entirely appropriate to offer belief-specific prayer.

Religious Emblems

The chaplain is in an ideal position to promote the religious emblems program and encourage Scouts to complete the requirements for the emblem of their faith. Many troops include Scouts of various faiths; therefore, knowledge of all emblems is helpful. Since procedures vary among different faiths, the Duty to God brochure, No. 05-897A, is a helpful reference. In addition, call your local Boy Scout service center or the council religious relationships committee for help in identifying ways to promote the religious emblems program and emblem recipient recognition ceremonies.

Troop Chaplain²

Why Were You Recruited As a Chaplain?

Scouting is a resource for religious organizations, schools, and community and civic groups to use in their program for young people. Scouting is an educational program based on "*Duty to God*" and designed to enhance:

- A personal value system
- Leadership skills
- Citizenship responsibilities
- Career awareness
- Personal fitness

If the troop is operated by a religious organization, it is customary for the religious leader to serve as the chaplain. The religious leader may ask a member of the staff who is qualified to serve in that position. A unit not operated by a religious organization may select a chaplain for the troop from the local clergy.

The Basic Opportunity

In this capacity, you as the chaplain have an opportunity to be a friend to the Scouts and leaders and to contribute to their spiritual welfare and growth. You as the chaplain, by virtue of your position and personality, can encourage the boys in their Scouting work and other aspects of their total lives.

The Job Description

1. Provide a spiritual tone for all troop meetings and camping experiences.
 1. Assure members and leaders of your interest in them and their activities.
 2. Provide spiritual counseling service when needed or requested.
 3. Provide opportunities for all boys to grow in their relationship with God and their fellow Scouts.
 4. Encourage Scouts to participate in the religious emblems program of their respective faith.

Outreach Opportunities

Many times one of the first contacts a new family has in the community is with the Scouting unit. As new members are registered, you will learn of their religious affiliations or interest and can extend to them an invitation to join you in worship. Alternatively, you may share with them other opportunities for worship within the community. At no time should the chaplain proselytize.

² *From the Lutheran Council on Scouting*

Accidents, Illnesses, and Other Problems

Ask the leaders to report accidents, illnesses, and other problems of members to you. You should become aware of situations where a pastoral call would be appropriate and beneficial. Leaders who are in regular contact with their members often are the first to know of situations that may need pastoral attention.

If a member misses several meetings, it may be an indication that something is wrong. Ask that the names of absentees be shared with you. As chaplain, you have the opportunity to visit and discover the source of the problem. If the problem is with some aspect of the Scouting program or leadership, you should discuss this problem with the appropriate individual or committee.

Chartered Organization Representative

This person is the representative of the chartered organization to the district and local council of the Boy Scouts of America. This person must be able to represent the organization's concern in both policy-making and program. The chaplain should work closely with the chartered organization representative for the interest of the chartered organization and its ministry, as well as for children, youth, and families.

Support of Unit Leadership

Remember, volunteers sharing their time and effort are what make Scouting work. Support them. Recognize them for a job well done. Commend them personally for their ministry. Thank their family members, too, for their sacrifice makes Scouting possible.

Observe Unit Leadership

Unit leaders are charged with fulfilling the purpose of both the chartered organization and Scouting. The leadership should demonstrate awareness of and understanding of both. It should be evident that Scouting activities are fulfilling spiritual needs, in addition to developing Scouting skills.

Religious Emblems Study Programs

Encourage Scouts to earn their appropriate religious emblems. The troop possibly includes Scouts of various faiths; therefore, knowledge of all emblems would be helpful. The chart A Scout Is Reverent, No. 5-206A, will be most helpful. Procedures within various faiths differ. A call to your local council service center will help to identify the requirement book, method of ordering, and presentation information.

Planning Worship Experiences

Every troop going away for a weekend needs to plan to conduct or attend a service in keeping with the 12th point of the Scout Law. You may be invited to conduct the

services or work out a program with the chaplain aide and other adult leaders. An overnight event should include worship experiences, either for the individual or for the troop. You may want to recommend scripture readings or devotional readings to be used at the close of the evening or as a morning meditation.

Identifying Service Opportunities

Service projects for advancement are required of all Scours. Helping others is a Scouting tradition.

You have the advantage of being able to identify many possible service projects for individuals and families, for the chartered organization.

Additional Training

The annual relationships week at the Philmont Training Center is an excellent opportunity for Chaplains of many faiths to get a week of powerful and uplifting training at the ranch in a setting conducive to a family vacation. They will meet other Scouters from around the country and will have the opportunity to fellowship with other members of their faith who are active in Scouting. Ask your District Executive to be placed on the list to receive a free information pack and invitation to the next summer's annual conference.

National Scouting Associations

Chaplains should be aware of the National Scouting Associations that most faith denominations have formed. Organizations like N.A.U.M.S (National Association of United Methodist Scouters), NLAS (National Lutheran Association of Scouters), ABS (Association of Baptist for Scouting), etc. can be a source of inspiration and information. Any church sponsored unit should have at least one adult member who is a member of their respective Scouting Association.

Activities

Many Relationships Committees often have events during the year like Duty of God Encampments, A 10 Commandments Hike, or perhaps even faith specific events like Catholic Scouter Development. There may be classes offered at the College of Commissioner Science on Religious Emblems and ways to promote Duty to God in the unit and in the council. Check the council website to learn about upcoming opportunities to involve the scouts you work with.

Supplies

There is not only a chaplain patch, but that the Scout Shop offers manuals, counselor guides, and other faith materials including blank church bulletins and A Scout is Reverent inserts for unit Chaplains to use.

Manual for Chaplain Aides ³

The chaplain aide is an approved youth leadership position in Boy Scout troops. The responsibilities of this position include encouraging the spiritual growth and awareness of each member of the troop and assisting the troop chaplain (and adult committee members).

