



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

Faith and Charity

We are called, especially during Lent, to be renewed in faith and to receive and share the love of God

Archbishop William E. Lori

Supreme Chaplain



The season of Lent will begin Ash Wednesday, Feb. 13. Experience teaches us that we can begin this season of repentance with many good intentions that soon fall by the wayside. Resolutions to pray more, fast or eliminate bad habits easily fade amid the wear and tear of our daily routine. As Lent approaches, we might be asking ourselves, “Will this year be different?”

In this Year of Faith, Pope Benedict XVI has invited us to observe the season of Lent in a way that will make a fundamental difference in our lives. He has asked us to reflect on the relationship between faith and charity, on how faith opens the door of our hearts to God’s love for us. When we truly believe that God is love (cf. 1 Jn 4:8) and that God loves us more than we could ever ask or imagine, then we rediscover our calling to be men and women of true and authentic charity.



(CNS photo/Erik de Castro, Reuters)

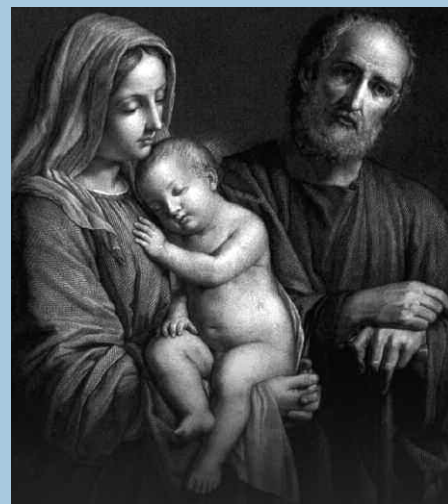
A LIVING FAITH

Many people think of faith as belief in a set of unproven and abstract ideas and arbitrary rules, a kind of impersonal belief system that more or less guides their lives. Others think it doesn’t matter much what they believe so long as they are nice to those around them, and for that reason they do not seriously fulfill their obligation to be well-formed in the faith. However, the Christian faith that we are called to profess is neither simply a personal philosophy of

life nor a feeling about God and others. It is something much more.

SEE FAITH AND CHARITY, PAGE 2

Knights Launch Family Prayer Initiative



In his Apostolic Letter *Porta Fidei*, Pope Benedict XVI expressed his desire that the Year of Faith be an opportunity to profess the in our homes and among our families, so that everyone may feel a strong need to know better and to transmit to future generations the faith of all times” (8).

To foster the development of the faith “in our homes and among our families” our Supreme Chaplain, Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore, authored a special prayer for families that is presented on page 4 of this newsletter. It is hoped that offering *A Family Prayer*

SEE FAMILY PRAYER, PAGE 2

FROM THE DIRECTOR’S DESK

Exercise an Apostolic Ministry

7. Exercise an apostolic ministry among the Knights and their families as a friend, teacher and sanctifier of souls.

- Be present in times of joy and celebration, as well as sorrow and solace.



Father John P. Grace, O.S.A.

Director of Chaplain Programs & Development

As we move on to Key #7, we do so keeping very much in mind this Year of Faith which we are celebrating. For us as chaplains, our apostolic ministry is offered in great scope amongst our council members and their families. We do not have to seek

them out. They are inviting us, offering themselves and willing to cooperate and work with us.

Father Michael J. McGivney’s life and example gives us ample guidance in his desire to found the Knights in the midst of, and especially because of, all the problems that were extant in New Haven in his day. Many needed moral and physical help as they lived in poverty, wretchedness and crime, in want of someone to be their “friend, teacher and sanctifier of souls.”

“The Knights of Columbus could not be expected to remedy every case, but the organization was Father McGivney’s best response to the scenes he witnessed every day” — so Douglas Brinkley and Julie Fenster say in their book, *Parish Priest*.

Circumstances may have changed since that time, but the parish and its families are still in great need of what a dedicated Knights of Columbus

SEE APOSTOLIC MINISTRY, PAGE 3

FAMILY PRAYER, FROM PAGE 1

together with their children will help parents begin to fulfill the duty described by Pope John Paul II: “By reason of their dignity and mission, Christian parents have the specific responsibility of educating their children in prayer, introducing them to gradual discovery of the mystery of God and to personal dialogue with Him” (*Familiaris Consortio*, 60). This prayer is featured on the *A Family Prayer* card (#10086). See page 4 of this newsletter for more information on this prayer card and details on how copies can be ordered by your council.

