



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 Fortnight Continues

Amid growing threats to religious liberty, Catholics are invited to join in prayer and reflection about our first freedom

by Most Rev. William E. Lori

Last year in Baltimore, after the opening Mass of the 2012 Fortnight for Freedom, I stood on the portico of the Basilica of the Assumption to greet members of the congregation as they exited the church. A young girl with her parents came up to me, handed me a little American flag and said, "That was fun! I hope we do this a lot!"

Everyone laughed, and I went on greeting the many people who had attended Mass. Later on, though, I thought about the little girl's reaction. Although her reasons for enjoying that Mass were probably not the same as mine, I do know that Catholics need to gather yearly to pray for religious liberty — not only for my generation but also for that little girl's. That is why I was delighted when the U.S. bishops decided to organize the Fortnight for Freedom again this year — a 14-day period of prayer, reflection and action

to promote a greater understanding of religious liberty in the two weeks leading up to Independence Day.

The Fortnight will officially begin with an opening Mass in Baltimore's Basilica of the Assumption on June 21 at 7 p.m. and end with a closing Mass on July 4 at noon at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. During this period, the Church celebrates the feast days of two saints who are champions of religious freedom: St. Thomas More and St. John Fisher. This year, dioceses across the United States will again be organizing Masses, prayer gatherings, study groups, rallies and many other activities in observance of the Fortnight.

JUNE 21 to JULY 4, 2013



FORTNIGHT FOR FREEDOM

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The Importance of Mothers and Fathers

As the traditional family is undervalued and under attack, the Church promotes marriage and family for the health of society.

Archbishop William E. Lori

Supreme Chaplain



No one loves us quite so tenderly and persistently as our mothers. Where would we be without them? They are the glue that holds families together. Even though Mother's Day is past, it is never too late to pay tribute to our mothers, living and dead, and to commend them to the Lord. Let me wager, however, that good mothers desire, more than anything else, good husbands and fathers. They deserve husbands who are loving and faithful. Mothers understand how important a father's love and example is for their children. And wives know that if they are united with their husbands in faith, values and their understanding of how to raise their family, their children will more easily grow and develop as God intended.

Good fathers sense this, too. They know that loving and respecting their wives is also important for children. The love of mothers and fathers is complementary. Fathers have their own brand of strong and tender love that

goes along with and completes the love that mothers have for their children.

TV AND REALITY

Together, loving husbands and wives create a space of safety, stability and nurturing for their children. Within this zone, they can hand on the faith of the Church and help their children develop spiritually, intellectually, psychologically and physically. Parents can also be role models who help their children come to understand how men and women relate to one another in a healthy, respectful manner.

Today, when we watch reruns of old family sitcoms such as *Leave It to Beaver* or *Father Knows Best*, we think of such shows as quaint, overly idealized portraits of what family life was like in the 1950s and '60s. Even



(CNS photo/Mic Smith)

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then, it was rare for a stay-at-home mom to do housework while wearing pearls and high heels, or for a dad to wear a tie around the house. The wisdom that the parents dispensed to their children on those TV shows can seem a little stilted to our 21st-century ears.

By contrast, contemporary sitcoms often present fractured families or “traditional” families in which both the husband and the wife are silly and foolish. This is especially true of fathers, who are seldom portrayed as intelligent, wholesome, positive influences on their children. Even if we don’t watch these shows, their influence is all around us in popular culture.

Baby boomers (of which I am one) may think that the Church wants all families to be like those TV sitcom families of old. At the same time, more than a few millennials may think that the Church’s teaching on marriage and family is hopelessly out of touch. But the Church’s teaching doesn’t take its cues from flickering screens, whether they’re old 12-inch televisions or iPads. Rather, the Church knows from reason, experience and revelation how important husbands and wives, mothers and fathers, are for the flourishing of children and society. The definitions of husband, wife, father and mother cannot be changed at will. This has to do with the structure of reality; it’s “how things are.” Furthermore, the Church recognizes that marriage is an image of God’s whole relationship with his people. The Church is the bride of Christ and our spiritual mother.

