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THE EXPLORER

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State Deputy's Message

Advent is a time of preparation. Of course, that involves all the traditional Christmas preparations; buying gifts, decorating the house and tree, wrapping presents, baking and sending Christmas cards. We take great joy in preparing for celebrations with our family and friends during Christmas. In the middle of all we do during Advent, Catholics must never forget that what we prepare for first and foremost is the birth of Christ and the hope of His second coming on the last day. Don't neglect those preparations during this Advent season. Those preparations of course involve taking stock of what we have done right in our lives and where we have fallen short. In our faith life, we do that with an examination of conscience and the sacrament of reconciliation.

For members of the Knights of Columbus and for our Order, this is also the time of year that we take stock of how we are doing and that begins with the mid-year meeting. At the state level, that means a review of our results compared to our Circle of Honor goals and for local councils, it means a review of results compared to their Star Council goals.

As for the Circle of Honor goals, we have work to do to hit our intake goal, promotion of the insurance and financial products the Order has to offer and compliance with our safe environment protocols. We are, however, doing well promoting new council growth, building up the faith of our members and with our charitable and fraternal programs. To help us ramp up our membership growth, we will emphasize continuous recruitment with every personal contact and council activity. We will also stress intentional recruitment through

promotion of well-run Church Drives and the use of the e-member program. We are reminded that the health of our Order depends upon our growing membership. We will continue to promote our Fraternal Benefit Nights both virtual and in person, remembering that ensuring the financial security of our members was a founding vision of Fr. McGivney.

I encourage local council leadership to assess how well their councils are doing relative to their Star Council goals. Is your council hitting their membership growth goals, do we promote our financial benefits, has paperwork been submitted and is the council safe environment compliant?

From a personal perspective ask yourself, did I do my best, did I devote the amount of time necessary to get the job done? Am I an ambassador for the Knights of Columbus, our programs, the vision of our founder and our mission of charity and service? Also ask yourself if you have grown the Order by sharing it with others and inviting them to join us.

Once you have done a good assessment of where you stand, continue the efforts in the areas where you are succeeding and make plans to correct the areas that need attention. In other words, prepare yourself and your council for success in the second half of the year.

On behalf of my wife Patty and I we wish you all a happy and holy Advent Season, a very Merry Christmas and much success in the coming months. Remember that Christ is the reason for the Season and that we as Christians look forward with joy to Christmas and the promise of eternal life with Him.

Vivat Jesus,
Michael J. Grothoff



State Chaplain's Message

My dear Brother Knights and families,

Moving into December we are all aware of the shorter days and less sunlight. I have always appreciated how the seasons of the year work together with the Liturgical seasons. In the case of December, when the earth is at its darkest point, light begins to appear again.

We are reminded by the Gospel of John that the true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. (John 1:9) Even in these darkest days of the year, we are confident that God's plan for Salvation History was perfectly manifest in the Birth of Jesus Christ, and continues to manifest itself in the Liturgy of the Church.

In addition to Advent and Christmas, December has the beautiful Feasts of the Immaculate Conception on December 8, and Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 12. The Second Vatican Council Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, reminds us that Mary was free from all stain of sin, as though fashioned by the Holy Spirit and formed as a new creature. Adorned from the first instant of her conception with the radiance of an entirely unique holiness, the Virgin of Nazareth is greeted, on God's command, by an angel messenger as "full of grace." (*Lumen Gentium*, 56)

How beautiful to think, as we pray the Rosary, or join in the celebration of Holy Mass, that Mary, filled with grace, by saying "yes" to the Angel Gabriel, ended the long darkness of sin and alienation from God. John's Gospel again cries out: from his fullness we have all received, grace in place of grace, because while the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. (John 1:16-17)

This leads me to reflect upon the works of the Knights of Columbus. In all of our councils as we pray together; evangelize and share our Catholic faith with one another and others; as we do works of charity; as we witness to the beauty and building up

of a culture of life and a civilization of love, we allow the grace of Christ, of which Mary is filled, and which Christ pours into our hearts through the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5) to fill our lives with hope.

