On April 19, 2015, Bishop Gainer celebrated Mass for the diocesan Scouting community at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Camp Hill. This Mass marked the first time that all of the elements of our diocesan Scouting community (Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and American Heritage Girls) were specifically invited to worship together with our bishop.

Scouts and their families gathered prior to Mass and subsequently socialized at a reception in the parish hall. Scouts filled many roles during the Mass by ushering, reading, bearing gifts, and performing in the choir.

In an especially memorable moment, more than 130 religious awards earned over the past year were blessed and distributed by Bishop Gainer during the Mass.

The Scouting community expressed its gratitude to the Church of the Good Shepherd for its generous hospitality and also to Bishop Gainer and other attending clergy for their inspiration and support.

Check out some additional photos of the Mass, courtesy of Chris Heisey from The Catholic Witness, on pages 5 and 6.

FUTURE DIOCESAN EVENTS

- July 18th
- September 19th
- November 21st

Scouts from our diocese are invited to join with other youth at a kick-off Mass for the upcoming World Youth Day in Krakow, Poland.

The kick-off Mass and Catholic Youth Experience begins at the Cardinal Keeler Center and ends at Bishop McDevitt High School in Harrisburg on August 1, 2015. Activities will begin at 9:00 a.m. and will include Mass with Bishop Gainer, music, a Rosary procession, and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. The day will end at 3:00 p.m.

Plan now for your Scouts to attend as a group (uniforms are not expected). The cost for the Catholic Youth Experience is $7 per person. There is no cost to attend the WYD kick-off Mass. Learn more on the diocesan website and in The Catholic Witness.
CATHOLIC BOY SCOUT SUMMER CAMP

Summer has finally arrived, and for many of the boys and girls in our diocese, that means summer camp! Anticipation has certainly been building for a number of Catholic boys in our area, as they plan to participate in the first Boy Scout camp ever coordinated by the Harrisburg DCCS. Nearly 100 Catholic youth are expected to take advantage of this opportunity, with one troop travelling from as far away as West Virginia. On the spiritual side, Catholic boys and leaders will be able to attend Mass, earn nationally recognized activity patches, join in communal prayer, and complete several inspirational crafts. On the Scouting side, campers will be able to take advantage of the many activities offered by the New Birth of Freedom Council at Camp Tuckahoe. Tuckahoe has expanded their list of activities this year to include paddle boards, pedal boats, and a sporting arrow range.

Anyone who might be interested in contributing to or attending this camp should contact Patrick McCormack at patrick.a.mccormack@gmail.com. Scouts attending Tuckahoe from July 19th to the 25th will have the opportunity to earn this commemorative patch.

Diocesan Catholic Boy Scout Retreat

The annual Catholic Scout Retreat has become a beloved tradition in the Diocese of Harrisburg, and registration information for the upcoming retreat was recently released. This year’s retreat will be September 18-20 at the Penn Dutch Council’s Camp Bashore in Lebanon County. The theme for this year’s retreat will echo that of the World Meeting of Families: Love is our Mission: The Family Fully Alive! The basic program will include three sessions on Saturday morning and, new to the retreat program this year, a rifle shooting event in the afternoon. Scouts who are at least 14 years old may choose instead to enroll in Project C.O.P.E. for an additional cost of $10 per participant.

Recitation of the Holy Rosary on Saturday afternoon and Masses both Friday and Saturday night will augment the religious character of the weekend. A non-denominational religious service will also occur on Sunday morning. Scouts and Scouters unable to attend the entire retreat can register just for Saturday.

Catholic Girl Scouts Support School Fundraiser

On March 27, 2015, the students and teachers at Saint Margaret Mary School in Harrisburg were treated to a bake sale with help by their Brownie and Cadette troops. The girls supported this sale to raise money for Catholic Relief Services’ Operation Rice Bowl. This Lenten program of fasting and alms-giving raises money for famine relief, education, sanitation, and other humanitarian causes around the world. Saint Margaret Mary raised $250 and demonstrated a powerful commitment to the corporal works of mercy. Imagine the impact if all of our Scouts did the same each year!
**Integrate Laudato Si into Scouting Activities**

Within the past few weeks you have probably heard quite a bit about *Laudato Si*, the latest encyclical from Pope Francis. The interest generated by this document provides an excellent opportunity for Catholic Scouting units to examine their own record on environmental stewardship. While reading the entire encyclical might seem too challenging for many of our Scouts, informed leaders can certainly help their Scouts to understand some of its basic themes.

For example, the title of the encyclical was inspired by the famous prayer of St. Francis of Assisi known as the Canticle of the Sun. Your Scouts may be curious to read that prayer, learn more about St. Francis, and discover why he is known as the patron saint of animals. Scouts can also take action for the environment by promoting and practicing outdoor ethics, by recycling, and so much more. See what your Scouts will suggest!

Given the strong commitment that our Scouting communities already have to conservation, Catholic Scouts should prove especially receptive to this message from Pope Francis. Boy Scouts promise to be clean, to live by the Outdoor Code, and to practice the principles of Leave No Trace. Girl Scouts pledge to use resources wisely and make the world a better place. American Heritage Girls and Camp Fire kids likewise incorporate conservation into their programs.

