



THE KNIGHT CHATTER

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Lent:

A time of reparation and preparation through Prayer, Fasting, and Charity. It begins on Ash Wednesday, February 26, and ends Holy Saturday, April 11



LENTEN REGULATIONS

Everyone between the ages of 14 and 60 is bound to:

- Abstain from meat (no meat allowed) on Ash Wednesday, all Fridays in Lent, and Good Friday.
- Fasting -- one full, meatless meal on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Two other meatless meals may be taken, but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted, but liquids are allowed.
- No one should dispense from these practices except for grave reasons, such as health, and some other penitential practice (such as praying a rosary, reading Scripture, or abstaining from television) should be substituted.

CHAPLAIN'S MESSAGE

FR. MARK HUGHES

GRAND KNIGHT'S REPORT

MICHAEL HOULIHAN

Brother Knights,

When it rains it pours is an expression that is obvious in its meaning. We understand what the person is going through. The question becomes what to do about the situation.

A friend of mine is in a downpour at the moment. He has three children each of whom is dealing with big issues in their lives. What should he do? It is obvious to him being a man of deep and mature faith that he should take his situation to God. So first he prays about the issues. He gives perspective to the moment by thanking God for the great blessings he has. First, all three of his children are faithful and quality people. Their family is strong and close. They have had success along the way and have bright futures.

So don't panic. These are bad chapters that his children are going through which will be followed by good chapters in the future. His prayer leads him to be loving, supportive, and understanding. Harsh and angry language does not



Fr. Mark Hughes

Brothers,

Each January, the Knights of Columbus prepares a summary of the charitable works of the organization to let the world know how we are putting our faith into action. Each Council provides its input to that survey, as we did recently. Year after year, our society donates a tremendous amount of time and resources to make our world a better place and to be witnesses to Jesus' call to charity. Last year, Knights personally contributed over 75 million service hours and over \$185 million in charitable donations – a great accomplishment.

I helped prepare our summary of charitable works for 2019, and it was a great experience for me to see how much our members are doing in our community. The activities that you are involved in are diverse and meaningful – including fundraisers for the needy, feeding the hungry, legal services for the poor, coaching youth sports, catechesis, support for our veterans and their families, working at our parishes, programs for the mentally disabled, support for our priests



Grand Knight Houlihan

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CHAPLAIN'S MESSAGE

(Continued from page 1)

become a factor. The situation does not get worse because of unwise dialogue, but gets better because of the calm and grace filled conversations that take place.

He also seeks counsel from other faithful people he trusts and who put God first. He is getting support and reason, rather than someone else's anger and judgmental attitude.

With all the conflict and tragedy in our world today, it is more important than ever to be people in touch with our creator and open to God's point of view. Problems have solutions that are good and can be found when we walk through life with God, rather than on our own. It is not a complex concept, but rather is a formula that has had great success since Jesus walked in our world.

Sincerely,

Fr. Hughes

ROSARY AT 7:30 P.M.

**We pray the Rosary
before our meetings
on the 1st and 3rd
Tuesdays of each
month**

**The Rosary is a
proven, effective
prayer in meeting in-
dividual and national
needs**

Come and join us!



Did You Know?

Our website (www.kofc2797.org) works on your phone or mobile device? Add us to your home screen and access us wherever you go!

- Keep track of our events - <https://www.kofc2797.org/events>
- Contact your officers - <https://www.kofc2797.org/officers>
- Access our monthly newsletter, the Chatter - <https://www.kofc2797.org/chatter>

GRAND KNIGHT'S REPORT

(Continued from page 1)

and seminarians, and support of programs at our local Catholic schools. And these are only the things I heard about! Many of you are involved in charities that didn't get reported. In all, our record of contribution is good, and I want to congratulate you for that.

Participating in charitable activities has a number of benefits. First, of course, it directly benefits needy recipients. Second, as we hear in the new Exemplification ceremony, charity gladdens the heart of the giver, and creates habits in us that predispose us to moral goodness. A third and important benefit is the inspiration it gives others to be charitable – when others see our charitable works, it shows them that charity is within their ability and their availability. Sometimes, the inspiration we need for being charitable is the sight of someone like us being charitable.

Last year, our Council provided a lot of examples of “doing good”, and we should be proud of that. But not satisfied with it! We have much to do still. There are several months left in this year in which we have many charitable activities planned. You'll see an update in a week or so of the “SignUp Genius” website with volunteer opportunities for our Winter and Spring events. Please pick an event to participate in – the benefits are great, to both our community and to you.

Have a good month, Brothers.

