



## Archdiocese of St. Louis

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## Catholic Youth Apostolate

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Catholic Scouting      CYC Sports      Youth Ministry      REAP Team

April, 2011

Dear Pastors and Girl Scout leaders,

Over the past several months you may have become aware of the issues surrounding the National Office of Girl Scouts of USA, World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGS) and Planned Parenthood. We have been in communication with the National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministry, NFCYM, the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops' youth ministry department and have been assured that NFCYM has been in a continued discussion with GSUSA at the National level. For details about current issues as well as background information, please read the attached letter from the NFCYM.

The Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri does not collaborate or partner with Planned Parenthood, nor do they intend to do so in the future. "We believe religious opinions and practices are best decided by girls and their families," said Donna K. Martin, CEO of the Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri. She added, "We encourage girls to discuss these matters with their parents and religious advisors."

On an Archdiocesan level, the responsibility of the Catholic Youth Apostolate's Office of Catholic Scouting is to minister to Catholic young people and Catholic adults in Scouting. Our purpose is to promote faith formation programs and retreats. We plan to continue to minister to Catholic adults and Catholic girls in Girl Scouts. In fact, this year alone through our faith formation award program we have reached out to over 900, girls teaching them more about our faith and virtues such as chastity, truthfulness, etc.

We believe that it is important for you to know that Girl Scout leaders (and several Pastors who work with Girl Scout Troops) contacted us over the past several months with concern for this issue. Not one of the parents or leaders has ever felt any pressure to present or promote any programs associated with Planned Parenthood or anything against their Catholic faith. They also expressed that they have total control over the planning and facilitating of the programs for the girls in their troops. As you know, the Archdiocese has no oversight of Girl Scout troops in individual parishes. Each Pastor, parent, Scout leader will need to make his or her own decision regarding participation in these programs. If you have any questions or concerns, we encourage you to call Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri. The organization is committed to transparently discussing policies and positions and welcomes discussion around any issue.

We ask your prayers that this situation will be resolved, and we will continue to keep you informed.

We are here to help you! Thank you for all you do for our young people!

Sincerely,

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Encl. NFCYM doc.