

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

ASSEMBLY 1818

Volume II Issue II September 2026



Faithful Navigator Tony Hopfinger	412-496-6776
Comptroller George Barbiero	203-885-8238
Captain Darwin Reeck	941-541-9657
Admiral Tony Salvucci	617-320-1759
Purser Vinny Gelsomino	815-409-2385
Pilot Rick Anderson	321-303-8172
Scribe Joe Macarelli	941-340-9477
Inner Sentinel Chuck Woodrum	304-282-8733
Outer Sentinel Bill Blanchard	732-841-6074
One Year Trustee Richard Kunzier	973-903-1226
Two Year Trustee Kevin Szopinski	630-277-1367
Three Year Trustee Bernie Lanza	941-441-8892
Faithful Friar	Rev. Janusz

In Gratitude for Heroes: 9/11 and the Blue Mass

Brothers,

This is the 25th anniversary of 9/11, and our hearts turn to that solemn memory of September 11, 2001, a day that tested the soul of our nation and revealed the extraordinary courage of ordinary Americans. We remember the nearly 3,000 lives lost, families forever changed, and the heroic first responders who ran toward danger with unwavering resolve. Their sacrifice remains a living testament to the virtues we as Sir Knights pledge to uphold patriotism, courage, duty, and selfless service. This year, our remembrance is beautifully connected to a special event in our own community. The Blue Mass at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church in Venice will be celebrated on Sunday, September 13 at the Noon Mass. This Mass honors all active, retired, and deceased first responders, which include the police, fire departments, EMS and paramedics, dispatchers, sheriff and deputies, corrections officers, canine units and all who serve in public safety. These men and women are the guardians of our neighborhoods and the quiet sentinels who put their lives on the line daily so that others may live in peace. The Blue Mass gives us the opportunity to say with gratitude and conviction: we see you, we thank you, we pray for you. As Fourth Degree Knights, the patriotic arm of the Order, our presence at this Mass is more than symbolic; it is a witness to our belief that faith and patriotism are inseparable, that honoring those who serve is part of our vocation, and that we stand united with all who protect life, liberty, and community.

Vivat Jesus!



SK George Barbiero

Sir Knights,

At our last Assembly Meeting, I took a couple of minutes to say some words about the Prayer List. I would like to share my remarks to those Sir Knights that were not present. Why ? Because the Prayer List is important; it sure is for that particular Sir Knight who takes the time to write out a name on the List.

A Sir Knight comes to our Assembly meetings and then walks over to enter a name on the Prayer List. This shows a very deliberate step on his part. By doing so, he feels strongly to take the time to enter the name. And Why? He is asking us, his Brother Sir Knights, for a lending hand a prayer. By writing down a name on the Prayer List, he has faith that we will lend him a hand by including the person whose name he scribed in our prayers.

A Brother Sir Knight is asking for our consideration. He has an expectation that we will be there for him. He was told this. We told him this.

We, his Brother Knights, have a couple of choices. Yes, we can acknowledge when we hear the name read. But maybe we could do a little more really extend our hand to him. Here are a couple of thoughts. We can include the name or better yet make reference to the names on the Prayer List in our daily prayers; another way, when the Petitions of the Faithful are made at the Mass, we can include the names on the Prayer List in our petitions. It is no doubt impossible to remember all the individual names, but we can just made reference to the names on the Prayer List.

Fraternalism isn't that one of our precepts, a promise that we make when we become a Knight?

Vivat Jesus,

SK Tony Hopfinger,

Faithful Navigator





Brother Sir Knights,

As we gather for our monthly meeting, I want to begin by reflecting on the theme of this year's Supreme Convention: **"In the One, We Are One."** Earlier this week, as the 144th Supreme Convention opened in Denver, our Order received a special video greeting from **His Holiness, Pope Leo XIV**.

In his message, the Holy Father reminded us that unity and charity are not mere ideals. They are virtues we are called to live daily. He encouraged us to continue bearing witness to the concord Christ desires in our families, our parishes, and in the communities where we serve. He also expressed deep gratitude for the generosity of the Knights of Columbus, noting that our works of charity often become powerful instruments of unity.

As we begin our time together tonight, let us carry that spirit forward renewed in purpose, strengthened in fraternity, and united in Christ.

Vivat Jesus.