Michael Houlihan

Grand Knight

The Last of the Old Degree Ceremonies

As you may have heard, the Supreme Council has consolidated the first three degrees into a single degree termed, the “Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity. This will take effect on March 1.

The district held its last Formation (2nd) Degree at the council on January 21. Three council members took this degree: Matthew Morin, Christopher Rhodes, Kevin August.

Then on January 31, the state held the final Knight-hood (3rd) Degree ceremony at the council. Matthew Morin and Christopher Rhodes were the last council members to be so exemplified. Congratulations, fellows.

A schedule of future degrees will be announced shortly.

For more information in the meantime, check with Grand Knight Michael Houlihan (houlhangk2797koc@gmail.com or 410-707-8550).



DISTRICT DEPUTY'S REPORT



William Newbrough, DD

Dear Brother Knights, Friends and Family Members,

During this year's MD State Council Mid-Term meeting of Grand Knights, Deputy Grand Knights and District Deputies on January 11, we were told that the Order was initiating a new "Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity" that would replace the three ceremonial exemplifications we have known over the years. As one who has enjoyed the solemnity and beauty of our degrees as a candidate, a spectator, a degree team member and now as District Deputy, I was initially shocked and saddened by the news. Our degrees have served to build and strengthen our Order over its long history. But it's important to remember that our degrees do not exist for ceremony sake alone. And in fact they have changed significantly over the years – especially the 3rd degree. On the contrary, our degrees were designed to welcome, educate and edify our new members while strengthening and inspiring our Brother Knights in their charitable works and fraternal mission.

It's important to look to the example of our founder Fr. Michael McGivney, especially at this moment of significant change. During the inaugural years of the Order, Fr. McGivney was instrumental in designing the two degrees that were used to initiate and form new members -- the Degrees of Charity and Unity. Later, the Order would add the 3rd Degree of Fraternity followed by the creation of the 4th Degree of Patriotism. Each of these ceremonies in its time was intended to maximize the growth of the Order, protect Catholic families and welcome Catholic men into an organization that did not separate faith from daily life lived in the public square. Fr. McGivney resisted every effort that might do so, stating that he did not want Catholic men to join secret societies that banned religious discourse from their fraternal activities. In short, he wanted his Knights to be complete, well-formed Catholic gentlemen whose faith was evident in the lives they lived. Faith and Family were and continue to be the foundation on which the Knights of Columbus exist and thrive.

Over the years, many changes have occurred in our ceremonies most dramatically in the creation of the "new" Knighthood 3rd Degree about eight years ago. But again, the principles of the Order remain unchanged. Even in Fr. McGivney's lifetime, there were ceremonial changes. Following one such change, Fr. McGivney was quoted as saying, "Our Order is the same as when first instituted." The most recent changes combine the lessons of Charity, Unity and Fraternity into a single exemplification that is open to the public. The degree is intended to be held in a council's home parish and a chaplain (priest or deacon) should be present if possible. The Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity is open to our families,

friends and fellow parishioners. In this degree, as stated by our Supreme Knight Carl Anderson, we seek to "extend the hand of brotherhood to good men, who want to become better men so that together we may become great men."

The new ceremony remains true to our traditions while addressing the needs of today's fast paced life style. Time constraints and the requirement of secrecy have been identified as the two primary obstacles to joining our Order. The new degree is more accessible while remaining true to the principles that have shaped and built the Order since its founding in 1882. In many ways, the simplified ceremony harkens back to the simpler ceremonies of Charity and Unity first designed by Fr. McGivney. Most importantly, our families will be able to see firsthand the organization that their fathers, sons, brothers and friends are joining as they commit to the principles of Charity, Unity and Fraternity. This aspect of including the family in the ceremonial welcome of the new members is completely in line with Fr. McGivney's desire to see Catholic men live their faith fully within the context of their daily lives.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Degree teams whose dedication and commitment to the ceremonials of our Order has been such a gift to their brother knights. Their commitment to excellence in performing their roles has welcomed and formed generations of new members of our Order. They have inspired, educated and motivated countless brother knights to perform innumerable acts of charity in Christ's Holy Name. Personally, I cannot begin to list the number of occasions in which a lousy day has turned around to become a truly blessed evening by attending a well-executed Admission, Formation or Knighthood Degree. I am so grateful for the many inspiring exemplifications I have attended in my years as a Knight. And I would like to invite those who have served on degree teams to consider taking a speaking role in the new Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity.

