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THE EXPLORER

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Kansas Knights of Columbus

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November 2025

State Deputy's Message

Brother Knights,

It is hard to believe we have already completed the first four months of our fraternal year. In just six short months, we will gather in Wichita for our 125th Kansas State Convention. This will be a time to reflect on the achievements we have made as we Continue a Legacy of Faith, Family & Fraternity. As we look forward to the convention, we must each ask, where will your council stand? Are you on track to earn the Star Council Award? This goal represents excellence in faith formation, charitable works, and inviting new Catholic men into our brotherhood, and it should be pursued by every council across Kansas.

As the pace of summer gives way to the busy months ahead, our activities as Knights begin to intensify. November is a month full of important events and opportunities to strengthen our mission:

- Tootsie Roll Drive: Many councils are now completing their drives and submitting the required paperwork. Thank you for your support for individuals with intellectual disabilities.
- Adopt-a-Seminarian: The list of seminarians is available at www.kansas-kofc.org. Councils should adopt a seminarian and report their pledge. Supporting vocations is vital to the future of our Church.
- Memorial Mass: November invites us to remember those who have gone before us. Work with your pastor to hold a memorial Mass honoring the deceased Knights from your council.
- Religious Education Raffle: Ensure that all sold tickets have been returned to the Religious Education Fund Chairman and that your parish religious education requests have been submitted.
- Voting – November 5: We encourage all members and eligible family members to exercise their civic duty by voting. Freedom is a responsibility we must never take lightly.
- Membership – “Fishers of Men” & Supreme Incentive:

Our membership theme, Continuing a Legacy of Faith, Family & Fraternity, reminds us that recruitment is not a one-time effort. Continued recruitment is vital to the growth of the Order. The Fishers of Men initiative encourages us to personally invite Catholic men to grow in faith and fraternity through the Knights.

Additionally, the Supreme “Go For Two” Incentive is now underway. Any Knight who recruits two new members between September 1st and December 31st will receive an entry into a \$1,500 drawing.

All councils in the Dodge City Diocese will soon receive materials for the Bishop Blast membership campaign on November 22–23, 2025. A letter from Most Rev. John Brungardt will be included in the information. Plan this letter in parish bulletins and read at Mass. Grand Knights will receive instructions to support this united diocesan church drive.

This month we also observe two national holidays:

Veterans Day – November 11

We honor and thank our veterans for their sacrifices and service to our country. Your courage has secured the freedoms we enjoy today. Thank you, and God bless you.

Thanksgiving – November 27

May this holiday be a reminder of the many blessings we receive from God. May your day be filled with gratitude, faith, family, and fellowship.

From our family to yours — Happy Thanksgiving!

Vivat Jesus,
Gary L. Wondra

State Chaplain's Message

Continue a Legacy of Faith, Family & Fraternity

As Knights of Columbus, we look to our past in order to guide our future. It is a great blessing for us to look to our founder Blessed Michael J. McGivney to know why the Knights were founded. As we celebrate our 125th State Convention this year we look to the great Knights from our own state upon the shoulders of which we now stand.

As we look to those men who have continued this organization in our state we also are reminded to pray



for our deceased brother Knights in this month of November. November is the month dedicated to the poor souls in purgatory. We begin the month by commemorating all those who have made it to heaven and we spend the rest of the month praying for those in purgatory.

Let us be reminded of the witness of Blessed Michael J. McGivney as we live out our brotherhood of the Knights of Columbus, but let us also pray for our brother Knights who may be in purgatory and in need of our prayers.

Vivat Jesus,
Fr. Brian Lager

State Evangelization and Faith-Formation Director's Message

This will be the last article for the Explorer prior to the mid-year meeting in Wichita. I hope all that attended gain a deeper understanding of the COR initiative. The speech and power point demonstration that Dan presented was an excellent motivator for those who have been conducting COR groups and a greater vision of what COR can do for you and your council.

I have been trying to analyze some of the information gleaned from the 944 form submitted by councils. It is helpful for my team when planning for the balance of this year and, hopefully, gain some insight into what we can provide, down the road, to those who are not already participating in COR.

On a positive note, we have over 40 councils who have selected an EFF chairman at the council level. That is the best place to start for those who do not have one. We have over 90 councils who indicated they are participating with a COR group. I would hope those councils, if they do not have an EFF person, would select one. Supreme sends out some very important information to those individuals who are named as the EFF chairman.

