

## **Joint Statement of the Catholic Diocese of Wichita and the Girl Scouts of Kansas Heartland**

**Dated August 4, 2017**

Girl Scouting is proud of its long-standing relationship with the Catholic Church which dates back to 1914. Scouting is an effective way to help Catholic girls and young women to serve God and their country. Girl Scouting builds character and leadership in an environment that provides wholesome fun under the guidance of strong adult role models. Girl Scouts honors the life of faith of all its members and encourages each girl to become stronger in her own faith community.

The Catholic Diocese of Wichita acknowledges Girl Scouting as a valuable form of youth ministry that engages girls and young women in the life of stewardship within their Catholic parishes. Further, the available Catholic religious recognition programs and the Girl Scouts "My Promise, My Faith" program are important ways in which Scouting can be infused with Catholic faith and values.

The Catholic Diocese of Wichita further acknowledges the long history of mutual support and close cooperation with Girl Scouting. Girl Scout troops have been a consistent presence in many of the parishes, working in close cooperation with their pastors, the principals of parish schools, and other Church leaders to nurture the healthy development of young women, and to build on their faith through Catholic religious award programs.

To continue the effectiveness of Girl Scouting as a viable youth ministry program, the Catholic Diocese of Wichita and Girl Scouts of Kansas Heartland agree to the following:

### **The Catholic Diocese of Wichita:**

1. Recognizes the positive impact that Girl Scouting has on girls, their development and their faith
2. Supports Catholic girls and leaders in Girl Scouting
3. Approves of parishes promoting involvement in Girl Scouts and providing meeting spaces for troops who provide appropriate insurance coverage documentation
4. Agrees to provide ongoing support for religious award programs through its Catholic Committee on Scouting
5. Assists Girl Scouts of Kansas Heartland and the diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting in establishing standards of quality for Girl Scout troops and volunteers
6. Ensures that all adults involved in troops fulfill diocesan safe environment requirements, including participation in VIRTUS safe environment training for adult volunteers

### **Girl Scouts of Kansas Heartland:**

1. Respects the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and the policies, objectives, aims and practices of the diocese and individual parishes
2. Maintains regular, ongoing communication with the Catholic Diocese of Wichita through the Office of Faith Formation and the Catholic Committee on Scouting
3. Operates its troops and volunteers that are located in Catholic institutions in compliance with Catholic teaching and diocesan policy; especially its Child Protection policies
4. Recognizes and honors the principle that religious instruction is the responsibility of religious leaders and parents

5. Defers discussion on issues of human sexuality, abortion or birth control to religious leaders and parents, believing that these are matters best discussed within their faith community and family
6. Has no relationship with Planned Parenthood and will not partner with that organization in programs or advocacy
7. Ensures that all proceeds for Girl Scout cookie activities remain with the local council and troops
8. Recognizes that troops affiliated with Catholic institutions may express global solidarity and service by means other than use of the WAGGGS pin or activities

Together, the Catholic Diocese of Wichita and the Girl Scouts of Kansas Heartland are committed to maintaining open communication regarding concerns or questions that may arise, and they will assist troops, leaders, and parents in providing a fruitful experience for their Girl Scouts in developing leadership and service opportunities.

This Joint Statement reflects the positions of the Catholic Diocese of Wichita and Girl Scouts of Kansas Heartland as of the date indicated above. It is not contractual in nature, and may be revoked upon any changes in position by either party.



Rev. David Lies  
Vicar General/Moderator of the Curia  
Catholic Diocese of Wichita



Liz Workman  
Chief Executive Officer  
Girl Scouts of Kansas Heartland