

# INVOCATION

AUGUST 2025



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS  
COUNCIL 13527  
CHRIST OUR REDEEMER  
CATHOLIC CHURCH  
NICEVILLE FL

**Knights Receive State Award for  
Community Service**



# Knights Receive State Award for Community Service



**K**nights of Columbus Council 13527 at Christ Our Redeemer Catholic Church in Niceville was recently honored by the Florida State Council for the council's service and commitment to Okaloosa County's Habitat for Humanity for more than 15 years.

The Council has routinely provided from twelve to twenty volunteers for each workday, performing tasks which included the digging footings for the concrete slab, framing the walls, installing drywall, flooring, painting, exterior siding and installing doors, cabinets, shelving and installing conduits.

Because of the number of volunteers that the council routinely provides, the Okaloosa County Habitat has called upon the council for large jobs such as framing, which requires a large number of participants. At two recent builds in Crestview, Fla., the Knights were able to assemble the frames and install them on the foundation, completing the walls for an entire house in just under eight hours, a job that would normally take several days.

The award was presented to the Council at the State's recent annual convention held in Jacksonville, attended by representatives of the more than 340 councils in the state.

# A Season for Intentional Growth

*By State Deputy Michael P. Gizewski*

**T**o my Grand Knight, District Deputy and State Officers, and let's not forget, the Regional Administrators and Brother All: As August settles in, many of us might view this time as a quiet pause between the busyness of early summer and the energy of fall activities.

But for us as Knights of Columbus, August is not a time for slowing down—it is a season for intentional growth, both spiritual and fraternal. It is a time to reawaken our mission, deepen our faith, and reach out boldly to Catholic men who are still waiting to be invited into something greater than themselves.

Now is the time to renew our vision of what it means to be a Knight. We are not just members of a service organization—we are men of faith, anchored in the Eucharist, devoted to our families, loyal to the Church, and committed to living out the Gospel in the public square. This month, let's place spiritual renewal at the heart of our efforts. Let us begin again with God.

Every council, every parish, and every event we host should reflect the light of Christ. Whether we are handing out coats, supporting seminarians, or leading the Rosary, people should see something different in us—something deeply rooted in faith. That difference is not our programs or our numbers. It's our spirituality. That is the true foundation of the Knights of Columbus, and it is the most powerful tool we have in attracting new men to join our brotherhood.

The truth is simple: Catholic men today are hungry. They are searching for meaning, for purpose, for brotherhood, and for a way to serve that aligns with their faith. In many cases, they don't even know where to begin. That's where we come in—not just with invitations to join, but with witness. A council filled with spiritually active men—men who pray together, serve together, and build each other up—is a witness that is impossible

to ignore.

This August, I urge every council to double down on this mission. Use your spirituality to lead. Center your meetings in prayer. Offer Mass intentions for your parishes. Lead parish Rosaries. Host Holy Hours. Invite men not just into a group—but into a mission that calls them higher. Let's not be afraid to speak openly about our faith and to show the joy and strength that come from living it out in community.

Growth doesn't happen by accident. It happens when we are deliberate. That means setting goals for recruitment, yes—but it also means setting a tone for how we live as Knights. If each of us invites just one man this month, and does so with sincerity, prayer, and passion, the impact will be exponential. But even more importantly, when we grow spiritually—when we deepen our own walk with Christ—our councils become magnets for others seeking the same.

Let's also not forget that many men who once were active Knights have fallen away from their involvement, especially in the wake of recent years. Now is the time to reach out to them too—to welcome them back with warmth and a renewed sense of purpose. A phone call, a personal conversation, or an invitation to a faith-centered event could be all it takes to reignite their passion for the Order.

As Knights of Columbus, we are called to be men of action, but more importantly, men of faithful action. If our councils grow in number but lack spiritual depth, we miss the mark. If we serve our parishes without anchoring that service



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Michael P. Gizewski*



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in prayer, we miss the point. Let us never lose sight of our identity: we are Catholic men, first and foremost, united in our commitment to be faithful sons of the Church and loyal brothers to one another.

As we look ahead to the rest of the fraternal year, may August be remembered not as a slow month, but as a turning point—a time when we recommitted ourselves to growth, to brotherhood, and most importantly, to God. May our efforts bear fruit not only in our councils and assemblies, but in the lives of the men and families we serve.

May we always be guided by the Holy Spirit, strengthened by the sacraments, and inspired by the example of our founder, Blessed Michael McGivney.

Let us step forward this month with courage, humility, and joy—trusting that when we put Christ at the center, everything else will follow. Open wide the Doors for Christ! I say to you, Open wide the doors for Christ! He will enter, he will enter, and when he enters set him free in your words and your actions. Open wide the doors for Christ!



**P**astor and State Chaplain Father Bob Kantor of St. Agnes Catholic Church in Naples celebrated the founder's feast day on Wednesday, August 13, with the Mass for Blessed Michael McGivney.

The Fourth Degree Color Corps under the direction of Florida Vice Marshall John Shelton rendered honors.

Knights, Columbiettes and parishioners were invited to a reception in the narthex following

the Mass. Region 5 Director Allen Heyman and DD Jeff Vespo were in attendance, along with Knights from the St. Peter the Apostle, St. William, and St. John the Evangelist Councils in Naples.

Fr. Bob Kantor, added the current state pin to the Council 14202 banner in the photo. Also shown (L to R) are St. Agnes Council DGK Peter Dresch, GK Mark Crain, and Past DGK Joe Manhart.



# On Fire for Christ

*By State Chaplain Very Rev. Bob Kantor*

“I have come to set the earth on fire, and how I wish it were already blazing!” Luke 12:49

Accepting Jesus is not easy when we realize how revolutionary his teaching really is. Knights of Columbus are often called to be counter-cultural, standing up for our Faith and principles that are sometimes at odds with the society around us. It helps to have steadfast leadership, and we are blessed with it in our Order.

At the 143rd Supreme Convention in Washington, D.C. there were countless inspirational moments. From award recipients achieving great things while leading noble lives and news of initiatives like the Global Wheelchair Mission and Ukraine Solidarity Fund to the address of our Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly and prayers of Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William Lori, attendees were “set ablaze” in zeal for what is possible as Knights of Columbus.

