



CHAPLAIN'S *report*

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS *In service to One. In service to all.*

LEARNING THE FAITH, LIVING THE FAITH ♦ 1 COLUMBUS PLAZA, NEW HAVEN, CT 06510-3326, USA

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Parish Priests and the Knights

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In 1877, at the young age of 25, Michael McGivney was ordained a priest. His first assignment was as vicar of St. Mary's Church, whose pastor's ill health meant the young McGivney would bear the full responsibilities of the parish.

He served Irish immigrants facing a hostile culture and work environment, inherited the enormous financial debt from the church's construction expenses, and ministered to an infamous murderer. He did this all while tirelessly exhorting his parishioners — who were disparaged and lambasted by the WASP mentality of the neighboring Yale University — to a greater witness and evangelical charity.

From the beginning, Father McGivney sensed that the Knights of Columbus could meet a need faced by all Catholic men in every parish — not just his own. Hence, they did not name themselves after St. Mary's Church or even after the patron of Ireland, St. Patrick. In October 1881, the gathered assembly chose a name that spoke to the international scope and spiritual battle at the heart of every man's vocation.

Father Gordian Daley, Father McGivney's contemporary and a fellow priest, said, "By serving as a bulwark against indifference, [the Knights of Columbus] has checked that leakage from the ranks of the faithful which was formerly so immense and so deplorable a loss to the Church." He continued, saying that this leakage "went on unabated because no one took the trouble to pursue the layman into the paths of his everyday social life and animate him there and everywhere with the Catholic principle" (*The Columbiad*, June 1900).

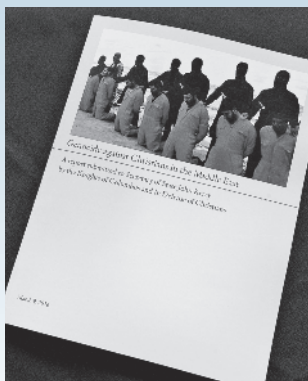
Today, 135 years later, our brother Knights have the same calling: to serve with evangelical charity the needs of the men and their families at the parish level. The Order's Building the Domestic Church While Strengthening Our Parish initiative is a clarion call to put the mission of every council at the heart and service of every parish. I ask my brother priests and pastors: How can the Knights better serve your parish? In what ways can they assist you in evangelizing the young adults, young families and, especially, the men who are inactive or fallen away from the sacraments? As we approach the season of sacramental celebrations and time of *mystogia*, are there new tasks our brother Knights can assist you and the faith formators of your parish with?

Father McGivney's genius lay in his ability to inspire men to form a brotherhood of evangelical charity that spread throughout the world. He gave his life for this work, dying at the young age of 38 in 1882, only 13 years after he was ordained.

May we continue to serve our brother Knights in imitation of Venerable Father McGivney. *Vivat Jesus!*



St. Mary's Church in New Haven, Conn., where Father McGivney began his priestly ministry on Christmas Day in 1877. After the original church of St. Mary's was destroyed by fire, the new stone church was built on Hillhouse Avenue, close to Yale University.



The cover of the report produced by the Knights of Columbus and In Defense of Christians, showing a photo of the 21 Coptic Christians beheaded by ISIS in 2015.

That Word Is "Genocide"

Secretary of State John Kerry has officially declared that genocide is being committed by ISIS against Christians and other religious minorities in the Middle East. This decision came following a 280-page report submitted to the State Department at the National Press Club in Washington in early March.

When presenting the report, Supreme Knight Carl Anderson stated, "There is only one word that adequately, and legally, describes what is happening to Christians and other religious minorities in the Middle East: That word is 'genocide.'"

Senior State Department officials had requested that the K of C and In Defense of Christians produce such a report after the Order began co-sponsoring a petition to include Christians in a declaration of genocide at the hands of ISIS. The petition was signed by more than 100,000 people.

For more information, visit www.kofc.org.

You Cannot Handle It Alone: Strengthening the Covenant

By Father Luis Granados, DCJM

“The task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone” (Ex 18:18). When Jethro visited Moses in the desert, near the mountain of God, he saw that Moses was working from morning till evening and gave him his counsel. “What you are doing is not wise. . . . You will surely wear yourself out, both you and these people with you” (Ex 18:17-18). The wise father-in-law recommended that Moses choose collaborators to help him in his mission.

During this time of Easter, parish priests experience the truth of these words. The intensity of Lent and Holy Week, with daily confessions, adoration and so many solemn liturgical celebrations, seems to wear us out. When the priest proclaims that the Lord is truly risen, he himself is “tired to death.”

When we are this tired, can our work be fruitful? Can we still extend our voice and our hands to reach out to all the members of the parish? The dramatic shortage of vocations in some dioceses may increase our anxiety. We may wonder, “Who will protect and nourish the flock of Christ when my strength fails?” Jethro gives us the answer: “You should also look among all the people for able and God-fearing men” (Ex 18:21).

As the Lord blessed Moses with collaborators, he has blessed each pastor with families in his parish. These “domestic churches” are called to be “not only an object but a subject of the new evangelization” (Benedict XVI, 7 Oct. 2012). Families, therefore, are not just sick members of the flock, but active missionaries who help the priest in his mission. Priests and families working together — this is the secret of the new evangelization and the true remedy for secularization.