[Pope Leo Message | Knights of Columbus](#)

ASSEMBLY 1818 - 2026 / 2027 FRATERNAL CALENDAR

August

12th	Wednesday	No Veteran Forgotten Ceremony	8:30AM	SNC	Second Wednesday of every month
14th	Friday	Officer Meeting	2:00PM	OLOL	Monthly
20th	Thursday	Assembly Meeting	6:45 PM	Knight Hall Substation Road	5:30 Rosary; Dinner 5:45 every Third Thursday
28TH	Friday	CC Practice	1:00PM	OLOL	

September

9th	Wednesday	No Veteran Forgotten Ceremony	8:30AM	SNC	Second Wednesday of every month
11th	Friday	Officer Meeting	2:00PM	OLOL	Monthly
13th	Sunday	Blue Mass	12:00PM	OLOL	Color Corps Requested
17th	Thursday	Assembly Meeting	6:45 PM	Knight Hall Substation Road	5:30 Rosary; Dinner 5:45 every Third Thursday

October

9th	Friday	Officer Meeting	2:00PM	Officer Meeting	Officer Meeting
14th	Wednesday	No Veteran Forgotten Ceremony	8:30AM	SNC	Second Wednesday of every month
15th	Thursday	Assembly Meeting	6:45 PM	Knight Hall Substation Road	5:30 Rosary; Dinner 5:45 every Third Thursday
15th	Thursday	Guest Speaker - TBE	6:45PM	Knight Hall Substation Road	PART OF THE MONTHLY MEETING
30th	Friday	CC Practice	1:00PM	OLMC	



VISION

Rooted in our Catholic faith and guided by charity, unity, fraternalism and patriotism, Bishop Charles McLaughlin Assembly 1818 serves as an exemplary model of faithful service and sets the standard for Knights of Columbus Assemblies.

MISSION

Bishop Charles McLaughlin Assembly 1818 is a Catholic volunteer brotherhood of Sir Knights pledged to the guiding principles of **Patriotism, Charity, Fraternalism, and Unity**. We are steadfast in our commitment to strengthening our Catholic faith, supporting our Assembly and its members, assisting our state leadership, and honoring the veterans and country. As members of the **Color Corps**, we proudly offer our service to the Church and to our Bishop whenever called upon. We stand ready to support worthy causes and uphold the dignity of our Order. Together, we strive for the betterment of our faith, our community, and our country.

MEMBERSHIP

Definition of insanity? Doing the same thing over & over again, expecting something different to happen!

TOGETHER
EVERYONE
ACHIEVES
MORE

EVERYONE
GETS
ONE



Get your football book-\$25.00

Membership Drive

- 21 new prospects picked up between the 5 Masses
- 3 transfers & 2 are 4th Degree members
- Shout-out to the Color Corps members who worked in 100°+ heat
- Thank you to Bill Blanchard — Knights on Bikes — tremendous success, free rides offered to new sign-ups that day!!! LOL
- Thanks to Bill B. & Mark Schaefer for helping at all 5 Masses

*Next membership drive – full regalia-yes [swords](#)

Coming Up / Next Steps

- Sunday, August 23 — 3rd Degree Exemplification in parish library @ 2:00pm.
- Sponsors are still needed, for these Knights
- October CCW meeting — speak with women about their spouses joining
- Waiting on approval from Betty-Ann Busby to attend new parishioner orientations
- Goal: present the Knights of Columbus directly to new parishioners

Please reach out anytime to brainstorm new ideas

TOGETHER
EVERYONE • ACHIEVES • MORE

Membership Drive Shout-Out

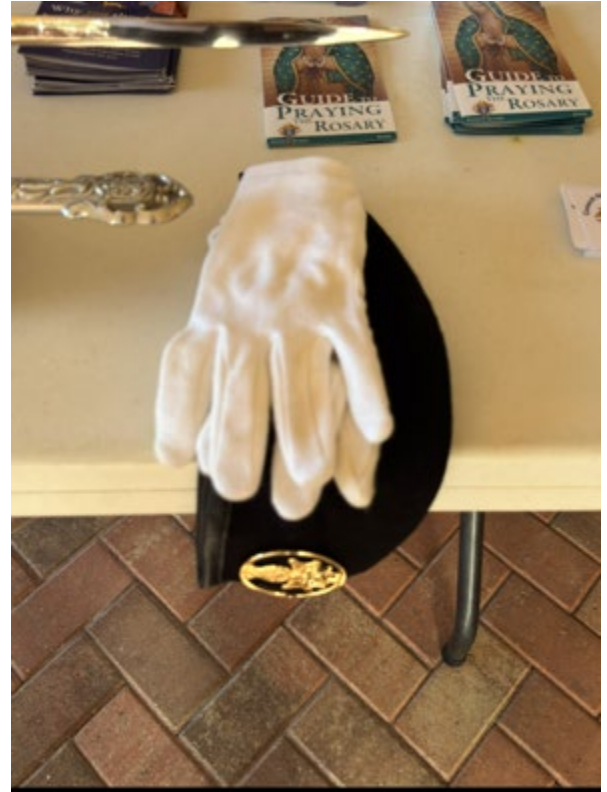
I just wanted to personally thank you all for your help and support over this weekend at the membership drive. This event was a tremendous success, picking up 21 new contacts, three of which are transfers into our council and assembly. It was a very hot couple of days, but you all hung in there and toughed it out thank you for that. This would have been an impossible task without my brother Knights by my side.