August is a special month for the Knights of Columbus, whose saintly founder, Blessed Michael McGivney had a feast day celebrated on Wednesday, August 13th. It fell on the day between his birthday of August 12, 1852, and death on August 14th, 1890. The adage about tombstones listing one’s birth and death year is that the dash is everything ... representing the time of a person’s life. For our

founder, it was only 38 years. Time is precious and our Fraternal Motto, Tempus Fugit, Memento Mori,” “Time Flies, Remember Death” reminds us that we have limited time on earth to serve God and neighbor. Some make more of it than others.

If we are to be Knights after the heart of Jesus, we can look to Blessed Fr. McGivney for life’s inspiration. He helped families through financial struggles and spiritual pitfalls. Serving immigrant families and seeing the plight of his flock, particularly that of men losing their faith, and widows and orphans without the necessities of life, he met those needs tirelessly.

Another priest whose feast day we celebrated August 4th is St. John Vianney, the Cure of Ars, who likewise served the spiritual needs of people and became an unlikely hero for Christ in France. Growing up poor and without much of an education, St. John Vianney had to persevere and rely on the help of a tutor until he finally secured a place in seminary. One of his advocates stated, “The Church wants not only



*State Chaplain  
Very Rev. Bob Kantor*





learned priests but even more holy ones.” Upon ordination he was sent to a tiny village of 250 souls.

Through his pastoral zeal, simple homilies, and many hours in the confessional, it would become a place of pilgrimage so popular that the railroad had to add special trains to take people there. By the time he died in 1859, St. John Vianney was one of the most beloved figures in France. In an interesting twist of fate and grace, his childhood parish became the first in France to have a Knights of Columbus council in 2016, connecting these two holy priests who have inspired so many.

The examples of St. John Vianney and Blessed Michael McGivney remind us to rely on God and use what limited resources we have, knowing God will not only supplement our skills, but let His strength shine through our weakness. I don’t know about you, but the leaders I most admire are those who can admit their mistakes, acknowledge their weaknesses, laugh at themselves, and persevere to do their best with the help of God and others. Knights of Columbus are called to do just that. Together with God, we can do all things. St. John Vianney, pray for us! Blessed Michael McGivney, pray for us!

## Faith In Action

**S**t. John Council 11281 of North Naples has been busy, with programs in three of the Faith in Action categories.

**Faith** - In October, St John Council 11281 sponsored the annual Vocations Dinner Dance to support Seminarians. This year they raised \$13,000 which funded stipends at both Christmas and Easter for 11 seminarians and a parishioner in formation for the Permanent Diaconate.

**Life** – The council held many programs in Fraternal Year 2024-25. Their annual baby bottle drive in January and raised \$24,300 which was donated to three Pregnancy Clinics and two Homes for mothers and babies. They also supported the Parish Respect Life group, and \$10,000 was marked for a second Pregnancy Resource Center mobile ultrasound van.

In March, they conducted their DDD program at St John the Evangelist parish and at neighboring St Leo the Great parish. Council members collected donations after each of the Masses which totaled \$17,000. This money was donated to local organizations including LARC, (Lee County Association for Remarkable Citizens) and STARability. Additionally, they supported Special Olympics through Florida KofC Charities.

**Community** - A house was built in Jamaica for a needy family with a \$5,000 donation to the parish-based Jamaica Outreach Program. Yes, through



a local partner \$5,000 does build a place to call home in Jamaica.

In the photo, Most Reverend Bishop Frank Dewane, Bishop of the Diocese of Venice, is presented a miniature sculpture of the Knights of Columbus logo by Grand Knight Jack Kindsvater at Council 11281’s annual Vocations Dinner Dance.



# Supreme Faith Award



**S**ergio Lozano came to Washington D.C. knowing he was an international award winner, but it was still quite a thrill when the Past Grand Knight from Coral Springs Council 8838 was called to the stage to accept the International Award for the Faith Category for his council's Youth Eucharistic Adoration program.

Lozano was also recognized on Page 2 in the program for the Supreme Knight's Awards Session, sharing second place as top recruiters from the KofC insurance territories, adding 144 members to join the order.

"A couple years ago, I felt I'd love to go to one of the Supreme Conventions, and God got me here in such a beautiful way, giving us an award," Lozano said. "I'm so happy and grateful to be here. It was a very beautiful experience. I think God is amazing, God always takes care of you."

"I found out about the award at the Organization Meeting we had in Orlando in June. [Immediate Past State Deputy] Rick Hughes came to me and

said, 'Hey Sergio, you just won the award for the International Faith.' Tears came out of my eyes, and they said they would take it to Washington."

To earn the recognition, Coral Springs Council 8838 organized 17 consecutive monthly holy hours geared toward the youth and their families at St. Andrew Catholic Church, one of five parishes the council serves. The Holy Hours averaged 700 people, including 250 youth. Programs included adoration, a procession led by the Fourth Degree Color Corps, rosary, confessions and music provided by a choir of 30 children, directed by a Knight. Each program also included time for fellowship, including pizza and ice cream.

"Any time you're in front of Jesus, you will never come out the same," Lozano said. "You will always be better."

An inspiring moment led Sergio to begin the program.

"One day I was in my kitchen, and I felt God talking to me and he said, 'Youth adoration,'" he explained. "He said it three times. So I went on my knees, I cried for one hour, and immediately I got a meeting the Knights and with our pastor. They all agreed, and it's something that the parish needed. We started that month, and we haven't stopped. And every month, it's more kids, more people. It's something great for the family. And because of that, we have recruited a lot of members."

The Holy Hours directly inspired 16 men to join the order, part of a recruiting effort that added 112 new members two years ago, and 151 last year.

"They see what we are doing, and say, 'These guys really put their faith into action, and do you know what – I want to be part of that.'"

For Lozano, recruiting is a heart-felt process.

"When you understand that each man represents a family, and that family has a wife and children, and if you can get everyone into these programs, they can be part of this amazing fraternity," he said. "And why not? So, I don't miss an opportunity when I see a man. I just go straight up to him, introduce myself and then see what happens."