There can be no doubt that many of the troubles we face in society today can be traced back to the decline of the family. As John Paul II observed: “The future of humanity passes by way of the family” (FC, 86). The Knights of Columbus knows this to be true, and that is why in the years ahead our efforts to support and build up family life — especially among brother Knights and their families — will only increase. Please encourage the Knights and their families to offer this *A Family Prayer* together during this Year of Faith.

The Year of Faith began on Oct. 11, 2012, the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council and the 20th anniversary of the promulgation of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. The close of the Year will take place on Nov. 24, 2013, the Feast of Christ the King. In announcing the Year of Faith, Pope Benedict XVI called for a “renewal of the Church ... through the witness offered by the lives of believers.”

One of the ways that the members of our Order can help to foster and sustain that renewal is through prayer. As Knights, we know that we are called to love our neighbor as ourselves. Prayer is a source of unity and strengthens

our spirit and our good works. It offers Knights the opportunity to express our love of God, and the time to reflect and to seek the strength and inspiration for an authentic love of neighbor that reveals Christ to those we serve. As chaplains, please continue to encourage the members of your council and their families to pray in their personal lives, and with their families, parish and council.

As mentioned above, please urge your council to obtain the *A Family Prayer* cards and distribute them to members of the council and parish. Along with encouraging family prayer also work with your council’s officers to order *Year of Faith Prayer Booklets* (#10083) for your members, their families and other parishioners. This prayer booklet contains a collection of traditional prayers for use during the Year of Faith.

Also, promote participation by your members and other parishioners in the Orderwide Marian Prayer program honoring Our Lady of Guadalupe. In addition, also support the praying of the Rosary at council meetings and special events, and ask your council to distribute rosaries in your parish, to children receiving their First Communion and Confirmation, RCIA candidates and to newly married couples.

The Year of Faith is an opportunity for our councils to engage in activities ranging from faith formation to charitable works. Especially important among these activities is prayer. Please continue to foster family prayer among the members of your council and their families, and your parish in general.

FAITH AND CHARITY, FROM PAGE 1

Faith is a gift of the Holy Spirit given to us in the sacrament of baptism that enables us to accept as true and life-giving all that God has revealed and teaches us in and through the Church. We must daily invest our whole selves in this gift of faith, through which we embrace the truth that God is love. Through faith, we are caught up in the merciful and redeeming love which God’s Son, Jesus Christ, communicated to the world by his life, death and resurrection. Through faith, we accept the merciful love of God poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

Lent calls us to an authentic and renewed conversion to the Lord. During this time of grace, many in our parishes are making final preparations for the sacrament of baptism and entry into the Church at Easter. Those of us already baptized are called during Lent to rediscover the gift of faith so that at Easter we can sincerely reaffirm our baptismal promises to reject sin and the attraction of evil, and to profess our faith in God and in the Church.

The elements of a good Lenten observance remain the same: repentance of our sins by making a good and complete confession; forgiveness of those who have harmed or offended us; sincere efforts to pray better and more often; a resolve to deny ourselves, to forego wants and to manifest our need for God and his mercy; and a commitment to serve those in need, including some form of hands-on charity.

Our faith becomes more focused and alive when we pray, repent and extend ourselves in charity. We can then better recognize how much God loves us. We come to see Jesus not merely as a figure of history, but as alive and real, as the most important person in our lives. We grasp that he lived and died for our sake, because he loves us deeply and personally.

As the gift of faith comes alive and expands, we can never be nonchalant about coming to Mass. After all, the sacrament of faith,

baptism, continually leads us to the sacrament of charity, the Eucharist.

THE WITNESS OF CHARITY

In his letter introducing the Year of Faith, Pope Benedict said, “Only through believing, then, does faith grow and become stronger; there is no other possibility for possessing certitude with regard to one’s life apart from self-abandonment, in a continuous crescendo, into the hands of a love that seems to grow constantly because it has its origin in God.”

Once we have fallen in love with God through faith, then we will want to share the truth of his love and the love of his truth with those around us, including family members and friends who no longer practice the faith and those who seem to have no religious faith at all. The greatest act of charity we can offer others is to share with them the living Word of God — to help them discover the gift of faith that opens them up to the love of God in their lives.

We help make the faith credible to others when they can see we are responding to God’s love by leading lives of charity and love. This is why prayer and study of the faith combined with self-denial and service are so important. We engage in these activities through the grace of God so that our hearts will be expanded, so that we will believe and love more sincerely, and so that we can share the Gospel with others more forthrightly.

