For more information on earning the religious emblem for your faith, contact the Programs of Religious Activities with Youth (P.R.A.Y.) at www.praypub.org.
This study guide has been written for use across the Heart of America Council camps.

The entire guide is recommended for use at the Bartle Reservation, while those questions marked with ☐ are recommended for the Naish Reservation.
A LEATHER IS THE OUTWARD SYMBOL OF AN INNER CHALLENGE YOU CHOOSE TO ACCEPT. YOUR LEATHER CHALLENGE SHOULD AFFECT YOUR LIFE TO SUCH A DEGREE THAT YOU CAN RECOGNIZE A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE WITHIN YOURSELF. YOU WILL KNOW THAT YOU HAVE BEEN HONEST WITH YOURSELF WHEN OTHERS SEE THIS CHANGE.

**PERSONAL CHALLENGE**

☑️ To what personal goal do I want to strive by wearing a Purple Leather?

☑️ How do I plan to do this? Be as specific as possible.

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**THE STORY OF THE LEATHER**

It was many years ago in 1914 when a young disabled boy sat on the sidelines at summer camp. He cheered his friends on, always wearing a smile and sharing all he had to give – his Christ-like ideals and happy way of looking at everything – with everyone.

On the last night of camp, a bandanna was tied around his neck as a humble symbol from the campers to recognize his Christ-like way of living. From this small beginning comes the tradition of campers wearing an outward symbol that represents the desire of its wearer to follow the examples that Jesus set for us all. Later, this little "rag" of cloth was replaced with a colored Leather for a Scout to wear on his hip.

What does the Leather signify? It is an outward symbol of an inner challenge that you choose to accept. It reminds you of the challenge you accept at camp and continue to carry out while you are away from camp. The Leather is a personal and voluntary way of challenging yourself to improve your way of life. Your promise of improvement is between you and God. The responsibility to live up to this challenge is yours. God will see your success in fulfilling this desire to live a better life; your family, friends, and anyone you meet should see it, too.

Now you may share in the experience of coming close to God through dedicating yourself to becoming more like Jesus in your thinking and behavior.

Come and enjoy the chance to learn and grow in your relationship with God.

*Man is something to be surpassed. What have you done to surpass him?*
THE LEATHER

The Leather is an outward symbol of accepting an inner challenge to grow. Its symbolism is Christ-centered, sacred, and personal. The decision to continue the journey rests with you.

Each color has a specific meaning. Linked to the meaning of a particular Leather is your personal challenge for growth.

**THE BLUE LEATHER**
1. Loyalty to the Scout Oath / Law
2. Loyalty to God
3. Loyalty to country
4. Loyalty to others

**LOYALTY**
(Loyalty to God, country, others)

**THE SILVER LEATHER**
1. Decision to follow Jesus
2. Decision to live the Christian way of life
3. Decision to live the Christian disciplines

**DECISION**
(Christian Decision)

**THE BROWN LEATHER**
1. Serve God
2. Humility
3. Become more aware of the needs of others

**SERVICE**
(Service to Others)

**THE GOLD LEATHER**
1. Understanding others
2. Concern for others

**BENEVOLENCE**
(Understanding Others)

**THE RED LEATHER**
1. Sacrifice of time
2. Sacrifice of talent
3. Sacrifice of personal will

**SACRIFICE**
(Leadership and Humility)

**THE PURPLE LEATHER**

**DEDICATION TO A LIFE OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE**
(Life Service)

**THE WHITE LEATHER**

**HIGH AND NOBLE LIVING**
(Noble Life)

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**The Road Not Taken**
By Robert Frost (1874-1963)

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I —
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

9. ⚠ Courage does not follow rutted pathways. What do you gain by taking the more difficult path in life?
8. High and noble living constantly demands hard and difficult choices that each person must make alone. The morally correct choice often carries with it suffering and personal sacrifice.

a. Why do suffering and personal choices often result from morally correct choices?

b. In living a high and noble life, what attitudes should a person have? Why?

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**THE MEANING OF THE LEATHER**

Your Leather is a piece of the Creation. You couldn't sell your Leather; it isn't worth much money. Your Leather has only the meaning that YOU give it.

**THE LEATHER IS NOT:**

1. A decoration.
2. An award for achievement.
3. A reward.
4. A "pat" on the back.
5. Measuring myself by others.
6. "I AM FIRST."
7. Self-centered.
8. I am good, or being good.
9. Knowing about God, talking about God.
10. Sight (seeing things as they are).
11. A status symbol.

**THE LEATHER IS:**

1. A symbol.
3. A responsibility.
4. A "push" forward.
5. Measuring myself by God.
6. "I AM THIRD."
7. Christ-centered.
8. I want to be better.
9. Knowing God, talking to God.
10. Vision (seeing things as they ought to be).
11. A personal calling to humility.
Acceptance of the Purple Leather is an acceptance of dedication towards high and noble living in whatever faith opportunities – and life in general – come your way.

When you accepted your Red Leather you challenged yourself to time, talent and personal will. Do you feel you measured up to your challenge? In what ways was it most difficult?

Use this page to write your reflections of this past year.

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**Solitude**
By Ella Wheeler Wilcox (1850-1919)

Laugh, and the world laughs with you;
Weep, and you weep alone.
For the sad old earth must borrow its mirth,
But has trouble enough of its own.
Sing, and the hills will answer;
Sigh, it is lost on the air.
The echoes bound to a joyful sound,
But shrink from voicing care.

Rejoice, and men will seek you;
Grieve, and they turn and go.
They want full measure of all your pleasure,
But they do not need your woe.
Be glad, and your friends are many;
Be sad, and you lose them all.
There are none to decline your nectared wine,
But alone you must drink life’s gall.

Feast, and your halls are crowded;
Fast, and the world goes by.
Succeed and give, and it helps you live,
But no man can help you die.
There is room in the halls of pleasure
For a long and lordly train,
But one by one we must all file on
Through the narrow aisles of pain.
Psalm 46:1-3 NIV

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.

6. How can a person be strong enough to do what s/he knows is right?

7. Prepare a concise statement about your goals in life. Include the role of faith in your life?

Psalm 25:21-21 NIV

Guard my life and rescue me; let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in you. May integrity and uprightness protect me, because my hope is in you.

1. How can you put purity and integrity more fully into practice in your daily living?

2. What obstacles will you meet?
**Proverbs 12:17-19 NIV**

A truthful witness gives honest testimony, but a false witness tells lies.

Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue lasts only a moment.

**Proverbs 15:4 NIV**

The tongue that brings healing is a tree of life, but a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit.

3. 🙁 How can falsehood and deceit undermine your purposes and goals?

**Psalm 146:7 NIV**

[The LORD] upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets prisoners free.

4. 🙁 How can the truth make a person free?

**Isaiah 61:1-4 NIV**

The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn,

and provide for those who grieve in Zion — to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor. They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations.

5. 🙁 What areas of concerns, existing today, could you help correct?