LOOKING THROUGH STAINED GLASS

A Column by Fr. Tom

Knights and Columbiettes

As we return to our discussion about the ministries of the parish, we shift gears from the Liturgical Ministries to our Social Ministries. Many of the Social Ministries have multiple purposes, but one of the purposes of each is to help us build community in our parish. Two of the ministries that fall into this category are the charitable ministries, the **Knights of Columbus** and the **Columbiettes**.

The Knights of Columbus began in Connecticut in 1882, founded by Blessed Michael McGivney. "He proposed establishing a lay organization to prevent Catholic men from entering secret societies antithetical to Church teaching, uniting Catholic men and helping families of deceased members." [www.kofc.org] In order to help "families of deceased members," the Knights began an insurance fund, in which all members can participate. Over time, the organization grew and expanded. The Knights of Columbus now have councils in all 50 states and in many other countries as well. Also, individual councils support their local parish, perform charitable works and donate to various charities.

Here at St. Paul of the Cross, the Knights of Columbus not only contribute to various local and national charities, they also work to build up our parish community. They do so in at least three different ways – by advancing the spiritual life of their members, by building fraternity among their members, and by sponsoring parish events that build up the entire parish community, as well as raise money for charity. We can usually count on the Knights of Columbus to sponsor several breakfasts each year, as well as their two signature dinner events – Neapolitan Knight and Luigi O'Grady. In the past, the Knights have also contributed to the upkeep of the parish through donations of time, talent and treasure.

The Columbiettes are a sister organization to the Knights of Columbus. "The Columbiettes, an organization of Catholic women dedicated to our Patronesses, Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Theresa the Little Flower and St. Joan of Arc, are comprised of affiliated Auxiliaries of the Knights of Columbus Councils. […] One of our purposes is to aid our Council spiritually, socially and financially. Our purpose is to: promote the spiritual, social and charitable welfare of our members, to instill a steadfast conviction relating to the proper place and function of Catholic women in safeguarding the religious, civil and economic rights of all Catholics, to rely upon the intercession of Mary, our Mother and Model, for guidance in guarding the common good, and to work through her, on loving and aiding all members of the human family and to give assistance to the Knights of Columbus in all their activities upon request." [www.columbiettes.com]

At St. Paul of the Cross, the Columbiettes are integral to all of the activities of our Knights of Columbus Council, especially the major events we discussed above. Our Auxiliary also provides its support to local charities through its own activities, such as bake sales and other events.

If you would like to contribute to the building up of our parish community as a member of the Knights of Columbus or Columbiettes, or if you would like to be a part of a group of good and faithful Catholic men or women, please contact the Parish Office.