SOCIAL EXPERIMENTATION

I have been a priest for 36 years. Along the way, I have come to understand more profoundly how God blessed me from my youth with a loving family. I have also enjoyed the friendship of many families who live the vocation of marriage and family amid the struggles and joys of life. These families have taught me a lot about the title of “father” that is accorded to priests. We are called to be like good and loving fathers to the families of faith that we have been sent to serve.

How many societal problems would be headed off if husbands were attentive to their wives and present to their children! What a different scene it would be for so many children if they had the joy and security of sitting down to dinner with their parents and siblings with some regularity!

Often in distressed neighborhoods, it is the fathers who are missing. All too often, mothers must raise their children alone. Many do so heroically, and they deserve our respect, support and prayers. Yet, it should always be our hope and prayer that the number of strong, intact and loving families will grow.

As of this writing, we are awaiting decisions from the U.S. Supreme Court that, one way or another, will affect the future of marriage. Already, so-called same-sex marriage has become legal in a number of states. We should be rightfully worried, lest the high court open the door to legalizing same-sex marriage throughout the country, a move that will accelerate the movement for same-sex marriage around the world. To do so is to engage in massive social experimentation and restructuring, with little thought about the effect of these decisions on present and future generations.

It turns out that Mother’s Day and Father’s Day are more than gifts, greeting cards and gatherings. These holidays remind us to recommit ourselves to the vocation of marriage and family. May we, the family of the Knights of Columbus, remain at the forefront in defending and promoting this beautiful and challenging vocation.

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REFLECTING ON FREEDOM

Why is it so important to continue the Fortnight for Freedom? Some of the reasons are short-term. For example, most religious organizations will be forced to comply with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ contraceptive mandate on Aug. 1 of this year. This will compel religious organizations, regardless of their teachings, to include coverage for abortion-inducing drugs, sterilization and contraception in their employee health care plans. So-called accommodations proposed by the administration to allay the religious freedom concerns of religious organizations have not improved the situation and may even make it worse.

Further, if potential Supreme Court rulings legally redefine marriage or otherwise contribute to the redefinition of marriage throughout the United States, they could cause serious religious freedom issues for adoption agencies run by the Church and other religious groups. Such rulings could also raise concerns for immigration and humanitarian services offered by the Catholic Church and others.

The Fortnight for Freedom is an important opportunity to highlight these and other immediate religious liberty issues in the United States. It offers a sobering moment for all of us to realize how religious freedom has eroded over time and to ask for God’s help in protecting such a precious gift. But the Fortnight is an occasion for even more than that. It also represents a chance for us, as citizens and believers, to take stock of the importance of religious freedom in the American experience. *Our First Most Cherished Liberty*, a document from the U.S. bishops’ Ad-Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty that was published in April 2012, sums it up this way: “By the end of the 18th century, our nation’s founders embraced freedom of religion as an essential condition for a free and democratic society.” It goes on to implore us to protect the gift of freedom “not only for ourselves, but for all nations and peoples who yearn to be free.”

TRUTH AND DIGNITY

The American experience of freedom and the Church’s teaching on human freedom and dignity are not identical. However, the Church’s social teaching equips us as both citizens and believers to participate robustly in our democratic form of government and to evangelize our society with the truth about the human person and the conditions for human flourishing.

Dignitatis Humanae, the groundbreaking Vatican II document on religious freedom, explains that the principle of religious freedom is rooted in the dignity of the human person, who is “endowed with reason and free will and therefore privileged to bear personal responsibility” (2). This principle is known not only by revelation, but also by reason, and it allows human persons to fulfill their obligation to seek God. Hence religious freedom is rightly identified as a civil or constitutional right that is grounded in the truth about the human person.

According to *Dignitatis Humanae*, all persons “should be at once impelled by nature and also bound by a moral obligation to seek the truth, especially religious truth. They are also bound to adhere to the truth, once it is known, and order their whole lives in accord with the demands of the truth” (2).