The chaplain aide should

1. Work with the troop chaplain (usually an adult member of the clergy) to plan appropriate interfaith religious services during troop outings
2. Encourage troop members to strengthen their own relationships with God through personal prayer and devotion and participation in religious activities appropriate to their faith
3. Participate in patrol leaders council planning sessions to ensure that spiritual emphasis is included in troop activities
4. Help the troop chaplain (or other designated adult) plan and conduct an annual Scout-oriented religious observance, Preferably during Scout Week in February
5. Present an overview of the religious emblems program at troop meetings at least once per year
6. Help the troop chaplain (or other designated adult) recognize troop members who receive their religious emblems, perhaps during a troop court of honor (note: most religious emblems are conferred during a service at the Scout's place of worship, but the achievement should also be recognized at a significant troop event.)

Qualifications

1. The chaplain aide must be mature and sensitive and have earned the respect and trust of his fellow Scouts.
2. The chaplain aide must be at least a First Class Scout.
3. The chaplain aide must have received or be working on the requirements leading to the age-appropriate religious emblem for his faith.

³ BSA manual Chaplain & Chaplain Aides, 2002 reprinted with permission

Troop Worship Opportunities⁴

Praying as a Group

When present, members of the clergy or chaplain aides may be asked to lead the troop or other Scouting groups in a prayer. If the group consists of members of mixed beliefs, or if the beliefs of the group are unknown, prayers should be of an interfaith nature. However, if the group is of like belief, it is entirely appropriate to offer belief-specific prayer.

Sample Interfaith Prayers and Benedictions

1. For health, strength, and daily food, we give you thanks, o Lord.
2. For this and all your mercies, Lord, make us truly grateful.
3. For food, health, and friendship, we give you thanks, o Lord.
4. For food, for raiment, for life, for opportunity, for friendship and fellowship, we thank you, o Lord. (Philmont grace)
5. Come, o Lord, be our guest and bless what you have bestowed on us.
6. Gracious giver of all good, we thank you for food and rest. Grant all we say or do please you.
7. Lord, bless our Scouting leaders who spend so much of their time and energy to help us grow up well. Guide them in their work, give them patience and wisdom, and reward them in this life and the next. Amen.
8. As our campfire fades, we thank you for the joys and blessings of this day. We lift our minds and hearts to you in gratitude for life, happiness, and the Scouting movement. Lord, protect our camp this night. May we rise refreshed and ready to serve You. Amen.
9. May the great Scoutmaster of all Scouts be with us until we meet again.

At Camp

Since troops often camp on weekends, Scouts and leaders may not be able to attend their regular worship services. A troop worship service should be conducted and all encouraged to attend. The troop chaplain aide and the troop chaplain (or other designated adult) should conduct these services. Studies have shown that the youth especially feel closer to their God when in an outdoors setting. So while you are out there have a service pre-planned if possible and have some ideas in your “hip pocket” if the occasion arises. Many sources for conducting these field services are available.⁵

Scout Funeral Services

On occasion, a troop may experience the loss of a Scout or leader. It is a difficult time for everyone. At the request of the family or with the permission of the family and

⁴ BSA manual Chaplain & Chaplain Aides, 2002 reprinted with permission

⁵ Philmont and Ely daily devotional books

religious leader, Scouts may participate in the funeral and memorial service to celebrate the life of the Scout or leader. Some things that may be appropriate include:

- Attending in uniform
- Sitting together as a unit
- Serving as honorary pallbearers or ushers.
- Serving during the service by doing such things as reciting the Scout Oath or Law.

The primary concern is for the family and its preferences. The involvement of the troop or Scouts in the troop is at the discretion of the family and its religious leaders.

Scouting And Religious Organizations

A Scout's Duty to God and Country ©1998-99

The fact that more than one-half of all Scouting units are chartered to religious organizations reveals clearly that Scouting has a real contribution to make to religious organizations. Among Scouting's outstanding values to these organizations are:

Scouting supports the spiritual view of life that underlies the teaching of all denominations and faiths. Any boy, young man, young woman (Exploring) or leader who would be a member must profess a belief in God and promise to do his (her) best to fulfill the spiritual ideals of Scouting.

Scouting encourages boys and leaders, according to their own convictions, to participate in the program of their church, temple, synagogue, mosque, or other religious organization. Scouts are expected to fulfill their religious obligations and respect the beliefs of others.

Scouting helps boys put into practice some of the basic truths they are taught by their parents and religious leaders. They learn by experience to give of themselves, to share, to help others, to assume responsibility, and to understand the values of personal integrity.

Scouting gives boys an opportunity to explore their interests and God-given talents.

Scouting helps boys find their place in life and become happy, well-adjusted, useful members of the community.

Through the annual charter, religious organizations are able to use the Scouting program in conjunction with their other programs for youth.

Although many Scout units are chartered by a religious organization, no member of another denomination or faith can be required, because of his membership in that unit, to take part in or observe a religious ceremony distinctly peculiar to the faith of the sponsoring organization.



REMEMBER:

The Boy Scouts of America does not require membership in a religious organization or association for enrollment in the movement, but does prefer and strongly encourages membership and participation in the religious programs and activities of a church, temple, synagogue, mosque or other religious association or organization of his or his family's choice.

The Bedrock of Scouting Values

6

In our pluralistic society, I find it interesting that some who champion individualism, tolerance, and diversity the loudest are the strongest critics of values that are different from their own. If pluralism ... if diversity ... if tolerance are truly important in a pluralistic society, then even though we may find fundamental disagreement with an individual or an organization, we must recognize and respect the right of that individual or organization to their opinions, their values, and their lifestyles.

"Scouting has never sought to impose its values on anyone. We welcome all who share them, and we respect the right of others to walk a different path."

Many of Scouting's critics confuse our mission and our methods. If the Boy Scouts of America was merely a recreation or social organization that taught kids how to camp, and nice things about crafts, and getting along with their neighbors, it would not have thrived for more than 90 years, nor would it deserve the support and popularity of more than 100 million alumni and members. Scouting is so much more. Scouting's mission, as an educational organization, is to provide children with fundamental values that prepare them for life. In addition, yes, recreation is a part of Scouting, but it is not an end in Scouting. It is merely a vehicle in which children, through a learning experience can gain the insights of values and responsible life. The essence of the Boy Scouts of America is found in our Scout Oath and Law.