There are over 60 councils who indicated that they do not wish to participate. There is no reason listed, just a note saying they do not wish to participate. I would like for some of them to be a little more specific in their refusal. If we could understand their reluctance, maybe we could provide some instances where it would be of use to them and their councils.

We have over 40 councils and one Diocese that indicate a difficulty in "finding a suitable leader". With the help

of the Diocesan Chairmen, the DD in that area and the EFF chairman assigned from the state, maybe they could offer some suggestions while working with the pastor and the GK from that council.

Another listed explanation for not participating in COR "the council doesn't want to compete with an existing men's group in the Parish." The idea behind COR was not to "compete" with anyone. We have a vast selection of material that can be used by any meeting group. The existence of another men's group is a very positive thing for that parish. Perhaps, there are still men in the parish who cannot meet at the time of the other group, or have other conflicts. COR is designed to enhance the opportunities to learn. It is not a competition, not a situation of one being better than the other, just another way that your council can support the men in your parish in their quest to be better Catholic men.

The bottom line is trying to understand what we can provide for you and your council. The contact information for all of us connected to COR is available on the [Kansas State Council website](http://www.kansas-state-council.org).

Vivat Jesus,
Garold White

State Membership Director's Message

Here we are in the month of November -- not too far from that number 777. It might not seem like a big number, but between now and the end of the year, December 31st, that goal means something important.

Yes, we all get tired of hearing about "the numbers." But let's take a moment to remember why those numbers matter. They aren't just statistics on a report -- each one represents a Catholic man, and his family, who could be part of something greater.

Every number is an opportunity. It is a door we can open, an invitation we can extend, a chance to share what the Knights of Columbus truly stands for: Charity, Unity, and Fraternity.

When we invite a new man to join, we aren't just asking for another set of hands to help at parish events. We're offering him -- and his family -- the chance to grow in faith, to live out the principles of our Order, and to find brotherhood and purpose within the Church.

So yes, the numbers matter -- but not because we're chasing totals. They matter because every new member represents a life touched, a family supported, and a faith strengthened.



As we approach the end of this year, let's commit ourselves once again to that mission. Let's reach out, extend the invitation, and share the gift of the Knights of Columbus with those who need it most.

Vivat Jesus,
Andy Gilner

District Master

I would like to take this opportunity to announce Robert (Bob) Hawkins as the new Vice Supreme Master (VSM) of the Rev. Juan Padilla Province. He is a former District Master and Faithful Navigator and a member of the St. Louis Assembly. He is also a Past State Deputy of the Missouri State Council. We had the privilege of having Bob participate at our latest Schulte exemplification October 25th. Please join me in welcoming Bob to our State for all future State and Patriotic 4th degree events.

I would also like to thank Guy Steir, Former Vice Supreme Master and Past State Deputy of Kansas for the last four years. He worked tirelessly to promote the Patriotic degree. He is much appreciated, and I would like to wish him well in his next positions in the Knights of Columbus.

I would like to update you on the next scheduled degrees as follows:

1. Schoenchen (just south of Hays) is planning for its exemplification for November 22, 2025.
2. Topeka is planning an exemplification April 25, 2026. We will have the Biennial Mtg at this time.
3. The Schoenchen and Topeka Exemplification registration letters are on the State Website. Click on the "Patriotic Degree" at the top of the website to get to the registration Buttons to click on these exemplifications to get all details.

So, let us not forget the benefits of being a 4th Degree Knight. The 4th degree is to enhance the work of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd degrees, while bringing in patriotism to our nation, as well as our name being placed on a chalice so that we are remembered in a Mass after we are deceased.

Every Sir Knight is encouraged to recruit new Sir Knights for these exemplifications. Only through the recruitment of new Sir Knights will your assembly remain strong and active today and in the future. The need to support and defend our country's religious freedom and civil laws are ever becoming more vital to the growth and well-being of our American heritage.

Contact me if your assembly would like to host an exemplification. Additional information about Hosting exemplifications are available upon request.

The potential for new assemblies in Kansas is great. Many eligible Knights of Columbus members decline to join due to the distance to assembly meetings or events. For a member to be active, they must become and stay involved. In some areas, a district or group of smaller councils could join to form an assembly. Likewise, members in a large council could easily support their own assembly. Brother or Sir Knights interested in establishing a new assembly are invited to contact myself, District Master, for further information. I will gladly meet with any council or group of councils to assist you.