To be sure, the freedom to embrace truth might sound like an odd idea in a culture that increasingly values opinion over truth and even rejects the very idea that truth about the nature of things is both knowable and binding on our consciences. Yet when the very notion of truth, especially the truth about the inviolable dignity of the human person, is denied, democracy itself begins to falter. The truth about the human person is the foundation of all our rights, including religious freedom.

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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.

Working with Council Leaders



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

Our fraternal year ends in a few weeks time. State conventions have taken place, our energy has been renewed, and there is an air of completion and anticipation in the air. In many states, councils and assemblies,

changes in leadership will take place as new officers step into their positions of responsibility. Within the Church structure also, this is often the time when priests are asked to undertake new assignments. Seeing that we are all here to serve, even as our lives change, it is the Church and the Order of the Knights that remain constant and invite us to share our graces and talents. The poem of Alfred Lord Tennyson comes to mind as he writes of *The Brook*: “*And draw them all along, and flow to join the brimming river, For men may come and men may go, But I go on forever.*”

Key #8 Work in collaboration with local, state and supreme council officers.

- Make use of Supreme Council materials for both annual programs and periodic special events, as well as materials such as prayer cards and posters.
- State deputies should adopt a special religious theme for their term in office — help them build on that theme at the local council level.

Materials, programs and events are all good and necessary, but the examples of Knights themselves are the greatest positive promotion we have. Our collaboration is a key issue as we work with local, state and supreme officers. When states and/or councils just “go their own way,” they have lost sight of our principles of charity, unity and fraternity. The encouraging presence and direction of the chaplain can often contribute to a new life for a council or an assembly that has fallen on difficult times and is in danger of becoming inactive. Help from other councils and assemblies, or if necessary, from the state council and Supreme Council, is readily available. Collaboration between all these areas is vital for our progress and in some ways the very reason for our existence.

The members of the Knights of Columbus have much to offer. In fact, I think we have everything to offer! Our manpower consists of over 1.8 million lives of goodness, willing hands ready to serve. There is an endless array of charitable activities offered everywhere the Knights are in action, ranging from larger scale events to the simplest act of just “being present” with a smile. Our Supreme Knight Carl Anderson has stated many a time: “I want the Knights to be wherever the Church is — active in every parish, Catholic school, V.A. hospital, etc.” We have so much to offer and should be a great blessing in every parish. The Supreme Knight has stated that he believes we have an obligation to offer membership to every eligible Catholic man, because being a Knight can help him develop his faith, be a better father and husband, and contribute to Church and world. What a blessing for any parish! The chaplain can help other priests (and bishops) understand what the Knights can offer to the parish, to the diocese, to the Church. In fact, the chaplain can easily be one of the best recruitment and retention persons for a council.

There is an abundance of materials available for all Knights of

Columbus service and recruitment events. Why not make use of them? They are available from the Order’s Supply Department, which can be reached by calling 203-752-4214. Catalogs for supply and promotional items are sent out each year in the Surge Kit, and can also be ordered from the Supply Department. Samples of other items as well as handbooks and additional materials are also included in the Surge Kit sent to every council. Again, let me urge you to MAKE USE OF THEM! The Catholic Information Service (CIS) at the Supreme Council also has

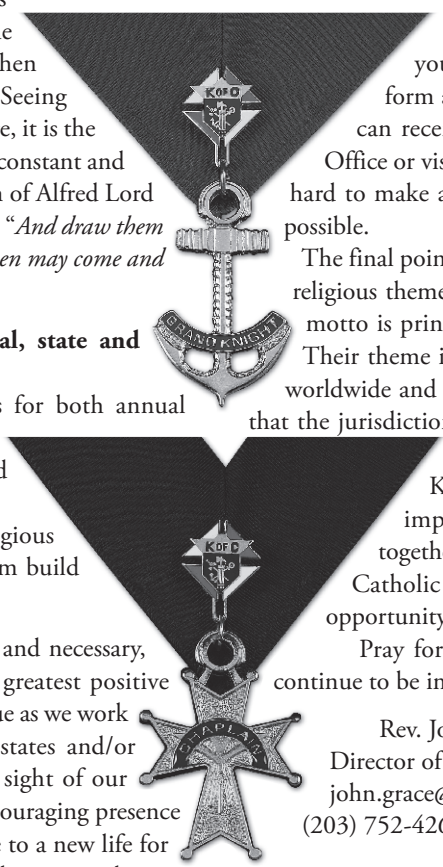
a most valuable collection of booklets that will satisfy much of your faith formation craving. When last did you read one of these? They are available in printed form and also online in English, Spanish and French. You can receive printed booklets from the CIS at the Supreme Office or visit kofc.org/cis. For years, CIS has been working very hard to make all of our resources available in as many formats as possible.

