

THE PATRIOT'S CALL: *United in Faith & Freedom*

ASSEMBLY 1818

Volume I Issue XII June 2026



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Comptroller George Barbiero	203-885-8238
Captain Tony Hopfinger	412-496-6776
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Pilot Rick Anderson	321-303-8172
Scribe Vince Hagerty	609-805-7704
Inner Sentinel Chuck Woodrum	304-282-8733
Outer Sentinel Bill Blanchard	732-841-6074
One Year Trustee Ed Farrell	941-223-6321
Two Year Trustee Richard Kunzier	973-903-1226
Three Year Trustee Kevin Szopinski	630-277-1367
Faithful Friar	Rev. Januszc

A Joyful Welcome from the Knights of Columbus

For the **Knights of Columbus**, especially the **Fourth Degree—the Patriotic Degree of our Order**, Bishop-elect Biosca's appointment is a moment of great joy and renewed purpose.

As the patriotic arm of the Knights, we are honored to welcome a shepherd whose life reflects:

- **Service to God and country**
- **Courageous missionary witness**
- **A heart for unity across cultures and communities**
- **A Franciscan spirit of humility, peace, and fraternity**

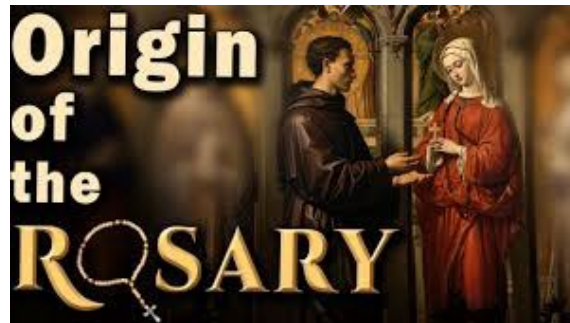
His leadership arrives at a time when our Church and nation deeply need voices of compassion, clarity, and hope. We, the Sir Knights of **Bishop Charles McLaughlin Assembly 1818**, look forward to standing proudly with him supporting his ministry, honoring his mission, and offering our service at diocesan liturgies, civic ceremonies, and parish events throughout Southwest Florida.

May the Holy Spirit guide Bishop-elect Biosca as he begins this new chapter and may Saint Francis and Blessed Michael McGivney intercede for him and for our beloved Diocese of Venice.



Vivat Jesus!

SK George Barbiero



The Origin of Rosary Beads by Sir Knight Joe Frech

When my mother was reaching the end of her life, I visited her and brought my rosary beads. We prayed the rosary together for the first time since I was in second grade when I made my first holy communion, so it was a special moment for both of us.

I prayed the rosary with confidence resulting from the practice I received before each council and assembly meeting. I wondered how the rosary became a part of the Catholic heritage which prompted me to conduct some research into the origins of the rosary beads.

The rosary can be prayed for any special reason, whether it's for special intentions, a way to deepen your faith or something that you do on a daily basis. Brother Joe Schulte said he prayed the rosary from memory while getting an MRI, which also helped pass the time.

Using beads in prayer was a means of keeping track of the number of prayers said, dating way before the Catholic religion was formed. Many faiths such as Hindus, Greeks, Buddhists and other religions had used and still use some type of beads to pray. In the third century, Christian monks used stones and prayer ropes to keep track of praying. In the early 1100s, Saint Alvery would recite 150 repetitive Hail Mary prayers each day.

In 1214, Saint Dominic, the founder of the Dominican Order, started praying with rosary beads similar to the ones used today. In the late 1400s, Alan de Rupe of Brittany discovered the rosary and thought it would be a good idea to produce rosaries for the common man for their use to enhance their spiritual growth.

In the early 1700s, Saint Louis de Montfort was a catholic priest who felt that praying to Jesus through Mary was a great way to show devotion to Mary.

In 1917 in Portugal, the rosary was encouraged to be said daily requesting world peace during WWI. At this time the "O my Jesus..." was added and is called "The Fatima Prayer."

In 2002, Pope John Paul II started the "Luminous Mysteries," and called October 2002-October 2003 "The Year of the Rosary" which was meant to spread devotion throughout the world.

Bob's Contributions to the No Veteran Forgotten Ceremony

Bob's dedication to the **No Veteran Forgotten Ceremony** is rooted in a lifetime of service and sacrifice. A proud United States Marine, he served from **1959 to 1965**, completing **nine deployments** and taking part in major Cold War-era operations, including the **Bay of Pigs**



Invasion and the **Cuban Missile Crisis**. These experiences shaped his unwavering commitment to ensuring that every Veteran, especially those without family receives the honor they deserve.

