

## Promoting 'To Serve God' Parent Handout

Dear Parent,

Today we talked about the religious awards and encouraged our Girl Scouts to earn the religious award of their faith. You, as the parent or guardian, will decide whether or not your child will participate in these programs. Here is the information we covered together:

- Each Girl Scout will earn the religious emblem for her specific faith
- Parents and religious leaders are the teachers, not the troop leader
- Most religious awards programs have more than one level. A Girl Scout who has earned a religious award when she was younger, may progress to the next level and earn another award.

There are four steps to get started on these programs:

1. Girls must obtain the specific booklet for their religion. This booklet will contain information on all the lessons and service projects that they will need to complete. Each girl needs to have her own booklet to document progress. Some religions also offer adult manuals for counselors and mentors. Check with your local Girl Scout Council to see if it stocks these booklets in its store, or contact the religious organization directly.

Here is the information that your child found on the program for her faith:

Name of program: \_\_\_\_\_

Address, phone, or email \_\_\_\_\_

2. Parents must review the specific guidelines for their particular program: age/grade requirements vary from program to program; some programs require that the youth be an official "member" of the local religious institution, others may not; and each program determines who may serve as counselor (some require clergy, others allow parents or other family members). Be sure to look at specific eligibility guidelines!

3. Families should talk to their religious leaders and show them the booklet before beginning any program. Most of the religious awards programs require that they be completed under the auspices of that religious organization, and many require the signature of the local religious leader. Again, check the specific eligibility requirements for your religious program.

4. The young person needs to complete the requirements, obtain the proper signatures, and follow the instructions to order the award. (These awards are not available in your local Girl Scout Council store.) The award can be presented at anytime of the year and should be presented in a meaningful ceremony, preferably in the girl's religious institution.

We would be very proud if our Girl Scouts earned their religious awards. Please talk with your child about these programs. We would like to know by \_\_\_\_\_ (date) who is going to participate in the religious awards programs. Even though this is a project that will be done with your family and your clergy, we are interested in your daughter's progress and want to encourage her as much as possible. Feel free to call if you have any questions.

Thank you!