# Louis Prevost, Older Brother of Pope Leo XIV, Captivates Assembly

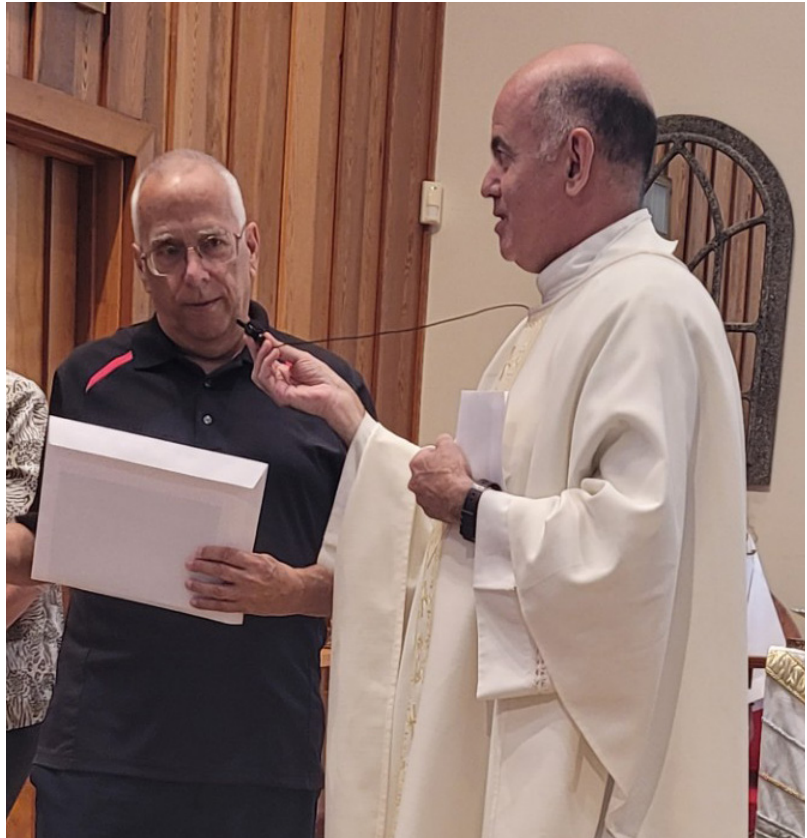
**F**ather Claudio Stewart recently introduced Louis Prevost – older brother of Pope Leo XIV – and his wife Deborah following Mass at St. Maximilian Kolbe Catholic Church in Port Charlotte. Originally planning to talk for about five minutes, the Prevosts gave their impressions and answered questions for about 45 minutes. Included in the congregation was Sir Knight Kellmis Fernandez, Florida State Multi-Cultural Director for the Knights of Columbus, who spoke with him and told him about the Knights of Columbus, extending an invitation to join the order.

Fernandez then set up a formal Zoom meeting interview with Mr. Prevost conducted by PSD and KofC Supreme Director Scott O'Connor and himself. The interview lasted nearly two hours. Following are a few highlights from the interview.

Louis Prevost: Father [Claudio] Stewart, my good buddy said, “I'd like you to introduce yourself to the parish, if that's okay with you. We'll be sure to do it after Mass, because if we do it during Mass, or during the homily, all attention would be taken away from the importance of the Mass, everyone would be looking to see where you were.”

So, Father Stewart held off until after Mass, he then made the announcement that the Pope's brother was a member of the congregation, and he asked my wife Deborah and I to come up and say a few words. We went up there to say a few words, and it mushroomed into something more than a little five minute how-do- you-do.

Both of us had given our impressions, and what we thought of the new Pope, and how we had



experienced the trip going to Rome.

But yeah, that's that same day as when Kellmis and I first met. He introduced himself and told us about the Knights of Columbus and started this ball rolling.

Kellmis Fernandez: I think when we met was right before you went to Rome, because when I saw the (TV) interview, I saw you hugging your brother (Pope Leo) and I said, “That was a wonderful picture.” This is one of the things that I love right now, when you talk, I get chills because your brother is the Pope.

Louis Prevost: Yes he is! It kind of renders me speechless sometimes! And then, when my thoughts come together and I try and start explaining what it feels like, or just how it's affected us, it's hard to describe. So, you just end up rambling on, trying to express these feelings and emotions. But the bottom line, it's the greatest thing in the world



that could have happened, you know, with his, with his vocation. It's like you dream about it. You think about it. When he was made cardinal, it got really serious, because we used to joke about it all the time (becoming Pope someday) and then when he was made a cardinal, then, oh, my God! It could happen! Holy God! I know when we were in Rome, when he became a cardinal, we went for his elevation ceremony. There the people had said, "You know your brother has a 1 in 3 shot of being the next Pope;" that was in 2023.

People out in Vatican Square (who saw us and would talk to us) said the same thing. "Your brother is well loved by a lot of people. He's got a really good shot at being the next Pope." And we thought, Yeah, but he's American, and he's young. But it's the thought, he's a cardinal, It could happen, and it did. We've been going crazy ever since.

Scott O'Connor: So, I am curious, what do you call your brother (the Pope) when you talk with him?

Louis Prevost – I call him "Rob."

Scott O'Connor – That's great, just like nothing has changed.

Louis Prevost – Yeah, he's the Pope. But dang it, he's still my little brother. How do you change 70 years of Rob, Rob, to go, Your Holiness? It

just doesn't work. I'm sorry, he's my little brother.

Scott O'Connor: I fully understand the prerogative of the older sibling. That's the priority.

Louis Prevost: Yeah, and he fully is aware of that. He knows and understands, he doesn't mind. Actually, he probably prefers it to be called (Rob) just to escape the constant formality of his position, and how he has to be with other people, you know. It's nice to talk with us like normally, you know, the way brothers do. We tell jokes, we just have a regular conversation like nothing's changed as much as possible. I've had to clean some stuff up a little bit when we talk (laughs), just because that part doesn't feel right. But we're still brothers!

Scott O'Connor: Here is a big question: Are you a Cub fan or a Sox fan? I am also from the Chicago area and came from a 'House Divided.' I was a Sox fan, however, others in my family were big Cub fans.

Louis Prevost: I am a Cubs fan, our house was a little more divided. Rob (Pope Leo) is a Sox fan, and not that I don't like the White Sox, but if both of them are on TV, I'm going to watch the Cubs game. I like the Cubs, I go to more Cub games, my mother was a Cubs fan, but my father was a St. Louis Cardinal fan. We were just all over the map. Regarding football - I'm kind of leaning away from the Bears and turning more towards Tampa Bay. Now. Just because of the geographic location and the fact that the Bears suck so badly (laughs).