A big shout-out to Bill Blanchard, Knights on Bikes, and Mark Schaefer for being by my side for all five Masses simply amazing. Thank you to the Color Corps team for showing up in Regalia on this *extremely* hot weekend. I also want to thank Father Jay for his support and for giving us the opportunity to speak with the parish.

If any of you have ideas on ways to improve our membership drives, feel free to reach out. Remember, teamwork makes the dream work! God bless you all. Vivat Jesus!

SK Steve Vacca
941-310-6061
stevac58@yahoo.com





No Veteran Forgotten Ceremony

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

Wednesday, September 9th, 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.



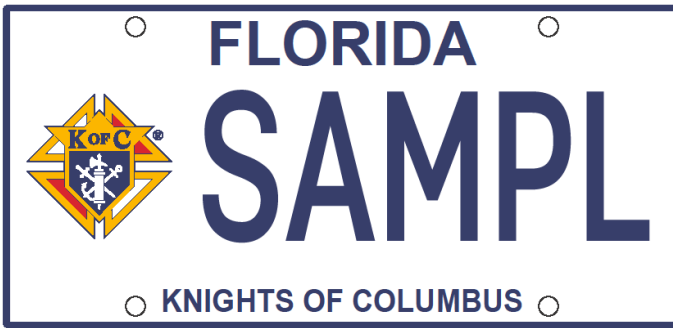
RANK	VETERANS NAME	BRANCH OF SERVICE
DT2	Timothy P. Morton	US Navy - Vietnam
ABH3	Jeffery J. Johnson	US Navy - Vietnam
YN2	Charles T.J. La Fever	US Navy - Vietnam
PFC	Stephen E. Day	US Army
A1C	Donald D. Adkins	US Air Force - Vietnam
PV1	Richard S. Daily	US Army - Vietnam
PV1	Richard H. Ulm III	US Army
CPL	Ronald J. Koniarski	US Marine Corps - Vietnam











Florida Knights of Columbus License Plate Initiative

Brother Knights,

If you attended our last Monthly Meeting, Faithful Navigator Tony Hopfinger shared that the Florida Knights of Columbus License Plate Program is finally beginning to take shape. The State Council is gathering signatures of interest so they can bring an official request before the Florida Legislature for approval.

How to Show Your Support There are two ways to express interest:

1. Online (Preferred Method)

- Visit the **Florida State Council website**
- Open the **blue pull-down menu**
- Select **Charity Resources**
- Click **FL KC License Plate Request** You will need your **membership number** to complete the form.

2. Paper Form A printable form is also available for those who prefer to submit their interest manually. It will be available at our next monthly assembly meeting but for sure online is the preferred method.

Who Can Participate? At this stage, the program is **open only to Knights**. Whether it expands later is unknown, but the more support we show now, the stronger the case becomes.

Why This Matters A Knights of Columbus specialty plate would be a visible witness to our faith, our fraternity, and our commitment to charity. It's a simple way to evangelize on the road and strengthen our presence across Florida.

Let's Help Move This Forward The campaign is just getting started, and every signature helps. I will include a direct link to the Florida State Council website so you can sign up easily.

Together, we can help bring this project from idea to reality one Knight at a time.

“A Victory for Catholic Veterans”

From :Bishop Charles McLaughlin Assembly 1818, Venice, Florida

Bishop Charles McLaughlin Assembly 1818 stands in gratitude and support of Congressman Greg Steube (R FL) for his steadfast leadership in securing a long overdue honor for Catholic Veterans: the right to have a CRUCIFIX placed on their headstone in our nation's veteran cemeteries



Nearly one in five American Veterans is Catholic and many are buried at veteran cemeteries without a choice for a catholic symbol engraved on the headstone. The current choice is among 100 that include Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Wicca and secular humanism.

