



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

The Power of Love

In Christ's victory over sin and death on the cross, God manifests his love and overturns our earthly expectations

Archbishop William E. Lori
Supreme Chaplain



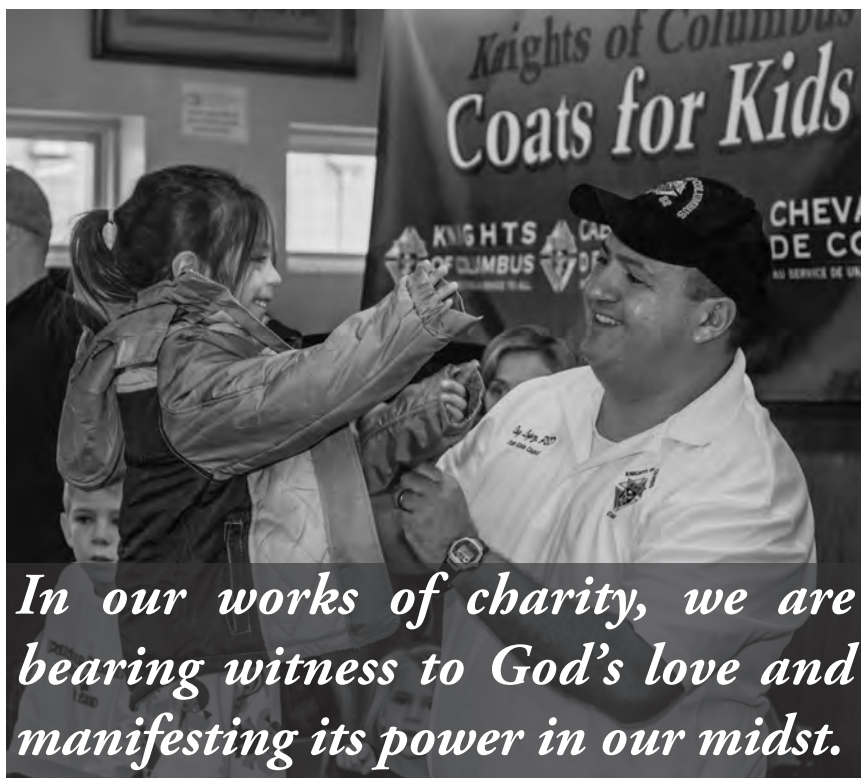
The words “power” and “love” don’t seem to go together. Power tends to evoke fear. Love tends to evoke trust. It is rare to find a person who would be described as both powerful *and* loving.

In fact, we may even experience that disconnect with regard to God. We rightfully address God as almighty, all-powerful. But we also speak of God as loving and merciful. A moral theology professor once asked his students whether they thought of God as “a monster or a marshmallow” — that is to say, a harsh, exacting, powerful God, or an indulgent God who gives us everything and expects almost nothing in return. It turned out that many of his students thought of God as having a split personality — condemning one minute and forgiving the next.

Years ago, when I was helping a young couple prepare for marriage, the bride-to-be told me she didn’t want a Scripture reading from the Old Testament because back then God was “angry,” whereas in the New Testament God was “a lot nicer.”

Similarly, people’s faith is sometimes put to the test by God’s seeming powerlessness. When a terrible tragedy or natural disaster takes place, the question is asked, “Where was God?”

SEE POWER OF LOVE, PAGE 2



In our works of charity, we are bearing witness to God's love and manifesting its power in our midst.

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

In the Spirit of *Deus Caritas Est*



Father John P. Grace, O.S.A.
Director of Chaplain Programs & Development

As I write, the period of *sede vacante* is just upon us. We live in historic times, and I believe we

have not really yet determined how to put it all in context. By the time you read this, our new pope may well be in the Cathedra of St. Peter, and the *sede* no longer *vacante*. Of course our complete admiration, obedience and filial love go out to him in prayerful offering of him to our Lord and Savior in his new office and deep responsibilities.

