

# Celebrating Scout-Guide Week

February 15–22, 2015

One of today's catch words is inclusivity. It is used by secular society and it is also used by the church. But, what does it mean?

To be inclusive is to include all people regardless of background or beliefs. To be inclusive is to honour all people for who they are, yet to be inclusive is also to respect who you are. Respecting oneself is not to become prejudiced but to appreciate all people for who they are, what they believe and what they bring.

Scouting and Guiding have been inclusive organizations for a long time. All people were allowed to join these movements early on if they stated a belief in a God. Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell, founder of the Scout movement, was once asked if a certain non-Christian group could join Scouting. He said yes, because they had a belief in a God and therefore they could fulfill that part of the Scouting promise.

"Duty to God" is a cause of concern today. While that phrase remains in the Scouting promises, Guiding promises have the phrase to be true to oneself. As Christians we might use the phrase discipleship instead of duty. Discipleship is living the faith and using the gifts with which God has blessed us to reach out to the world in love, so that all may know God's love.

Scouting and Guiding are two of the ways that our churches can be active in discipleship. The programs of Scouting and Guiding help youth to discover who they are in society and grow into leaders. By offering meeting places and sponsorship we are saying that the youth of our communities are not only the leaders for tomorrow, but are also the leaders of today. By offering our time and talents as leaders we are saying that God believes I have something to share and so do you. Inclusivity also means various generations can have fun together.

The Religion in Life program helps youth to connect their faith to all the service, formation and inclusivity done as Scouts and Guides. This time of discovery helps us to be true to ourselves as we do our duty to God.

—Rev. Michael Diegel + OCT



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