Scott O'Connor: What do you think your brother as Pope is most interested in accomplishing during his Pontificate? Knowing him the way you do, what do you think he wants to try to do?

Louis Prevost: That's a loaded question. I think number one is to grow the church. To bring people back in, to make it larger. But not by bending the rules of the Church or the church doctrine to make it like easier to be Catholic, so to speak. He's got the knowledge and the education in church doctrine and theology. I think he knows, I mean, I think on the first or second day



of his ministry, I think he came out and said, "God created man and woman." There's no in between, marriage between a man and a man or a woman and a woman is not going to go over in the church. He was laying the ground work. There were some that thought, oh, he's going to make the church more liberal, well, perhaps on some things but not in other areas.

I think he'll be a little more conservative than Francis was, but I don't see him deviating too much from where the church is going, just because of his appeal and his background and places. He's been around the world. This is why I thought he would be elected if they took the politics out of the equation. He's got a worldwide education. He's been to all these countries all over the world when he was Prior General of the Augustinians. He speaks numerous languages, I think eight in all, maybe nine. He can talk to people like you and I are talking, but in other languages. Speaking personally, I remember many of the popes were not able to speak English very well, I had a really hard time understanding some of them.

Unfortunately, when you can't understand you lose interest real quick, because you are wondering "what is he saying?" It gets hard to follow, whereas with Rob (Pope Leo), if he's talking to us in the US, he's speaking our language. He knows words that in the US can be taken differently than in Europe or Asia means something entirely different. He can speak to people on their level in their own language, in a way they can understand and relate to him better. I know, I've seen it all the time. I hear comments from many people who say, "I love this Pope. I can understand what he's saying, and I'm going to go back to the church because he talks to me." He doesn't talk like in another language. His message is clear. I think that's going to help a lot.

I think he is going to try to expand the church worldwide, I know when he talked to the cardinals explaining to them what he wanted them to do and how he wanted them to proceed, but I can't see him changing things in a big way, you know, like changing positions on going to confession, or "if you want to get a divorce, you can get a divorce. It's okay. We'll bless that." I don't see big changes like that, it'll be status quo. But by making the



church more relatable to people, I think that is a goal he will work on. When we talk, we don't talk about the business of the Church. So, that's just my take on what I see him looking to do. I'm sure he's got a head full of ideas. But I haven't talked with him about issues, I don't think it's my place unless he says, what do you think about? And I don't know if he'd come to me to ask me what I think about a church rule.

Scott O'Connor: Finally, do you have anything you would like to say or convey to our readers?

Louis Prevost: Just that I'm very thankful and happy that my brother was elected Pope. Every time I meet people I say, well, let's pray together, pray for him, and that he does a fine upstanding job and is able to continue his work. I know before his election he had wanted to go back to the missions and back down to Peru and be with the people there. But he was elected Pope. So, now he has not just the people of Peru under his wing, but he's got the whole world. It's a giant leap from what he's used to, I guess anybody elected into that position would be in the same boat.

But yeah, just pray for him that he can continue to do the job and learn, you know, and that he enjoys the job. I know he will make the church better, holier, if that's possible, hopefully he will bring people to it.

*Editor's note-this article will be continued in the next edition of the Invocation and posted on the state website at [floridakofc.org](http://floridakofc.org).*

# Florida Delegation Reports From Supreme Convention



## Delegate Alan Gauzens

It was Joanne and my pleasure to be included in the Florida Delegation to the Knights of Columbus 143rd Supreme Convention in Washington, DC. I am humbled by the giving and willing spirit of our delegation to jump in and help, and the Brothers from around the world. Seventy-nine jurisdictions attending is overwhelming in its sheer number but brought personal by each encounter with a Brother. The diversity of our cultures yet solidarity in our Catholic principals makes a beautiful tapestry of the KofC.

This was underscored each day with morning Mass. From Tuesday's Opening Mass at the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception to the Thursday Memorial Mass, we are in shared communion - if only our world could learn from our Fraternity. Although physically tiring, a part of me wishes we could rewind some of the days to continue this experience. But as Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William Lori reminded us Thursday, "It is time to come down from the mountaintop and be of service to our brothers just as Christ came down from the mountain to be among us". It is our call, each Knight and you and I as leaders to seek out those who need the touch of Christ we offer in unity and fraternity as brothers in charitable service to our parishes and communities.

Hearing from our Supreme leadership in the business sessions each day on the accomplishments by our order demonstrates the depth and breadth



of our impact, including this year's International Faith Program winner from Florida (I am sure more will be written separately about this). The various committee reports were efficiently delivered, and the Supreme Advocate's professionalism and efficiency were on full display during the review



and disposition of some 403 resolutions submitted from the 79 Jurisdictions plus the Supreme Board of Directors.

There were too many encounters to regale in a few paragraphs. The most memorable for me will be the Opening Mass where Knights filled the nave (and with some standing), the church hierarchy and Fourth Degree Color Guard; the

States Dinner conviviality; the dinner at the Ukrainian Catholic National Shrine of the Holy Family with delegations from the Ukraine, Poland, Canada, and Oklahoma. And the sharing includes our wives; it is a delight to be welcome as couples within our Catholic organization.

Vivat Jesu!

## Delegate Alex Santos

**A** Delegate's Journey: Reflections from the 143rd Knights of Columbus Supreme Convention

From August 5 to 7, 2025, I had the honor of attending the 143rd Supreme Convention of the Knights of Columbus in Washington, D.C.—my third convention overall, but my first time serving as a delegate. This milestone deepened my appreciation for the Order and its global mission.

### Opening Mass at the Basilica

The convention began with a majestic Opening Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. I was privileged to serve as part of the honor guard, standing in reverence beneath the breathtaking dome—a masterpiece donated by the Knights themselves. The Knight's Tower stood tall as a testament to our enduring legacy.

The Mass was celebrated by dozens of clergies from around the world, including priests, bishops, and cardinals. Most Rev. Timothy Broglio, Archbishop for the Military Services, USA, served as the principal celebrant and homilist. His message resonated deeply, setting a spiritual tone for the days ahead.

