



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

Overcoming Religious Illiteracy and Relativism

**Father Jonathan
D. Kalisch, OP**

Director of Chaplains and
Spiritual Development



Our Holy Father Pope Francis engaged in a question and answer dialogue with bishops during the recent World Youth Day in Kraków, Poland. When asked a question regarding how to share the Church's message of mercy given the global climate of terrorism, godless ethics and immorality, the pope responded: "We are suffering from religious illiteracy ... and a relativism that confuses one thing with another. And that is where catechesis is needed — lifelong catechesis, a catechesis that not only imparts ideas but accompanies people on their journey. Accompaniment is one of the most important attitudes — being ready to accompany people's growth in faith."

The Holy Father's comments highlight the great gap regarding the knowledge, practice and teachings of the Church and the faithful's adherence. To help overcome this religious illiteracy and relativism, it is incumbent upon each chaplain to explore ways to build faith formation and prayer into the monthly meetings of our brother Knights. Reading and discussing *Into the Breach* (#340) with its attendant study guide would be a good place to start. Promoting family prayer through our Building the Domestic Church program will reach beyond the members of the council, as will encouraging others to take advantage of the Catholic Information Service's free Faith Formation Correspondence Course.

Pope Francis went on to enunciate three aspects of lifelong catechesis needed to overcome prevalent religious illiteracy and develop missionary disciples, saying, "Today's religious illiteracy has to be countered with three languages, with three tongues: the language of the mind, the language of the heart and the language of the hands. All three together, harmoniously." May our K of C councils become the centers where every man and his family can find such faith formation.

Vivat Jesus!

A Parish That Goes Forth

Excerpts from Pope Francis' meeting with Polish bishops, July 27, 2016

Holy Father, our pastoral work is based largely on the traditional model of the parish community, centered on the sacramental life. It is a model that is still effective. Nonetheless, we are aware that, in our situation too, the circumstances of daily life are changing rapidly and challenge the Church to come up with new pastoral models. Pastors and faithful are a bit like those disciples who are attentive and active, but do not always know how best to exploit the missionary dynamism, interior and exterior, of the ecclesial communities. ... What do you suggest to us? Is there a specific way you can encourage us to build up the Church community in our world fruitfully, joyfully and with a missionary spirit?

I would like to stress one thing: The parish remains valid! The parish must remain. It is a structure that we must not discard; it is the home of God's people. The problem is how the parish is organized! There are parishes with ungodly parish secretaries who scare people off. Parishes with closed doors. But there also parishes with open doors, parishes where — when someone comes to ask a question — they are told, "Come in, make yourself at home, what can we do for you?" And someone listens to them patiently, because caring for the people of God requires patience; it takes effort!

A fine university professor, a Jesuit whom I knew in Buenos Aires, asked the provincial when he retired to be assigned as a parish priest in a city neighborhood. ... One day he told me: "Tell your professor of ecclesiology that there are two things missing in his course. ... First, the holy people of God essentially wear you out. And second, the holy people of God naturally do whatever they think best." And this wears you out!

Today being a parish priest is exhausting. ... How is this parish doing? What is it doing? What is its religious education program like? How well is catechesis being presented? Is the church open? ... I think of one parish in Buenos Aires [where] whenever an engaged couple arrived to get married, the secretary would immediately begin by saying, "Here are the prices."



Pope Francis gives a thumbs up as he arrives with World Youth Day pilgrims to a prayer vigil in Kraków, Poland, July 30.