In **2010**, while serving as **Faithful Navigator of Our Lady of Charity Assembly #3089**, Bob helped launch a new initiative within the Knights of Columbus Fourth Degree. This program ensured that Sir Knights would attend the funerals of Veterans buried without family at **Sarasota National Cemetery**. Originally known as the **No Next of Kin Program**, it began with a simple but profound mission: *to stand in for the families who could not be there.*

Under Bob's leadership, the Assembly attended **more than 80 funerals each year**, with members stepping forward to accept the folded American flag on behalf of the deceased. The program officially opened on **May 10, 2010**, and over its **17-year history**, Bob's Assembly orchestrated **2,005 ceremonies** with Bob personally leading **1,911** of them. His presence, his reverence, and his Marine Corps bearing became synonymous with the ceremony itself.

It is the Veteran, not the preacher,
Who has given you freedom of religion.
It is the Veteran, not the reporter,
Who has given you freedom of the press.
It is the Veteran, not the poet,
Who has given you freedom of speech.
It is the Veteran, not the protester,
Who has given you freedom to assemble.
It is the Veteran, not the lawyer,
Who has given you the right to a fair trial.
It is the Veteran, not the politician,
Who has given you the right to vote.
It is the Veteran,
Who salutes the Flag,
Who serves under the Flag,
Whose coffin is draped by the Elag
Who allows the protestor to burn the flag.

As the years passed, the program evolved into what is now known as **No Veteran Forgotten**, expanding its mission to honor Veterans whose families are unable to attend their burial. Participation has grown significantly, with the Knights of Columbus now attending on a consistent monthly basis. Through every season, every weather, and every solemn gathering, Bob's leadership has ensured that no Veteran is laid to rest without dignity, prayer, and the presence of grateful Americans.

At the conclusion of each ceremony, Bob reads a well-known and beloved poem one that has long circulated among Veteran communities and has become a cherished part of these tributes. Its words remind all present of the quiet heroism of those who served and the sacred duty of remembering them.



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
**FOURTH
DEGREE**
EXEMPLIFICATION

Patriotic Degree of the Order



One Nation, Under God

A Joyous Day for Our Assembly - Seven New Sir Knights!

It is with great pride and fraternal joy that we announce that **seven of our brothers advanced to the Patriotic Degree** at the Exemplification held on **May 9, 2026**, at **St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church in Naples, Florida**. Their commitment to the principles of our Order shines brightly, and we congratulate each of them on taking this important step in their journey of faith and patriotism.

Our Newly Exemplified Sir Knights

- Cosmo Cordialini
- Michael Ochoa
- Horatio Hoggard
- Gregory Kirwan
- Anthony Leone
- Edward Martinez
- Michael Day

These brothers were proudly accompanied by members of our Color Corps in full regalia:

- SK Bernie Lanza
- SK Tony Hopfinger
- SK Vinny Gelsomino
- SK Steve Vacca
- SK Darwin Reeck
- SK Bob O'Brien

Their presence added dignity, honor, and a visible sign of our Assembly's unity. This was truly a **joyous occasion**, a reminder of the strength and vitality of our brotherhood. Let us continue to encourage our Third-Degree brothers to "take the leap" into the Fourth Degree, where we more fully embrace the principle of **Patriotism** a calling that is needed now more than ever.

Know a Third-Degree Brother Ready to Advance?

If you know a brother who is considering the Fourth Degree or would like to join our Assembly, please encourage him to contact our Membership Chairman:

SK Steve Vacca

Phone: 941-310-6061

Email: stevac58@yahoo.com

Steve is always happy to answer questions and guide candidates through the application process.

Together, let us continue to exemplify the values that define us: **Charity, Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism.**





A Year of Service: Knights Help Restore OLPH's Sacred Walkways



During a recent retreat at **Our Lady of Perpetual Help Retreat and Spirituality Center**, Michelle Murray noticed that the prayer decks beloved spaces where countless souls pause to reflect, rest, and encounter the Lord were in serious need of repair. Moved by compassion and a deep sense of stewardship, Michelle stepped forward with remarkable generosity.

Because of her support, **not only were the prayer decks fully replaced, but the bridges leading to them were restored as well**, renewing these sacred pathways for all who seek peace, healing, and quiet conversation with God.

The Knights of Columbus Assembly 1818 held their retreat at OLPH this year. These grounds have long been a place of profound spiritual experience. The stillness of the water, the beauty of creation, and the reverent silence of the walkways make OLPH a sanctuary unlike any other.

