



SPIRITUAL SCOUTING OFFICE

Date: February 29, 2012

To: Concerned Groups

From: Dr. Al Tarlo
Spiritual Scouting
CYO

RE: National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministry and Girl Scouting misinformation campaign

I want to take a few minutes to bring everyone up to date on the campaign of internet misinformation continuing to be targeted towards the National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM) and the Girl Scout Movement. Negative information about Girl Scouts has been sent around the internet over the last several years. The NFCYM has also been targeted this past year as well. That information is either false or unfairly edited to imply "guilt by association." While it is understandable that these Internet articles may be of concern, it is important to note that the information is either false, or a gross exaggeration designed to create the appearance of a relationship that does not exist with Planned Parenthood.

I can also assure you that GSUSA and the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM) maintain a longstanding relationship (1914), under which GSUSA agrees to support Catholic families and communities in the promotion of Catholic moral teaching among Catholic youth. This relationship is detailed in the eight-page NFCYM and GSUSA Position Statement located on NFCYM's website, which was **updated in 2005**. You can view the document [here](#). The latest update can be found on the NFCYM website home page dated 2/11/2012. Despite all of the concern about the live television interview of the past national CEO more than seven years ago in 2004 and the current EWTN series that was on "Women of Grace", NFCYM (the arm of the Bishops) and CYO Spiritual Scouting can assure you that Girl Scouts does not have a relationship with Planned Parenthood.

The fact that something is on the Internet does not make it true. We as Catholics have an obligation to make sure that all individuals are treated with dignity and respect. ***We need your help too. We ask you to please not publish any thing in your parish bulletin regarding Girl Scouts (other than local items like: GS Hayride, Girl Scout Mass etc.) that you have not verified with the Spiritual Scouting Office at CYO. Also, we would appreciate your help by actively encouraging Girl Scout Families to join us for the 100th Anniversary Girl Scout Celebration Mass at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament on Sunday, March 11, 2012 at 2:00 pm.***

We would be very happy to meet with your parish community, school, and Girl Scout leaders/parents to answer their questions at your convenience. Our committee has a track record of successfully working with both GSUSA and NFCYM to effect improvements.

Some of the recent focus of the Internet has been directed towards 5 out of 82 speakers at the 52nd National Girl Scout Convention in Houston. I represented the Archdiocese of Detroit at the convention and the NFCYM was also present.

One of the biggest complaints on the Internet is that the Mayor of Houston (who was elected as mayor a year ago) welcomed the 10,000 attendees to the city and spoke for 3 minutes. This convention was planned over three years ago, so Girl Scouts had no idea she would be the mayor. And, having the Mayor greet a convention is standard practice around the country. According to the internet she has political and lifestyle positions that are different than many of us. Yet we as Catholics must remember that all individuals are created in the image and likeness of God. I am also confident that if the Pope were to visit Houston that he would be gracious and allow her to welcome him to the city.

I found the speakers talks inspirational and I am providing you with an article sharing perceptions of the convention experience that can be utilized as a tool of information sharing for your parish bulletin (see attached document).

“Statement on Convention Speakers from GSUSA

GSUSA’s convention will highlight more than 80 Girl Scout supporters as speakers, entertainers, conversation leaders and role models. These supporters come from many walks of life, including business, science, the military, the media, philanthropy, fashion and more. In many cases, they show girls by example that dreams do come true, whether as the first African-American female combat pilot, the first woman to anchor the evening news alone, the youngest recipient of the Best Actress Oscar, or a physics professor whose work helps answer fundamental questions about the nature of dark matter. They were chosen without regard to politics for their ability to inspire the thousands of convention participants who will in turn help our nation create more opportunities for girls of courage, confidence and character, who make the world a better place.”

Please be aware of the following:

- All issues relating to Girl Scouting and the work of the task force have been reviewed by Auxiliary Bishop Cepeda.
- Statements regarding the relationship between Girl Scouts and the Catholic Church are available to review on the following websites: Girl Scouts of the United States of America, NFCYM, CYO and the Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan
- Girl Scout Financials are available on the [national](#) and [local](#) websites for review to verify no link to Planned Parenthood.
- Position Statements regarding Planned Parenthood are posted on both the [national](#) and [local](#) Girl Scout Websites.

The mission of Girl Scouts is to build girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place. The Girl Scout Leadership Experience and the national program portfolio that is delivered by volunteers is how mission is accomplished.

Please let me know if we can be of further assistance. Please feel free to call me or email me at anytime at 248-496-4871 or at tarlo.al@aod.org.