**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Diocese of Brownsville Hosts Annual Scout Sunday Mass

The Diocese of Brownsville will recognize all scouts and leaders who have earned their Catholic Religious Emblem in 2020 at a special Mass on Scout Sunday, February 7, at 9:00 AM at the Basilica of Our Lady of San Juan Del Valle National Shrine.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions—as well as to ensure the health and safety of all scouts and their families—we kindly ask that you abide by the following guidelines for this celebration:

* Seating will be socially-distant, by family units, in accordance with current Basilica policy. Scouts in uniform will be seated with their families in a designated section on a first-come, first-serve basis beginning at 8:30 AM until filled.
* Attendance by scouts and scouters at this Mass is **voluntary**. Scouts and scouters who feel sick or not comfortable with attending a large indoor gathering of this nature, or who are health-compromised in any way **should not attend**.All scouts and scouters will receive the religious emblem they have earned—whether they are present or not.
* Scouts attending the Mass must have the prior approval of their unit’s chartering organization to attend the Mass (unit leaders should seek this permission through their Chartered Organization Representative).
* Immediately following the Mass, scouts are asked to remain in their designated section for public recognition. Scouts earning religious emblems will be announced by unit. Scouts should stand when their name is called, and remain standing until the entire unit has been announced, and until they have been applauded.
* Following the public recognition inside the Basilica, please follow the instructions of the announcer and proceed outside to the designated table to pick up your religious emblem *(sorry—there will be no group photographs taken this year due to health and safety concerns).*
* Each unit is asked to designate an adult who will pick up the religious emblems for any scouts missing from the celebration. Any items unclaimed will be available for pick-up at the Catholic Pastoral Center beginning Monday, February 8. *Please note: due to COVID-19 restrictions, no persons are allowed inside the Catholic Pastoral Center. Please contact Dora Rodriguez-Rosa at 956-787-8571 to arrange a date and time to pick up your emblem curbside in front of the Pastoral Center.*

For those unable to attend the Mass in person, you can participate in the 9:00 am Eucharistic celebration online by joining the livestream at the Basilica of Our Lady of San Juan del Valle National Shrine YouTube channel at youtube.com/olsjbasilica.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation. We look forward to celebrating with you your son’s/daughter’s achievement on February 7.

*-Diocese of Brownsville Catholic Committee on Scouting*