Scouting at home Religious Emblems

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BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
LONG BEACH AREA COUNCIL

Why Religious Emblems?

- The spirit of the Religious Emblems program is found in the Scout Oath and Scout Law:
  - Scout Oath: "Duty to God"
  - 12th point of the Scout Law – "A Scout is reverent"

  - *How can Scouts practice their duty to God and being reverent?*
    - Participating in Interfaith Worship Services at camp (formerly "Scouts Own" service)
    - Participating in Scout Sunday/Scout Sabbath (First Sunday in February)
    - Participating in the annual Ten Commandments hike (Friday after Thanksgiving)
    - Earning your faith's religious emblem

Religious Emblems

- At least 42 different denomination Emblems available
- Most denominations offer emblems for multiple levels:
  - Cub Scout
  - Weblows
  - Scout
  - Venture, older Scout
  - Adult Recognition
- *But, not all denominations may offer emblems for every level*
- https://www.scouting.org/awards/religious-awards/chart/

There are lots of religious denominations…

- African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME)
- African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church
- Anglican Catholic Church
- Anglican Church in North America
- Armenian Apostolic Church of America (Western Prelacy)
- Armenian Church of America (Eastern Diocese)
- Baha'i
- Baptist
- Buddhist
- Catholic, Eastern
- Catholic, Roman
- Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
- Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
- Church of Christ, Scientist (Christian Scientist)
- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
- Churches of Christ

There are lots of religious denominations…

- Community of Christ
- Eastern Orthodox
- Episcopal
- General Church of the New Jerusalem (The New Church)
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Jain
- Jewish
- Lutheran
- Meher Baba
- Moravian
- National Association of Anglican Traditional Catholic Scouters
- Nazarene
- Polish National Catholic Church
- Presbyterian Church in America
- Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

There are lots of religious denominations…

- **Protestant and Independent Christian Churches**
- **Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)**
- **The Salvation Army**
- **Sikh**
- **Unitarian Universalist Association**
- **United Church of Christ**
- **United Methodist**
- **United Pentecostal Church International**
- **Unity Worldwide Ministries**
- **Zoroastrian**

Getting started…

- *How do I get started on earning my Religious Emblem?*
  - Similar to Merit Badges, you should first talk with your Unit Leader
    - Cubmaster, Scoutmaster, Crew Advisor
    - Unit Chaplain or Chaplain Aide
  - They can direct you to the person who can help:
    - To the Council Religious Emblems Coordinator (REC) – For Long Beach Area Council:
      - Catholic: Christopher Espinoza
      - Jewish: Tova Gottesmann
      - Others: will be directed as needed for your faith tradition through P.R.A.Y. web site

Finding out who to contact…

- Most REC's can be found or contacted through:
  - Through your Local Council Service Center
    - https://www.longbeachbsa.org or https://www.scouting.org/
  - Through the P.R.A.Y. (Program of Religious Activities with Youth) website
    - https://www.praypub.org
  - Through local houses of worship, local religious leaders, or local religious headquarters

- *Can't I just talk with my pastor?*
  - You can, but unless your pastor is a former Scout or has a working relationship with Scouting, they may not know much about the Religious Emblems program. Best to start with your REC or other listed experts.

LBAC Contacts…

- For those in Long Beach Area Council:
  - For Catholics
    - Christopher Espinoza
    - The LBACCCS (Long Beach Area Council Catholic Committee on Scouting)
  - For Jewish:
    - Tova Gottesmann
  - For Protestant and Independent Christians and all others:
    - Contact P.R.A.Y. https://www.praypub.org/

About your Religious Emblems Coordinator…

- Your Religious Emblems Coordinator is like a Merit Badge Counselor
  - Provide you with necessary pamphlets and booklets
  - Will guide you through the requirements
  - Responsible for signing off on your completion of the requirements
  - Helps coordinate the award of the emblem/medal

- *What are the requirements?*
  - This will vary depending on your religion and your level in Scouting
  - Each denomination manages the requirements and the awarding of emblems
  - Requirements are meant to be age appropriate for that Scouting level

Some typical questions…

- Frequently Asked Questions:
  - What are the religious emblems programs?
    - The religious emblems programs are programs created by the various religious groups to encourage youth to grow stronger in their faith. The religious groups—not the Boy Scouts of America—have created the religious emblems programs themselves.
    - The Boy Scouts of America has approved of these programs and allows the recognition to be worn on the official uniform, but each religious organization develops and administers its own program.
  - ***What does this mean?***
    - These programs are not designed or managed by the BSA, but by the various religious groups
    - BSA encourages participation (Duty to God/a Scout is reverent) and allows it to be worn on the official Scout Uniform

Some typical questions…

- Frequently Asked Questions:
  - I have a unit with children of all different faiths. How can I include the religious emblems programs for my unit?
    - The religious emblems programs should be presented to youth members and their families as an optional program for them to complete through their religious organization. Religious instruction should always come from the religious organization, not from the unit leader. Parents need to be informed of these programs and told where to get the information for their particular faith. Interested in making a presentation on the religious awards? Find sample scripts at www.praypub.org.
  - ***What does this mean?***
    - This isn't necessarily a Troop or Patrol activity, it is better done as an *individual* or *family* activity

Some typical questions…

- Frequently Asked Questions:
  - Which religious emblem square knot should I wear?
    - Cloth, silver knot on purple, No. 05007, may be worn by youth or adult members who earned the knot as a youth, above left pocket. Cloth, purple on silver, No. 05014, may be worn by adult members presented with the recognition, above left pocket. Adults may wear both knots if they satisfy qualifying criteria. (See the *Insignia Guide,* No. 33066D.)

  - ***What does this mean?***
    - All recipients wear the same knot, both youth and adult.
    - Adults who earn both a youth emblem and an adult emblem may wear two knots
    - Medals are worn over the knot for formal occasions (i.e. Court of Honor)

Some typical questions…

- Frequently Asked Questions:
  - How is the emblem presented?
    - The emblem should be presented in a meaningful ceremony, preferably in the youth member's religious institution. Some emblems come with a sample presentation ceremony.
    - Each religious program has its own emblem. Follow the instructions in your recognition guidelines because the emblems come from different places and require submission of different information. These emblems will not be available in your local council!
  - ***What does this mean?***
    - Emblems are not presented by the unit but by the religious institution
    - Emblems are not ordered through the Council or the BSA but by the religious institution

Some typical questions…

- Frequently Asked Questions:
  - Why did Scouting change from a "Scout's Own" service to an "Interfaith Worship Service"?
    - A "Scout's Own" service was intended to be open to all denominations and but not follow any one particular religious tradition's form or practice. Over time, however, in order to avoid offending any particular Scout or their religious convictions, these services evolved into more generic, non-religious services – an inspirational, informal ceremony meant to avoid any particular religious tradition. They are made up of a mixture of readings, prayers, reflections and music. Many Scouts' Owns are based on a particular Scouting themes, such as friendship, using resources wisely, or fairness.
    - Current NYLT and Wood Badge training has Scouts using an "Interfaith Worship Service" going back to Robert Baden-Powell's original intent that Scouts be exposed to a variety of religious traditions, and offers Scouts the opportunity to learn from each other about their particular religious traditions.
  - ***What does this mean?***
    - Scouts should learn about and be respectful of all religious traditions.

Resources available online…

- Resources:
  - Scouting.org website
    - https://www.scouting.org/awards/religious-awards/
  - Council web site
    - https://www.longbeachbsa.org/
  - P.R.A.Y. web site
    - https://www.praypub.org/bsa