The bedrock of Scouting's values is literally and figuratively ... duty to God ... "On my honor, I will do my duty to God and my country ..." To Scouting, the question is NOT: Can a person be honorable without a belief in God? Rather, our commitment is that no child can develop to his/her fullest potential without a spiritual element. The Boy Scouts of America is not a religion ... it is an organization with strong religious tenets. It is a movement that is committed to developing the entire child ... spirituality is very important in that total development. That is why we hold to duty to God. Whether it is the Judeo-Christian ethic; or a Buddhist, Protestant, Mormon, Catholic, or Native American ethic; or that of any of the other great religions of our world, the Boy Scouts of America is committed to the proposition that no child can develop to his/her fullest potential without a spiritual element in his/her life.

In looking ahead to their adult years, Scouting is in accord with the teachings of the world's great religions and is committed to the concept that sexual intimacy is the providence of a man and a woman within the bonds of marriage.

In addition, consistent with the world's great religions, the Boy Scouts of America is committed to respecting the dignity of individuals or values with which we disagree. In four places in the Scout Oath and Law ... when you read the descriptive terms ... you

⁶ <http://www.scouting.org/nav/volunteers.html>

will find comments related to respect. However, respect doesn't mean abdication of one's values. Nor does it mean the forced inclusion of others' values in your life. What it does mean is the recognition of the right of people to have opinions, values, and lifestyles other than yours and for all to be tolerant of each other's differences. When the Boy Scouts won the United States Supreme Court case, you didn't see us "celebrating in the street." The issue was not to vanquish a young man who is an inappropriate leader within Scouting. The issue was the maintenance of our constitutional right and our commitment to providing those faith-based values to our constituency in a respectful manner.

Scouting has never sought to impose its values on anyone. We welcome all who share them, and we respect the right of others to walk a different path. We don't expect everybody to agree with our standards and values ... but we do think it's fair to expect others to respect them.

An Historical Perspective on "Reverence" In Scouting⁷

Whether one agrees or not with the position of the Boy Scouts of America that belief in God is an essential part of the Scouting program to build character and instill positive values in youth, a review of treasured Scouting memorabilia from the past discloses that historically this view has often been presented in Scouting literature, whenever the Scout Law ("A Scout is Reverent") and the Scout Oath "to do my Duty to God" are discussed. Both the Scout Law and Oath are mandatory for BSA members.

For example, in its HANDBOOK FOR BOYS, of which over 30,000,000 have been printed since 1910, the Fifth edition (1948) explained the phrase "morally straight" in the Scout Oath or Promise this way:

"George Washington said that morality cannot be lasting without religion. A morally straight Scout knows how to love and serve God in the way He wants him to...On Mt. Sinai God gave to Moses the Ten Commandments. He laid down certain definite Laws for all. Not to steal, not to lie, not to abuse your body are some of these Laws. Keeping these Commandments is an important step towards being morally straight..."

Similarly, the HANDBOOK FOR BOYS had this to say about "Reverent":

"Reverence is that respect, regard, consideration, courtesy, devotion, and affection you have for some person, place, or thing because it is holy? The Scout shows true reverence in two ways. First, you pray to God, you love God and you serve Him. Secondly, in your everyday actions, you help other people, because they are made by God to God's own likeness.

"The 'unalienable rights' in our historic Declaration of Independence, come from God. All your life you will be associating with people of other beliefs and customs. It is your duty to respect these people for their beliefs and customs, and to live your own." - (c) BSA, 1948

Relevant to the issue of admitting atheists (or those who refuse to say the Oath's "Duty to God" provision) to Boy Scouts is the philosophy espoused by the Founder of Scouting, Sir Robert Baden-Powell, O.B.E., in official scouting literature written by him during the time he was Chief Scout of the World (1910-1941).

While it is true that no one has deified Baden-Powell, nor even beatified him (at least by church canon, although his works have richly earned him the sobriquet "the sainted B-P" and he does have a memorial plaque in London's Westminster Abbey), he, as the creator of scouting, composed the Boy Scout Oath at issue. It is thus highly instructive to see what HE said about a scout's Duty to God and why HE included it in the Oath HE wrote and used, since HE, after all, invented Scouting in the 1st place!

Baden-Powell's book *ROVERING TO SUCCESS*, a 1930 handbook for British Rover Scouts, is an excellent source for understanding the goals and philosophies of scouting espoused by the founder of the movement himself, for two principle reasons: It was

⁷ By Jim Howes, April 1, 1992

written in 1930, after B-P had seen scouting grow and mature into a world-wide association over a twenty-year span, hence he had the benefit of many years experience and reflection; secondly, "Rovers" is the branch of scouting (in many countries other than the U.S.) for boys over age 18 to mid-twenties. As such, it's on a more mature level for a serious view of B-P's scouting philosophy.

"Rovering to Success" begins by recounting, in the colorful writing style that captured boys' imaginations in the pre-MTV era, the time he paddled a birch-bark canoe across a lake in Upper Canada. He develops this parable saying: "The whole thing--the early voyage through the easy running stream, and then coming out on the broad lake, the arising of difficulties, the succession of waves and rocks only avoided by careful piloting, the triumph of overcoming the dangers, the successful sliding into a sheltered landing place, the happy campfire and the sleep of tired men at night--is just what a man goes through in life." This he calls the Voyage of Life.

In paddling one's canoe on the "...adventurous voyage from the stream of childhood, along the river of adolescence, out across the ocean of manhood", he warns of the dire need to avoid foundering on certain "Rocks", i.e., dangerous hazards/ deleterious influences, in the lives of Scouts which, unless avoided, interfere with the scout's goal of achieving happiness in life..."the only true success". These "Rocks" are then expounded upon by B-P in the chapters that follow:

Chapter Title Topics discussed

- (1) "HORSES" Gambling, lack of thrift, indolence, etc.
- (2) "WINE" Alcohol abuse, gluttony, foul language, etc.
- (3) "WOMEN" Venereal diseases, irresponsible sexual conduct
- (4) "CUCKOOS & HUMBUGS" Demagoguery, snobbery, jingoism, etc.
- (5) "IRRELIGION" Atheism and irreligious*

*(quoting from introduction to this chapter):

"The dark side of this rock is the danger of atheism and irreligious. Its bright side is its realization of God and Service to Brother Men. To this the study of Nature is a direct help."