Charity, of course, is the first principle of the Knights of Columbus. Membership in the Order offers innumerable opportunities for men and their families to strengthen their faith and serve those in need. We grow together in friendship with the Lord through our fraternity, and this friendship is lived and cultivated by our practice of charity.

May this Lent, amid the Year of Faith, be a most fruitful season of grace for each of you and your families.

MEMBERSHIP IN THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS is open to men 18 years of age or older who are practical (that is, practicing) Catholics in union with the Holy See. This means that an applicant or member accepts the teaching authority of the Catholic Church on matters of faith and morals, aspires to live in accord with the precepts of the Catholic Church, and is in good standing in the Catholic Church.

Order Co-Sponsors “Ecclesia in America” Conference at the Vatican

From December 9, the feast of St. Juan Diego, to December 12, the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Knights of Columbus co-sponsored the “Ecclesia in America” conference at the Vatican. The conference, which addressed the history and future of the Church in America, was co-sponsored with the Pontifical Commission for Latin America and with assistance from the Institute for Guadalupan Studies in Mexico City.

Pope Benedict XVI addressed the conference at a private audience on Dec. 9.

Fifteen years after Pope John Paul II held the Synod for America to discuss the future of the Church in North, Central and South America, the conference brought together a diverse group from throughout the United States, Canada, Latin America, the Vatican, Europe and beyond to discuss the history, present situation and future work of the Church on the American continent — defined as from Alaska in the North to Argentina in the South.



Msgr. Eduardo Chavez and Supreme Knight Carl Anderson at the conference.

Members of the hierarchy from Latin America, the United States and Canada led working groups throughout the event that discussed various aspects of the Church in America, including such topics as: the New Evangelization, the Church’s role in education, the Church’s role in charity and its preferential option for the poor, and the role of the Virgin Mary in leading Christians in America to Christ.

Supreme Knight Carl Anderson addressed the conference about the importance of the laity’s role in the New Evangelization and spoke of Our Lady of Guadalupe’s example and Juan Diego’s cooperation with her and his bishop as excellent models of evangelization today.

Also addressing the conference was Cardinal Marc Ouellet, president of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America, who introduced the conference and celebrated the opening Mass. Msgr. Eduardo Chávez spoke on Our Lady of Guadalupe. Professor Guzmán Carriquiry discussed the needs of Catholics facing the continent in terms of the New Evangelization and focused on the need for authentic Catholic education and cooperation among the countries of the hemisphere.

According to Professor Carriquiry, secretary of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America, “We must remember that more than 50 percent of the world’s Catholics live in the Americas — a percentage that will grow in the coming decades. The fact that this conference is taking place at the center of Catholicism, with all our American churches present in communion with the Holy Father, is especially significant for us.”

Supreme Knight Anderson noted: “It is a tremendous blessing for the Church in America that the Vatican and the pope have taken such a strong interest in the faith in our hemisphere. America is truly the Christian continent. Each country in our hemisphere has a shared history of having had the good news of Jesus Christ take root there. In America, especially compared to many other parts of the world, the faith is vibrant — the legacy of the apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe and of the hard work of many missionaries, including St. Juan Diego.” He added, “This conference will explore particularly how Our Lady of Guadalupe’s example, and that of St. Juan Diego, can be guides for us in engaging in a new evangelization of our continent and in bringing the good news of Jesus Christ to those who may have forgotten or lost interest in it.”

Other highlights of the conference included reports from several members of the commission, presentations by Cardinal Seán O’Malley of Boston, and a recitation of the rosary at the statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe in the Vatican Gardens.

The conference concluded on Dec. 12 with a closing Mass and a general audience with Pope Benedict XVI, during which he sent his first-ever “tweet.”

council can and does offer. How many families received hope through the priestly ministry of our founder? How many families have been given hope by the Knights of Columbus today? How many families might have avoided troubles with the aid of the Knights of Columbus? Father McGivney’s dream is being realized daily because of dedicated Knights.

Our Holy Father said recently: “The Gospel parable (of the Good Samaritan), recounted by Saint Luke, is part of a series of scenes and events taken from daily life by which Jesus helps us to understand the deep love of God for every human being... . With the concluding words of the parable of the Good Samaritan, ‘Go and do likewise,’ the Lord also indicates the attitude that each of his disciples should have towards others, especially those in need.”