Neil Voje a member of Epiphany Cathedral, Venice Florida exposed this Catholic failing when he requested the principals at Sarasota National Cemetery for a headstone engraved with the Catholic crucifix to honor Stan Voje, his deceased veteran brother. The V.A. said the wait could be between 3-5 years. Being persistent, Neil worked his way up to Congressman Greg Steube who identified the need.

Congressman Steube realized this injustice and acted. In April, he led a bipartisan coalition of 45 members of congress in a letter to VA Secretary Douglas Collins and Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs Sam Brown, urging the VA to add the crucifix to its approved list of emblems. His message was clear: Catholic Veterans deserve the same reverence and representation afforded to every other faith tradition.

The enthusiasm quickly grew into a national movement. The Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA under Archbishop Timothy Broglio, publicly supported the initiative. Representative Riley Moore strengthened the cause by securing language in the Military Construction and Veteran Affairs funding bill directing the VA to approve the crucifix as an eligible emblem.

The house passed the bill with overwhelming bipartisan support--400-1-- a resounding affirmation of the dignity owed to our Catholic servicemen and women.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Congressman Steube for his unwavering commitment, courage, and advocacy on behalf of Catholic Veterans and their families. Special thanks to Neil Voje for lighting the Fire for our Catholic veterans.

Our Assembly 1818 stands proudly and echoes their resolve: We will not rest until every Catholic veteran has the right to be laid to rest beneath the Catholic Crucifix.

Richard "Rick" Anderson
Faithful Pilot
Cemetery Coordinator
Bishop Charles McLaughlin
Assembly 1818



Vivat Jesus!



Picture Submitted by SK Terry Leary

THE DIFFERENCE

BETWEEN CRUCIFIX AND CROSS:



CRUCIFIX

The Crucifix (a Cross with a Corpus) is a symbol used by the Catholic Church. Its name is derived from the Latin word *cruci fixus* which means "fixed to a cross." It thus refers to an image of Jesus fixed to a cross which is distinct from a plain cross.

Most crucifixes include the sign INRI across the top. INRI is the Latin abbreviation for "Iesus Nazarenus, Rex Iudaeorum" or Jesus the Nazarene, King of the Jews.

CROSS

The cross is a symbol of Christianity. But there are over 35,000 Christian denominations in the world. More often than not, protestants do not have the body of Christ on the Cross. In Roman times, the cross was an instrument of torture and public humiliation.

Today, the cross has been adopted as a symbol of the ultimate sacrifice. It evokes Jesus' death and, more importantly, His resurrection.

Note: Catholics understand that both the simple cross and the crucifix are symbols of our faith, helping us to recall Jesus' great sacrifice for us.



Victory for Veterans Gala
Plantation Golf & Country Club
March 6th, 2027
V4V

As we begin a new month of fraternal service, it is fitting that we 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. Their presence at church, civic, and ceremonial events reminds all who witness it that our principles are not merely spoken but lived with dignity.



Knights on Bikes: Faith, Fellowship & the Open Road

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



A Night of Fraternity, Honor, and Gratitude at Knights Hall for SK Amado Varona

What began as an invitation to support Council 7052 and celebrate our Brother **Sir Knight Amado Varona** became a memorable evening of unity and fraternal pride.

Council 7052 hosted its **Annual Installation Dinner** for Epiphany Cathedral Council 7052, welcoming their incoming officers with a well-organized program, excellent food, and warm fellowship. A touching video tribute highlighted **Sir Knight Amado Varona's** years of dedicated service, followed by heartfelt remarks from **Monsignor Patrick Debois** and **Grand Knight Troy Sacco** each reflecting the deep respect Amado earned through his leadership and humility.

The installation ceremony was conducted with dignity by **District Deputy SK Richard Zahn**, with our Faithful Navigator assisting in place of the Assistant District Deputy.

Assembly 1818 was honored to stand with Council 7052 on this special night. Sir Knights Tony Hopfinger, George Barbiero, Darwin Reeck, and Jim Lamar represented our Assembly in Color Corps uniform, offering visible support as Amado received the Knight of the Year Award.

As the evening concluded, stories shared about Amado's gentle spirit, willingness to help, and quiet leadership filled the room, followed by sustained, heartfelt applause.

It was a truly uplifting celebration strengthening the bond between Assembly 1818 and Council 7052, honoring a remarkable Sir Knight, and reminding us of the joy found in fraternity and shared purpose.