As of March 1st 2020, councils which have fully prepared for the new exemplification and have all the necessary ceremonial items and arrangements will be authorized to host the new degree. In the words of our Supreme Knight, "The Knights of Columbus need the men of today just as the men of today need the Knights of Columbus." And indeed, today the Church needs us now more than ever. Let us honor the traditions of our past while moving forward boldly with generous hearts, ever ready to safeguard our families while putting our faith into action.

May Our Lady Queen of the Knights guide and protect our every step! *Vivat Jesus!*

William Newbrough
District Deputy No. 18



Why the Knights are Changing the Degree Ceremonies

From the Catholic News Association, January 31, 2020

The Knights of Columbus has announced a major revision to its longtime initiation ceremonies and for the first time will open them to the public, saying the changes are needed to become more appealing to prospective members and to respond to a “crisis” in church membership.

“Today, we need an exemplification of our principles that presents, in a clear and convincing way, how charity, unity and fraternity can come together to form a Catholic way of life for today’s man and his family,” Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson said in the January 2020 issue of *Columbia* magazine.

The rituals of the Knights, sometimes called ceremonies or exemplifications, have for decades been separated into first, second and third degrees focused respectively on the principles of Charity, Unity and Fraternity, the first three principles of the Catholic men’s fraternity founded in Connecticut in 1882 by Father Michael J. McGivney.

The Knights of Columbus now claim about 1.9 million members in 15,900 local councils in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Poland, Ukraine, South Korea and several other countries.

Usually when new members joined the knights, councils would run a first degree initiation ceremony for them or take them to a nearby council with a trained degree team. New members would be encouraged to go through their second and third degree ceremonies at a later date.

These ceremonials of the order were kept under a pledge of secrecy limited to the membership.

The new ceremony will now combine all three degrees and, in another major change, will be opened to the public. Anderson said the exemplification may be conducted in a council’s meeting chamber or in a church, “with families and friends seated in the pews.”

“They will see firsthand the organization that their husbands, fathers, brothers, sons and friends are joining — the principles and values they are committing to and why it matters,” Anderson said in remarks he originally delivered Nov. 23 to the Knights of Columbus midyear organizational meeting of state deputies in Orlando, Florida.

“This historic new ceremonial is rooted in our past and tailored to our present. It will inspire more men to join us,” Anderson said. “Most of all, it is essential to the sustainability of the Knights of Columbus, as it will empower us to advance our mission and grow in the years ahead. It is essential to our ability to meet the crisis we now face.”

Anderson’s remarks acknowledged that more than 26 million Catholics have left the faith in the United States and millions more in Canada. Baptisms have fallen by 40%, sacramental marriages have fallen by more than 66% and only just over 20% of Catholics attend Mass regularly.

Four in ten baptized Catholics no longer identify as Catholic, and for the first time self-identified Catholics no longer make up a majority of Hispanics, according to a 2019 survey.

“This is a crisis for our Church. This is a crisis for our Catholic families,” Anderson said, adding “this is a crisis for our order.”

“You know as well as I do that we are finding it harder to recruit men — especially younger men,” he told the Knights’ state deputies. “And while many jurisdictions are still adding members and inspiring more good works, in other jurisdictions this is no longer the case.”

Anderson cited the difficulties of bringing young men, especially young fathers, into the order. Many said they found it difficult to attend multiple ceremonies.

“They also tell us that secrecy is unnecessary, and sometimes, it is even an impediment to joining,” Anderson added. He cited a lack of manpower in local councils to perform degree ceremonies. Some candidates give up, and some never seek second and third degrees.

“Last year, little more than half of the men who took their First Degree also took their Third Degree,” he said, adding that the number of third degree teams is expected to decline.

He said the current system is “too often a stumbling block, not a gateway to membership” that often fails to promote “a truly Catholic fraternal membership according to the vision of Father McGivney.”

“Our ceremonials have always been an essential way we teach the principles of charity, unity and fraternity. But today, too many men never hear the lessons of unity and fraternity,” he said, adding that the failure to reach members “threatens the future of our order.”

Anderson said the crisis facing the Church is fundamentally “a failure to evangelize.”

“Such a crisis cannot be adequately responded to without the action of Catholic husbands and fathers,” he said.

The Knights’ membership process already changed in recent years when the order began to allow online membership. Online members had the right to attend any council business meeting and could purchase Knights of Columbus insurance, but they lacked the ordinary rights of council members until they officially enrolled in a council and underwent a first degree ceremony.

The 2019 Supreme Convention of the Knights of Columbus adopted a resolution to consider combining the first three degrees and removing the condition of secrecy.