And so, as the world around us seems darker, both from a lack of sunlight, and a lack of light from Christ, may we never give into despair. Jesus Christ, whose coming we celebrate, through His Incarnation, life, passion, death and resurrection and sending of the Holy Spirit is truly the light coming into the world.

Have a blessed Advent, and a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Vivat Jesus,
Father Meinrad Miller, OSB

State Membership Director's Message

As we enter the Advent season let us remember to Honor our Holy Mother Mary because of her steadfast faith in God. She believed – as we all want to – that God would remain with her and would never leave her. During the season of Advent, we prepare our own hearts with this same faith. This is a time for us to grow closer to Mary's son. Our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us pray that we can grow the Knights of Columbus so that it will forever remain strong and stay the Strong Right Arm of the Church.

As we enter the month of December, we are almost halfway through our fraternal year. Our membership numbers are not what we want for this time of year. As of now we are about 140 men short of where we want to be. We can remedy this by asking every eligible Catholic man in the pew next to you to join our Order. Using the E-member portal on the Supreme website is very simple. It only takes a few minutes to get signed up. (kofc.org/joinus). We need these men to help us and them grow stronger in our faith and help those in need.

Remember that December is the month that our Lord and Savior was born. Let us always pray to him and his mother Mary that we are "ALL MADE FOR GREATNESS" and can help other men and



their families grow stronger in our faith. Let us show other men and their families that joining the Knights of Columbus will be right for them and for our Order.

Blessed Michael McGivney, Pray for Us!

Vivat Jesus,
Steve Abels

State Program Director's Message

Brother Knights,

As we approach the end of the calendar year, now is the time to reflect on the status of your council activities so far. We are nearing the mid-point of the fraternal year. I highly recommend that you print out a blank SP-7 Columbian Award application and handwrite the programs into each of the categories to see what has been accomplished so far. Then fill out the form with the activities you have scheduled for the rest of the fraternal year. Where you have blanks, try to identify activities you missed. If there are still blanks, look to the state Program & Membership Guide. Try to identify additional activities to fill in those blanks. For example, is your council participating in the Knight of the Month/Year and Family of the Month/Year programs? If not, add that to your list. Also be sure to fill out the forms online at the State and Supreme websites for those programs. Once your draft form is complete, you will be ready to fill out the final version of that SP-7 form online well before the June 28th deadline.

When the new year arrives, it will be time to pick up the pace. The first three months of the year are the busiest time for council activities. You will need plenty of rest to finish out the year strong! Is your council hosting a pro-life baby shower? How about a free throw contest? Participating in the state bowling tournament? Getting the youth in your parish involved in the Vocations Poster Contest? Take a quick look at the calendar for the rest of the year in the Program & Membership guide so you are ready. If you have questions or need help, reach out to your District Deputy, myself, or one of the

program directors/chairmen. We are all here to help you succeed.

Most important of all, be sure to spend time with your family and friends during the holiday season. Go to mass together. Say the rosary. Talk about your faith. Above all, be there for each other and talk about the good times you've had together, and the good times yet to come. Wishing you and your family a very Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year!

Vivat Jesus,
Eric Severt

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December

Keep Christ in Christmas!

- 2-4 Mid-Year Meeting DD Meeting in Lawrence
- 3 RSVP ticket drawing for prizes
- 15 **Deadline** to submit Tootsie Roll Report and checks to State Treasurer Kevin Roberts
- 31 **Deadline** for Keep Christ in Christmas poster contest winners to District Deputies

January

Happy New Year! Support Culture of Life Activities!

- 1-31 Council Free Throw Contests completed by end of month
- 1-31 Conduct 18th Annual Culture of Life Baby Shower
- 22 50th Anniversary of Roe vs. Wade Decision
- 17 **Deadline** for requests to host 2024 Fraternal Year State Bowling Tourney
- 31 **Form #1728** Annual Survey of Fraternal Activities Report due at Supreme
- 31 **Form #4584** Special Olympics Report Form due at Supreme
- 31 District Winners of Keep Christ in Christmas Poster Contest to Family Director

Congratulations!

Knight of the Month for October 2022: William Dickinson of Council 11534 – Overland Park – Holy Cross

Family of the Month for October 2022: The Les Bruna Family of Council 1777 – Marysville