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Did You Know

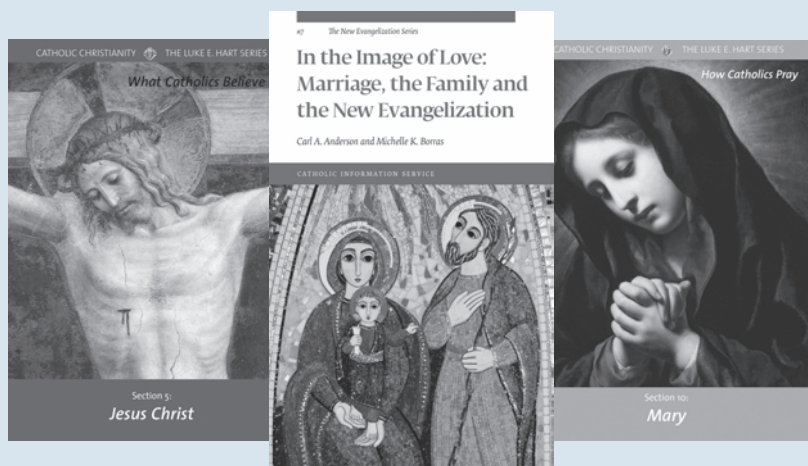
The Knights of Columbus Catholic Information Service (CIS) has been providing evangelization and catechetical materials for the Church since 1948.

Among CIS's quality publications is the 30-part Luke E. Hart Series by apologist Peter Kreeft. The series discusses the fundamentals of the faith and how Catholics should pray and live. Available in English, Spanish or French for a nominal fee at knightsgear.com, the booklets can also be down-loaded free of charge as PDFs or podcasts at kofc.org/cis.

CIS also offers a Faith Formation Correspondence Course. This is a 10-lesson introductory survey of the Catholic faith, with study materials and multiple-choice questions for each lesson. This course is very useful for chaplains as they seek to reinvigorate their parishes and councils.

Also available this month is the new Building the Domestic Church Series, featuring a variety of popular Veritas booklets on various topics such as love and marriage, family life, spirituality for busy parents and praying. Ask your grand knight today to order the CIS Domestic Church Series and kiosk for your parish. The complete set (which contains 15 copies of each book) is available to councils for the special price of \$150 (which includes shipping and handling). To place an order, council officers should email cis@kofc.org or call 203-752-4267.

The full range of CIS offerings can be found at kofc.org/cis.



Undertake a Spiritual Journey With St. John Paul II

Chaplains are invited to lead a pilgrimage to the Saint John Paul II National Shrine in Washington, D.C. Your pilgrimage can be tailored for your council, parish or school group. Mass is offered daily in the Redemptor Hominis Church, which seats up to 500 people, and a first-class relic of St. John Paul II is always available for veneration in the Luminous Mysteries Chapel. The expansive exhibit "A Gift of Love: The Life of John Paul II" is open every day. The exhibit's engaging combination of videos, artifacts, images and interactive displays teach and inspire pilgrims of all ages, whether they personally remember John Paul II or are becoming acquainted with him for the first time.

Also of special note is a new exhibit on the life and legacy of St. Thomas More. The exhibit runs from Sept. 16, 2016, through March 31, 2017, and explores the importance of Thomas More's stand for religious freedom. It is sponsored by the Knights of Columbus and features relics and artifacts from England that have never before visited the United States.

Please come to discover, learn and worship.

PARISH, FROM PAGE 1

This is wrong; parishes like this are wrong.

How do we greet people? How attentive are we to them? Is someone always in the confessional? In parishes — not those in the country but in city parishes and those on the highways — if there is a confessional with the light on, people always come. Always! A welcoming parish. These are the questions we bishops should be asking our priests: "How is your parish doing? Do you go out? Do you visit the imprisoned, the sick, the elderly? What about the children? Do you have a place for them to play? What about the oratory?" The oratory is one of the great parish institutions, at least in Italy. There kids play and learn a little catechesis. They come home tired, happy, and a good seed has been sown.

So the parish is important! There are those who say that the parish is no longer relevant because this is the hour of the movements. That is not true! The movements help, but the movements must not be an alternative to the parish. ... [The parish] has to remain as a place of creativity, a reference point, a mother, all these things. It is where that inventiveness has to find expression.