This restoration did not happen overnight. It was the fruit of a **full year of dedicated labor** by our faithful volunteer maintenance crew:

- **Derek Baiz**
- **Mike Day**
- **Chuck Hammerle**
- **Tony Hopfinger**
- **John Myer**

Of these five volunteers, **four are Knights of Columbus, and four are Sir Knights of the Fourth Degree**, a powerful testament to the spirit of service that defines our Order. Their craftsmanship, sweat, and brotherly commitment ensured that Michelle's gift became a lasting blessing for generations to come.

On **April 21**, Michelle returned to OLPH for the **blessing of each renewed space**. It was a beautiful moment filled with gratitude, grace, and the quiet joy that comes when faith and service meet in harmony.

As Knights, we are called to build up the Church not only through words, but through action. These Sir Knights lived that call with humility and honor. And Michelle Murray, through her generosity, made it all possible.

May God bless Michelle, our volunteer Knights, and all who serve with joyful hearts. Their work reminds us that when generosity and brotherhood come together, sacred spaces flourish and the light of Christ shines even brighter.



CALENDAR 2025-2026 Our Assembly is excited to present a calendar filled with opportunities for fellowship, spiritual growth, and service. We encourage all members to review the upcoming schedule and participate as actively as your time and talents allow. We look forward to seeing you there.

JUNE 2026

- **Wed, June 10** – SNC @ 8:30 AM
- **Thurs, June 18** – Award Presentation & Dinner @ 6:00 PM

Prison Ministry Volunteers Needed Throughout the Diocese

The Diocese of Venice is seeking compassionate men and women who feel called to bring Christ's light into some of the most forgotten corners of our community. By joining their team of Prison Ministry volunteers, you will enter county jails and state prisons across our 10-county Diocese to offer pastoral outreach, distribute the Eucharist, and accompany our incarcerated brothers and sisters through faith-based programs that remind them they are not abandoned by God.

Priests, Deacons, and lay volunteers are all encouraged to discern this meaningful work. No prior experience is needed, only a willing heart. Volunteers participate in an orientation program and then shadow experienced ministers until they feel fully comfortable and confident. Times and days vary by facility, allowing you to serve in a way that fits your schedule.

This ministry is a powerful witness to mercy, hope, and the dignity of every human person. Many volunteers describe it as one of the most grace-filled experiences of their lives.

If you feel the Holy Spirit nudging your heart, please reach out to **Joe Mallof at 224-217-7139** or **Bob Hiniker at 863-558-0407** to learn where your gifts can shine in this joyful and transformative mission.



[Knights on Bikes Venice Chapter](#)

Knights on Bikes: Faith, Fellowship & the Open Road

We encourage you to explore this link for the latest information about Knights on Bikes.

You are Invited
Assembly 1818
Annual Awards Banquet
18th of June

Doors Open at 5:00 pm
Dinner at 6:00 pm

Hotel Venezia
425 US 41 Bypass N
Venice 34285

Char-Grilled London Broil, Mushrooms,
Demi-Glace, Crispy Onions

Baked Fillet of Haddock, Stuffed with
Lemon Beurre Blanc

Chicken Milan, Sun-Dried Tomatoes,
Lemon, Artichoke

All dinners include vegetable, potato or rice, mixed
green salad, rolls & butter, tea or coffee, dessert

\$40 per Person (includes gratuity)
Payable at the Door

Solo Sir Knights Will Dine at The King's Table

RSVP to ahhopfinger@gmail.com including your
dinner selection no later than Tuesday, June 9

Brothers,

Your Faithful Comptroller is pleased to share that the Bishop Charles McLaughlin Assembly 1818 website **kocasembly1818.org** is now up and running. Many of you have already begun using it, and I hope it continues to serve as a helpful way to stay aligned with the life and mission of our Assembly.

The site is steadily taking shape. Each month I continue adding new Fourth Degree resources, Assembly information, and updates on upcoming events. There is much more to come, but the foundation is strong and already proving useful.

In addition to the website, our Assembly has expanded its communication tools to keep every Sir Knight connected and informed. We are now using **Constant Contact** for email and messaging, along with **Sign-Up Genius** to help organize participation in upcoming events. These platforms give us greater flexibility, clearer communication, and a more reliable way to reach all our members.

Please make it a habit to check your email regularly, read the messages sent through these systems, and respond to event invitations when you are able. Your engagement helps strengthen our unity and ensures the success of our activities.

