



# Memo

**Date:** September 23, 2013  
**To:** Clergy  
**From:** Pat Chivers, Director of Communications and Advocacy  
**Re:** Boy Scouts of America

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At the Council of Priests meeting on September 18, questions were raised about the position of the Archdiocese of Atlanta in relation to sponsoring Boy Scout troops in light of the resolution made by the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) earlier this year.

The BSA approved a resolution stating that “No youth may be denied membership in the BSA on the basis of sexual orientation or preference alone.” The resolution also stated that “while the BSA does not proactively inquire about sexual orientation of employees, volunteers or members, we do not grant membership to individuals who are open or avowed homosexuals or who engage in behavior that would become a distraction to the mission of the BSA.”

Bishop Robert Guglielmone of Charleston, episcopal liaison of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to the National Catholic Committee on Scouting, commented that “Church teaching is very clear that the homosexual inclination is not sinful and that same-sex attraction is not immoral, but that what we’re dealing with here is the distinction between the inclination and the conduct. The standards remain the same as they always have for scouts. Homosexual activity will not be condoned.”

“The leadership of the BSA has made it very clear that they intend to hold the line on adult leaders, but they also said they would hold the line on this issue, so where this could go, I don’t know,” Bishop Guglielmone continued. “That’s why I feel it’s imperative for the Church to continue to be involved. And if it gets to the point where some of our basic issues are threatened — such as being able to pick leaders for Catholic chartered groups or in diminishing the role of religion and God — then we will have to re-evaluate our participation in the program at that time.”

**Archdiocese of Atlanta**

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Since the change in policy will not take effect until January 1, 2014, the National Catholic Committee on Scouting (NCCS) has adequate time to study the effects of the policy. The Archdiocese of Atlanta will continue to be involved with BSA and parishes are encouraged to continue their support of local troops at this time.