



# 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 SUPREME KNIGHT

### Embracing Martin Luther King's Principles of Nonviolence

*Editor's note: In October, just hours after the mass shooting in Las Vegas, a group of Christian leaders — including Supreme Knight Carl Anderson — gathered in front of the Martin Luther King Memorial in Washington, D.C., to call on religious leaders to sign a letter endorsing the nonviolent approach advocated by the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.*

*As we head into January and February, which mark occasions for countrywide nonviolent pro-life events and Black History Month respectively, we offer the supreme knight's remarks for you to share with your parish and community. Visit [usccb.org/issues-and-action](http://usccb.org/issues-and-action) to discover additional resources addressing cultural diversity.*

Sixty years ago, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. made the case for political nonviolence in the face of racism, segregation and violence.

In doing so, he staked out the moral high ground. In his essay "Nonviolence and Racial Justice," published in the *Christian Century* in 1957, Rev. King laid out a path forward for our country. He wrote:

"At the center of nonviolence stands the principle of love. In struggling for human dignity, the oppressed people of the world must not allow themselves to become bitter or indulge in hate campaigns. To retaliate with hate and bitterness would do nothing but intensify the hate in the world. Along the way of life, someone must have sense enough and morality enough to cut off the chain of hate. This can be done only by projecting the ethics of love to the center of our lives."

Things didn't immediately get better after 1957. There were church bombings, there were killings and beatings of peaceful protestors and of people registering to vote. Things looked bleak, and the violence was real, but Rev. King held that high ground. And people rallied to him.

He understood that there were two non-negotiable principles in our democracy: First, that all are created equal and are entitled to the equal protection of our nation's laws. Second, that in our democracy, there can be no place for political violence.

Today our country faces many challenges, including a renewed racism by groups like the Ku Klux Klan.

I know well the dangers of racism and hatred. For a decade, I served as a member of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. And today, I lead the 2 million men of the Knights of Columbus, an organization that has long assisted the cause of racial equality.

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## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

### It All Can Be Different

**Father Jonathan D. Kalisch, OP**

Director of Chaplains and Spiritual Development



Recently I spent a week on retreat with the Hermits of Bethlehem in Chester, N.J. I was beautifully surprised that a place like this exists and by my attraction to the silence and prayerful solitude. The experience of being unplugged from the constant barrage of emails, text messages and various media left me thinking that it all can be different.

As we begin the new year, it strikes me that the same can be said about the local Knights of Columbus council experience; it all can be different. Here at Supreme, we continue to encourage local councils to focus on faith formation and spiritual leadership, but such things can only take hold with the renewed involvement of our Knights in the field. Central to their success is the role you play as chaplain to our brother Knights and their families. You know their strengths and challenges and can pastorally elicit the new engagement needed to make their efforts more evangelical.

I urge each of you to regularly meet with the leadership of your council to chart a plan to equip the council to become a "field hospital" ready to receive and form new members. A key aspect along this journey is the individual member's spiritual growth and faith formation so that he can lead his family in prayer and increased sacramental practice.

Surveys of potential Knights show that younger men seek an opportunity to grow in the mature practice of their faith. What does your council have to offer such a man? Moreover, before planning any K of C meeting or function, leadership should ask whether a potential brother Knight could justify being away from his wife and children in order to participate in this particular event. If not, how can it be transformed to become an effective use of each Knight's time? These questions must regularly be asked in each council. Ultimately, a local council may need to change its culture in order

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# Lenten Observance: What Should this Look Like for Knights?

Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William Lori recommends that Catholics observe Lent by making a good and complete confession; forgiving those who have harmed us; making sincere efforts to pray better and more often; resolving to deny ourselves and manifest our need for God; and serving those in need through hands-on charity.

But what does this look like for a Knight? It means that we, as chaplains, must be there to support our brothers. With our help, each of them can rediscover the gift of faith. Like a personal trainer, we must provide encouragement, motivation and a plan for success.

First, start with a simple message at your council meeting: “Lent, which is just around the corner, is a time when we are obliged to renew our faith. We discipline ourselves not for some new diet fad or trend, but to remind us that we too often put our desires before God. This Lent, let us work as a council to pray and sacrifice for each other.”