If anyone needs assistance navigating the website, Constant Contact, or Sign-Up Genius, I am always available to help. No brother should feel left behind, we grow stronger when we stay connected.

My hope is that these tools continue to support our mission of keeping every Sir Knight informed, engaged, and walking together in faith, fraternity, and patriotism



**UPDATE YOUR INFO
STAY CONNECTED**

Biennial 4th Degree Meeting – Assembly Update

SK Bernie Lanza, SK Tony Hopfinger, and SK Vinny Gelsomino attended the **Biennial 4th Degree Meeting for the Florida District, De Soto Province**, representing Assembly 1818 with distinction. They brought back important updates on **district strategies, member engagement, and unified protocol** for all Sir Knights.

District leadership emphasized strengthening our patriotic mission, improving communication across Assemblies, and renewing our commitment to visible, dignified service. Clear guidance was also provided on **Color Corps' expectations**, including proper drill procedures, uniform standards, and upcoming training opportunities to ensure consistency and excellence at every event.

Their participation keeps our Assembly aligned with the latest requirements and reinforces our dedication to the highest traditions of the Fourth Degree.



Installation of
Assembly Officers
Ceremonial



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
**FOURTH
DEGREE**
Patriotic Degree of the Order



2026-2027 OFFICERS

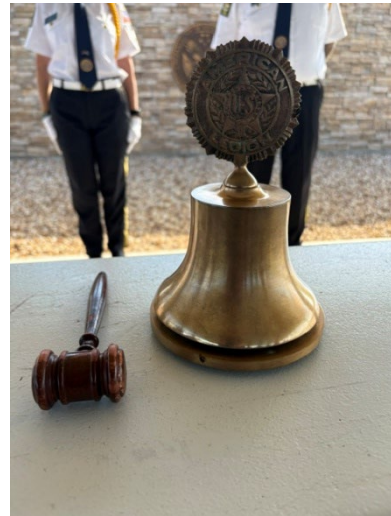
Faithful Navigator		SK Anthony H. Hopfinger
Faithful Comptroller		SK George Edward Barbiero
Faithful Captain		SK Darwin Reeck
Faithful Admiral		SK Anthony J. Salvucci
Faithful Purser		SK Vince W. Gelsomino
Faithful Pilot		SK Richard L. Anderson
Faithful Scribe		SK Joseph Macarelli
Inner Sentinel		SK Charles E. Woodrum
Outer Sentinel		SK William G. Blanchard
Trustee (1Year)		SK Richard A. Kunzier
Trustee (2Year)		SK Kevin P. Szopinski
Trustee (3Year)		SK Bernard Francis Lanza

No Veteran Forgotten Ceremony

We are pleased to announce that the **No Veteran Forgotten Ceremony** will be on:

Wednesday, June 10th, 2026.

We ask all participants to meet by 8:45 AM. We head to the Internment Shelter at Sarasota National Cemetery at 8:50 AM, with the service beginning at 9:00 AM. Please wear your assembly shirt, and invite your spouses, friends and neighbors to join us as we stand together to remember the legacy of those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.



RANK	VETERANS NAME	BRANCH OF SERVICE
PVT	Robin G. Wood	US Army - Vietnam
RM3	John G. Constantine	US Navy - Vietnam
LCPL	Scott A. Johanson	US Marine Corps
PVT	John A. Weaver.	US Marine Corps - Korea
SP4	Vaughn Canter	US Army - Vietnam
SGT	Steven C. Milburn	US Marine Corps - Vietnam











Honoring Commitment - As we begin a new quarter of fraternal service, it is fitting that we pause to honor the men whose dedication, discipline, and quiet strength continue to elevate the mission of our Assembly. The Color Corps stands as the visible arm of the Fourth Degree an embodiment of reverence, patriotism, and unity. Today, we joyfully recognize those Sir Knights celebrating their Color Corps anniversaries this month.

MAY & JUNE COLOR CORPS ANNIVERSARIES

Name	Years
Thom Gardner	2
George Barbiero	2



Milestones of our Brother Knights - This month, we extend our warmest wishes to those brothers observing a birthday, and we also recognize those who are celebrating an anniversary of their commitment to the Fourth Degree.

