

DIOCESE OF VENICE IN FLORIDA



SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST EMBLEM For Scouts Ages 11-13

INTRODUCTION

Second Revision
Summer 2012

Welcome to the St. John the Baptist Religious Emblem program.

This is the **only** edition that Scouts and other Catholic youth may use to attain this emblem.

For all youth beginning this religious emblem program, you are beginning a journey to attain a deeper knowledge of God. You will acquire new understandings, take time to personally reflect on them, and talk to God in prayer. It is meant to be a personal challenge to you.

For those youth in scouting programs, this religious emblem program serves as a bridge between the Parvuli Dei program and the Ad Altare Dei program. It is hoped that all youth and adults helping them will derive many blessings from the Lord while working on this program.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS PROGRAM

The purpose of this program is to help youth aged 11 through 13 to better understand their personal relationship with Jesus Christ and their role in the Roman Catholic Church. The program is divided into five units based on the life of St. John the Baptist and our faith journey to God.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

You must be willing to devote the time to this program. In addition to this, you must have a sincere desire to grow in your Catholic faith. For you Scouts, you must realize that the Scouting program by its very nature involves spiritual growth.

ELIGIBILITY

This religious emblem program is for Catholic youth. It is designed for 11 through 13 year olds. However, older Scouts may work on the program. You must be a Catholic youth to begin the program. Adults, those over the age of 18, are not eligible.

HOW YOU START

Ask your youth leader, Scoutmaster, or any member of the Troop Committee if there is a trained religious emblems counselor in your parish. If there is a counselor available, ask them to help you with the program. If they are not available, contact the Youth Director at your parish and ask if they can assist. If there is no Youth Director at your parish, contact the Diocesan Youth and Young Adult Outreach Director.

You will need a Bible and a notebook. The New American Bible, RSV – Catholic Edition, and Douay-Rheims are all approved versions. If possible, the Scout should have his own personal copy for study. The notebook will serve as a record of where the Scout is at in the program. It will be reviewed, so it must be kept in a neat and clean format.

Unit One: St. John the Baptist – An Overview of His Life

St. John the Baptist was the second cousin of Jesus. At this time, please read this section on his life:

John's parents were Zechariah and Elizabeth. Elizabeth was a cousin of Mary, the Mother of Jesus. An angel commanded Zechariah to name his son John. John's mission was to prepare the way for the coming of Jesus. When John was still a young boy he went into the desert to prepare himself with silence, prayer and penance. Soon crowds started to come to him. He warned them to be sorry for their sins, and to change their lives, and he gave them the baptism of repentance. One day, Our Lord Himself came. He wanted to be baptized by St. John, to begin making reparation for our sins. On that day, St. John said to his disciples that Jesus was the Messiah for whom they had been waiting. He told them and everyone else to follow him. Later on, St. John was put in prison for simply speaking the truth. King Herod had his head cut off. *Saints for Young People for Every Day of the Year*, Daughters of St. Paul, 1984.

As we can see from his life, St. John the Baptist had a special mission.

ACTIVITY

1. Find in your own Bible and read the following Scripture passages that relate to this historical account. Mark 1:2-11 and 6:17-29.
2. List in your notebook the above Scripture passage then write a short summary of the key facts. This will make the concepts and questions easier to answer and understand.
3. Write down in your notebook the following question and your answer: St. John the Baptist had a mission. In what way do you feel that your participation in Scouting or your youth program is like that mission?

PLEASE NOTE: Your answers must be in complete sentences reflective of quality time spent on each activity. If they are not, the work will be considered inadequate and will NOT be accepted.

Unit Two: St. John the Baptist – An Evangelist

One of the qualities of St. John the Baptist was that he was an evangelist. When a person is an evangelist:

It means that he announces glad tidings. In the early Church, the term applied to many preachers. In the New Testament, it is used for preachers of the Gospel. *The New People's Encyclopedia*, Catholic Press, Chicago, 1973.

The word "Gospel" refers to:

The accounts of Jesus' life and teachings found in the New Testament of the Bible. Also the word "Gospel" means "Good News." *Jesus Send Us Your Spirit*, Benziger Publishing Company, 1990.