You can download and read the entire encyclical from the Vatican website at http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/index.html.

**Are You Ready for the World Meeting of Families?**

Anticipation continues to build for the upcoming World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia. Pope Francis will participate during his first papal visit to the United States, which will also include stops in Washington, D.C., and New York.

Many pilgrims from the Diocese of Harrisburg will travel to one or more of those venues, while many more will participate in locally organized events or join the pilgrims in prayer.

This event provides an excellent opportunity for our Scouting community to focus on the family. What will your Scouts be doing to strengthen their families and provide a positive witness to the wider world?

Could your Scouts order devotional cards with a prayer to the Holy Family and distribute them after Mass? Could your Scouts organize a family potluck supper? Could your Scouts organize a “family fun day” or movie night in the parish hall?

Plan for this to be a meaningful moment for our Catholic Scouts and families!

**National Catholic Committee on Scouting Responds to BSA President Robert Gates**

Edward Martin, the chairman of the National Catholic Committee on Scouting, recently released a letter in response to the suggestion by Boy Scouts of America President Robert Gates that the movement reconsider its current membership standards for adults.

While Gates’ preference for greater inclusion received much more attention in the popular press, Martin emphasized Gates’ declaration that the Boy Scouts of America should guarantee the right of chartered organizations “to establish leadership standards consistent with their faith.” Since any change in adult membership standards could have a significant impact on the religious liberty of the churches that currently charter the largest number of Scouting units, Martin promised continued vigilance and advocacy for the interests of Catholic Scouting.

While Martin expressed his confidence that participation in the Boy Scout program would remain compatible with Catholic teaching, he did encourage us to pray for the future. You can read Martin’s complete statement on the National Committee’s website, http://www.nccs-bsa.org/pdf/Response-150521.pdf.
Catholic Scouting Honors Adult Leaders

Previous issues of Catholic Scouting highlighted most of the religious awards that can be earned by our youth, either individually or as troops. Yet we all know how critical adult leaders are to the success of our youth, and it is fitting that we also recognize these outstanding volunteers for their efforts.

The Diocesan Catholic Committee for Girl Scouts USA and Camp Fire USA currently offers three different awards for adults. The Diocesan Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Award may be presented for three years of service, the National Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Award may be presented for five years of service, and the National Saint Anne Medal may be awarded for ten years of service. The other criteria for each of the awards are similar and mostly related to the spiritual leadership of youth and service to the community. A nominating form and additional details may be found on our diocesan website. Nominations must be received by January 7th each year.

The Diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting currently offers two different awards for adults. The Bronze Pelican Award is a diocesan award that may be presented for five years of service, and the national St. George Emblem may be presented for eight years of service to Catholic Scouting. Nomination forms and additional information for each of these awards may be accessed through our diocesan website.

Catholic Committees Planning for Next Year

Our diocesan committees will be making some important decisions about their 2016 activities at the meetings scheduled for July 18th.

Topics for discussion at the DCCGSCF include settling the dates and subjects for two upcoming patch workshops and exploring the possibility of organizing a diocesan pilgrimage.

The DCCS will open a discussion on ways to enhance its support for Catholic Cub Scouts. Suggestions for consideration will include organizing a religious patch workshop and offering a day of activities for Webelos at the annual Scout Retreat.

In addition to their separate agenda items, both committees anticipate collaborating on at least two events next year: the biannual diocesan recognition dinner and the annual diocesan Mass with Bishop Gainer.

Interested? Plan to attend!

Summer Adventure on the St. George Trek

For many Boy Scouts and Venturers, a trip to one of the national High Adventure Bases would seem like the pinnacle of their tenure in Scouting. Thanks to the National Catholic Committee on Scouting’s commitment to developing Catholic leadership, seventy lucky Scouts have an opportunity to hike along the trails at New Mexico’s Philmont Scout Ranch, the original High Adventure Base.

This annual event gathers Catholic Scouts, bishops, priests, religious, and seminarians from across the country for eleven days of backpacking. Known as the St. George Trek, this excursion is also a vocation retreat. Participants attend Mass and pray together while also enjoying the glory of God’s creation. Scouts from the Diocese of Harrisburg have been accepted into the program for each of the last several years, including the trek beginning this July.

Interested Scouts must be at least 15 years old by July 1st in the year of their trek, in good health, attending high school, and willing to assist their local committees upon their return from the trek. As an added attraction, the cost for participating is considerably lower than most other organized trips to Philmont.

Applications must be made through local diocesan committees and are accepted as they are received until all of the spaces have been taken. Start thinking now about applying this fall for next year’s trek.
Memories from the Diocesan Scouting Mass

[Images of scouts and clergy]
Memories from the Diocesan Scouting Mass

St. George,  
Patron Saint of Boy Scouts, and  
St. Agnes,  
Patron Saint of Girl Scouts,  
Pray for Us!