Much has been written about Pope Benedict XVI, and his own writings will live on. When he promulgated his first encyclical, *Deus Caritas Est*, some had expected something more “modern,” something more in keeping with the times, maybe something on social justice, and they did not expect such a statement as “God is Love!” But, through this statement Pope Benedict XVI delineated what his papacy was all about and this is the theme that underlined all his teaching and preaching and desire for the rest of his time as pope. He wished that we live out what John Paul II had requested: a civilization of love.

His great desire was to enliven a revitalization of faith in Christ, the Gospel and the Church through a New Evangelization. Primary evangelization is done by missionaries in places where Christ is not known — “to those regions awaiting the first evangelization.” Re-evangelization is done in places where Christ has been preached, but the baptized have not really been evangelized — “to those regions where the roots of Christianity are deep but who have experienced a serious crisis of faith due to secularization.” The New Evangelization, though a concept and term that was first offered by John Paul II in 1981 and has been used in Latin America for some time past, is what Pope Benedict wished to see enacted in our modern times throughout the Universal Church.

Seeing that Benedict XVI wrote his doctoral thesis on the writings of St. Augustine, the quotation from the *Confessions of St. Augustine* could also underline his office

SEE POPE BENEDICT XVI, PAGE 3

In truth, God is always powerful, truthful and loving. But his “thoughts are not our thoughts and his ways are not our ways” (cf. Is 55:8).

A POWER THAT SAVES

God transforms our ordinary ideas about power and love. Flawed human beings often use power for evil purposes, and earthly love is all too often self-absorbed. Citing St. Thomas Aquinas, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches: “Nothing can be in God’s power which could not be in his just will or his wise intellect” (271). God uses his power to create and redeem, to share his truth, to reveal his love and to confer his goodness on creation. In his fatherly care for us, he takes care of our needs and calls us to be his sons and daughters. By his endless mercies, he exercises power over sin and even death. His power is his love, for “God is love” (1 Jn 4:8).

Again and again, the Scriptures sing of God’s power to save. Mary was at the heart of God’s merciful plan for the salvation of the world. After announcing to her that she would become the mother of God’s son, the angel said, “Nothing will be impossible for God” (Lk 1:37). In response to her cousin Elizabeth, Mary praised God’s power and love: “The Almighty has done great things for me, holy is his name” (Lk 1:49).

The greatest manifestation of God’s power is the forgiveness of sins. When Jesus told a paralytic that his sins were forgiven, the Pharisees accused him of blasphemy: “Who but God can forgive sins?” (Lk 5:21). Similarly, the liturgy reminds us that God’s power is demonstrated most in his mercy. One of the Opening Prayers for Sunday Mass puts it this way: “O God, who manifest your almighty power above all by pardoning and showing mercy...” Truly, the Lord’s idea of power is very different from our own.

As we journey through Lent on our way to Holy Week, we experience a dramatic moment and are invited to share the power of God’s mercy and love. When Christ is condemned and led forth to be

crucified, he appears utterly powerless. He is deserted by his disciples. Even his heavenly Father seems to have abandoned him. Yet, it was in that moment that Jesus was most powerful. For, as he mounted the cross, Jesus took upon himself the sins of the world and, by means of suffering and death, robbed sin of its power to be the last word about human existence. Obedient to his Father’s saving will, Jesus used the instruments of suffering and death to defeat the power of sin and evil.

IN UNION WITH CHRIST

In the glory of the Resurrection, Jesus manifested his power over sin and death. As Blessed John Paul II often said, the love of Christ crucified is stronger than sin and more powerful than death. With Mary we can say, “The Lord has done great things for us, we are glad indeed” (Ps 126:3, cf. Lk 1:49).