Vivat Jesus
Dale Weber
District Master - Kansas

State Program Director's Message

Brother Knights,

As we head into the home stretch of the calendar year, now is a good time to assess progress towards achieving Star Council. From a Program standpoint, that means evaluating where your council is at for your SP-7 form, Columbian Award Application. Make sure you are on track to earn 4 points from each of the Faith in Action (FIA) categories – Faith, Family, Community and Life. As I've said before, print out a blank form and write in everything your council is doing in each area. If you have questions, contact me or one of the FIA directors. Any one of us would be more than happy to review your draft application, sooner rather than later. You can find our information in the State Directory or look up our e-mail addresses on the state website at <https://kansas-kofc.org/program-team>.

If your council has not submitted an application for your parish to receive \$450 for religious education, please do so ASAP. We've extended the deadline from October 1st to December 1st. Be sure to use the correct form from the state website ([Religious Education Fund Request Form Link](#)). Submit your signed (by your pastor) form to Fr. Brain Lager per the instructions at the bottom of the form.

The religious education fund grants are funded by the Religious Education Fund Raffle. If you have not turned in your tickets (sold and unsold) and council check to your District Deputy, please do so immediately. District Deputies need to get those tickets and checks submitted



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to the Religious Education Fund Chairman, Mark Baalman, ASAP as they were due November 1st.

Is your council supporting a seminarian? The seminarian list is available on the state website (right side of the webpage, below the State Deputy message). The deadline to submit pledge cards ([Seminarian Report Link](#)) indicating which seminarians your council is supporting was due November 1st.

Tootsie Roll reports and checks are due by December 15th. However, if you know your results and have selected the organizations your council is supporting, please submit your reports and check now. The closer we get to Christmas, the more likely you are to miss the deadline. Don't delay, report today!

Last but not least, conduct your Keep Christ in Christmas program during the month of November or early December. The winning posters from each council are due to the Family Director no later than December 31st. The guidebook is available on Supremes' website ([Guidebook Link](#)). Get the kids from your parish excited about the real meaning of Christmas with this activity!

Vivat Jesus,
Lorin Haas

Impactando La Comunidad Hispana

Conociendo los Programas Fraternal y los Beneficios de Nuestra Membresía

Martes, 18 de noviembre a las

8:00 PM EDT | 7:00 PM CDT | 5:00 PM PDT

<https://goto.webcasts.com/starthere.jsp?ei=1722822&tpkey=065e009009>

State Administrative Director's Message

The 2025-2026 Official State Directory will be updated this month for corrections and changes. If you are aware of any errors or omissions to the original please notify the State Secretary at statesecretary@kansaskofc.org and the Administrative Director at administrative@kansaskofc.org as soon as possible.

Seminarians – The seminarian list has been received from the Faith Director and the list has been added to the main page of the website. There is a section that contains a list for each diocese. You will also see a list of addresses for the seminaries that they are attending.

Vivat Jesus!
Tim Schmidt

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOVEMBER

Conduct "Keep Christ in Christmas" Poster Contest

- 1 Deadline for district deputies to return Religious Education Fund Drawing Donations & Extra Tickets to State Religious Education Fund Chairman
- 1 Deadline to return Adopt a Seminarian Pledge cards
- 1 Deadline to order Free Throw Kits from Supreme

DECEMBER

- 1 Deadline to report Soccer Challenge reports to Supreme & State Council
- 5-7 Mid-year district deputy meeting in Wichita
- 6 Drawing for prizes – Religious Education Fund
- 15 Deadline to submit Tootsie Roll Reports & Checks to State Treasurer
- 20 Deadline to submit bid to host the 2024 State Sporting Clays Shoot
- 31 Council winners of Keep Christ in Christmas Poster contest to District Deputies

Congratulations!

Family of the Month for September 2025: The Ted Brock Family, Council #2955, Dodge City

Knight of the Month for September 2025: Mark Schmitz, Council #8505, Hiawatha

Knight of the Month for August 2025: John Saxer, Council #12437, Louisburg

Knight of the Month for July 2025: Dr. Davy Harkins, Council #2296, El Dorado

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updates and
Catholic action
alerts from the
Kansas
Statehouse in
Topeka.



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