Anderson said he directed a review of the ceremonials “with an eye toward staying true to our roots while at the same time presenting our principles of charity, unity and

(Continued on page 5)



ROCK CREEK SENIORS

ST VALENTINE'S MEETING AND PARTY

With Election of Officers

Sunday, February 9

1:00 PM—3:00 PM

Rock Creek Council

Catered Luncheon Buffet

Entertainment by Daytones Barbershop Quartet

BRING your Sweetheart!

\$20 per person

\$2 cash bar

Reservations required

Make checks payable to "Rock Creek Seniors"

Send your name and check by Thursday, February 6 to:

Jean Gordon

10013 Sinnott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817, 301-530-4926

\$15. Dues for 2020 are now due



Changing the Degree Ceremonies

(Continued from page 4)

fraternity in a more clear and convincing way." The process involved consultation with supreme directors, state officers, and longtime members experienced in ceremonies.

"The result is a new ceremony that stays true to our traditions while addressing the needs of our times," he said.

Anderson placed the order's longtime rituals in the context of the 19th century, when the Knights of Columbus competed with many other fraternal societies. Men of the time "wanted secrecy and the sense of progression that came with multiple degrees," he said.

These fraternal ceremonies presented a "journey through knighthood" to encourage greater participation in the order and to inspire men to seek leadership roles in local councils. Anderson said these ceremonies worked well for such purposes in the past, but do not work today. He professed a "special fondness" for the old ceremonies, but he noted that Fr. McGivney himself needed to make changes in the 1880s to help the order grow.

Citing Pope Benedict XVI's description of McGivney as representing "the secret of the impressive growth" of the Catholic Church in America, Anderson said McGivney is still an inspiring example for millions and the Knights of Columbus continue to pray for his canonization.

"For Father McGivney, the path of charity, unity and fraternity was to be an enduring path of Christian discipleship," said Anderson, who said this was entrusted to laymen under the guidance of clergy "to direct and carry out their own part in the mission of the Church."

Anderson prayed that McGivney's intercession "guide, sustain and enable us to fulfill our vocation as leaders of this great Order for the welfare of our brother Knights and the renewal of our Church."





Our Victorious Polar Knights

On Saturday, January 25, Rock Creek Brothers **GK Michael Houlihan, Warden Alex Lieb and I** literally ran into the Chesapeake Bay as part of the Polar Bear Plunge, to raise funds for Maryland Special Olympics. Our



heartfelt thanks to all those who supported our small but intrepid band of Polar Knights in our glorious quest! I am pleased and proud to announce that with your generous support, the Polar Knights raised \$4,300 for this most worthy cause!

The day started as cold and ominous with sheets of rain pelting our band of chivalrous, yet un-

daunted warriors. Miraculously, a bit of sunshine broke through just as our official plunge time of 11 am approached. Struggling through the frigid tempestuous waters of the Chesapeake Bay, our Polar Knights successfully reached the "Boundary of Doom" (official demarcation line set by a ring of Maryland State Police EMT di-

vers) to give the much vaunted "High Five of Glory" that only the most worthy Knight hopes to attain!!! Following this Herculean effort,

our gallant band Valliantly fought their way back to shore with chattering teeth and warm hearts! (We ran like frightened rabbits — **The water temperature was an official 41 degrees!**)

I hope the two photos amuse, document and certify to our glorious adventure and feats of strength. **Thanks again for making our Quest so successful!!**

For a gallery of photos of the many plungers, check <http://www.baltimoresun.com/photos/ac-cn-super-plunger-20200117-50qloivlmvccvpls2i3dhsagoy-photogallery.html> Can you find us among the crowd?

On behalf of my comrades-in-arms, Alex Lieb and Michael Houlihan,

Bill Newbrough



Cardinal Patrick A. O'Boyle Assembly, No. 386

The monthly business meetings for the 4th Degree Cardinal Patrick O'Boyle Assembly are held the third Thursday of each month in the Emerald Room at Fr. Rosensteel Council in Forest Glen. Rosary begins at 7:30 pm, meetings at 8 pm, followed by a complimentary buffet meal.

This month, February 20, will be the annual Renewal of Obligations Ceremony. Following the Rosary, the Business Meeting will include the Renewal of Obligations. The Ceremony will be conducted by the Archdiocese of Washington District Master and his staff.

This will be the last Renewal of Obligations conducted in the familiar way. On March 1, the first three degrees will be combined into a single degree ceremony, encompassing the principles of charity, unity and fraternity. This will necessitate a change in the renewal ceremony.

As of the January Business meeting, the Assembly had 357 paid members with 114 members whose dues are past due. The unpaid members have been contacted and requested to keep their annual dues current.

