

*****NEWS RELEASE*****

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American Heritage Girls Membership is on the Rise in Florida's Palm Beach Diocese

Diocese Joins Others Across the Country to Embrace AHG as Scouting Alternative

CINCINNATI, Ohio — Florida's Palm Beach Diocese is [announcing its support](#) of the *American Heritage Girls* (AHG, www.americanheritagegirls.org). In Palm Beach, as in other parts of the country, word has spread that AHG is the premier faith-based, scout-type leadership and character development program for girls ages five to 18. AHG, dedicated to the mission of building women of integrity through service to God, family, community, and country, offers hands-on badge programs, service projects, leadership opportunities, outdoor adventures, and more, with an emphasis on Christian values and family participation along the way.

The Palm Beach Diocese is not the first Catholic Diocese in the country to disengage from the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts. It joins many dioceses from across the country in embracing AHG. This is due to AHG's deep ties and extensive resources and partnership with the Catholic Church. AHG has established the [AHG National Catholic Committee](#) to support *American Heritage Girls*, while promoting and providing for the growth and spiritual development of its Catholic members, in fidelity to the magisterium of the Catholic Church, and to act as the liaison between AHG and the Catholic Church.

American Heritage Girls Founder and Executive Director Patti Garibay attributes this trend to the fact that "AHG's programming is rooted in Christ. Through its faith emphasis, AHG hopes that girls will grow in their faith and become lifelong Christ-followers. Girls will understand their identity in Christ and seek God's will for their lives." Garibay adds, "The impact of being a member of AHG doesn't just result in a vest full of badges or a memory bank of camping skills. AHG is Kingdom-focused. Here, the seeds of lifelong faith are planted. Here, young women of integrity blossom."

As a result, AHG's membership is up by 50 percent, filling a void for families who are leaving behind the more secularly based [Girl Scouts, who are experiencing a huge decline in membership](#). Though many reasons are given for the plummeting membership of the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts, the elephant in the room is the long and much-publicized decline in and contradiction of Christian values found in these organizations.

Most Reverend Gerald M. Barbarito, Bishop of Palm Beach, enthusiastically welcomes the implementation of the *American Heritage Girls* program as a valuable way to support faith-based scouting for his flock. "We look forward to participating in this new venture within our Diocese so that our young people may have another opportunity to support each other in their journey of growth with their Catholic faith as an essential part of their lives."

American Heritage Girls was founded in 1995 by a group of parents who wanted a faith-based, scout-type character development program for their daughters. At *AHG*, girls ages five to 18 meet together as [a single Troop](#) at the same time and then break out into Units by Levels. This gives *AHG* girls the important social experience of interacting with friends and godly mentors of various ages; members also learn leadership skills within a group setting. *AHG* Troops are located in [local communities](#) across the nation. If none exists in a given area, families can bring the *AHG* Program to their own area. An *American Heritage Girls* Troop Development Coach is available to provide resources to potential Charter Organizations and other families to form [a new Troop](#).

Today, there are [Troops](#) in all 50 states and girls being served in 15 countries around the globe. Girls can join a Troop at any time; if a Troop is not available nearby, they can become a [Trailblazer](#) and enjoy the *AHG* program alongside their parent. Thousands of volunteer members across the country are helping girls grow in their faith, cultivate a heart for service, enjoy the great outdoors, and have more fun than they can imagine.

The “*Raising Godly Girls*” radio feature and [Raising Godly Girls blog](#) shares guidance and biblically based advice on many key topics affecting girls today. It gives parents, educators, and faith community leaders a set of tools, resources, and Scripture-based advice to assist in raising girls after God’s own heart. The “[Raising Godly Girls Minute](#)” with Patti Garibay airs on 900+ Christian radio stations across the country.

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To schedule interviews with *Patti Garibay, founder and executive director of American Heritage Girls*, contact Media@HamiltonStrategies.com, Beth Harrison, 610.584.1096 ext. 105, or Deborah Hamilton, ext. 102.