(Then follows B-P's own chapter outline):

"Irreligious: atheism is being pressed on young men; irreligious is prevalent; religion is essential to happiness.

Nature lore:

Safeguards against atheism;
God's work in Nature gives the lie to atheists; Nature knowledge is a step to realizing God."

B-P goes on to say, "There are a good many men who have no religion, who don't believe in God; they are known as atheists...If you are really out to make your way to success--i.e., happiness--you must not only avoid being sucked in by irreligious humbugs, you must have a religious basis to your life. Religion very briefly stated means: recognizing who and what is God; secondly, making the best of the life that He has given one and doing what He wants of us." The rest of the chapter on "Irreligious" is devoted to various measures to help scouts "avoid atheism", to use B-P's repeated phrase, such as experiencing the grandeur of Nature as a (again quoting) "step towards realizing God", to which he adds, "I advocate the understanding of Nature as a step, in certain cases, towards gaining religion."

The 274-page book goes on to discuss, with several examples and quotations, how first-hand experience of Nature's wonders can help one understand God.

For example, he quotes Abraham Lincoln:

"I can see how it might be possible for a man to look down upon earth and be an atheist, but I do not see how he can look up into the heavens by night and say there is no God."

As well as the Koran:

"Seest thou not that all in the heavens and all on the earth serveth God; the sun, the moon, the stars, and the mountains and the trees and the beasts and many men"

Commenting on the inspiration he drew from the outdoors, he wrote:

"I love the homely beauty of the English countryside as I do the vast openness and freedom of the rolling veld in South Africa. I love the rushing waters and the nodding forests of Canada; but I have been more awed by the depths and heights of the Himalayas and by the grandeur of those eternal snows lifting their peaked heads high above the world, never defiled by the foot of man, but reaching of all things worldly the nearest to the Heavens." He mused that perhaps the reason so many of the world's peoples at such high elevations are Buddhists is "the mountains almost talk you into it.

In the quiet of the night, you listen to their voices; you are drawn into the brooding immensity all round you. In warm cities, where men huddle together, one must have something to cling to--- a personal Savior, a lantern in a sure and kindly hand, and comforting voices in the dark. But here ...there is a mystic purpose in Nature..."

It makes demonstrably clear the fact that B-P was strongly opposed to atheism and would turn over in his grave at the thought of atheists as scout leaders or permitting Scouts to omit "Duty to God" from their Scout Oath.

While it may be argued that these ideas are outdated, or that scouting in the 1990's should change with the times to maintain its relevance, there is ample historical evidence that Scouting's founder regarded atheism as something to be avoided, as foreign to the ideals of scouting: individual happiness, fulfillment, and service to fellow man through doing one's duty to God. This has been Scouting's core belief and its founding purpose since the beginning of the movement.

Viewed in this light, the current insistence of the Boy Scouts of America that its members adhere to the Scout Oath's "On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and my Country..." is merely remaining true to Scouting's basic founding spirit.

Why should a scout pledge his Duty to God? In the words of Baden-Powell:

"Religion is essential to happiness. This is not a mere matter of going to church, knowing Bible history, or understanding theology. Religion ...means recognizing who and what is God, secondly, making the best of the life that He has given one and doing what He wants of us. This is mainly doing something for other people."

All that scouting seeks to impart to our young people...striving to do one's best and to do a good turn daily... flow naturally and logically from this founding purpose of scouting, to equip boys as they embark on their Voyage of Life.

What is a Scout's Own?⁸

A Scouts' Own is an important part of the spiritual life of any Scout section.
By Scouter Liam Morland

The whole educational approach of the [Scout] Movement consists in helping young people transcend the material world and go in search of the spiritual values of life (WOSM 1992:5).

A Scouts' Own is an important and often misunderstood part of a Scout program. Most of the Scouts' Owns that I have seen are essentially distilled church services which do little for the spiritual life of those present, particularly those who do not regularly attend religious services. This essay is intended to help Scouts and Scouters run effective Scouts' Owns by providing a definition of Scouts' Own, some things that follow from the definition, and examples of how this can be put into practice. While I will use Scouts section terminology for this essay, Beavers' Owns, Cubs' Owns, Venturers' Owns, Rovers' Owns, and Scouters' Owns are important parts of their respective sections.

What is a Scouts' Own?

I will define a Scouts' Own as "a gathering of Scouts held to contribute to the development of their spirituality and to promote a fuller understanding of the Scout Law." Let's take a look at what this definition means.

A Scouts' Own is a **gathering** of Scouts. This can be in groups as small as two or as large as a whole World Jamboree, though groups of a few patrols work best. In smaller groups, Scouts are able to get involved, share their experiences, and see that spirituality is something that affects everyone.

A Scouts' Own is held for the development of the Scouts' **spirituality**. Spirituality is that which is beyond the material; that which gives meaning and direction to one's life. Scouting is primarily concerned with how people live out their beliefs in everyday life. Hence, a Scouts' Own should connect in some way to the **Scout Law**, the ethical code of Scouting. Usually, this is done by mentioning the Scout Law, making allusions to it, and/or including a recitation of the Law as part of the Scouts' Own. Some Scouts' Owns may simply include ethical content which the Scouts can connect to the Law themselves.

What is Spirituality?

Spirituality is that which is beyond the material world, beyond the world of interacting matter, beyond the world of science. One's spirituality gives meaning to the material world, so that we may see it not as just matter and energy, but as a wonderful whole, perhaps part of a divine plan. One's spirituality also gives direction to how one should act in life, based on its meaning. For example, if the meaning of the world is that it is the creation of God, then one has a responsibility to protect and use responsibly the earth's resources. Spirituality is not about creeds. It is about this search for meaning and direction, and is expressed in how we behave towards others and towards the entire cosmos.

According to the World Organization of the Scout Movement (1998:10), spiritual development in Scouting is directed towards "[d]eveloping the ability to:

- Acknowledge and explore a dimension beyond [humanity];

⁸ By Scouter Liam Morland

- Explore the spiritual heritage of one's community;
- Understand the beliefs, practices, and customs of other world religions;
- Integrate spiritual values into one's daily life and in the global direction of one's development towards and higher and more unified state of consciousness.