When a parish does all this, it becomes — with regard to missionary disciples — what I call a "parish that goes forth." For example, I think about one parish — a good example that was later imitated by many — in a town where children tended not to be baptized because people didn't have a lot of money. ... [The people of the parish addressed this problem] by visiting homes and seeing how many children were unbaptized. They would then prepare the families, and as part of the [parish's] patronal feast, they would baptize 30 or 40 children who otherwise would not have been baptized. ...

People don't get married in Church. I think of a priests' meeting where someone got up and said, "Have you considered why?" And he gave all those reasons we know about — the present culture, etc. But there are lots of people who do not get married because it is expensive! It costs money. ... In Argentina, we have two weddings: first you get married civilly and then you go to your place of worship and get married. Some — many! — do not come [to the church] to get married because they don't have the money for a big party. ... But the priests who are smart say: "Don't worry, I'll wait for you! On the days that the civil marriage office is open — from 11 to 12 and from 1 to 2 — I won't take my siesta!" So after the civil marriage, the couples come to the church, get married and leave in peace.

To be creative, try to go out and meet people [and] put yourself in people's shoes. Nowadays, parishes that are "offices" don't work because people are not disciplined. ... People in general are not disciplined. I think of my own country — if you don't go out to find them, if you don't approach them, they do not come. This is what it means to be a missionary disciple, a parish that goes forth. To go out and look for people, as God did when he sent his Son to find us.

I don't know if this is a simplistic answer, but I don't have any other. I'm not a brilliant pastoral theologian, I just say whatever comes to mind.

Best Practice of the Month: Uniting Your Two Families

A best practice among Knights of Columbus chaplains is bringing their two families — their parish family and Knights of Columbus family — together.

Father Paul Chovanec of Council 8293 in Houston, Texas, does this by welcoming Knights to host events at his parish, St. Justin Martyr Catholic Community. This year, the chaplain and his brother Knights coordinated parish and council schedules to host events during Knights of Columbus Family Week. Held Aug. 9-16, the week included a family dinner, various spiritual activities, several family Masses, a service for the sick of the parish and a multicultural Marian festival. The festival was only one of several multicultural events; the parish also hosted a Spanish bilingual event in the parish hall and a family Mass celebrated in Vietnamese.

Make your parish a true home of spiritual renewal by welcoming such activities. While they take planning and partnership, such activities will help unite your brother Knights with your parish families under the principles of charity, unity and fraternity.

United in joyful witness and generous service, parishioners and Knights can lead the world to the light of Christ. If you and your council have worked together on a similar project that demonstrates a chaplain's role in enhancing the spiritual life of Knights and their families, evangelization and outreach, or membership growth and retention, please send the information to chaplains@kofc.org.

New K of C Documentary on Mercy to Air on ABC

The Knights of Columbus' new documentary film, *The Face of Mercy*, will air on ABC affiliates across the U.S. from Oct. 16 to Dec. 16.

The Face of Mercy explores the history and relevance of Divine Mercy in our turbulent times. Meet a woman who found freedom in forgiveness after seeing her family wiped out by genocide, a former-NFL linebacker who walked away from football to share Christ's mercy with the homeless, a baseball player who traded MLB ambitions for the monastery, a priest with a drug-dealing past and a young widow who chose mercy towards her husband's killer. The stories remind us that Divine Mercy is not just a devotion of the past or some abstract theology — it is alive, it is present, and it will transform the world.

For information on broadcast times or to obtain a DVD for your parish, visit faceofmercyfilm.com.