### Supreme Knight's Annual Report

The opening session featured the Annual Report of Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly. He shared insights from his recent meeting with the Holy Father, emphasizing a message of love, unity, and fraternity. He highlighted the Order's role in restoring the iconic baldachin above the altar of St. Peter's Basilica—a symbol of our commitment



to the Church's sacred heritage.

From supporting Ukraine to uplifting families and communities worldwide, the Supreme Knight reminded us of the profound impact our collective efforts continue to make.

### Message from His Holiness Pope Leo XIV

During the opening session of the 143rd Supreme Convention, Pope Leo XIV delivered a heartfelt video message to the Knights of Columbus. He praised the Order's charitable works for the most vulnerable and its commitment to fostering fraternity among all men.

His Holiness encouraged delegates to:

- Continue the mission of Christ by helping those in need
- Strengthening vocations to the Eucharist through faith formation
- Invite more men to join the Order

It was a profoundly moving moment to hear the Vicar of Christ speak directly to us, affirming our mission and urging us to persevere in our good works.

### States Dinner & Global Fellowship

The States Dinner was a joyful celebration of fraternity. I had the privilege of engaging with delegates from across the globe, exchanging stories of service and leadership. Meeting state deputies from the Philippines for the first time was especially meaningful, as we shared a common passion for faith-driven community work.

### Marching with the Color Corps

One of the most unforgettable aspects of the convention was serving in the Color Corps. I participated in all three Masses and stood watch at the Adoration Chapel, side by side with District Masters, Marshals, Vice Supreme Marshals, and Supreme Master Michael McCusker. The unity and reverence we displayed were a powerful reflection of our shared devotion.

### Ukrainian Welcome & Cultural Exchange

The Ukrainian delegates were inviting another highlight to a welcome party at the Ukrainian Catholic National Shrine of the Holy Family. Their hospitality and traditions were profoundly moving. We were joined by fellow Knights from Canada, Cuba, the Bahamas, France, Ukraine, and many more—an inspiring reminder of our global brotherhood.

### Pilgrimage to the St. John Paul II National Shrine

As the convention came to a close, I had the privilege of visiting the St. John Paul II National Shrine and attending the 3 o'clock Divine Mercy Rosary. During the prayer, the works of the Knights of Columbus were mentioned, and we lifted our mission of charity and hope in prayer.

### Looking Ahead

This convention was a profound experience—spiritually enriching, culturally inspiring, and deeply unifying. I hope to be elected as a delegate again next year, when the Supreme Convention will be held in Colorado. Until then, I carry these memories and lessons forward in service to our Church, our communities, and our families.

Vivat Jesus!

## Delegate John Kreger

I was most impressed with all the masses, with of course the one held in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception being the highlight. After watching the 50 to 60 priests (a guess) process in with 44 Bishops (I counted) and 12 Cardinals (I counted), I fully expected Pope Leo XIV to come in. And though that didn't happen, it was a beautiful service. Their WalMart sized gift shop was a highlight too as they had plenty of great religious and local souvenirs.

The masses held in the Hilton were beautiful services as well. The choir was fantastic!

Listening to Pope Leo XIV's greeting to the





convention attendees was very inspiring. We are so lucky to live in a time when the first American was elected as Pope. It's nice to hear his support directly from him.

Hearing the story of the Duppong Family and seeing them recognized as International Family of the Year was inspiring. We can only hope that in time, their daughter Michelle will be recognized as Blessed and then as a Saint.

I enjoyed spending time with my fellow delegates and attendees of the convention. It was nice spending time with our senior leadership in the Florida delegation – it's not often that the rank-and-file members of an organization get such personal time.

My only real disappointment with the convention was that the President of the United States, Donald Trump, didn't send a greeting to

the delegates (or make a guest appearance). I really thought that with over two million members in the Knights of Columbus, we would be a group that he would have liked to speak too.

I was disappointed in the Washington Hilton Hotel. I stayed one full week and the television in my room only worked the last night I was there. Every day I called the desk and every day they told me it would be working "tomorrow." I eventually told them, tomorrow never comes and that when I wake up in the morning it's today! I also couldn't believe it was \$56 a day to park. I'm glad I flew – the metro experience was a lot of fun.

Thanks for letting me be part of the convention. I look forward to next year's convention in Denver – I hope to go again.

Vivat Jesus!

## Delegate John O'Malley

After missing the 2024 Supreme Convention in Quebec when my flight was cancelled due to the threat of a hurricane on the eve of the trip, I took no chances and drove to Washington, D.C. for the 143rd Supreme Convention.

It was a very enriching spiritual experience, from quiet time in the Adoration Chapel to the Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, and the Masses and sessions at the Washington Hilton. I also enjoyed the fraternization in the Florida Hospitality room – where I got to showcase my Miami Dolphin colors – and meeting Knights from throughout the world between the sessions.

One lasting impression is the time and effort that the KofC put into the backdrops used in the main room throughout the convention. The three-dimensional images looked as if various statues were taken from the Basilica to the convention hall. Pope Leo IV's address on the big screen was another surprise – to see the first American Pope, addressing us as if he was with us in the hall.

Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly's opening



address was very inspiring, detailing many of the charitable works of the order and leaving us anxious to share the good news with our councils.

I was very impressed with Past Supreme Knight Carl Anderson, who compared the obstacles facing Father McGivney in founding the Knights in 1882



with challenges faced by our first Catholic President, John F. Kennedy, in 1961. It would be nice if the Knights would publish these remarks in a booklet; even nicer if Mr. Anderson would expand his talk into a book.

Other highlights included Sunday morning Mass in the New York State hospitality room; listening to SK Sergio Lozano's little-known tidbits on Florida history in our hospitality line; pin trading; and spending time with the Florida delegation – friends old and new.

Vivat Jesus!



## Delegate Roger Avery

**S**tories of Hope, Service, and Enduring Faith Take Center Stage. This reflection on the recent Knights of Columbus Convention in Washington D.C. vividly captured the organization's vibrant spirit, moving beyond mere

procedural reports to highlight the profound impact of personal stories and tangible acts of service. It powerfully illustrates the core principles of charity, unity, fraternity, and patriotism, leaving me feeling energized and profoundly proud.