As Catholic Scouts, our understanding of the Bible is crucial. Through sacred tradition passed on by the Apostles and their successors, we are able to understand scripture more clearly. It is possible to read the Bible and misinterpret its meaning. In fact, Jesus said, “you are badly misled because you fail to understand the Scriptures and the power of God.” Matthew 22:29. This is why sacred tradition and sacred scripture may be viewed together.

As God created us in His image and likeness, we should want to be an example to others. In the St. John the Baptist Religious Emblem program, you must become familiar with the use and place of the Bible in your daily life. You are called to be a person who is empowered by God to know and share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

If you are having difficulties finding a book of the Bible, chapter or verse, please check with your parent, religious emblem counselor, Youth Director, parish Director of Religious Education, Sister or Parish Priest.

A good approach to follow in this Emblem program, when Scripture passages are to be read, write in your notebook the following “Steps in Reading the Bible”:

- a) First, say a prayer (for example: “God help me understand your word”), then read the bible scripture passage.
- b) Second, after reading it pause for a few minutes to reflect on it in your mind and let it find a place in your heart.
- c) Third, read the Bible Scripture passage again, slowly and reverently. It is truly God’s word.

ACTIVITY

1. Find in your own Bible and read the following Scripture passage: Luke 3:16-18.
2. List in your notebook the above Scripture passage then write a short summary of the key facts.
3. Write in your notebook the following questions and answers:
 - a) What has been “Good News” in your life and family? (Please explain)
 - b) If someone asked you where you came from and where you are going, what would you reply?
 - c) In answering “b)”, have you been a type of evangelist like St. John the Baptist? Depending on your answer, why or why not?

Unit Three: St. John the Baptist – Helper to Jesus

As a Catholic Youth, you need to be a person who helps Jesus. St. John the Baptist did this throughout his life and we must do this as well. In the Scout Oath, Scout Law and Scout Slogan, we see an indication of the need to help one another. Non Scouts should look up the Scout Oath, Law, and Slogan to become familiar with what we are talking about.

In this Unit you will be challenged to help Jesus by putting these principles of Scouting into practice. You will be doing a service project of approximately 5 hours. This service project is inspired by St. John the Baptist in that you too will be sharing the “Good News.”

ACTIVITY

1. Find in your own bible and read the following Scripture passage: Matthew 3:13-17.
2. List in your notebook the above Scripture passage then write a short summary of the key facts.
3. Write down in your notebook the following questions and your answers:
 - a) What special talents do you have? How are you using these talents now?
 - b) In what ways have you used your talents to help Jesus?
4. At this time, find and read in *The Boy Scout Handbook*: The Scout Oath, Scout Law and Scout Slogan.
 - a) From each of these principles of Scouting, list the phrases that refer to service to others.
5. Each youth is required to perform a service project of five (5) hours duration. The time spent must be accounted for in your notebook and signed off by an adult. Each project must be approved by your Religious Emblem Counselor prior to starting on it. Some suggestions include:
 - a) Help with a religious education program
 - b) Visit a shut-in
 - c) Help at parish festivals
 - d) Tutor a student
 - e) Help beautify your parish grounds
 - f) Write letters to our troops overseas
 - g) Collect food for the hungry
 - h) Send greeting cards to the elderly
 - i) Participate in a walk-a-thon to help a worthy cause
 - j) Read to someone who is blind
 - k) Interview a priest or religious who works with the migrants
 - l) Collect unwanted clothes to donate to the poor
 - m) Do volunteer work at a nursing home, hospital, etc.
 - n) Recycle aluminum cans and give the money to the poor
 - o) Address Christmas envelopes for someone who can't
 - p) Participate in a group service project
 - q) Pray outside an abortion facility
 - r) Write to your Congressman or Senator regarding a Catholic social justice issue
And any other projects that may also apply.

PLEASE NOTE: While you are completing Unit Three, you may also work on Unit Four and part of Unit Five. In Unit Five, you will be doing a reflection on your Service Project.

Unit Four: St. John the Baptist – A Personal Faith Journey to God

St. John the Baptist was martyred for his faith. This means that he was put to death for what he said and did for Jesus. In his personal faith journey to God, he faced the toughest challenge, yet he would not settle for anything short of the truth.