Suggested Monthly Activities

OCTOBER

- ❖ As part of the Orderwide Charitable Service Week (Oct. 2-9), celebrate a special day of prayer at your parish. Invite Knights and their families, as well as any who may be interested in the missionary and charitable work of the Order. Become involved in your council's outreach programs, offering to bless food and other items being distributed to the community.
- ❖ Celebrate the legacy of St. John Paul II by leading a parish novena to end on his feast day, Oct. 22. During each day of the novena, distribute prayer cards (#4983, available in packs of 100 cards for \$3). Alternatively, recite the rosary, a favorite prayer of St. John Paul II, or share other resources that proclaim John Paul II's message for families, such as *Building the Domestic Church: The Family Fully Alive* (#10162).
- ❖ Ask your brother Knights to assist you in organizing a White Mass to honor and ask intercessory blessings for those in the medical field on Oct. 18, the feast of St. Luke, patron of physicians.
- ❖ Hold a rosary service on Sunday, Oct. 30, as part of the 5th Sunday Rosary Program. Rosaries and program materials are included in the *5th Sunday Rosary Kit* (SR-KIT). To place an order, please call 203-752-4270 or email fraternalmission@kofc.org.
- ❖ Prepare for the end of the Jubilee Year of Mercy by accompanying a pilgrimage of Knights and parishioners to your nearest Door of Mercy. Be sure to arrange this pilgrimage prior to the official closing of the Doors of Mercy in the dioceses of the world, Nov. 13.



NOVEMBER

- ❖ On the solemnity of all saints, encourage Knights in your council to attend Mass together, witnessing to the devotion and brotherhood that are an integral part of the Order.
- ❖ Remember deceased Knights, family members and parishioners during a memorial Mass. Also, consider sponsoring a cemetery cleanup that ends with a prayer service for the deceased.
- ❖ Host a parish event to coincide with the closing of the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica, which marks the end of the Jubilee Year of Mercy, Nov. 20. The event might include the opportunity for confession and a talk on mercy, or personal witness from a brother Knight who experienced or extended mercy.

Upcoming Year of Mercy Events

Oct. 7 — Marian Jubilee and Night of Reconciliation

Nov. 7 — Jubilee for Prisoners

Nov. 13 — Closing of the Holy Doors in the basilicas of Rome and dioceses of the world

Nov. 20 — Closing of the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica, marking the end of the Jubilee Year



A Year of Mercy banner is seen as pilgrims walk down the main road leading to the Vatican before they enter the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica, Jan. 21.



**KNIGHTS
OF COLUMBUS®**

CHAPLAIN'S
report

1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06510-3326

A Prayer for Peace and Protection

Offered by Pope Francis in Kraków, Poland, July 30, 2016

O almighty and merciful God, lord of the universe and of history.

All that you have created is good and your compassion for the mistakes of mankind knows no limits.

We come to you today to ask you to keep in peace the world and its people, to keep far away from it the devastating wave of terrorism, to restore friendship and instill in the hearts of your creatures the gift of trust and of readiness to forgive.

O Giver of Life, we pray to you also for all those who have died as victims of brutal terrorist attacks.

Grant them their eternal reward. May they intercede for the world that is torn apart by conflicts and disagreements.

O Jesus, Prince of Peace, we pray to you for the ones who have been wounded in these acts of inhuman violence: children and young people, old people and innocent people accidentally involved in evil. Heal their bodies and hearts, console them with your strength and, at the same time, take away any hatred and a desire for revenge.

Holy Spirit, consoler, visit the families of the victims of terrorism, families that suffer through no fault of their own. Wrap them in the mantle of your divine mercy. Make them find again in you and in themselves the strength and courage to continue to be brothers and sisters for others, above all for immigrants, giving witness to your love by their lives.

Touch the hearts of terrorists so that they may recognize the evil of their actions and may turn to the way of peace and goodness, of respect for the life and for the dignity of every human being, regardless of religion, origin, wealth or poverty.

O God, Eternal Father, in your mercy hear our prayer which we raise up to you amidst the deafening noise and desperation of the world. We turn to you with great hope, full of trust in your infinite mercy. Made strong by the examples of the blessed martyrs of Peru, Zbigniew and Michał, who have rendered courageous testimony to the Gospel, to the point of offering their blood, we entrust ourselves to the intercession of your Most Holy Mother.

We ask for the gift of peace and of the elimination from our midst of the sore of terrorism.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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