The first point above deals with the wonder and emotion that we feel when encountering the world. A flower may be colourful in order to attract insects, but it is also beautiful.

Acknowledging and exploring this sense of beauty is an important step to finding meaning in the cosmos. This is why BP believed that nature study is so important. Likewise, the ugly things in life such as pain, suffering, and inequality, give rise to a sense that we must all work to right the wrongs of this world. We find the strength to do this in this dimension beyond humanity.

The second and third points above deal with a Scout's knowledge of how others have answered the spiritual questions of the world. In order to understand and get along with people of their own culture and those of other cultures, one must understand their spiritual beliefs, their religions. Scouting believes that people may choose whatever spiritual path they wish, but that they should do so based on sound knowledge. One must not abandon the religion of one's community unless one understands what one is giving up; and one must not choose another path unless one knows what one is accepting. While most religions offer answers to questions of meaning and value, Scouting helps people to ask the questions. Scouting hopes to help people understand the spiritual diversity of the world so that Scouts can make responsible spiritual choices.

The last point above deals with putting one's beliefs into practice. BP believed that a person's religion is in how they behave, rather than in what they believe. This is where the Scout Law intersects spirituality. Scouting hopes that Scouts will connect their spirituality to the Scout Law so that the living out of their religion is also an active expression of the Scout Law.

Designating a Scouts' Own

Scouts' Owns are made up of a combination of stories with a moral or spiritual message; metaphors, such as describing learning in terms of packing a backpack for life; prayers, where hopes, fears, emotions, and thankfulness are expressed; songs, which usually are prayers; and sharing between those present.

These elements can be combined in a variety of ways. One should not include any elements that will not lead towards the goal of the Scouts' Own. For example, songs should not be included unless the members would really enjoy singing them. Campfires are the place to introduce Scouts to singing, not Scouts' Own. These elements also need not be combined in a manner that resembles a church service. When telling a story or parable, one need not explain its meaning. A parable hides the truth from those who are listening until they are ready to understand it. The Scouts may be turned off by the moralizing instead of leaving thinking about the story, later to find meaning in it.

A Scouts' Own should be focussed on a few closely related concepts. If the topic of the Scouts' Own is too broad, the Scouts will be unable to grasp it. In Beavers and Cubs, the Scouts' Own should concentrate on one very simple message which is illustrated with many examples. Kids of these ages are unable to fully comprehend abstract concepts like justice. They can give many examples of what is just or unjust, but they cannot deal with an abstract definition. Scouts can start to understand abstract concepts, but things must still be kept to a few concepts.

To help the Scouts concentrate on the Scouts' Own, it is a good idea to hold it in a special place, such as a lookout or pretty clearing in the forest. It should be a spot not usually used for other activities, so that it will be somewhat special. Many camps have a chapel area set aside. Be careful, however, as many chapels come with crosses which make them appropriate only for Christian Scouts' Owns. Choosing a spot some distance from the camp site is beneficial in

another way. At the end of the Scouts' Own, the group can file back to the camp in silence and walking with several paces between each person, allowing a time for silent contemplation of the topic of the Scouts' Own.

Scouts' Owns must be planned by Scouts and/or Scouters. When planning a Scouts' Own, one can draw upon many sources for inspiration. Books of ancient wisdom, such as the Koran, the Christian Bible or other religious texts; children's stories; *The Best of the Leader Cut Out Pages*; the writings of Baden-Powell; and the *Jungle Book* are all good sources. Remember that a Scouts' Own does not need to fit any prescribed framework: one does not have to include a reading or a prayer if one does not want to. In fact, pointing out that what is being said is a prayer might distract the Scouts from the words.

If one is going to include a prayer, ensure that it is appropriate for those present. One should never assume that everyone is, for example, Christian. Often the difference between a Christian prayer and a universal one is the closing. References to Jesus or Lord are Christian-specific (Father is marginal). A reference to God is not, as Scouting uses that word to refer to all conceptions of God. However, Be aware that many religions, such as Jainism and Humanism, have no conception of God. Prayers can be worded "We are thankful for..." instead of "We thank God for..." to get around this problem. If people wish to say "Amen" at the end of a prayer, they may do so, but if it is written on the Scouts' Own program (if you have one), then that suggests an expectation that it be said, making the prayer Christian-specific.

While it is important to set a Scouts' Own apart from the rest of the day, if one makes too big a deal of it, the Scouts may be distracted and the point is missed. The Scouts should gain the understanding that thinking about spiritual concepts is a normal part of life and should not be restricted to special places and times.

Most Scouters believe that hats should not be worn and knives should not be carried at Scouts' Owns. The not wearing of hats is due to the Christian tradition where males do not wear hats in church. In many other religions, however, it is expected that hats be worn during prayer. In any case, a Scouts' Own is not a church service. At my Scouts' Owns, I make no comment about hats; people make the choice to wear or not wear hats as individuals.

The issue of knives is similar. At many Scouts' Owns that I have attended, there has been a knife log into which one sticks one's knife upon entry to the area where the Scouts' Own is taking place. The reason for this has been that Scouts should not carry weapons during a Scouts' Own, as in a church service. However, a knife is not a weapon to a Scout. A knife carried by a Scout is a tool that helps them to Be Prepared to carry out the Scout Law. A Scout should Be Prepared no less at a Scouts' Own than any other time, so Scouts should continue to carry their knives during Scouts' Owns.

A Scouter's Five has the same purpose as a Scouts' Own, but should not last longer than five minutes and consists of a story or metaphor told by one Scouter, usually without any interaction with those listening. A Scouter's Five should be held at the end of campfires and Scout meetings.

Two Examples

I will now relate two examples of successful Scouts' Owns that I have run. The first is a Cub's Own based on the concept of thankfulness. The Cub's Own started with a hike to a clearing nearby to the camp site. I began by asking the Cubs what thankfulness was. They offered their suggestions. After summarizing the ideas, I divided the pack into sixes and distributed the Scouters among them. I asked each person to think of something that they are thankful for and to discuss these in their sixes to help each other think of things. After a few minutes, I called everyone back and went around the circle asking each person what they were thankful for.