Then ask each Knight to recommit to carrying his K of C rosary and praying at least one decade on it each day. Also encourage them to read the Luke E. Hart Series’ *Penance* (#115) or another appropriate Lenten book. Invite them to pray the Stations of the Cross at your parish and to bring their families to Sunday Mass each week.

Finally, encourage them to dedicate themselves to hands-on charity, such as a 40 Cans for Lent drive. Above all, invite them to really and truly consider the gift of being Catholic, urging them to do their best to witness to what it means to be Catholics, to be Knights.



*Knight Marcus Garcia designed and built the wooden cross with 40 cans which is emblematic of the “40 Cans for Lent” campaign of Our Lady of Guadalupe Council 8306 in Helotes, Texas.*

## Take a Look at the Knights in 2017

As you begin the new year, visit [kofc.org](http://kofc.org) and take a look at the highlights of the Order throughout 2017! To stay up-to-date on all Knights of Columbus spiritual initiatives throughout the new year, regularly check out the information on our website and follow us on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.

### **DIFFERENT**, FROM PAGE 1

to emphasize spiritual formation and faith fellowship in place of the business meeting culture.

Imagine if your council leadership did most of its business during an officers’ meeting. Suppose you trained and equipped several brother Knights to be faith formation leaders in the council, men who could speak personally about the faith and lead other men by witness and example. What if the main monthly meeting began with a Holy Hour, Stations of the Cross, *Into the Breach* discussion or a faith-formation video? This could be followed by a brother Knight’s witness and your teaching on a faith formation or spiritual topic. Finally, end with a fraternal social gathering. Our brother Knights and the many potential future Knights are starving for such an approach.

It all can be different. *Vivat Jesus.*



### **NONVIOLENCE**, FROM PAGE 1

A century ago, long before the U.S. Army integrated and five decades before the Civil Rights Movement, the Knights of Columbus stood alone as the only organization to integrate hospitality centers for our troops during World War I.

A decade later, we commissioned W.E.B. DuBois to write a black history of the United States, seeking to rectify history books that ignored the African American contribution to our country.

And throughout the 1920s, we publicly stood against the bigotry of the Klan.

Today, as then, we stand united in the principle that all are created equal, and we reiterate the words of Pope Francis last month calling for “the rejection of all violence in political life.”

We believe the way of nonviolence is as relevant today as ever. Fifty years ago, Rev. King summarized the stark choice we face today in the title of his last book, *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community*. He said: “Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”

The purpose of the letter we have circulated, and of our gathering today, is to urge all of our fellow countrymen to embrace these words, to bring our country together, and to commit to nonviolence. Such a commitment is the way forward in achieving not only peaceful protest but also in having important conversations that help us find civility in our public discourse and unity as Americans working together for the common good.

## Join the Pro-Life Movement Online!

As spiritual and moral leaders in the Knights of Columbus, we chaplains should encourage our brother Knights to publicly share messages about the sanctity and dignity of all life. Chaplains can do this by encouraging their brother Knights to join the pro-life movement online. It only takes seconds to upload a photo to Instagram, Facebook or Twitter with the hashtags #MarchforLife and #KofC, but in these few moments, Knights can make the pro-life message known across the world! Let’s be a part of a conversation so big it can’t be ignored!

## Upcoming Activities — February

Join the USCCB in celebrating Black History Month in your parish and community. Visit [usccb.org/issue-and-action](http://usccb.org/issue-and-action) to discover resources on celebrating the cultural diversity of the Church and addressing the racial divide.

Mark the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes by supporting the 2018 Warriors to Lourdes Pilgrimage. For information, visit [warriorstolourdes.com](http://warriorstolourdes.com).

Encourage Knights and parishioners to incorporate faith formation into their Lenten activities (e.g., hold a faith-centered talk during the council's next fish fry).

Host a celebration of Catholic marriage at your parish on Feb. 13. Be sure to remind couples that you're holding



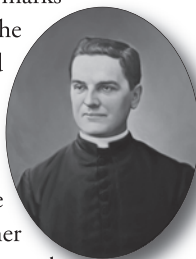
your celebration a day early because Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday will fall on the same date this year. Because of this, Feb. 14 is a day of fast and abstinence — so any Valentine's Day chocolates should be eaten a day early! To help plan the event, turn to the *Affirmation of Wedding Vows* booklet (#30003),

available at [kofc.org/domesticchurch](http://kofc.org/domesticchurch).

