

Religious Recognitions Presentation Script: A Presentation by Girl Scout Leaders to Troops and Parents

Considerations for presenting the Religious Recognitions to your Troop:

- Notify parents and invite them to the meeting
- Provide information on Religious Recognitions of all faiths
- Explain that Girl Scouting encourages girls to grow strong in faith and that Girl Scouting recognizes that religious instruction must come from families and faith communities
- Emphasize that girls will earn the Religious Recognition for their own faith
- Ask an older Girl Scout who has earned her Religious Recognition to talk to your Troop

Resources (available at www.praypub.org/partner_gsusa.htm)

- "To Serve God" brochure
- Dear Parent Handout

Religious Recognitions Presentation Script:

1. Hold up the brochure for everybody to see. Then say, **"The title of this brochure is 'To Serve God.' What does this title refer to?"** (It refers to the Girl Scout Promise) **"We hold up three fingers when we make the Girl Scout Promise because there are three parts to the promise. But the first part of the promise is the most important. We promise to 'serve God.' One way a Girl Scout can 'serve God' is to earn the Religious Recognition of her faith and to wear it on her uniform. The Religious Recognitions are special. They are not like ordinary patches. They are created by your own faith community."**
2. Explain the difference between the Religious Recognitions and the My Promise, My Faith pin. **The Religious Recognitions are not to be confused with the My Promise, My Faith (MPMF) pin that appears in the Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting. The MPMF pin is created by the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. to help girls connect Girl Scouting with their faith, whereas the Religious Recognitions are created by the various faith groups for their members to grow in faith.**
3. Explain that the Girl Scout leader is not the instructor for the Religious Recognitions. These are optional programs. Parents and guardians will decide whether or not a girl participates in them. **"Your parents and religious leaders will help you earn your Religious Recognition. This is not a badge we earn together as a Troop. We are of different faiths and we belong to different congregations. Each girl needs to earn the award for her own faith. These programs are opportunities for you and your family to work on something together."**
4. **Here's how you get started on these programs.** [The following information is adapted from the To Serve God Brochure.]

First, you must obtain the specific booklet for your religion. This booklet will contain information on all the lessons and service projects that you will need to complete. Each of you will need your own booklet to document progress. Some religions also offer adult manuals for counselors and mentors. You can check with our council store to see if they stock these booklets, or you can contact the religious organization directly (addresses and phone numbers are listed in the "To Serve God" brochure).

Second, parents must review the specific guidelines for their particular program: some programs require that the girl be an official “member” of the local religious institution, other programs may not. Age/grade requirements also vary from program to program. In addition, each program sets its own guidelines as to who may serve as counselor. Some programs require clergy to serve as counselor, others allow parents or other family members to serve as counselor. Parents must check specific eligibility guidelines!

Third, families should talk to their religious leaders and show them the booklet before beginning any program. Most of the religious recognitions programs require that they be completed under the auspices of that religious organization, and many require the signature of the local religious leader.

Fourth, you need to complete the requirements, obtain the proper signatures, and follow the instructions to order the recognition or pin. (These awards are not available in our Girl Scout store.)

5. Distribute the To Serve God brochure and/or the “Dear Parent” handout. **“The To Serve God brochure provides the name and address of where to obtain more information and/or to purchase the booklets. The “Dear Parent” handout is a short summary of how to get started on the programs. It also provides space for you to copy the contact information”** (if copies of the To Serve God brochure are not provided). Please note that most of the Protestant, independent, and non-denominational churches use the P.R.A.Y. program which is listed in the brochure under “Protestant”. Have the girls find out what the award for their faith looks like. Be prepared for some not to know what religion or denomination they are or not to be active in a religious institution. Remind them that the Religious Recognitions are optional programs.
6. Help the girls get started by setting a target date: **“Let’s set our first goal together as a Troop. The important thing is to get started! Can everybody try to get a copy of her booklet and show it to her clergy by _____(date)? I’ll ask each of you to give a “progress report” to the Troop at that time.**
7. Conclude your presentation: **“By learning about Religious Recognitions and making a commitment To Serve God, you are living up to your Girl Scout Promise. Thank you for your attention. This concludes our presentation.”**
8. Continue to encourage your girls by setting goals and keeping track of their progress. Try to include some activities for your Troop. Can you plan a joint field trip or service project related to the Religious Recognitions programs? Can you visit each other’s church, synagogue or temple? This would be a wonderful opportunity for the girls to experience pluralism.
9. Religious Recognitions are presented to the girls by clergy, usually in a worship service in the recipient’s congregation. Religious Recognition recipients should also be recognized in a Girl Scout setting, such as an awards ceremony. Plan now to recognize them in a special way.

Please duplicate.

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