### A Deep Spiritual Foundation

The convention's spiritual heart was the opening Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, celebrated by Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio. The sheer scale of the gathering, with over 2,000 Knights and families from across the globe, alongside numerous clergy, underscored a palpable sense of universal brotherhood and faith. Archbishop Broglio's message about "growth



in holiness, unity, charity and fraternity" and the prayer for "consolidation, growth and renewed friendship" set a deeply spiritual tone.

This was further amplified by a video message from Pope Leo, who echoed the theme of "Heralds of Hope" for the upcoming Jubilee Year, praising the Knights as "tangible signs of hope" and a direct continuation of Blessed Michael McGivney's legacy.

### **Compelling Individual Stories: Heralds of Hope**

What truly "stuck" with me were the compelling individual stories that embodied this spirit of hope and service:

- **Resilience in Ukraine:** The story of Tetiana Sahaidak, receiving a prosthetic limb through Knights of Columbus support, showcased practical charity amidst hardship.

- **Unwavering Faith:** A California family's Blessed Mother statue miraculously survived a wildfire, leading to their viral "Regina Caeli" in the face of devastation, exemplifying faith's power.

- **Courageous Outreach:** The "Guardians of Dignity" in the Philippines actively fighting human trafficking, exemplifying outreach to the most vulnerable.

- **Enduring Patriotism:** Sgt. Lewis Reed, at 91, still honoring veterans' funerals, having volunteered at more than 25,000, stood as an example of enduring patriotic service.

- **Miraculous Intercession:** A profound and moving miraculous recovery story attributed to Blessed Michael McGivney's intercession, where a toddler with no pulse for 52 minutes made a full recovery after family prayers and the placement of a first-class relic.

### **Significant Collective Impact and Programmatic Achievements**

Beyond these personal accounts, the reflection detailed the significant collective impact and programmatic achievements of the Knights:

- **Aid and Support After Pregnancy (ASAP):** This vital program provided \$6 million last year (and \$17 million over three years) in financial support and over 2,000 donated ultrasounds to

pro-life pregnancy centers.

- **Massive Charitable Output:** An impressive 48 million hours dedicated to service and a record \$197 million in charitable donations were recorded over the past year.

- **Spontaneous Act of Charity for Ukraine:** Following a presentation by the State Deputy of Ukraine on their continued humanitarian efforts and a dire need for 500 wheelchairs, the Florida State Deputy, Michael P. Gizewski, spontaneously pledged to provide 250 wheelchairs.

- **Global Wheelchair Mission:** This impactful initiative has donated over 158,000 wheelchairs worldwide, with 19,000 delivered last year alone.

### **Honoring Exemplary Service**

The convention also highlighted exemplary members and their contributions:

- **2025 Gaudium et Spes Award:** The Knights' highest honor was proudly presented to Mary Ann Glendon, a Harvard Law professor, former U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See, and trusted Vatican advisor. Recognized for her life defending human dignity and foundational truths, Glendon has brought legal brilliance, moral clarity, and deep Catholic faith to the world stage, serving three popes and reforming the Vatican Bank.

- **International Family of the Year:** The Duppong family was recognized for their faith-centered life and their late daughter Michelle's sainthood cause.

- **Blessed Michael McGivney Medal:** Pallottine Father Frank Donio was awarded for his pastoral zeal.

### **A Living, Breathing Force for Good**

In conclusion, the reflection powerfully underscored that the Knights of Columbus is far more than an organization; it's a "living, breathing force for good." The Supreme Knight's call to be "Heralds of Hope" resonated deeply, affirming that the Knights exemplify what it means to put faith, brotherhood, and service into powerful, transformative action, offering tangible signs of hope in a world in dire need.

Vivat Jesus!

# Supreme Chaplain's Challenge

*By Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William E. Lori*

“For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.” (Gospel for Aug. 31, Lk 14:11)

**O**ne lesson of this parable in Luke’s Gospel is that when you exalt yourself, there’s nowhere to go but down. In the life of a disciple of Christ, we are called to develop the virtue of humility. We are called to self-giving service to others, not self-serving advancement of ourselves. Let us strive not to seek worldly honors in an egotistical spirit, but rather to live as servants to others so that God may exalt us to eternal life.

## **Challenge by Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William E. Lori:**

This month, in which we celebrate the feast of Blessed Michael McGivney on Aug. 13, I challenge you to pray each day the Litany of Blessed Michael McGivney or the prayer for his canonization — and take time to reflect on his humility in serving the people of God.

## **Questions for Reflection:**

Do you sometimes struggle with the sin of pride? How can you be at once humble of heart and yet bold in living and proclaiming your faith? What living examples of humble service have you found in your own life?



*When presented by a request from Santa Fe High School (the Diocese of Orlando’s westernmost secondary school) for assistance in preparing its grounds for a new set of Stations of the Cross plaques, the Brother Knights of **St. Joseph Council 2505 of Lakeland** immediately began planning to assist. The Knights responded to a request made by Santa Fe’s Rev. Deacon George Ferraifi by organizing a work party assigned to remove a long line of mature palm hedges and to prepare a*

*worshiper path for students, parents and faculty. The project was completed in one morning, giving the school ample time to prepare for the new Stations to be erected.*

*Shown in the photo are (left to right) Rev George Ferraifi, Ken Dauphinais, Jack Jones, Tim Tailer, Mike McFarland, Bill Thompson, Travis Maydish, Scott Phillips, Mark Sagen, Bobby Brigman, and Jim Schmidt. Not pictured are Butch Scheffer and Doug Cooper.*



# A Night of Hope

**O**n the Feast of the Assumption the Knights of Council 9720 at St Francis Xavier Parish in Live Oak, Florida gathered for their installation by DD J Daniel Noblin and DW Michael Flowers. Prior to the installation itself, the CCW of the parish had beautifully decorated the Parish Hall for a pasta meal shared between the CCW and the Knights.

District Warden Michael Flowers, the immediate PGK of 9720 reported to the Invocation that it was a gathering of friends and family to welcome in the new officers of their council. "It was with great pride that I turned over the gavel of 9720 to Robert Johnstone, our Grand Knight. Robert is the only member of our parish active in prison ministry.

