

## Instructions for Adults Seeking to Lead Religious Emblems Programs

Thank you for your interest in working with the youth of your parish in the Diocese of Arlington. Religious emblems can help youth in scouting programs develop a richer and deeper connection to their Catholic faith and parish community. With the grace of the Holy Spirit, the youth's family and those within the parish community will help these young people remain faithful throughout their lives. As supplementary materials to the catechesis provided by the parish, these emblems programs should not merely "check the boxes" of requirements or become knowledge assessments to get an emblem.

**Rather, they are designed around faith-growth through prayer and discussions with faithful adults within the parish.** Research and common sense point to the importance of these parish-based connections. Youth are significantly more likely to remain engaged in their faith lives if they:

- Work on projects with adults of the parish who embrace their faith;
- Hear from parish adults who are able to talk about their faith;
- Regularly see an adult they respect participating in the Sacraments of the Church.

Consequently, we strongly discourage doing these programs outside of your parish (e.g., cross-parish programs or with those outside of the Diocese). Outstanding video or other online components can surely be integrated—yet if our goal is to nourish and sustain faith-filled youth and their engagement in the Church then it is critical to foster these parish-based relationships.

There are two types of emblems programs:

1. Group – Non-family-led programs for older youth which are specifically designed to have pastor-approved-adults guide the youth through various activities and discussions. (Pastor must approve leadership. Please complete Notice of Intent on subsequent pages.)
2. Family – Programs that provide families, the primary educators of the faith for their children, with tools to have faith discussions with younger children. Families working **EXCLUSIVELY with their own children** on the following programs **Guardian Angel, Light of Christ, Parvuli Dei, God is Love, Family of God, I Live My Faith, Deus et Familia Mea (new AHG), or Deus et Patria Mea (new AHG)**, should not submit the attached Notice of Intent.

***N.B. While the Family programs were not designed to be completed in a group setting, the Pastor has the discretion to permit the above Family programs to be done via group instruction.***

Regardless of program, be sure to consult with your pastor or his designee on matters or questions of faith that arise. In addition, seek out your pastor, other parish clergy, or director of youth ministry as a resource for rich discussion around a specific topic of faith. This relationship is important!

Prior to the start of the program, the pastor, or his staff designee on his behalf, must:

- Confirm that all diocesan youth protection requirements have been met and are up-to-date.
- Indicate that he has no reservation about the emblems counselor/moderator/mentor/facilitator/advisor working with youth in this capacity.
- Ensure that if you are leading a youth from another parish in the program that you as the counselor/facilitator notifies the pastor of the youth's parish that you are working with the youth. (We strongly discourage working on the program outside of a youth's own parish, but if done, both pastors must approve.)

### *Important Notes:*

- Boards of Review are required for some of the group/"older youth emblems." Please check the Diocesan website for more details.
- The NFCYM religious recognitions programs (available to all youth but primarily used by Girl Scouts and some AHG in the past) are currently under review due to some programmatic changes in approval.

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**Annual NOTICE OF INTENT to Initiate a  
Religious Emblems Program**

(Completed forms should be sent via PDF to [scouting@arlingtondiocese.org](mailto:scouting@arlingtondiocese.org))

Must be Completed and Approved Prior to Meeting with Youth

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

Name of Adult Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (home): \_\_\_\_\_ (cell): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Program being run for the following Parish: \_\_\_\_\_

These program(s) will be conducted in a group setting (please check all programs that apply):

_____ Deus et Civitas Mea	_____ Ad Altare Dei	_____ Mary, the First Disciple
_____ Femina Integritatis	_____ Pope Pius XII	_____ Spirit Alive
_____	_____	_____ Missio

The Pastor has agreed to allow the following family-based programs to be done by group instruction:

\_\_\_\_\_ Guardian Angel    \_\_\_\_\_ Light of Christ    \_\_\_\_\_ Parvuli Dei    \_\_\_\_\_ God is Love  
\_\_\_\_\_ Family of God    \_\_\_\_\_ I Live My Faith    \_\_\_\_\_ Deus et Familia Mea    \_\_\_\_\_ Deus et Patria Mea

**PROGRAM INFORMATION (if information is unknown, provide estimates—then update pastor once details confirmed)**

Date Program is to Start: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Youth Participants: \_\_\_\_\_

Location and Address of Meetings: \_\_\_\_\_

Day of Week Meetings will be Held: \_\_\_\_\_

Frequency of Meetings: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Meetings: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person(s) Assisting (must be approved by pastor and compliant with diocesan youth protection policies including having at least two approved adults at all activities):

\_\_\_\_\_

Among its roles, the Diocese of Arlington's Catholic Committee on Scouting supports parishes in the use of any emblems program approved by the bishop. The Committee supports the diocese through its oversight for fidelity of implementation at the parish level. The annual Notice of Intent was created to standardize the approval process for adults seeking to work with youth in the religious emblems program.

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**APPLICANT SIGNATURE** (If statements below are true, please initial and sign below)

\_\_\_\_\_ I affirm that I have read and understand the youth manual/workbook and associated leader manual(s) for the program(s) indicated. I understand my role and responsibility as a coordinator, advisor, counselor, facilitator, mentor, or moderator for the various programs is to provide the program as outlined in the emblems workbooks and/or program manuals.

\_\_\_\_\_ I affirm that I am currently a registered member of American Heritage Girls, Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts USA, and/or Trail Life USA. I am compliant with the applicable youth serving organization's youth protection program AND the Diocese of Arlington's Protecting God's Children Program and will abide by the parish and diocesan youth protection guidelines and code of conduct including as it pertains to who assists me with the religious emblems program. (Contact your parish's liaison to the Office for the Protection of Children and Young People/OPCYP for more information and visit the online code of conduct regarding youth protection [www.arlingtondiocese.org](http://www.arlingtondiocese.org).)

Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**PASTOR'S APPROVAL** (because elements of Church teaching are involved in religious emblems programs, leader selection and approval is important)

I hereby certify that the above individual(s) have been checked for compliance with the Diocese of Arlington's youth protection requirements and I have no objection to the listed individuals functioning as leaders in the above-named religious emblems program(s). (Please note that parish must check for OPCYP compliance. The diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting does not check for compliance.)

Pastor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE SEND THE COMPLETED FORM VIA PDF TO [scouting@arlingtondiocese.org](mailto:scouting@arlingtondiocese.org)

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**Once completed/approved, a copy of this form must be provided to pastors(s) of any participating youth who are not parishioners of the above-named parish.**

The above-named adults are coordinating or conducting a religious emblems program with a youth in your parish. This form is to inform you that the following youth in your parish should be seeking your approval to work with adults from outside of your parish on this program.