In his life he sought to know the truth from God and grow in it. As Scouts, we must strive to grow in knowledge of the truth. Jesus leads you to God each and every day if you are open to Him. As a Scout, you may never be faced with the challenge of dying for your faith.

Yet, as you continue on your personal faith journey to God, you will be given gifts similar to those God gave St. John the Baptist. You will be given courage, knowledge and inner strength. No matter what difficulties you encounter in your life, God is there to help you.

ACTIVITY

1. Find in your own Bible and read the following Scripture passages: Mark 6:17-29 and John 14:6.
2. List in your notebook the above Scripture passages then write a short summary of the key facts
3. Write in your notebook the following questions and your answers:
 - a) Do you know of any martyrs in our world today? How was their mission similar to St. John the Baptist's mission?
 - b) What do you like most about yourself? What might God like the most? Could this quality help you to be courageous like St. John the Baptist?
 - c) To what extent have you allowed God to take charge of your life? How thankful are you to God for what He has done for you?
 - d) What is the best gift God has given you? How are you sharing that gift with others?

Unit Five: St. John the Baptist – A Questioner

Before his death, St. John the Baptist sent messengers to Jesus to ask him a question. In Luke's gospel – chapter 7, verse 19, these messengers asked Jesus the question: "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?" Jesus answered this question for St. John the Baptist and deepened his understanding of who He was.

When we move on our faith journey toward God, it is only natural that we too will have questions. Seek answers prayerfully from God and from people around us who have the answers. When in doubt seek clarification and answers and you too will have a deepened understanding.

The work and service project that you have been involved with during the Religious Emblem program should establish a pattern for spiritual growth in your life. It is hoped that this program will lead you into further involvement in the life of your own parish community.

You are on a personal faith journey to God. May you strive to be a person like St. John the Baptist and share the "Good News."

ACTIVITY

1. Find in your own Bible and read the following Scripture passage: Luke 7:18-35.
2. List in your notebook the above Scripture passage then write a short summary of the key facts.
3. Write down in your notebook the following questions and your answers:
 - a) Based on the above Scripture passage, do you feel Jesus answered the question? When you have questions concerning religious matters, who do you bring them to?
 - b) Have you had any religious questions that you feel were answered well? Do you still have questions you don't feel you have the answers to? If so, ask your Parish Priest to get the answer and write it down.
 - c) What new things have you learned as a result of your participation in this Religious Emblem program?
 - d) What have you learned from your service project? How did you share the "Good News" of Jesus in the service project?
 - e) How was your service project similar to St. John the Baptist's mission?
 - f) Do you feel that you are now better prepared to share the "Good News?" Why?

The Youth and Youth Adult Outreach Department of the Diocese of Venice appreciates your participation in this Religious Emblem program. We prayerfully anticipate your further spiritual growth as you continue your personal faith journey to God. Please complete the application form that follows on the next page.



DIOCESE OF VENICE IN FLORIDA
Youth and Young Adult Outreach

APPLICATION – ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST EMBLEM

Last Name _____ First Name _____ Middle I _____

Age _____ Grade _____ Telephone No. _____

Diocese _____ Name of Parish _____

Pack No. _____ Pack chartered organization _____

City _____ State _____ Council _____

Certification

I HEREBY apply for the St. John the Baptist Emblem. On my honor as a Catholic, I certify that I have faithfully fulfilled all the requirements for this emblem. I further certify that I have prepared myself as best I can for a review.

Youth Signature/Date

Attested by

Parent/Guardian/Date _____ Religious Emblems Counselor/Date _____

Pastoral Approval

I certify that this Scout has appeared before me with the *St. John the Baptist Activity book*. He has met all the conditions of the program. I therefore approve him for the St. John the Baptist emblem.

Pastor or Parish Administrator (or delegate)/Date

Please mail this application to: Diocese of Venice in Florida, Office of Youth and Young Adult Outreach, 1000 Pinebrook Road, Venice, FL 34285.

Diocesan Record

Date Application Received _____ Date recorded _____

Signature _____