The Color Corps Team will hold its next practice on March 2, beginning at 7:30 pm. Practices are held every other month, on Monday, beginning 7:30 pm at the Rosensteel Meeting Room upstairs. Any assembly member with an interest in joining the Color Corps is invited to attend.



An exemplification for the Fourth or Patriotic Degree will be held on April 18, at 9:30 am, at St. Mary of the Mills Parish Center, in Laurel.

With the consolidation of the first three degrees, qualifications for membership in this degree will change.

If you have any questions regarding the Fourth Degree, or would like to join, contact me at neildori-ankc@yahoo.com or 301-237-0552 cell.

Ngil Dorian, SK
Past Faithful Navigator



Love Is In The Air



Steve Upton, PGK,

We spend a lot of time thinking about our loved ones during the month of February and especially around Valentine's Day. Technically, it's St. Valentine's Day, originally the feast day of a Roman saint from the third century. There is much speculation about the origins of the feast and even some discussion about the identity of the saint.

We do know that this St. Valentine was martyred on February 14, 269 and that the feast day was instituted by Pope Gelasius I in 496. But how did St. Valentine, a martyr, come to be associated with love and romance? Again, there is much speculation. One popular story is that he cured the blind daughter of his jailer. Before he was led off to his death, he wrote her a note and signed it "Your Valentine."

Unlike St. Valentine, most of us are not called to martyrdom, but we do think about our loved ones...and we write love notes and greeting cards. Gifts are commonly given to the ones we love. But have you ever considered some special gifts for the ones you love?

That's really what insurance is all about. People buy insurance because they love someone. They buy life insurance because of love of family. If you're not here to provide for your family, you want to make sure they can stay in the same home they love; you want to make sure your children will have the college education they will need; you want your family to continue to live the lifestyle

you've been so fortunate to be able to provide. And a whole life policy will provide you living benefits.

You either have or are still accumulating assets for when you retire. Long Term Care Insurance helps protect those assets in case of an extended care event. You won't have to spend down all what you've saved to pay for care. Retirement annuities from the Knights will help you enjoy your golden years. With a lifetime minimum interest rate guarantee, you will always be in the black with your account.

All the products we offer to our members are centered around protection; protection for you, for your family and for what you've been able save. Is your protection where you want it to be for your loved ones?

At this Valentine's Day, let's sit down and see where you stand. Make sure you have insured your love. Go ahead and buy that greeting card, write her a love note...maybe even get a beautiful arrangement of flowers or a dozen roses. But remember, the gift of protection will be there when it's needed most.

Vivat Jesus!

Steve Upton

STEVE UPTON, GK, FDD

Field Agent

301-873-7450 cell

301-421-1430 office

steve.upton@kofc.org



Club News

**Hours: Monday Thru Thursday 2-10
Friday 2-Midnight, Saturday 2-11, Sunday 2-8,
Meeting Nights 1-8**

The Holidays and Super Bowl have past and we head into the long stretch of winter. But that doesn't mean the Council slows down.

Be on the lookout for list-serve blasts, read the Chatter and open our website. The new Rock Creek website has all the updated events. Here are the events on the books and tentatively scheduled for the near future.

The New Ladies Auxiliary will be hosting a Winter Beach Party on February 28th with live music from *Back To The Beach*, a Beach Boys tribute band. The party will be held upstairs in Cantrel Hall. Admission is \$30 and includes draught beer, light snacks, and contests. Proceeds will help fund the Teachers Appreciation Banquet and Awards. See page 8 for more details.

Lent starts on Ash Wednesday, February 26. That means the Council Family Fish Fry starts two days later. The

first fish fry will be held on February 28th from 6 pm to 8 pm. The menu will include fish and chips, crab cakes, shrimp, cream of crab soup, and more.

The next Trivia Night will be held on February 22. Registration opens at 7 pm, and competition starts at 7:30. Teams up to six people will compete in six rounds of 10 questions. The team fee is \$25.

J Dub & Double-Crossed return to the lounge on Friday 21st. J Dub plays great covers from the 60s to today. The band starts at 8:30 pm, and the donation is \$5.

Keep an eye out for St. Patrick's and March Madness events.

See you around the Council!

For the latest information about the happenings in the Lounge, watch for list-serve blasts, read the Chatter and check the council website www.kofc2797.org.

Lounge phone: 301-530-1628

Mike Horan: 240-793-1169



FRIDAY FEBRUARY 28, 2020

The Ladies Auxiliary of the Rock Creek KOC present...

