

# Troop prepared to celebrate 60th anniversary

By Mike Latona  
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — The Boy Scout's motto to "be prepared" will take on a double meaning this weekend for Crusader Troop 200 of the Boy Scouts of America.

Original and current members, spanning a total of six decades, are preparing to come together this Sunday, May 31, for a 60-year anniversary Mass at St. Boniface, 330 Gregory St.

Following the 10 a.m. Mass will be a breakfast in the basement hall of St. Boniface School, where Troop 200 has held its meetings for the last 60 years.

Troop 200 is a landmark organization. When St. Boniface was granted its charter by the Boy Scouts of America on April 4, 1932, the church became the first Catholic parish in its district of Oretiana Council (Monroe County) to sponsor a Boy Scouts unit.

"This is going to be a true reunion for a great number of wonderful people," said Edward Sloan, 75, a lifelong parishioner at St. Boniface. Sloan has been connected with Pack 200 for the last 40 years and currently serves as scouting coordinator for the parish.

Sloan expects about 150 guests for the gala event, including three founding constituents of Troop 200: Bertrand Ehmann, committee member; and Norman Meteyer and Harold "Hap" Rossiter, assistant scoutmasters.

According to Sloan, nearly 2,000 young men — ages 11 and up — have attended the Tuesday-evening troop meetings over the years. Membership has gone as high as 50 in the 1940s and 1950s. Currently, the troop boasts 16 active members.

St. Boniface School has also housed Cub Scout Pack 200 for the last 30 years. The pack now includes 30 boys, ages 8 to 11.

George Varga, the current scoutmaster, notes that Troop 200's long tradition is impressed upon its newer members.

"Once or twice a year, we emphasize it to them and their families," said Varga, whose sons, Paul and Joe, are both assistant scoutmasters.

Sloan, whose four sons were all Scouts — he has eight children in all — believes that activities such as scouting are vital to today's society.

"I think, in this day and age, scouting is especially important because so



Babette G. Augustin/Photo editor  
Members of Crusader Troop 200 gather around scoutmaster George Varga (left) and scouting coordinator Edward Sloan during a May 19 troop meeting in the basement of St. Boniface School in Rochester.

many young kids don't get the proper moral principles and examples," he said. "Scouting is a great thing for youngsters to take advantage of. If you live up to the 12 points of scouting, you've got it made."

Those 12 points are: to be trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean and reverent.

Sixteen Otto, 16, an East High School sophomore, has been a member of Troop 200 for five years. He believes that frequent emphasis on scouting's 12 points can affect a youth's life.

"If you hear it enough and you say it enough, then consciously or not, you'll start to practice it and believe

it," he observed.

Otto also enjoys scouting because "it's a good way to make friends and meet people," he said. "You'd be surprised at how many different kinds of people are Boy Scouts."

Rossiter, whose name appears on the original charter that still hangs on a doorway in the St. Boniface basement hall, points to the different types of activities available to Scouts.

"(Scouting) gives them an opportunity to do a wide variety of things," said the 80-year-old Rossiter. "Our boys (in Troop 200's earlier years) were very good on firemanship because there was a firehouse right across the street that they would go to."

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