



ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE STATE OF HAWAII  
**DIOCESE OF HONOLULU**  
WITNESS TO JESUS

January 31, 2023

Dear Pastors and Principals,

Peace be with you!

The Diocese of Honolulu has been blessed for many years with a Catholic Scouting presence through the Boy Scouts of America (BSA). Many of our parishes and schools have had a relationship with the scouts – through the Knights of Columbus, and most recently through a direct charter with our parishes and schools. In 2020, BSA filed bankruptcy amid mounting claims of Scouting-related sex abuse. Recently, BSA and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops General Counsel (USCCB) have been working to establish new agreements which would enable us to continue relationships. Unfortunately, given the liability issues and our dissatisfaction with the BSA's cooperation on the issue, we will no longer allow parishes and parish schools to charter a BSA unit, nor will BSA units be allowed to meet in our facilities. This will be effective immediately for those who do not yet have a charter, but for those who do, it will take effect upon the expiration of the charter, or January 1, 2024, whichever comes first.

The diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting (DHCCS) will continue to promote the spiritual phase of Scouting, encouraging the completion of religious emblems and offering Catholic activities, such as Days of Reflection, for all Scouts and Scout leaders in the Diocese. The DHCCS will continue to host the Annual Scout Mass with the Bishop to recognize Catholic Scouts who received Catholic Religious Emblems and Awards. Please go to [www.catholicahawaii.org/catholicscouting](http://www.catholicahawaii.org/catholicscouting) for more information.

Should you have any questions about this matter, please contact Lisa Gomes, Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry at [lgomes@rcchawaii.org](mailto:lgomes@rcchawaii.org).

It is important that we continue to minister to our youth in various ways, but continuing our longstanding relationship with BSA has become more of a liability than we judge it prudent to bear. While this situation could change in the future, we appreciate your understanding and patience as we make this transition.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Larry Silva  
Bishop of Honolulu

Cc.: Lisa Gomes  
Very Reverend Monsignor Gary Secor, Vicar General  
Lisa Sakamoto  
Marlene DeCosta  
Kristin Leandro