This, of course, is nothing new. From the very beginning of the history of the Church we find examples of this covenant of vocations between the family and the priest. The mission of the family comes from its sacramentality. In the words of St. John Paul II, “Spouses are the permanent reminder to the Church of what happened on the cross. . . .

[They] participate in and are called to live the very charity of Christ who gave himself on the cross” (*Familiaris Consortio* 13). In other words, it is not only the priest who makes God visible in the world (especially through the Eucharist and reconciliation). The Catholic couple — the “permanent reminder” of the love of Christ Crucified — reveals and lives this fire of divine love. The way spouses love and forgive each other, and the way they take care of their children, reveals the measure of God’s love for us.

The beauty of this covenant between priestly and married love is manifested in their differences. The family doesn’t evangelize by becoming like a priest, nor the priest by becoming like a married person. The new evangelization happens through the unity and differences of vocations, not by “clericalizing” the family nor by “marrying” the priest. It happens by the amazing synergy of their pastoral and conjugal charity. The family and the priest need each other in order to be themselves. They cannot accomplish their vocation alone. There is no priest without the family, and there is no family without the priest. A good example of this covenant was seen at Justice Antonin Scalia’s funeral, held at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, in Washington. There, an excellent homily was delivered by Justice Scalia’s son, Father Paul. His presence provided a great example of the unity between marriage and priesthood. The relationship between these two sacraments of communion is that of mutual growth and admiration.

Without daily contact with couples, the priest risks losing awareness of his origin as a son, his identity as spouse and father, and his goal as servant of the family. On the other hand, a family that is separated from the priest loses the source of divine life and the witness of what is eternal.

“The task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone.” The new evangelization is not the task for the lonely priest, but that of the priest who seeks, wins, builds and sends out missionary families.

A member of Dr. Earl C. Bach Council 3340, Father Granados helped establish the Toward a Family Friendly Parish program at St. Mary Catholic Parish in Littleton, Colo. The 12-month program, whose focus is to draw families closer to each other and to their parish family, was the model of the Knights of Columbus’ Family Fully Alive program. *Building the Domestic Church: The Family Fully Alive* booklets (#10162, available free of cost, only shipping charges apply) can be obtained by contacting the Supply Department at 203-752-4214. A copy of this booklet and additional resources are available at www.kofc.org/familyfullyalive. To order additional items mentioned in this newsletter, please visit www.knightsgear.com.

Welcome to the New KofC.org

The newly redesigned kofc.org is simple. It’s quick. It’s easy to use.

One of the most noticeable improvements to the site is that it now automatically adapts to match the screen size of your device. Now, whether you are using a laptop, tablet or smart phone, you will have a much easier — and more personalized — user experience.

The new design also offers specially designed pages for chaplains, so they can access resources and materials to help them best serve their parish and council’s needs.

Visit www.kofc.org/chaplains today.

The screenshot displays the homepage of the redesigned KofC.org website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the KofC logo and links for Home, About Us, and Contact Us. Below the navigation bar, there are several featured sections: 'ASSOCIATED SITES' with links to 'Venerable Michael The Archery', 'CATHOLIC PULSE', 'SAINT JOHN PAUL II NATIONAL SHRINE', 'Knights of Columbus MUSEUM', and 'FATHERS FOR GOOD COLUMBIA'. A large central banner features a photo of a group of athletes and the text 'SPECIAL OLYMPICS ATHLETES'. To the right of the banner is a search bar and a 'FIND AN AGENT' button. Below the banner, there are several smaller articles and sections, including 'CRUX', 'CATHOLIC PULSE', 'Spirit of Suffering', 'The Catholic Difference', and 'Special Olympics'. At the bottom, there are sections for 'OF PARTICULAR INTEREST', 'LATEST NEWS', 'NOTABLE ACTIVITIES', and 'OTHER'.

The Saints of Mercy: St. Joseph Benedict Cottolengo

During the Jubilee Year of Mercy, Pope Francis has asked that each of us become open to the mercy of God in our lives. We offer our "Saints of Mercy" series to distribute to your brother Knights, that they might realize the heroic aspect of mercy and the beauty of sharing it with others. This month features St. Joseph Benedict Cottolengo, whose feast day is celebrated on April 30.

As a young priest serving in Turin, Italy, St. Joseph Benedict Cottolengo saw firsthand the concerns affecting Europeans in the early 19th century. Epidemics, immorality and death swept through the countryside, leaving behind serious social problems and intense poverty. Moved by their suffering, Father Cottolengo saw his vocation to be one of charity and founded the Little House of Divine Providence in Turin. Its purpose was to provide shelter to those who had none, with the assistants, volunteers and staff becoming a family to all those who passed through its doors.

Other houses gradually were built, each addressing specific needs: mental illness, deafness, physical disabilities and terminal illness. Orphans were also welcomed in the homes, which Father Cottolengo referred to collectively as his "Noah's Ark."

"The poor are Jesus," the saint would tell his followers. "They are Jesus in person. As such, you must serve them."