The final point in this key is: State deputies should adopt a special religious theme for their term in office. Most often this theme or motto is printed on their notepaper and engraved on lapel pins. Their theme is never out of keeping with the trend of the Order worldwide and inevitably enhances the Gospel or spiritual message that the jurisdiction wishes to emphasize at this time. Maybe a word

from the pulpit every now and again will help the Knights and others in the congregation refocus on the impetus of our four principles, bringing everyone together in charity and fraternity, by uniting them as true Catholic patriots in this Year of Faith, as we use every opportunity to evangelize anew.

Pray for us, and guide us, Father McGivney, that we may continue to be imbued with your spirit.

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A Column of Strength and Devotion

Knights of Columbus helps restore a centuries-old fresco of Mary in St. Peter’s Basilica

During the Year of Faith, the Knights of Columbus supported the restoration of the fresco of the Madonna of the Column, known also as *Mater Ecclesiae* (Mother of the Church) in St. Peter’s Basilica. The fresco is shown here before and after the restoration.



(Photos by M. Falcioni, Fabbrica di San Pietro in Vaticano)



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Because this principle applies to all people, the bishops have expressed their support not only for religious organizations that are in court fighting to preserve the freedom of church institutions from government interference, but also for private employers who are in court seeking to retain the freedom to run their businesses according to Christian principles.

UNITED IN PRAYER

There is an increasing tendency on the part of many in our society to reduce religious liberty almost solely to freedom of worship. This we must resist. Religious freedom surely includes freedom of worship, but it also includes the freedom for private individuals to live their faith in the workplace and to advocate in the public square those truths and values that flow from faith. Moreover, authentic religious freedom includes the freedom of churches and church organizations to conduct their schools, social services and other activities in accordance with their beliefs and teachings.

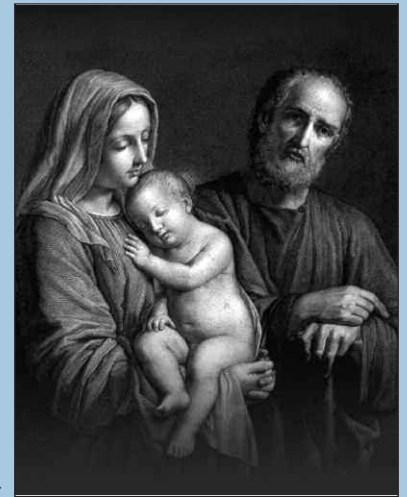
Precisely because of this tendency to reduce religious freedom to freedom of worship, we need to come together in prayer. We need to pray as individuals and families. We need to pray in our Knights of Columbus council meetings and at conventions. And we, the family of the Knights of Columbus, need to make every effort to participate wholeheartedly in the national and local activities of this year's Fortnight for Freedom.

May we unite in protecting our first and most cherished freedom, religious liberty!

ARCHBISHOP WILLIAM E. LORI of Baltimore is the supreme chaplain of the Knights of Columbus and chairman of the U.S. bishops' Ad-Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty.

'A Family Prayer' Cards Available

In his Apostolic Letter *Porta Fidei*, Pope Benedict XVI expressed his desire that during the Year of Faith "we will have the opportunity to profess our faith in the Risen Lord in our cathedrals and in the churches of the whole world, 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," Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore authored a special prayer for families that is presented on "A Family Prayer" card (#10086). It is hoped that offering this prayer 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). 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. Quantities can be ordered by your council 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 Giovanni Balestra, based on a painting by Sassotterato. The original print is housed at the Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family in Rome. Used with permission.