Cubs could repeat ideas, but this happened little. After we had gone around the circle, I said what I was thankful for, summarized what the Cubs had said, and added that I was thankful for being able to be part of a Cub Pack. This connected to the recitation of the Cub Promise, which ended the Cubs' Own.

The second Scouts' Own that I want to give as an example was with a Scout Troop. We went on a short hike to a clearing in the woods and sat on the ground. I told a story of a person who had been influenced by peer pressure to nearly steal a tire for the car that they and two others were driving in. I asked the Scouts why this person, who is normally law abiding, would do this. I asked for a more complete explanation when the answer of peer pressure came up. "We have a label, but what is peer pressure?" I asked. We discussed its meaning and its many forms. Next I described psychologist Solomon Ashe's experiments on peer pressure, particularly his experiments which showed that one brave dissenter in a group will be enough to encourage others to take a stand against wrong. I cautioned the Scouts that one can be easily influenced to do things that are wrong by a friend. As protection against this, I suggested that the Scouts compare all that they do to the Scout Law to ensure that they are not being led to do wrong by others.

Conclusion

The key to success in a Scouts' Own is to stick to the purpose: to develop spirituality and a better understanding of the Scout Law. The Scouts' Own must be interesting to the Scouts and be at their level in order to be effective. If you leave behind any preconceptions about a Scouts' Own being similar to a church service and you stick to spirituality that the Scouts can understand, you will succeed in contributing to the spiritual development of your Scouts, meeting Scouting's Purpose.

References

World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM).

1992. *Fundamental Principles*. Geneva, Switzerland: World Scout Bureau.

1998. *Scouting: An Educational System*. (PDF) Geneva, Switzerland: World Scout Bureau.

WHAT DO THESE RELIGIOUS EMBLEM PROGRAMS COVER?⁹

Generally, each religious emblem program is a progression of learning starting in Cub Scouting and ending years later as an older Boy Scout, Venture Scout, or Explorer. Each program has specific emblems that are linked with age appropriate requirements. Many start by focusing on the Scout's understanding of God at the Tiger level moving to the Scout's relationship to God at the Cub level. By the time a Scout becomes a Webelos the program materials shift to an emphasis on the Scout and his family's relationship to God. At the Boy Scout level the program focuses on the relationship of the Scout to his life in the community of his faith. In addition, at the final level the program examines how the Scout will apply his or her faith in his or her life.

In each case the program material focuses on similarities between how the Scout sees himself in successively broader relationships and his relationship with God. In addition, each of the programs begins with simple concepts and moves towards a more complex understanding through successive levels of learning about religious writings, religious figures, religious celebrations, acts of service and worship.

As the Scout grows in the Scouting family, he can participate in successive religious emblem programs at each age level that are more and more challenging. However, none of these programs at any level is a prerequisite to starting a program at another level.

These religious emblems are presented by religious organizations to Scouts, who work with their religious leader or a counselor through a demanding program of requirements that may take from a few months to a year or more to complete. By completing such a program, a Scout will learn about his relationship to his religious beliefs and grow spiritually. At the same time that Scout will be developing better character.

WHERE CAN I GET INFORMATION ABOUT RELIGIOUS EMBLEM PROGRAMS?

You can get more information about religious emblem programs from:

- Your local church, temple, synagogue, mosque or religious organization
- The lay organization within each religious organization
- National Scouter Associations supporting religious emblem programs (see the following two pages for additional information) and local Scouter Associations in your area
- There are two excellent places on the Internet for getting many Scout's Own Services – www.honorpub.com 's Scouting-E-Zine is a free bi-weekly newsletter

⁹ A Scout's Duty to God and Country ©1998-99

on the web with a Scouts own in every issue. The www.MacScouter.com also has a section on a Scout's Duty to God with many sample services.

- Religious Awards are not limited to just youth members. Increasingly there are adults for adult Scouting volunteers, as well as the Units themselves, with many faiths having a kind of Quality Unit Award for the units they sponsor. Some faiths also have established Scholarships, and nearly all have websites that provide more information on all of these opportunities.
- To find the link for your faith, visit:
http://www.scouter.com/compass/Leaders_Resource/ Check out the Chaplain Resources & Chartered Partners categories.
- The National Headquarters Office of each religious organization
 - Programs for Religious Activities with Youth (P.R.A.Y.)
8520 MacKenzie Road,
St. Louis, Missouri 63166,
1-800-933-PRAY
www.praypub.org

"How to get started on Recognitions/Emblems" >>>Recognitions/Emblems

"Religious Emblems Presentation Script: A Presentation by Unit Leaders to Boy Scouts and their Parents".

"Sample Presentation about the Religious Emblems Programs to members of Boy Scouts of America

- Roundtable meetings and training sessions
- Your Council Scout Service Center (Scout Shop)
- Boy Scouts of America - Request *Your Church Can Serve Children, Youth, Families Through Scouting*, No. 17-111 (1992) and other publications listed in this book by writing directly to

The Relationships Division
Boy Scouts of America
P.O. Box 152079
1325 West Walnut Hill Lane
Irving, Texas 75015-2079

- Council website : <http://www.bsacac.org>

Local Council Religious Relationships Committee

Here at the Capitol Area Council we have formed a Religious Relationships Committee in the last year. Our primary task with is to work with the Chartered Organizations that own the Scouting program.

Our goal is to harmonize our Chartering Organizations into a closer cooperation with the council and the BSA program. We help them interpret and promote the Scouting program through the Chartering Organizations Representatives (COR).

The Religious Organizations Committee is again subdivided into three primary functions. The Religious Relationships Subcommittee members work with national and local representatives of Religious Scouting Organizations to support local religious oriented programs.

The Chaplaincy Subcommittee is the group that you will be working with primarily. Each district will have a chaplain or representative to the subcommittee, which has two main activities: First, the subcommittee trains and supports unit Chaplains and Chaplain Aides by providing training sessions on a regular basis. They provide Chaplains with information to enhance their programs and will work with the units to conduct Scout Shabbat and Scout Sunday observations in February. Secondly, the Subcommittee recruits and supports Resident Chaplains at Council resident camps and activities. The Camp Chaplain conducts appropriate religious services and works to enhance the religious experience through devotionals and services held at council camps. The subcommittee arrange for the financial support apart from the council, through donations, memorials, and other tools to fund a dynamic program. Finally group will conduct training sessions for Chaplains and Chaplain Aides on a regular basis.