Surely, Father McGivney felt the need and the urgency to “go and do likewise.” His determination not to be deterred was apparent when he said, “We will meet with obstacles and rebuffs, but with God’s help we would not fail.” Is he not our exemplar when we consider the initial difficulties he encountered in founding the Order? He never lost sight of the horizon, and his role was to keep the founders from losing their focus. Yes, even today, we hear of councils that are floundering or maybe stalled, but the chaplain’s role can be vital as he encourages them to recover and regain their momentum, and is there with them “as a friend, teacher and sanctifier of souls.”

The chaplain is in an ideal position to be a sign of faith and hope for the council. Father McGivney sought to bring hope to a depressed situation by fostering a true love for one another, by making Christ alive in the midst of their material deprivation. He brought hope through his solid faith and his priesthood. Chaplains can be a sign of hope to councils that need encouragement and a great boost of faith to all. We have a mission to “go and do likewise.” Surely, we are in a privileged position.

As Christ came into this world, took on our condition and immersed himself in the local situation, we are also invited to become part of the councils within our jurisdiction. As Christ healed people and uplifted the whole human race, we too have the opportunity to help heal situations and bring both councils, and the members within, to a closer unity with Christ himself and with one another — and so benefit the whole Order. No more than Christ did, neither do we always find the ideal situation. But, we priests are indeed “other Christs.” We take the situation as is, bring a new understanding to what it really means to be people of faith, people full of hope, and so we go out to bring the love of God to all we meet. We undertake our projects because we believe in who we are, because we may even hope for the impossible, and because we love our God, our Church, our Order and one another. All we do must be undertaken as an “apostolic ministry among the Knights and their families as a friend, teacher and sanctifier of souls.”

Lent will soon be with us. May it be a special time in our lives this Year of Faith. Let us really live our faith this Lent, not as a penance but as a gift and the privilege it is to be Christian, Catholic and active chaplains and members of the Knights of Columbus.

Pray for us, and guide us, Father Michael McGivney, that we may continue to be imbued with your spirit. God bless and keep you all during this Year of Faith.

Rev. John P. Grace, O.S.A.

Director of Chaplain Programs and Development
john.grace@kofc.org (203) 752-4263



A Family Prayer Card Available to Councils

The Knights of Columbus has long recognized the need for families to pray together, both to strengthen the faith of individual family members, and their ties as a family. In this Year of Faith, to continue the fostering of prayer among our Knights of Columbus families, Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore, authored a special prayer for families that is presented on *A Family Prayer* card (#10086).

Along with the prayer, these cards also include a drawing of the Holy Family by Gianni Balestra, based on a painting by Sassoferrato. The original print is housed at the Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family in Rome. The image can be seen on page one of this

newsletter.

Please encourage your council to make use of these prayer cards and distribute more copies to council members and others so that this prayer will be offered in Catholic homes throughout your community. Your grand knight will soon be receiving a mailing with samples of the prayer card. Chaplains will also be sent samples and a reply postcard that you can use to obtain 100 complimentary cards. Larger quantities can be ordered by your council's grand knight or financial secretary; the cards are available in batches of 100 at a nominal cost of \$3 per batch, to defray shipping costs. *A Family Prayer* cards (#10086) are available in English, Spanish and French.

A FAMILY PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank you for the gift of our family. Enlighten our hearts and minds that we may live more fully this vocation to love.

In our daily life and work,
may we reflect the self-giving love which you,
O Father, eternally show with your Son
and the Holy Spirit.

Let your love be evident in the peace that reigns
in our home and in the faith we profess and live.
May our family always be a place of generosity,
understanding, forgiveness and joy.

Kindly give us the wisdom and courage
to be witnesses to your eternal design for
the family; and grant that the Holy Family
of Nazareth may always guide our path
to holiness as a family.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ,
your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the
unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever.
Amen.



Prayer composed by Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore, Supreme Chaplain. The cover image of the Holy Family is a drawing by Gianni Balestra, based on a painting by Sassoferrato. The original print is housed at the Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family in Rome. Used with permission.

Pope Addresses 'Ecclesia in America' Conference Attendees

Pope Benedict XVI addressed the attendees of the "Ecclesia in America" conference at St. Peter's Basilica on Dec. 9 following the Mass that officially opened the conference. Pope Benedict told those in attendance: "Dear friends, the love of Christ impels us to devote ourselves without reserve to proclaiming his Name throughout America, bringing it freely and enthusiastically to the hearts of all its inhabitants. There is no more rewarding or beneficial work than this. There is no greater service that we can provide to our brothers and sisters. They are thirsting for God."