1st Annual Beach Party

Fri, 2/28, 8:30pm

Come for the FIRST FISH FRY OF THE SEASON 6-8pm (price not included in Beach Party ticket price) in the KOC lounge, and stay for the Beach Party upstairs at Rock Creek Mansion. ALL WELCOME !!



\$30 pp includes snacks, unlimited draught beer & the band...

“BACK TO THE BEACH” with Dave Phenicie (8:30pm)

75/25 Raffle

DRESS FOR THE BEACH!

Hula Hoop, Best Dressed & Limbo Contests



5417 W Cedar Lane, Bethesda

Lounge 301.530.1628

Save the Date!

Raffle Supports:
KOC Teacher's Appreciation Night.

Attire:
Flip Flops, Shorts, "Hawaiian Style" shirts, etc.
Best Dressed Awards!!

Tickets:
Buy your tickets in the Lounge. Fish Fry dinner sold separately.



REFLECTIONS

Lawrence P. Grayson, PGK

Crisis, Hope, and the Lenten Season

“[T]he Church is currently experiencing one of the greatest crises she has ever known,” declared Cardinal Raymond Burke last October. This assessment was recently affirmed by Pope-Emeritus Benedict XVI who described the current situation as “the lasting crisis that the priesthood has been going through for many years.”

In the introduction to their soon-to-be-released book, *From the Depths of Our Hearts: Priesthood, Celibacy, and the Crisis of the Catholic Church*, the Pope-Emeritus and Cardinal Robert Sarah wrote: “The priesthood is going through a dark time. Wounded by the revelation of so many scandals, disconcerted by the constant questioning of their consecrated celibacy, many priests are tempted by the thought of giving up and abandoning everything.” Priests are questioning their vocations at a time when they are needed most to catechize and lead their congregations in the faith.

The Church is being besieged throughout the world, externally and internally, politically and culturally. And what is true for the universal Church is equally true for the Church in America.

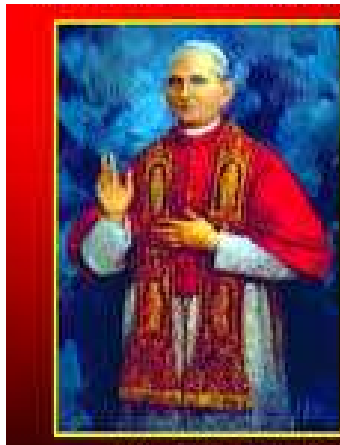
This country is evolving into a secularist, anything goes society, becoming anti-religious and threatening the ability of people to live their faith in the public square. A host of laws, regulations and judicial rulings are allowing homosexuality, assisted suicide, gay marriage, abortion, pornography, prostitution, self-selected sexual identity and transgender behavior to spread throughout the nation. The advocates for these positions are clamoring not only for acceptance, but for special protected rights to acclaim their behavior and force others to adhere to their values or face legal penalties and social sanctions.

The cumulative effect is staggering. Christian bakers, photographers, printers, owners of celebratory venues, nurses, physicians, pharmacists, and others are being threatened with civil and workplace penalties if they do not use their skills to celebrate and memorialize activities that violate their religious consciences. Even the Little Sisters of the Poor have been forced to seek relief for a third time from the U.S. Supreme Court to exempt them from a government mandate to provide their employees with health insurance that covers abortion-inducing drugs. And, although the bill was withdrawn before becoming law, the California state senate overwhelmingly approved a bill to force priests to violate the seal of Con-

fession in cases of child abuse.

At a time when the voice of the Catholic Church is needed greatly to meet these external threats, it has been effectively silenced by internal scandals that never cease to shock: sexual abuses of minors and seminarians, hierarchical cover ups, misuse of church funds, disputes among bishops and among cardinals over long-settled dogma, including married clergy, priestly celibacy, ordination of women, and Communion to divorced and civilly remarried Catholics, non-Catholics, and pro-abortion politicians. The result is a laity that is largely confused and discouraged, and either obeying only those elements of the faith that meet their liking or leaving the Church entirely.

As Pope Paul VI warned almost 50 years ago, the “smoke of Satan” has seeped into the Church.



His Holiness, Pope Paul VI

June 29, 1972

“From some fissure, the smoke of Satan has entered the Temple of God.”

In spite of the moral darkness, there is hope. There are many strong religious elements that can foster a resurgence of the Catholic faith. There are new religious orders with an increasing number of seminarians and postulants. There is a vibrant and expanding lay, Catholic media. There are newly-established colleges that are committed to devel-

oping strong Catholic identities.