Through the ages, we share in the power of Christ’s death and resurrection, the Paschal Mystery, principally through the Mass and the sacraments. Exalted at the right hand of the Father in heaven, Jesus truly remains with us in the power of his love in all the circumstances of our lives. Our Redeemer is never absent in our moments of triumph, in our daily routine, and in times of trouble and sorrow. In his wisdom, God does not prevent all sin and evil from occurring, but he accompanies us at every moment of our lives, constantly seeking to expand our capacity to receive and give his love. If we allow the Lord to comfort us by the power of his love, then whatever good we experience or evil we endure is for our salvation.

Meditating on the power of God’s love brings us to the first principle of the Order: charity. The charity that the family of the Knights of Columbus is called to practice flows from our union with Christ, crucified and risen. In our works of charity, we are bearing witness to God’s love and manifesting its power in our midst.

Through prayer, penance and charity may we open our hearts during this Lent as never before to the truth, beauty, goodness and power of God’s love!

New Knights of Columbus–Marist Poll Results

More than 8 in 10 Americans Favor Significant Abortion Restrictions

Four decades after the Supreme Court’s controversial decision in *Roe v. Wade* legalized abortion throughout the United States, a new Knights of Columbus–Marist Poll shows that more than 8 in 10 Americans (83 percent) favor significant restrictions.

The poll reveals that support for significant abortion restrictions has increased by four points since last year — rising from 79 percent to 83 percent.

Of the 83 percent who support significant restrictions on abortion, 10 percent believe abortion should never be permitted; 12 percent believe abortion should be allowed only to save the life of the mother; 34 percent would restrict abortion only to cases of rape or incest, or to save the life of the mother; and 27 percent would limit abortion to — at most — the first three months of pregnancy.

Just 11 percent would allow abortion at any time, while six percent would allow it during the first six months of pregnancy.

“After four decades of legalized abortion in this country, Americans have had ample time to understand that abortion has terrible

consequences,” said Supreme Knight Carl Anderson. “They understand abortion’s true legacy — a child loses life, and parents lose a child. And after witnessing the effects of abortion for the past 40 years, Americans are not legally or morally comfortable with that legacy. It is time for our country to chart a new course on this issue — a course that protects both the mother and the child.”

The survey also found that nearly six in 10 Americans (58 percent) believe abortion is “morally wrong.” And 84 percent of Americans say laws can protect both mothers and unborn children.

“For years polls have found that Americans divide on labeling themselves as pro-life or pro-choice,” said Lee Miringoff of The Marist Poll. “By asking more detailed questions about their specific views on abortion, we have been able to go beyond those labels to get a more complete picture of what Americans actually think about this issue.”

The newly released survey is the latest in a series of polls commissioned by the Knights of Columbus and conducted by The Marist Institute for Public Opinion.

2013 March for Life



Supreme Knight Carl Anderson, Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William E. Lori, Supreme Advocate John Marrella and Assistant Supreme Advocate Michael O'Connor greeted college Knights before the 39th March for Life.



Crowds make their way from the National Mall to the Supreme Court.



Hundreds of thousands of pro-life pilgrims gather on the National Mall at the kick-off rally for the 2013 March for Life.

POPE BENEDICT XVI, FROM PAGE 1

as pastor and teacher for the Universal Church: “Oh beauty ever ancient, ever new.” He had no intention of changing the Gospel or the teachings of the Church, but he did wish these to be seen in their proper light in our modern age, revitalized and reenergized. The Word of God and the teaching of the Church were indeed for him: “ever ancient, ever new.”

So, why do I write all this now, seeing that we have a fresh start, a new era at hand? Well, maybe we need to see the Knights through a comparable lens as Pope Benedict saw the Church. Time and again he called us back to basics — our love for Christ, his Church and one another. He asked that we renew our understanding of our baptismal charism through a revitalized spirituality based on a better understanding of the tenets of our faith. In other words, he encouraged a deeper spirituality coming from a reinvigorated formation in our faith. Has this resonated with our members and within our councils?