Best Practice

Far too few young men and women are open to the idea of a religious vocation. In part, this attitude is the result of an increasingly secular environment. The decline of attendance at Mass, direct attacks against God and the Church, and the continued attempt to control religious freedom affect each young person discerning the path God has chosen for him. Often, young people walk away from the faith even after discerning a vocation, feeling unsupported by a culture that doesn't understand a life dedicated to Christ and the Church.

This month, as the Church celebrates the 53rd World Day of Prayer for Vocations on Sunday, April 17, encourage those in your parish — particularly any young men in your council — who are discerning the call to religious life. Such personal support can go a long way in helping such men and women face their concerns about finances, family disapproval or other questions.

Also, speak to your brother Knights and members of your parish about conducting programs and activities that promote vocations, such as the Refund Support Vocations Program (RSVP). The program is designed to help councils directly support seminarians and those in religious formation. RSVP is also an excellent way to show those not yet in formation that they do not have to travel such a path alone — they have support from many, particularly the Knights of Columbus.



Dominican Sister Malia Dominica Wong, vocations coordinator for the Diocese of Honolulu, displays a poster which was used as part of a presentation during the Year of Consecrated Life. The presentation was given to parishes, mission churches and schools in the Hawaiian Islands.

Monthly Suggested Activities

APRIL

- Join Catholics throughout the world in celebrating the 53rd World Day of Prayer for Vocations on April 17, Good Shepherd Sunday. The purpose of this day is to publicly "pray to the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his harvest" (Mt 9:38; Lk 10:2) and, as Pope Francis says, "to give thanks for the role of the community in each person's vocational journey."
- ♦ Organize a Holy Hour for vocations or lead prayers during your council and assembly meetings, asking the Lord to prompt men and women to respond to the call to a priestly or religious vocation.
- ♦ Encourage your council to take part in the Order's Refund Support Vocations Program (RSVP) to help seminarians and postulants with tuition assistance and personal expenses.

MAY

- Celebrate the feast of the Ascension (May 5), the memorial of Our Lady of Fatima (May 13) and Pentecost Sunday (May 15).
- ♦ Host a "Dry the Tears" prayer vigil in solidarity with the jubilee event conducted by Pope Francis at the Vatican. The event — to be held on the evening of Ascension Thursday — will focus on praying for those in need of consolation due to spiritual anxieties or physical concerns.
- ♦ Lead the parish in a rosary novena to conclude on the memorial of Our Lady of Fatima. Consider inviting a guest speaker to come for the novena and preach on the importance of Our Lady's presence in the early Church. You could also distribute the CIS booklet *Mary, Mother of God* (#324), which explains Mary's role in salvation history. For more information on this booklet and other materials offered by the Catholic Information Service, please visit www.kofc.org/cis.
- Support your local council members in honoring the mothers of your local community following weekend Masses on Mother's Day, Sunday, May 8. Invite your parish's Squires to organize a Mother's Day flower sale and encourage your brother Knights to support local mothers in need by donating supplies to women's shelters or crisis pregnancy centers.

Can't Wait to Receive Your Copy of Chaplain's Report?

If you would like to read the newest issue as soon as it becomes available, sign up for our monthly notification system. Through this system, an email containing a direct link to a digital copy of the latest issue of *Chaplain's Report* will be provided. You can sign up for the email by visiting www.kofc.org/chaplains.

Unless otherwise requested, chaplains will continue to receive a paper version of the newsletter.

Further inquiries regarding the electronic version may be sent to chaplains@kofc.org. You are also welcome to fill out the questionnaire available at www.kofc.org/en/members/for-chaplains/contact.html.

Upcoming Jubilee Events

May 5 — "Dry the Tears," a prayer vigil for all those in need of consolation



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1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06510-3326



St. Faustina Kowalska's Prayer to the Merciful Jesus

from the novena to the Divine Mercy

Most Merciful Jesus, from whom comes all that is good, increase your grace in men and women consecrated to your service, that they may perform worthy works of mercy; and that all who see them may glorify the Father of Mercy who is in heaven.

Eternal Father, turn your merciful gaze upon the company of chosen ones in your vineyard upon the souls of priests and religious; and endow them with the strength of your blessing.

For the love of the heart of your Son in which they are enfolded, impart to them your power and light, that they may be able to guide others in the way of salvation and with one voice sing praise to your boundless mercy for ages without end. Amen.

Father's Day — A Day of Commitment

Supreme Knight Carl Anderson has asked that Knights and their wives — along with all the married couples of a parish — demonstrate their commitment to marriage during a special Affirmation of Wedding Vows ceremony on June 19, which marks the celebration of Father's Day in the United States and many countries.

Chaplains and pastors should work closely with grand knights to plan the event. Wherever possible, chaplains should also provide a brief catechesis to the parish, explaining the Catholic understanding of marriage and the strength of the sacramental bond.

Consider beginning the service by welcoming a Fourth Degree honor guard to lead the married couples into the church. Be sure to make an announcement before the Mass inviting all married couples to join the procession and to then affirm their vows at an appropriate time during the liturgy.

Additional information and a program for the event can be found at www.kofc.org/domesticchurch.