



June 21, 2013

**Statement of the Bishops of Washington State Regarding Policy Change  
for Boy Scouts of America Membership**

The Catholic Church teaches that all people are to be treated with dignity and respect. The recent change in the membership policy of the Boy Scouts of America does not affect the teachings of the Catholic Church or the manner in which the Catholic parishes in Washington State conduct the scouting programs under their sponsorship.

Scouting programs seek to instill the importance of duty to God and country, and groups chartered through the Catholic Church witness to the faith while providing youth a valuable and well-rounded opportunity for involvement in the life of the local parish and community. The values set forth in the Scout Oath and Law are fundamental to the Boy Scouts of America and central to teaching young people to make better choices over their lifetimes. The Church, through its clergy and lay leaders, has the responsibility to teach the Gospel and encourage all people to live out the teachings of Christ – regardless of their sexual attraction.

At present, the Bishops of Washington State do not anticipate any change in their approach to Scouting programs but will continue to review any developments or updates that may be issued by the Boy Scouts of America.