In recent years, we have underlined our desire for our Knights to look carefully into their faith formation so as to be more effective members of the “right arm of the Church.” We have also asked chaplains to give time to the spiritual welfare of the council members during the monthly meeting. In the *Ten Keys to Success as a Chaplain*, we have asked that they “involve members of in the sacraments and prayer” (Key #3) and also to “provide solid catechesis on faith and morals” (Key #5).

Our commitments and basis for the undertaking of our charitable projects as Knights must emanate from our spiritual lives and from a deep faith, not just in order to do good for others, laudable as that may be.

All this follows naturally from Pope Benedict’s first encyclical, where he says: “With regard to the personnel who carry out the Church’s charitable activity on the practical level ... they must not be inspired by

ideologies aimed at improving the world, but should rather be guided by the faith which works through love.” And again: “The personnel of every Catholic charitable organization want to work ... so that the love of God can spread throughout the world. By their sharing in the Church’s practice of love, they wish to be witnesses of God and of Christ, and they wish for this very reason freely to do good to all” (both quotations from *Deus Caritas Est*).

Speaking from his study window on February 24, 2013, Pope Benedict gave this as part of his final public message: “Meditating on this Gospel passage (the Transfiguration), we can draw a very important teaching from it. First of all, the primacy of prayer, without which the entire commitment of ministry and charity is reduced to activism.”

With deep and humble gratitude, we thank our beloved Benedict XVI for his pastoral leadership and for the depth of spirituality with which he has invited us all to celebrate anew our faith in action, in love for Christ and his Church. Let us, as Knights, be imbued with his spirit not only as he retires from the public scene, but as we accept and carry with dignity his legacy of love, so ancient and yet so new.

God bless and keep you all during this Year of Faith, and as we celebrate Holy Week and prepare to immerse ourselves in the Easter spirit.

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The New Evangelization Booklet Series

The Knights of Columbus Catholic Information Service (CIS) continues to develop its new series of booklets that cover the basic themes of the New Evangelization. Drawing on the teachings of Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI, the 17-part series is a response to Pope Benedict's challenge, "We must see to it that the beauty and contemporary relevance of faith is rediscovered." The series will show that the New Evangelization is not a new Christian message, but rather a new presentation of the joy of the Gospel, in all its transforming power, to the men and women of today. The five installments, What Is the New Evangelization? (#401), "I Believe in You": The Question of God in the Modern World (#402); A God Who is Threefold Love (#404); The Beauty of Holiness: Sacred Art and the New Evangelization (#418), and Technology and the New Evangelization: Criteria for Discernment (#419) are now available in print and as a PDF at kofc.org/cis. The series will also be translated into French and Spanish. More information will be available in this newsletter and at kofc.org/cis as the series is completed during this Year of Faith.

YEAR OF FAITH LECTURES NOW ONLINE

In response to Pope Benedict's call for a Year of Faith, the Blessed John Paul II Shrine scheduled a series of lectures on prayer and spiritual renewal. Recorded versions of the presentations are available at jp2shrine.org. For more information on the Year of Faith, visit annusfidei.va.

Honor Our Founder and Join the Guild

One of the best ways to honor our founder is to join the Father Michael J. McGivney Guild. The guild serves as a source for information about the life, works and spirituality of Father McGivney. The guild distributes informational materials about him, receives reports of favors granted through his intercession and oversees the distribution of relics. Guild members receive regular updates on the progress of the cause for canonization of Father McGivney, who has been declared Venerable by the Vatican, and are invited to participate in promoting devotion to him. Members of the Knights of Columbus are not automatically guild members and must elect to join the guild. *The Father Michael J. McGivney Guild Newsletter* is published bimonthly except July-August and is sent free to guild members. To join the guild, go to fathermcgivney.org or write to the address below. Requests for information about Father McGivney, materials regarding his cause for canonization and accounts of any favors received through his intercession can be directed to: The Father McGivney Guild, 1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06510-3326.