The Religious Emblems Subcommittee works to organize Religious Emblem Display Teams (REDs) that in turn support district and unit level activities to promote and expand the program. This group acts as a liaison with the P.R.A.Y. organization and the units. They also work to recognize award recipients on a council level.

To contact with our CAC Relationships Committee & RED Team: See the council website.

Other Resources

Chaplain Corps

adapted from Minsi Trails Council Chaplain Corps ¹⁰

Resources:

Prayers

1. Troop Opening Prayers, 36 prayers on 3x5 cards [Acrobat.PDF](#) - 26K
2. Court of Honor Opening Prayer [Acrobat PDF](#) - 3 K
3. Eagle Court of Honor Invocation [Acrobat PDF](#) - 5 K
4. Blue and Gold Banquet Invocation [Acrobat PDF](#) - 4 K
5. Pastoral Prayer for Service - General - Youth and Peace [Acrobat PDF](#) - 5 K

Youth Protection Materials

Internet Safety - This presentation was created to introduce parents to the potential dangers of the Internet. The talk establishes the problem, and then discusses several approaches to safeguard children, including filtering software, surveillance software, and parental rules and acceptable limits. The presentation slides are available in [Zip](#) (168K), and [Acrobat PDF](#) (122K). There are some graphical imperfections in the PDF file.

Internet Safety Hand-out - This Word document contains references for web pages and software suppliers highlighted in the above presentation. [Word Doc.](#) (15K)

Child Abuse Protection - This presentation was created for Leaders, and covers the three main types of abuse : Emotional, Physical, and Sexual Abuse. The talk also introduces the concept of abusive friendships. [Zip](#) (16 K)

Ethics and Morals

Teaching Your Children Values - This book by Linda and Richard Eyre contains a month by month program, which is full of suggestions for activities that a family can use to pass on their values to their children. The book also serves as a good source for object lessons and is full of nuggets that can serve as meditation thoughts for Vespers or formal worship with the boys. The book is also a good reference to have for parents. The book is more secular in its approach to the subject.

Where Is Moses when We Need Him?: Teaching Your Kids the 10 Values That Matter Most - This book, by Bill and Kathy Peel, is one of the best sources I have found to integrate the teachings of the Ten Commandments. The book is full of sermon starter ideas, and is just really good reading for anyone who is concerned about youth. This goes for Chaplains and Parents alike. I recommend this book.

¹⁰ http://www.minsichaplain.org/chap_corps.html

7 Habits of Highly Effective Teenagers - This book, by Sean Covey, uses the timeless 7 habits and applies them to teenagers who face tough issues and life changing decisions. The book is full of entertaining stories, which are really effective at getting the meaning across. This book is necessary read for teenagers, parents, and others who care deeply about teenagers.

Object Lessons for Every Occasion - This book, by Sheryl Bruinsma, has 33 different object lesson suggestions. The book contains object lessons for very young, elementary, and older children. Some of the object lessons are Christian, but some are easily used in Inter-Faith settings as well. Even if you never use any of the object lessons directly from the book, it is a valuable resource to get starter ideas. I have used this to find sermon starters for both Boy Scouts, and Children Sermons in the Church setting. Check this one out!

Counseling and Parental Helps

Children & Divorce: What to Expect, how to Help - This book, by Dr. Archibald D. Hart, gives us a view into the lives of children whose parents are undergoing a divorce. The book suggests ways to minimize the damage to children and is a valuable resource for both parents and Scouters in today's world. Another tool in our tool chest to help boys (and girls) through this damaging event.

The Way They Learn - This book, by Cynthia Ulrich Tobias, helps us to discover learning styles and how to teach to our child's strengths. Not all children can process and organize information using the same methods. The author suggests learning styles, which are based on both concrete or abstract perception skills, and either random or sequential ordering skills. Knowing how your child learns can help you to maximize the success that they have in school. The book also details the potential problems when teacher/child learning methods clash. It can be a valuable resource for parents and Scouters trying to make sense out of children with differing learning skills.

Seven Kinds of Smart: Identifying & Developing Your Many Intelligences - Thomas Armstrong takes a different approach in determining learning skills. Even though our schools may frequently overlook them, there are many different ways that kids can be smart. The author lists Linguistic, Logical-Mathematical, Spatial, Bodily-Kinesthetic, Musical, Interpersonal, and Intrapersonal strengths. Each of these is explored. The author suggests ways to determine which strengths are present and how to fully develop each. The book is an interesting look into this subject and can be helpful for parents and Counselors dealing with children who may be struggling with the conventional learning environment.

Counseling in Times of Crisis - A resource for Christian Counseling in a "How To Do" Approach. This book gives practical advice for counseling during times of crisis. Although the book is not specifically geared to children, it gives valuable insights into crisis situations. A valuable adjunct to our counseling tools.

Life Space Intervention - This book, by Mary Wood and Nicholas Long, details a technique for working with troubled or troubling children and adolescents. Conventional methods of intervention can actually serve to escalate the crisis situation or to reinforce negative feelings. Life Space Intervention techniques builds on the strengths of the child, and uses the crisis as a learning experience. LSCI is a strategy for dealing with youth crisis situations, which are on the rise in today's society.

Child Grief Counseling

This is not a subject, which we look forward to addressing; however, it is a normal part of our life cycle and will eventually impact every troop or pack in some way. When it does, what we do or don't do can have a tremendous impact on the boys involved, and in the healing process which follows. Some have suggested that a child's grief experience is very much like wet cement, easily formed. After the cement dries, however; change is more resistant and post traumatic symptoms may develop. The advice here is "do something quickly." The references below will aid you in understanding how you, as a non-clinician, can help. I have not previewed all the books, which follow; however, each has been recommended by authors writing about this subject. (source: KidsPeace Healing Mag.)