He goes, without fail, to the prisons of our area each Wednesday. He is bringing the prisoners the love of Christ and also the hope of Christ. While most of them will remain behind bars for the rest of their life, Robert brings them hope of a God that forgives the worst of us. A God that turned to the thief on the Cross and told him that very night he would see Him in paradise. I am so excited to see Robert's accomplishments with our Council as he shares that same love of Christ with each of its members".

Father Manolo Puga, the Pastor of St. Francis Xavier and Chaplain of 9720 was filled with the same hope. Witnessing the unity of the CCW and the Knights Council and hearing the oaths of office and vows taken by its officers, he spoke of the hope he had for the Council and for the Parish. A hope that they would evangelize and take Christ to those most in need-something its Grand Knight already does each week.

The evening ended with a truly powerful moment. The DW called the wife of the Grand Knight, Joanne Johnstone forward for a blessing



from Father Puga. Less than two weeks after the installation, Joanne is scheduled to have a brain tumor removed. Father Puga placed his hands upon her cheeks and prayed for God's healing and God's protection.

This prayer was echoed by the members of the CCW and the Knights gathered around in that room. "You felt God's Spirit there with us." Michael Flowers stated, "Father had spoken about being filled with hope earlier. I don't think you could walk away from that hall without a spirit of hope. After all, that is what we are, as Knights: Messengers of Hope- With every wheelchair given to a child, with every veteran served a meal, with every pregnant mother and every unborn life that we, as Knights help save, we are bringing more hope into the world.

It isn't our hope. It's the hope of a Judean carpenter that walked the Earth over two thousand years ago. It is the hope of a Savior that died for my sins and for yours. It is up to us, as Knights to be His messengers and to stand in the breach of a world that needs Him more than ever. We got a small taste of that on the Feast of the Assumption and I believe we will see a lot more of it in the year to come". Vivat Jesus!

# Council Donates Funds to Charities

**S**aints Cosmas and Damian Council 13341 of Lakewood recently used funds raised from its Citizens with Disabilities Drive – the popular Tootsie Roll Campaign – to donate \$10,650 to deserving local charities.

The council visited St Mary Academy in Sarasota on June 23 to present a \$3,550 donation to Development Director Connie Taft. They toured the school and learned how academics, life skills, arts, science and religious education are provided to K-8 students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. SMA is the only school in the diocese to provide a Roman Catholic faith-based education to children with these disabilities. It serves about 100 students from Sarasota and Manatee counties. Students learn the way they do best, in classes of no more than 12 students. Occupational and speech therapies are provided as needed. The donation will help fund scholarships to bridge the gap between Florida state funding and current tuition costs.

Next, they visited The Haven in Sarasota on July 25 to present a \$3,550 donation to COO Alison Thomas and Pre-School Director Erin Nowakowski. They toured the pre-school, which



serves both neurodiverse and neurotypical children aged 1-5 in small inclusive classes. The pre-school currently serves 66 students from Sarasota and Manatee counties. A purposeful play-based curriculum provides younger students with opportunities for development of skills, relationships and problem solving. A Montessori model for students aged 3-5 fosters hands-on learning at each student's developmental level. Students are provided with occupational, physical and speech therapy based on individual needs. They also met and engaged with one class of students. The donation will help cover a tuition funding shortfall.

The visit continued with a tour of The Haven's other programs at the Sarasota campus that serve people with disabilities, including Residential, Vocational, Adult Day Training and The Haven Academy, a high school for students from 14-22 y/o. The residential program serves 67 adults who live in eight group homes on campus. The vocational and adult day programs serve over 300 adults and The Haven Academy serves 47 students.

A \$3,550 donation was also made by mail to Special Olympics of Manatee County.





# A Fruitful Knights Journey

*By Florida State Council, E-Membership Director Joe James*

I had the pleasure of being recruited to the Knights by my best friend when I was a Parishioner at St. Patrick Catholic Church in Cedar Falls, IA. We had served on a couple of committees together and became close, since we had daughters the same age and in the same grade.

One day he asked me if I liked playing softball, as the dads had a team, but you had to be a member to join. Being an avid player and umpire, I said, "Where do I sign up" and out came the Form 100. I had never even heard of the Knights of Columbus until then. This is how my journey started 30 years ago as a member of Monsignor Stephen Mayer Council 4516. The Knight's name was Dan Dalessandro and he was an engineer at John Deere.

My journey was a fruitful one with the Knights, while it took me a few years to figure out what the Knights are all about and not just softball. I have also had some great tragedies. However, my Brother Knights were always some of the first to offer their comradery, support of prayers and spiritual support. I have moved several times and been a member of six different Councils since then, serving in various positions.

Fast forward now 30 years and we have remained in limited contact due to our family moving several times through Facebook and occasionally a letter or text message, I have never forgotten the great opportunity I was given to become a part of this great organization. Recently, his wife Pat reached out to my wife Julie to let us know they were in the Tampa area for a Celebration of Life for one of Dan's siblings, his last brother. While it was a somber occasion for them, they were excited we were able to get together for lunch. The first thing we started talking about was what each of us were doing with our Councils. He is now a member of



Fr. James Conroy Council 4403 in Bettendorf, IA and after retirement from John Deere became even more active. He has served in several positions including Grand Knight. We also discussed my history and various positions as a Knight in Kansas, Hawaii and now here in Florida.

My point is, you never know what the man you invite is going to end up doing with the Knights, but you may also get a friend for life. I am sure there are many of you who have similar stories. Make sure you share them. I had a State Deputy in Kansas who always spoke about how he was recruited 19 times before he joined. Maybe that man you have been trying to recruit for a couple years will be your Council's next Grand Knight, State E-Membership Chairman or State Deputy.