In addition to organizational strengths, there are the youth. On the day of his installation as pope, St. John Paul II said to the young people gathered in St. Peter’s Square: “you are the hope of the Church and of the world.” A commitment to the youth was a continuing theme throughout his ministry for he saw the young searching for the meaning of life and for ways to lead their lives. The youth, he perceived, are searching for God.

This papal-saint was right. Millennials, those born in the period 1981-2000, have already shown that they are a Pro-Life Generation. From among their ranks are many of today’s pro-life activists, disturbing the consciences of their elders, bringing the atrocities of abortion into public view, and expanding their numbers through outreach efforts in schools, colleges and universities. They are changing society. Public attitudes are shifting. Pro-life advocacy is increasing. Pro-abortion support is declining. The annual number of abortions is now the lowest it has been since abortion was legalized in 1973.

(Continued on page 10)



Physician Assisted Suicide

Last year, Maryland lawmakers rejected a bill to legalize physician-assisted suicide (PAS) for the fourth time. Yet, advocates are expected to reintroduce the legislation in this session. Regardless of what the bill looks like, PAS will be a risk to the elderly, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and others.

No safeguards can truly protect against coercion and abuse of vulnerable individuals. Nor can doctors accurately predict that an illness will be terminal in 6-months. And there is evidence in states where PAS is legal that insurance companies are already declining coverage of life-extending treatments and instead approving coverage for cheaper drug overdoses that end a patient's life.

Governor Larry Hogan has indicated that he is open to possibly signing a PAS bill if it comes to his desk. A growing coalition of local bipartisan opposition to PAS will oppose this legislation. Will you?

For more information about PAS, check with **Maryland Against Physician Assisted Suicide** at stopassisted-suicidemd.org. Then click the "Take Action" tab to sign up for alerts.

Go to Maryland Right to Life at MDRTL.org, and select the "Take Action" tab to send a prewritten letter or make a scripted phone call to your representative.

Finally, join the Catholic Advocacy Network of the Bishops' Maryland Catholic Conference at mdcatholic.org/joincan. Learn how you can take part in a Virtual Catholic Day of Action on February 19 and help the Church without every leaving your home.

Remember Our Sick and Deceased

Sick and Distressed:

PGK Roberto and Mary Jo Ibáñez, Leslie Ibáñez (wife of PGK Tony Ibáñez), Billy Horan, PGK Victor and Wally Khayat, PGK Vince and Glenda Bunag, PGK John Vivian, Greg Curtin, Vinny Mancini, Andrew Dolan Miller (son of Alex Lieb), PGK Bob Waters and his grandson-Brandon Waters, Lindsay Patten (daughter of Michael Patten), and those on the Seniors' sick list (p. 11)

Deceased:

Marilyn Samples, John Luce, and Elizabeth Leary

Pray for all of our departed members, families and friends.



REFLECTIONS

(Continued from page 9)

Passionate, Catholic, young adults and young converts are evangelizing on college campuses, street corners and other public venues. And there are many young families who are living their faith daily – praying, engaging in charitable works, and instilling in their children the habits of a Catholic life.

The latest generational cohort, born after 2000, appears to be equally committed to pro-life. Referred to as the iGeneration, the first pictures for many were taken via ultrasound in the womb, presenting them with the undeniable humanity of the unborn. As a positive indicator of the future, teenage pregnancies, births and abortion rates are at all-time lows and decreasing.

While there is reason for hope, a spiritual crisis – a satanic battle -- cannot be overcome solely with material approaches. It requires our actions to be aligned with the Will of God, so that He can act through us. The path forward requires a concerted effort by all Catholics, clerical and lay, to live the faith they profess. A reformation can start now in Lent by making it not only a period of spiritual preparation for celebrating the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Our Lord, but of repentance and renewal of the Church.

Let us begin by doing something each day to contribute to a resurgence of the faith – say the rosary, spend some time each week in Eucharistic Adoration, abstain from meat on Fridays, go to Confession, attend Mass more frequently, meditate on the liturgical readings through which the penitential spirit of the season is exemplified.

If we do, the results will be profound. As Pope St. John Paul II reminded us, "The power of Christ's Cross and Resurrection is greater than any evil...[Our Lord's] demands never exceed man's abilities. If man accepts these demands with an attitude of faith, he will also find in the grace that God never fails to give him the necessary strength to meet those demands." When we pray and do our best to meet the Lord's expectations, the world *will* be a different place.

Knight of the Month

This **Knight of the Month for February is Bob Metzler.**

In our recent survey of fraternal activities, we had many members who donated hundreds of hours of their time to charity, and among them Bob had the highest total of volunteer service. He is a regular contributor at many of our Council's events, present for most of our meetings, and active in his parish.

