



girl scouts

March 1, 2013

Mr. Robert J. McCarty, D.Min.  
Executive Director  
National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry  
415 Michigan Avenue, NE, Suite 40  
Washington, DC 20017

Dear Bob:

Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) is proud to celebrate its partnership with the Catholic Church and the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry. Indeed, Girl Scouts' partnership with the Catholic Church has served thousands upon thousands of Catholic girls across the country for nearly 100 years; it is among our organization's longest standing and most fruitful collaborations.

**Girl Scouts of the USA**

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**Office of the National President  
and the Chief Executive Officer**

A fundamental reason for this proud legacy is that the mission of Girl Scouting and the goal of Catholic youth ministry and formation share much in common. The mission of Girl Scouting is to build girls of courage, confidence and character, who make the world a better place. It is the driving force for our Movement. The goals of Catholic faith formation as expressed in *Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry*, are "to empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today ... to draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of the Catholic faith community (and) ... to foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person." Thus, it is abundantly clear that the Catholic Church and Girl Scouting both seek to empower girls and foster their growth and development as responsible participants in the life of the Church and outside of it.

Essential to understanding Girl Scouts and its relationship with faith communities is to realize that everything in Girl Scouting is based on the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Both include many of the principles and values common to Catholicism and other faiths. The Promise, for example, calls on girls to, on their honor, "serve God and my country," and to "help people at all times." The Girl Scout Law, meanwhile, is a moral code in which girls commit to being

*honest and fair,  
friendly and helpful,  
considerate and caring,  
courageous and strong, and  
responsible for what I say and do,  
and to  
respect myself and others,  
respect authority,  
use resources wisely,  
make the world a better place, and  
be a sister to every Girl Scout.*

**Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character,  
who make the world a better place.**



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Thus, given our Promise and Law, we at Girl Scouts have, although a secular organization always encouraged girls to take spiritual journeys via their faiths' religious recognitions.

We have a long and proud working relationship with the National Catholic Committee for Girl Scouts and Camp Fire, and out of that partnership have come some wonderful Catholic recognition programs for Girl Scouts from the second grade through the senior year in high school. And girls of all grade levels can also earn the Girl Scouts My Promise, My Faith pin. This pin, which girls can earn once a year, complements existing religious recognitions and allows all girls to further strengthen the connection between their faith and Girl Scouts. But the partnership with the Catholic Church extends well beyond this—to the dioceses and parishes in communities across our vast nation. Many Girl Scouts have partnered with their parishes, for example, to serve their communities as they earn the highest honors in Girl Scouting: the Bronze, Silver and Gold awards. And many women who were Girl Scouts in their youth today serve in faith and leadership roles within the Catholic and Girl Scout communities.

In the end, the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry and the Girl Scouts of the USA share a special bond that has stood the test of time. It is a blessing that the mutual respect and high level of trust between our organizations has led to an even stronger commitment to expand our partnership. We are excited, for instance, about opportunities to build closer ties with dioceses and parishes that have Hispanic ministry and to deepen working relationships as we serve this and other populations that are so important to our organizations.

As we in Girl Scouting enter our second century, we do so with gratitude and grace, as well as a sense of pride that our partnership with the Catholic Church and the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry has endured and thus benefitted countless girls on their journey to adulthood. And we do so looking to the future—to that next 100 years of mutual understanding and respect and service to Catholic girls and families in communities large and small.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Anna Maria Chávez".

Anna Maria Chávez  
Chief Executive Officer  
Girl Scouts of the USA