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS | EPIPHANY COUNCIL 12569**

**SEVENTH ANNUAL TRUCK, JEEP &**

# **CAR SHOW**

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22 | 10 AM - 2 PM**

**\$15 ENTRY FEE | REGISTRATION 9 - 11 AM**



**All Entries Judged by Appearance:**

**Exterior** - Body condition, panel fit, trim and detailing

**Interior** - Seats, carpets, headliners, door panels

**Paint** - Finish, matches throughout and door jams

**Cleanliness** - exterior, interior, and engine compartment



**Door Prizes  
50/50,  
BBQ & Breakfast**



**Trophies & Music  
Free General  
Admission**

CAR SHOW BENEFITS EPIPHANY KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS CHARITIES & OPERATIONS

**EPIPHANY CATHOLIC CHURCH  
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[WWW.EPIPHANYKOFCC.ORG/CAR-SHOW](http://WWW.EPIPHANYKOFCC.ORG/CAR-SHOW)**

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# INVOCATION

Knights of Columbus Florida State Council Newsletter

## How To Write an Article

**Newsworthy • Broad Appeal • Concise • Complete • Factual • Accurate**

**Answers the Questions: Who, What, When, Where, Why & How**

**INVOCATION reports on local council activities throughout the entire State of Florida**

- Article size: **300 words** ideal (half page) to 500-600 words max (full page)
- Articles submitted as an attachment in Word format - not in the body of an email
  - PDF submissions are for ads or promotions - not articles
- Pictures need to be sent separately as an attachment and the original pictures **Please do not format them in any way, we will do it**-- not embedded in a Word document
- **Articles need to be brief, highly relevant and actionable**
- **At a minimum, Who, What, When and Where needs to be in the first paragraph,**
- Articles need to be brief, to-the-point and **of interest** to the entire State Council
  - What is the event/activity about?
  - Whom did it benefit?
  - What was the result?
  - Who are the key players/Knights?
- **Similar story** submissions will be consolidated/batched into one article by the Editors
- Authors must submit on time per the Editor production calendar- **Deadline 1<sup>st</sup> of each month**
  - Late submittals will be placed farther down the newsletter or not published.
- Proof your article carefully for spelling and grammar before sending (**use spellcheck**)
- Document filename should reflect the office/title, i.e. State Deputy article
- Every Region needs to participate – one page of the Invocation will be dedicated to each Region respectively
  - If a region does not submit content their page will be eliminated from that issue
- Cover story submissions need to be submitted ahead of the deadline due to special photo editing
  - Cover story photos – in portrait style at least 1mb in size - not formatted or resized
  - filename “Cover Story”

Send all information:

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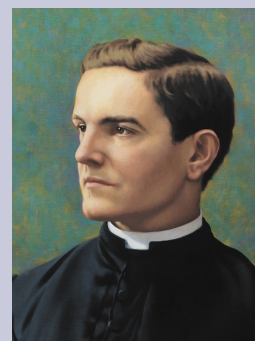
### Prayer for the Canonization of Blessed Michael J. McGivney

**G**od, our Father, protector of the poor and defender of the widow and orphan, you called your priest, Blessed Michael J. McGivney, to be an apostle of Christian family life and to lead the young to the generous service of their neighbor.

*Through the example of His life and virtue may we follow your Son, Jesus Christ, more closely, fulfilling His commandment of charity and building up His Body which is the Church.*

*Let the inspiration of your servant prompt us to greater confidence in your love so that we may continue His work of caring for the needy and the outcast. We humbly ask that you glorify your venerable servant Blessed Michael J. McGivney on earth according to the design of your holy will.*

*Through His intercession, grant the favor I now present (here make your request).*



## Is Your Personal Information Accurate?

**E**very member of the Knights of Columbus in the Florida jurisdiction is listed on the Florida KofC website. Financial Secretaries update council lists on the Supreme and State websites at least quarterly. To ensure your information is correct, please review the brief YouTube video link below to confirm that your personal information and your preferred contact information is correct.

The 5-minute video describes how to log on or gain initial access, and reviews how to correct or confirm your personal information.

Please note that if you are a State, Assembly or Council officer, chairman or director, you must remain subscribed to the State Council's email list. Failure to do so will result in you missing important communications concerning your position and may result in your forfeiture of that position.

Follow the instructions on the video <https://youtu.be/IVS3XkgiUs> and while you are on the site, check out the other good news and information is available to you with just a click or two.



## KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS FLORIDA STATE COUNCIL MISSION STATEMENT

Evangelize and proclaim our faith, protect families, and perform works of charity.

Through our witness and deeds attract Catholic men to our Order.

Build the Domestic Church through service, support our parishes, clergy, and communities.

Incorporate principled fiscal responsibility for charitable giving.

## The Florida State Logo



### Explanation of the Florida State Council Pin 2025-2027

**“OPEN WIDE THE DOORS FOR CHRIST”** is a powerful and fitting exhortation for the Knights of Columbus in this Jubilee Year. As men of faith, the Knights are called to welcome Christ into every aspect of their lives—into their homes, their parishes, and their communities. By echoing the words of St. John Paul II, we are reminded to live boldly and faithfully, opening our hearts to Christ’s truth, mercy, and love. Worn as a pin, it becomes a visible sign of commitment to evangelization, service, and the defense of life; encouraging all to embrace and share the Gospel in this special year of grace.

**“JESUS IN MARY’S WOMB”** is a profound symbol of the sacredness of life from its very inception. His presence as a child, unborn, reflects the divine value of every human life. The Knights of Columbus draws strength and inspiration from this mystery, standing firmly for the right to life from conception to natural death. As Mary carried the Savior of the world in her womb, so too must society recognize and protect the dignity of every human being at all stages of life.

We are a fraternity of men who love our God, love our Family, and love our country. We protect the children, we salute our veterans, and we pray to our patron Blessed Michael McGivney. We do all unashamed and with pride because we understand that which is not against us is with us. For we are the Knights of Columbus protectors of the widows and orphans, and we wear it proudly so **OPEN WIDE THE DOORS FOR CHRIST and he shall enter.**

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## Florida State Council Social Media

Your State Council is now on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and You Tube. We need all Brother Knights to participate and Let Your Light Shine.

- Go to Facebook and "LIKE" the page
- Go to Twitter and Instagram and "follow"
- #LetYourLightShine @KofcFlorida



## Knightline

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS IN SERVICE TO ONE. IN SERVICE TO ALL.

Check out the current issue of **Knightline**, a monthly resource for local KofC leaders. It is designed to help council officers plan events and activities, meet quarterly goals for the fraternal year and learn about Orderwide news. [CLICK HERE](#) to download the issue.

## COLUMBIA

[CLICK HERE](#) to view the online version of **COLUMBIA** Magazine, a publication for the Knights of Columbus.



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