Thank you all for your charitable service, and a special note of gratitude for your oversized contribution to our Council and our community. Come say thanks to Bob, who you can usually find saying the rosary before each meeting.



SENIORS' CLUB REPORT

By PGK Bob Waters, President

First, let me thak everyone for their prayers, cards, visits, calls, etc. after the operation for my new knee (yes, I did get the 30-year one). I am now going through rehab and will be up and around shortly.

Our Seniors St. Valentine's Meeting and Party will be on Sunday, February 9. This should help with the parking.

I have a letter from Montgomery County Police Chief Marcus Jones, which I will read it at our meeting. This was a response of my letter to him inviting police officers to attend our meetings.

Our St. Patrick's Meeting and Party will be held on Sunday, March 22. If I am in Florida, our VP Neil Dorian will run the meeting.

For our special prayers, please remember Bobby McDonald(a friend) and those who have died recently: Tom Fleetwood (a friend), Mary Ann Hewitt (the sister of our member Ed Reilly), Mary E. Kestel (the



PGK Bob Waters

mother of Council member Bob Kestel), and Kathleen H. Dwyer (the widow of Ed Dwyer, a longtime VP of our Seniors Club), and all on our prayer list.

GOD BLESS AMERICA AND OUR MILITARY!

PRAYER CORNER

In your prayers remember: Eureka and Elizabeth Arcand, Dorothy Bush, Maureen Collins, Kevin Dyer, Helen Fincutter, Susan Gordon Garcia, Lois Gargano, Katharine Giodati, Bill Gordon, Joselyn Walter Graham, Marie Horan, Saunders Jacobsen, Alex Lee, Julia Marcus, James Marketos, Joe Murphy, Eugene O'Neill, Ralph Oviedo, Sr. Maureen Patrice, Fr. David Pollak, Joan Reed, Anne Ryan, Bridget Shanahan, Midge Shanahan, Gloria Skapik, Pilar Stark, Stephanie Suff, Alex Swanke, Marge Swanke, Regina Walter, Barbara Waters, and Fran and Frank Zello.

Council Leaders

CHAPLAINS

Rev. Mark Hughes—301-942-2333, x-109
Deacon Robert Hubbard—301-942-1522

GRAND KNIGHT

Michael Houlihan—410-707-8550

DEPUTY GRAND KNIGHT

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Robert Hubbard—301-942-1522

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

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4th DEGREE - O'BOYLE ASSEMBLY

Neil Dorian—301-237-0552

PRESIDENT, KAY-CEE CLUB

Thomas W. Tappan—301-365-3128

WEBMASTER

Matthew Flynn—301-875-9293
Ivan Galic—301-633-3998

CHATTER EDITOR

Lawrence P. Grayson, PGK - 301-933-8731
e-mail - LPGrayson@verizon.net

COUNCIL OFFICES

LOUNGE—301-530-1628

KAY-CEE CLUB—301-530-0258

Rental Corner

The Rock Creek Mansion is booking into 2021! Pass the word to friends and colleagues planning weddings, bar/bat mitzvahs, anniversary parties and milestone birthdays.

We are the best kept secret in Bethesda.. And remember, Rock Creek Council members get a 50% rental discount!

Contact me for information, a tour, and availability.



Julie Buckingham Carter
Event Coordinator

cell phone: 240-426-1220,
email: rcmansion@gmail.com
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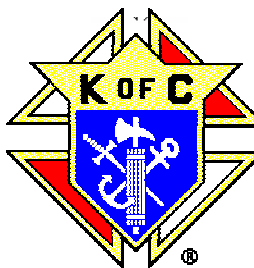
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March CHATTER Deadline:
February 25, 2020

ROCK CREEK COUNCIL CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
February						1
 Fast and Abstinence on Ash Wednesday  Abstinence on all Fridays of Lent						
2	3	4 Rosary 7:30 PM Business Meeting 8:00 PM	5	6	7	8
9 Seniors' Valentine Party 1:00 PM	10	11	12 K-C Club 7:00 PM	13	14	15
16	17	18 Rosary 7:30 PM Social Meeting 8:00 PM	19	20 Cardinal O'Boyle Assembly Rosary 7:30 PM Meeting 8:00 PM	21 Music in Lounge 8:30 PM	22 Trivia Night in Lounge 7:30 PM
23	24	25	26 Ash Wednesday	27	28 Lenten Fish Dinner 6-8 PM Lounge Beach Party 8:30 PM	29

Visit the **Council Website** at www.kofc2797.org