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## **CIRCULAR**

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### **Circular N° 41/2001**

To: International Commissioners  
National Programme, Adult Resources and  
Educational Methods Commissioners

Dear colleagues,

#### **Reference document: SCOUTING AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT**

Please find attached a copy of the above-mentioned document. Its importance will, no doubt, be evident to everyone.

Preparing this document has involved considerable work, which can be summarized in four stages:

- first, a series of consultations on the importance and timeliness of the publication, its ultimate objective and possible content;
- then, a preliminary summary was prepared and presented to the International Inter-religious Group meeting which took place in Geneva on 8 May, 2000. The discussion at that meeting was extremely enriching;
- following that meeting, a complete draft document was prepared in English and sent to around twenty representatives of organizations that co-operate with WOSM within the International Inter-religious Group. They had two months within which to provide feedback. Some were able to send us their comments on time and we are very grateful to them;
- the deadline for feedback was the end of May, 2001. The next months were spent revising the English text, translating it into French and organising its publication.

I would like to make a few comments in order to place this document in context:

- First, it is not an encyclopaedia. While it does present a historical overview, one should not expect to find accounts of the thousand and one episodes that have occurred during the course of the discussions on the spiritual dimension, even less the “parish” quarrels or the names of the protagonists.

- What we seek to present as the *primary message* is *the extraordinary force of the Scout Method in promoting and enriching the spiritual dimension amongst young people*. Through its principles, method, activities, group life, etc., Scouting creates an atmosphere that is conducive to the search for inner peace and truth.
- In so doing, Scouting seeks to contribute to the development of young people who are strong in their convictions yet who are open and tolerant, firm in their faith while respectful of the faiths of others - far away from fanaticism. In view of widespread indifference to religion and invasive materialism, need the importance of this be stressed further?

Finally, I asked Mateo Jover – in view of his intellectual training and his experience in this area – to write the document in close co-operation with the Educational Methods Department of the World Scout Bureau. Evidently, Sections 3, 4 and 5 reflect WOSM's official position. In the rest of the document, however, the author has developed his own hypotheses, drawing on the authors mentioned in the text and in the bibliographic section. These same sources offer references for anyone who would like to conduct their own research or to explore further any of the elements presented.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that the publication of this document is not a “one-off” event: it is part of a long-term process in this area. As an example, the World Programme Committee, in collaboration with the World Events Unit, has already prepared educational material on this subject which will be tested at the World Scout Jamboree in Thailand. The material aims to show young people taking part in the Jamboree the spiritual potential of nature-discovery activities, service activities, activities aimed at meeting others and developing a sense of solidarity, intercultural activities, and so on. We hope that the two tools will be complementary.

Extra copies of this publication are available from the World Scout Bureau.

Yours sincerely,



Jacques Moreillon  
*Secretary General*