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Name	Date	Age
Salvatore Fertitta	2	72
Michael Pznanski	4	74
George Moesch	5	67
Peter Spagnuolo	5	89
Robert Wucki	5	64
Roger Boulanger	8	79
Anthony DeNicola	8	62
Michael Davanzo	15	75
Wayne Smith	17	76
Anthony Giardullo	18	72
John Riebel	18	99
Charles Woodrum	18	74
Alan Kotlarski	20	83
Joseph Maguire	22	82
Valentine Marquez	22	87
Edmund Jones	23	79
James Baker	24	70
Nicholas Colavito	24	77
Dominick Caravella	25	60
Robert Heidenreich	26	90
Frank Mayle	26	75
Alfred Miller	27	76
Richard Anderson	28	83
Rev Jay Jancarz	30	70

JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

Name	Years
Roger Trottier	59
John Wilkinson	46
Rev Jay Jancarz	30
William Jagenow	28
Divid Warren	27
George Bevis	14
Paul Krause	13
Joseph Maguire	13
Michael Milak	13
Isabelo Sanchez	13
John Staas	13
Kevin Staas	13
James Baker	10
Kevin Peters	9
Martin Mosteller	8
Danial Prickel	6
Vincent Hagerty	5
Willard Hull	5
Robert Kraszewski	5
James Lakatos	5
Daniel Lanktree	5
Kenneth Lescallett	5
George McColgan	5
Michael Poznanski	5
Stefano Ragozzino	5
Deacon Epimaco Roca	5
Wilard Straub	5
Charles Woodrum	5
Manny Delgado	4
Robert O'Brien	4
John Tosado	4
Keith Caka	4
Rev. Thomas Carzon	4
Michael Cleary	4
Michael Davanzo	4
Brett Jacobs	4
Josh Mihm	4
Mark Uebelacker	4
Charles Donelson	3
Joseph Frech	3
Edmund Jones	3
Terrance Leary	3
Louis Nagy	3
Nicholas Colavito	1
Steven Vacca	1



SK Rick Miller	Pam Russell
SK Armand Padula	Jim Russell
Tom Hankard Jr.	Margaret Jagenow
Connie Smith	Michele Renzulli
SK Derek Baiz	Pat & Peder Christensen
SK Jim Martin	Lynne Froemiller
Paul Migliori	Linda Waldt
SK Ed McManus	SK Mike LaVecchia
SK Tom Festa	All Knights of Columbus Brothers
Johnnie Cozzie	Father Jay's Sister
SK Derek Bias	Sheila Farrel
Soul of Rick Hagemeyor	SK Thom Gardner
SK Mark & Susan Crews	SK Gerry Scannell (RIP)
George J Barbiero Sr.	SK Michael Iacampo (RIP)
Mark Hanrahan	Liliana Grace Russo

This prayer list is a testament to our commitment to one another, a space where we can place the names of our fellow knights, cherished family members, and dear friends. Whether facing health issues or grappling with personal challenges, each person needs our heartfelt prayers.



ASSEMBLY 1818 APPOINTED POSITIONS



Color Corps Commander	Martin Reis	209-480-6043
Cemetery Activity Coordinator	Rick Anderson	321-303-8172
Membership Chairman	Steve Vacca	954-655-1110
Retention Chairman Bereavement /Birthdays Anniversaries	Charles Woodrum	304-282-8733
Valentines For Veterans Chairman	Tony Hopfinger	412-496-6776
Football Commissioner	Richard Kunzier	973-903-1226
Welfare	Vinny Gelsomino Deacon Rich	815-409-2385 914-388-4389
Admissions Chairman	Anthony Salvucci	617-320-1759
Knights on Bikes	Bill Blanchard	732-841-6074
Newsletter & Webmaster	George E. Barbiero	203-885-8238

Gear Up, Brothers



Looking to show your Knights of Columbus pride? You may purchase shirts and caps at *Designer Tees* located at 565 Paul Morris Dr, Englewood. They may be reached at 941-272-8673. If you're looking for a wider selection of Knights of Columbus merchandise, including a variety of accessories and apparel, be sure to visit at [Knights Gear](#) online. They offer a range of items to help you display your dedication to the Order. Finally, for our esteemed Color Corps members, uniforms

may be purchased directly at [Knights of Columbus | Supply Room](#) and [Home - Knights of Columbus Supplies](#)



Council Updates & Family and Pro Life News



Below you will find the websites for each of the third-degree councils that contribute to our Assembly. Although each Council is unique, they all share the core values of charity, unity, and fraternity. We encourage you to explore each website as well as Deacon Rich's *Family and Pro Life News*.



[Click here](#) for Council 7997 San Pedro.



[Click here](#) for Council 15821 Our Lady of Mount Carmel.



[Click here](#) for Council 9924. Our Lady of Lourdes.



[Click here](#) for Council 7052 Epiphany Cathedral.



[Click here](#) for the monthly *Family and ProLife News Briefs* from Deacon Rich.