**Bishop Charles McLaughlin
Assembly 1818**

Monthly Meeting on August 20, 2026

EATING FRENZY!









Thank You to Lisa Barbiero – Composer of the Assembly 1818 Theme Song

At our most recent monthly meeting, the Knights of Columbus Assembly 1818 experienced something truly special. Through her talent, dedication, and the creative use of music-composition software, **Lisa Barbiero** crafted a memorable musical piece and theme song that speaks to the heart of who we are as Sir Knights.

When the first notes played, the room changed. Heads lifted. Smiles spread. And then spontaneously **applause and a standing ovation** rose from the Assembly. It was a moment of unity, pride, and joy that none of us will forget.

Lisa, your gift to Assembly 1818 is more than a melody. It is a reflection of our brotherhood, our mission, and our faith. We will **cherish its lyrics and melody** going forward, and it will be formally presented as the **Official Theme Song of Assembly 1818**.

It will be played at our meetings and at appropriate events as a reminder of the spirit that binds us together.

On behalf of all the Sir Knights who witnessed its first playing and all those who will hear it in the years ahead **thank you, Lisa**. Your generosity and creativity have blessed our Assembly.

God bless you, and God bless Assembly 1818.

Click the LINK below and enjoy!

[KOC Assembly 1818 Theme Song Best Music](#)



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 941-474-8673. 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](#)



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CONTACT A 4TH DEGREE KNIGHT
FROM ASSEMBLY 1818

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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.



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Name	Date	Age
Michael E. Milak	1	74
Michael L. Sellner	2	50
John E. Wilkinson	4	96
Bernard Louis Sponsel	5	75
Kevin J. Collins	9	87
Martin M. Mosteller	9	87
Dennis G. Putman	11	78
Keith E. Caka	12	54
Daniel P. Lanktree	13	81
Rev. Thomas Carzon	15	58
Peter M. Casamento	15	67
James C. La Mar	15	86
John E. Kesich	16	64
Joseph S. Macarelli	17	78
Richard L. Frohmiller	20	85
Isabelo H. Sanchez	22	91
George M. McColgan	24	76
Thomas J. Reno	25	86
Gregory A. Kirwan	26	70
Paul Krause	26	78
Michael Mauti	28	77
Jan Andrew Young	29	73



AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

Name	Years
John F. Temel	40
Dr. Francis E. Bruno	15
Robert B. Crowley	8
Mr. Richard Kuertz	6



SK Rick Miller	SK Kevin Szopinski
RIP - SK Armand Padula	SK John & Cathy Meyer
SK Mike LaVecchia	SK Amado Verona
SK Ed McManus	Katherine Lusk
SK Derek Baiz	Honey Stroker
SK Jim Martin	SK Bill Straub
George J Barbiero Sr.	Linda Waldt
Blake Starzyk	Jean Richardson
Cassie Wentworth	All Knights of Columbus Brothers
Connie & Jerry Smith	Father Jay's Sister
Pam & Jim Russell	Renee McPhail
Nicole Slater	Jennifer Miller
Camilla Popham	Frank Bruno
Turk & Anita Hemseri	Don Bohensky
Arlene Renzulli	Ann Hackett
Lisa Barbiero	Roberta Reamer

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
Faithful Friar	Father Jay Jancarz	
Cemetery Activity Coordinator	Rick Anderson	321-303-8172
Membership Chairman & Committee	Steve Vacca Jim Lakatos Tony Salvucci Joe Frech	954-655-1110
Retention Chairman	Charles Woodrum	304-282-8733
Victory for Veterans Gala Chairman & Event Coordinator	Darwin Reeck	941-541-9657
Football Commissioner	Richard Kunzier	973-903-1226
Welfare Chairman	Paul Caccatore	913-378-4931
Admissions Chairman & Committee	Deacon Rich Frohmiller Steve Vacca Tony Salvucci George Moesch	914-388-4389
Knights on Bikes	Bill Blanchard	732-841-6074
Photographer	Mike Mauti	978-807-0421
Assembly Rosary Leader	Bob O'Brien	732-606-3738
Newsletter & Webmaster	George E. Barbiero	203-885-8238
Relief Committee	Tony Hopfinger George Barbiero Vinny Gelsomino	412-496-6776 815-409-2385
AD HOC Committee for Bylaw Review	Mike Milak Kevin Szopinski Darwin Reeck	941-380-7248



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.