



Spirituality Award

The Rationale

The Spirituality Award as proposed creates a “climate of validity” in which various philosophical positions can be experienced and/or affirmed. This Award, if sensitively handled, can operate in a truly multi-faith context.

Spirituality and religion are by no means opposed or antagonistic. Spirituality seeks immediate, intuitive access to the truth that religion enshrines; namely, the truth of our connection to a transcendent reality.

Spirituality makes use of religious ideas, methods, rituals and practices, but it is not itself, a formal practice. Spirituality is a way of life, a form of consciousness, a transparent awareness that is receptive to the presence of the sacredness in all things.

A student of a religious class once said, “Spirituality is the truth you discover, whereas religion is the truth that is handed to you by tradition”. This is close to the Founder’s premise that religion can only be “caught” not “taught”.

A society that is made up of various faiths and cultures and includes those who are non-religious (4.9 million Canadians do not adhere to a faith community and only 30% of Canadians attend religious services on a weekly basis¹) begs the need for a Spirituality Award for members who are on a spiritual path that could lead to faith.

The Spirituality Award is inclusive, optional and interchangeable with the Religion-in-Life Program. It enriches and provides varied opportunities for Canadians now and into the future. The “Award” shows appreciation towards other visions and commonality at the same time.

Spirituality development in Scouting is found in the World Bureau documents and the Role of the Scouter is defined as follows²:

- The role of the Scout leader relating to spiritual development is not to give religious instruction, or to tack religious observance onto Scout activities.
- The role of the Scout leader is to use the kind of experiences offered by Scouting to help young people discover a Spiritual reality and incorporate it into their own lives. In fact, Scouting proposes a 5-step approach to spiritual development:
 1. Enable young people to experience spirituality through Scout activities.
 2. Make time for young people to discover and express the meaning of life.
 3. Help each individual to identify with his or her spiritual and religious heritage.
 4. Encourage internalization and personal commitment.
 5. Develop open and respectful attitudes.

¹ Statistics Canada

² Education and Development, World Scout Bureau (TB014 Explores of the Invisible)

The Spirituality Award would address all of the above and more for the youth member who is presently excluded from earning a Religion-in-Life Award by not belonging to a specific faith community.

The “Award” would become inclusive not exclusive and is interchangeable, not take away – but add on to the dimension of Duty to God, one of the three Scouting principles.

The last word... We do it for children, youth and young adults who have not had the opportunity to be taught or experience a faith.

Potential Questions

Who does the Spirituality Award apply to?

To the more than four million Canadians who do not adhere to a faith community but who are or wish to be spiritual.

Does the Spirituality Award replace or take away from the Religion-in-Life Award?

No. The Spirituality Award does not replace or take away from the Religion-in- Life Award(s). It is attained by youth who are now excluded from the Religion-in- Life Award by not belonging to a specific faith community. You earn, and wear, one or the other.

Where do you wear the badge?

The badge is worn in the same place indicated for the Religion-in-Life Award.

Is there a Certificate that goes with the badge?

No.

Does any other Scout Association address Spirituality Development?

Yes, Scouts United Kingdom addresses Spirituality Development in the following manner:

What is Spiritual Development?

The Scouts Association is an open Association. Whilst requiring all members to make a Promise, which includes “Duty to God” or “to Love God”, the Scout Association does not identify itself with any one religion. There is no established church within the Association.

The Scout Association is not directly and immediately concerned with the religious education of its members. That responsibility is with the religious families to which members belong, although some sponsored groups will have a more immediate responsibility towards their members’ religious development. However, the purpose of the Scout Association includes ‘to promote the spiritual potential of young people’. This responsibility is a fundamental part of the Association and needs to be achieved through the Program, Method and structure of Scouting.³

³ Source - Scoutbase.org.uk/ps/fab/intro/htm