Organize a Lenten men's retreat for parishioners and members of your council. If your parish calendar permits, lead a full weekend of reflection to offer a greater opportunity for spiritual enrichment, contemplation and meditation on the passion of our Lord.

## The Legacy of Father McGivney

One of the best ways to celebrate this Founder's Day, March 29 (which this year also marks the date of Holy Thursday), is to join the Father Michael J. McGivney Guild and encourage others to do the same. The guild serves as a source of information about the life, works and spirituality of Father McGivney. Members receive regular updates on the progress of Father McGivney's cause for canonization through the *Father Michael J. McGivney Guild Newsletter*, which is published five times a year. Members of the Knights of Columbus are not automatically guild members and must elect to join. All men and women can join the guild — it's free and even non-Knights and non-Catholics are eligible. For details visit [fathermcgivney.org](http://fathermcgivney.org).



## BEST PRACTICE OF THE MONTH “Bro, Do You Even Pray?”



Most everyone makes New Year's resolutions. It would not be far-fetched to say that nearly everyone breaks them. Many Catholics give the excuse that Lent, rather than the new year, is a more appropriate season for renewal and repentance — the problem is, we often let Lent slide away from us as quickly as our New Year's resolutions did.

A best practice among chaplains is to resolve to embrace Lent, creating opportunities for prayer and growth in holiness. This is how Pope St. John Paul II Council 14188 at Harvard University in Cambridge, Mass., observed Lent just a few years ago. Their virtue initiative — titled "Bro, Do You Even Pray?" — began on Ash Wednesday and highlighted prayer, charity, penance, devotion and fraternal correction. While the program was designed for college-aged Knights, it is easily adapted for all councils and parishes, as we've done below:

### PRAYER

- The council organized community prayer sessions, offering the public an open invitation to witness and pray the rosary together. To adapt this for your own council, simply announce or post a daily time that you will pray the rosary or Divine Mercy chaplet in front of the Blessed Sacrament, and encourage all your brothers to show up when they can. If this means they have their kids in tow as they head home from a school event, welcome the whole family to pray with you. Don't make this an exclusive "members-only event."
- If it's not reasonable with your parish calendar to host a public time of prayer, encourage each Knight to instead say a short prayer every day at 3 p.m. It could be a prayer to the patron of the council or a few short words from the Divine Mercy chaplet, such as "Jesus, I trust in you." Imagine the power of every single Knight in your council saying these words together at exactly the same time!
- Ask each Knight to say the prayer before a crucifix on the Fridays of Lent.

### CHARITY and PENANCE

- Charity begins at home. Lead your brother Knights and parishioners to collect items for local food kitchens through the 40 Cans for Lent drive.
- Welcome everyone to experience Christ's healing love in confession. Be sure to post the times when confessions are heard at your parish and throughout the diocese.

### DEVOTION

- Invite all brother Knights to attend Sunday Mass every week with their entire family.
- Organize a men's Bible study night.

### FRATERNAL CORRECTION

- As brothers, we are called to build up one another. As chaplains, we are obligated to keep our brother Knights accountable for their transgressions; this Lent, let us do so with utmost charity and encouragement.

As Council 14188 wrote, "The council officers hope that all brother Knights will consider integrating at least one of these activities into your everyday lives throughout Lent (and maybe beyond). Truly, we can all stand to become better Catholic gentlemen, as our Order calls us to do."

*Special thanks to Council 14188 for this best practice. If you or your council has established a similar practice that enhances the spiritual life of your brother Knights, please send the information to [chaplains@kofc.org](mailto:chaplains@kofc.org).*



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## Prayer for a Renewed Respect for All Life

*From the USCCB's "Holy Hour for Reparation and Healing for the Anniversary of Roe v. Wade." During January, especially in the days before and after the March for Life, we encourage each chaplain to offer the below prayer with his council and parish. Details on the Holy Hour may be found at [usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/](http://usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/).*



O God, source of all life and goodness,  
you fashion human lives in your image and likeness,  
and through your love, give each human life  
dignity, sanctity and priceless worth;  
awaken in every heart  
new reverence for the least of your children,  
and renew among your people  
a readiness to nurture and sustain  
your precious gift of human life.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.