Grieving Child: A Parent's Guide - Practical, compassionate advice for helping a child cope with the death of a parent or loved one. Parents and other caring adults will find much guidance in helping preschool age to teenage children through this difficult time.

Life & Loss; A Guide to Help Grieving Children - Linda Goldman shows a sensitivity toward the many loss and grief issues which our children often face. Linda offers presented a loving approach to helping children face some of life's most difficult issues. Professionals and non-professionals alike will benefit from this book.

Death Is Hard to Live with: Teenagers Talk about how They Cope with Loss - Learning to cope with grief is especially hard for teenagers. This book covers loss of family and peers, equipping teens to face loss and positively move on with life.

Breaking the Silence a Guide to Help Children with Complicated Grief: Suicide, Homicide, Aids, Violence - This book, by Linda Goldman, deals with grief, which stems from more complex issues. Each of these are explained in her book, and there are many references for more support and information.

Death & the Classroom: A Teacher's Guide to Assist Grieving Students - This is principally a teacher's guide which guides work through a death in the classroom. This guide may be useful in helping with a similar event within a troop or pack.

Grief Comes to Class: A Teacher's Guide - Majel Gliko-Braden has written a practical book, which helps parents and other caring adults to help a grieving child.

Teaching Students about Death: A Comprehensive Resource for Educators & Parents - A resource for explaining childhood bereavement in the school setting. This book is a compilation of contributions of many professionals, from many specialties.

When Grief Visits School; Organizing a Successful Response - Written by John Dudley, this book is recommended for school districts who desire to establish and train crisis intervention teams to handle grief producing tragedies.

"My Memory Book: A Journal for Grieving Children" - Chi Rho Press, P.O. Box 7864, Gaithersburg MD 20890 - (301) 926-1208 - \$10.95 (+ \$2.50 S/H) - Gretchen Gaines-Lane helps grieving children (*from a loss of a loved one such as a parent*) through a series of exercises including drawings, story writing, collage and journaling.

Counseling and Parental Helps

This list is not endorsed by the BSA. It is provided as a reference only.

ADD/ADHD Scouts <http://members.aol.com/ADDIsorder/4help/index.html> - This is a general reference page with lots of info including medications. There are many other links here for further information.

Bedwetting <http://familydoctor.org/handouts/168.html>- This site seems to have disappeared. If you know of a good reference for this common childhood difficulty, please Email the URL to me.

Kids Peace <http://www.kidspeace.org/>- National Centers for Kids in Crisis. - Contains Good information about Youth and Problems. The site maintains a "Healing Magazine" which is very informative.

MacScouter - A Scout is Reverent <http://www.macscouter.com/ScoutsOwn/>- A great site for Chaplains and Chaplain Aides. Lots of info.

Stop Bullies & Youth Violence - Kathy Noll and Dr. Jay Carter have written a book, which instructs children in methods to handle bullies. The link here is to Kathy Noll's web site, which has information on this book as well as many other links.

The Way They Learn - This book, by Cynthia Ulrich Tobias, helps us to discover learning styles and how to teach to our child's strengths. Not all children can process and organize information using the same methods. The author suggests learning styles, which are based on both concrete or abstract perception skills, and either random or sequential ordering skills. Knowing how your child learns can help you to maximize the success that they have in school. The book also details the potential problems when teacher/child learning methods clash. A valuable resource for parents and Scouters trying to make sense out of children with differing learning skills.

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Summer Camp Chaplain: One other place where unit Chaplains & Chaplain Aids can find a source of help and counsel is the Summer Camp Chaplain. Councils can and should have the resources of a National Camp School Trained Chaplain. This person has been to a full week of National Camp School, along with the rest of the Summer Camp Administration and can be a guide and resource for the unit while at camp.

Roundtable Materials

Graces, Prayers, Songs, Services, and Closings

Demonstrating "Duty To GOD" With Sensitivity ¹¹

When we conduct Scouting activities, it is important that we call attention to a Scout's "Duty to God" through the saying of a grace at meal times, a prayer at appropriate times; e.g. the start of a banquet or awards meeting; or in the songs and closings we use. (One of the best resources in this area is Walter Dudley Cavert's *Prayers for Scouts*, published by the Abington Press, Nashville, Tennessee in 1964. If you can find an old copy in a unit library or some other Scout archive, it would be worth the time and trouble. We will try to obtain permission to reprint prayers related to the Scout Oath, Law, Motto, and Slogan for a later edition. Another excellent source is The National Protestant Committee on Scouting's, *When Scouts Worship*, first published by the Bethany Press, St. Louis, Missouri, in 1968.) However, it is equally important that we as leaders act with extreme sensitivity to the content of the grace, prayer, or song. The grace, prayer, or song should be selected because it expresses a powerful, universal expression of thanks, blessing, praise, joy, or other value without reference to a single religion, its customs, or the name of its deity.

We are concerned that we do not place a single Scout in the position of doubting the values of his own faith or feeling singled out and isolated because of his own faith. We should never create a climate were a Scout feels compelled to choose between Scouting and his religious beliefs.

Frequently, it is best if the prayers acknowledge a common maker, such as the Maker of All Things, God, the Great Scoutmaster of all Scouts, or the Great Spirit, because each Scout can relate the words to his own faith. A grace, prayer, or song that singles out for adoration Jesus Christ, the Prophet Elias, the Prophet Mohammed, the teacher Sidhartha (Lord Buddha) or any other name sends conflicting messages to a Scout with a different faith. He may think that he is in the wrong place or he may get the idea he is not wanted. This can be prevented by reviewing all prayers, graces, and songs in advance to make sure that they do not indicate a preference for a particular faith or set of beliefs.

The key thing is that while we as Scout leaders should try to encourage a Scout to understand and exercise his "Duty to God," we must at the same time be very careful that our actions are not misinterpreted by any Scout to mean that his faith is unacceptable or that he should be in a different faith. Remember that Scouting does not define what a religion is and does not require membership in any particular religious group. We are interested in promoting a Scout's better understanding of his "Duty to God" because it aids good character development and improves citizenship skills. By using graces, prayers, songs and closings, we can help Scouts to remember that duty and to begin thinking about that duty to God.

¹¹ PART 3: A Scout's Duty to God and Country ©1998-99