



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

Lent and Returning Home

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Director of Chaplains and Spiritual Development



Lent offers a grace-filled opportunity to invite family members and fellow Catholics to deepen their faith by returning to the practice of the sacraments. The 135th anniversary of the founding of the Knights of Columbus, celebrated on March 29, provides a further opportunity for Knights of Columbus members to refocus their efforts on Father McGivney's vision of reaching out to men who are not in the pews.

Brother Knights should participate with their families in the Lenten missions, talks and devotional practices of their parish. Councils could offer to serve a simple Lenten meal or fish-fry either before or after parish events, such as the Stations of the Cross and other devotions at the church. During the meal, councils could

distribute *Building the Domestic Church: The Family Fully Alive* (#10162), *Into the Breach* (#340), or other CIS faith-formation booklets; view *The Face of Mercy* documentary about Divine Mercy and stories of conversion; or invite attendees to share short testimonies.

In addition, chaplains should encourage brother Knights to give witness at the council meeting. This witness could focus on reaching out to fallen-away Catholics, praying and going to confession as a family, or one's life of faith. Invite your council members to pray for everyone in your parish's RCIA by name, asking them to take the lead in welcoming these individuals to the parish family. As chaplains, we know the kindhearted goodness of our brother Knights; it is our duty to invite them to witness to their faith and to help us seek and find the lost sheep.

Vivat Jesus!

Lenten Reconciliation

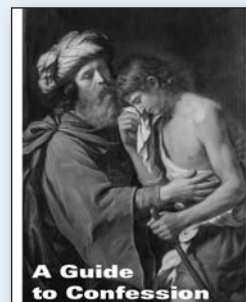
Christ invites us to respond to evil through a serious examination of our own lives and the seeking of forgiveness. We should encourage our brother Knights to frequently seek Christ's mercy in the sacrament of penance — especially as we begin to prepare for the season of Lent.

To assist our brother Knights, their families and other Catholics in receiving the sacrament of reconciliation, we offer *A Guide to Confession* (#2075). This small flyer provides a concise description of the sacrament and offers preparatory steps to receiving it. It is available in lots of 100 for \$3.

Ask your council to order the pamphlets and place them in your church vestibule. Give the cards to participants in RCIA and religious education classes. Make them available to parishioners and all council members. Promote the availability of the pamphlet through your council in the parish bulletins.

In addition, Catholic Information Service offers *Penance* (#115) as part of the Luke E. Hart Series. Also available is the Domestic Church series *St. Joseph: Our Father in Faith* (#328). Both these booklets are perfect to make available to your parishioners as the Church marks the beginning of Lent on March 1 and the feast of St. Joseph on March 19.

For more information, visit kofc.org/cis or write CIS, P.O. Box 1971, New Haven, CT 06521.



PREPARING FOR RECONCILIATION
In the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession), we encounter Jesus Christ, who after rising, the dead breathed the Holy Spirit on his Apostles — the first priests — and gave them the power to forgive sins in his name (Jn 20:23). The Heart of Christ burns with love for us and he wants us to experience his immense and unfathomable mercy by confessing our sins and receiving his forgiveness. This Sacrament gives us the consolation of God's pardon and strengthens our relationship with Christ and his Church.

A Lenten Prayer for Priests

“I do not run aimlessly;
I do not fight as if I were shadowboxing.
No, I drive my body and train it,
for fear that, after having preached to others,
I myself should be disqualified” (1 Cor 9:26-27).

May this time of Lent be a time of penance and purification,
of mercy given and received.

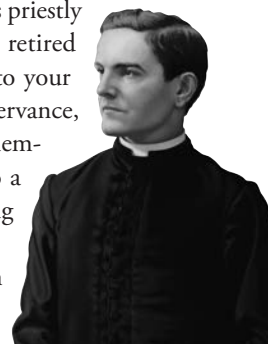
May it be a time in which we rediscover,
in the daily celebration of holy Mass,
the importance of our relationship with the Eucharist,
and rediscover that relationship itself
as a source of life for ourselves and our brethren. Amen.

Adapted from the Congregation for the Clergy's 2013 letter to priests for the beginning of Lent.

Honor Father McGivney Through a “Clergy Night”

As we prepare to mark Founder's Day and remember Father McGivney's faithful dedication to his priestly vocation, consider welcoming local pastors, retired priests and members of religious communities to your parish for evening adoration or, as a Lenten observance, the Stations of the Cross. Afterward, council members can greet the priests and welcome them to a simple reception to thank them for their ongoing dedication to the consecrated life.

More ideas on hosting on a clergy night can be found in the *Chaplain's Handbook* (#945).



Join. Pray. Report.

As a Knights of Columbus chaplain, you directly carry on the spiritual vision of Venerable Father Michael McGivney. One of the best ways you can help that vision endure is to join the Father McGivney Guild and encourage all council members to join as well.

The guild promotes devotion to our Order's founder. It serves as an official source of information about his life, works and spirituality; receives reports of favors granted through his intercession; and oversees the distribution of relics. The intentions of guild members are included in weekly Masses, periodic special Masses and novenas. Members also receive a regular newsletter with updates on the cause for canonization, reports of favors received and more.

Presently available from the guild is a second-class relic — a thread from Father McGivney's burial cassock, attached to a card containing a prayer for his intercession. You may order the relic card for yourself or others, especially in cases where extraordinary intercession is needed, such as a serious illness or personal crisis. As a chaplain, please encourage and lead Knights in prayer invoking the aid of Father McGivney and carry a relic card with you when visiting the sick.

Many Knights want to know how the cause for canonization is going. As we reported in the latest guild newsletter, two possible miracles have been fully investigated by the Vatican. Unfortunately, neither was judged miraculous according to the Church's high standards, though we can safely say that the healings in both cases were extraordinary. We are fortunate to have other reported healings in the early stages of investigation.

There are three key elements to promoting Father McGivney's cause and finding a miracle. They are: Join. Pray. Report. Welcome all men and women to join the guild — it's free and even non-Knights and non-Catholics are eligible to join. Make sure you and the council pray regularly — every day, if possible — for Father McGivney's canonization. Report any favors, large or small, to the guild for inclusion on the website and in the guild newsletter.

Remember that as a chaplain you are, in a sense, standing in the place of Father McGivney at council meetings. Make sure that your brother Knights know about his life, work and message so that they may become his true spiritual sons who look to him for assistance in their trials. Father McGivney had a simple yet deep approach to spiritual life that can be summed up in these few words: He was a parish priest. His outlook was not of the cloister or the mountaintop. To borrow an image from Pope Francis, he bore the smell of the sheep, involved in the daily life and perpetual struggles of his immigrant congregation, who were not accepted in 19th-century America. He preached and modeled love of neighbor to his people, helping them to move closer to Christ. He went beyond pious words to develop practical ways of helping struggling families, especially those which lost a breadwinner to early death. That was the reason he founded the Knights of Columbus as a public mutual benefit and burial society — he knew families needed more than spiritual support; they needed practical financial help.

You can learn more about Father McGivney by ordering *A Model for Our Times: The Heroic Witness of Venerable Father Michael McGivney* (#5044). This booklet is available for free; contact the Father Michael McGivney Guild at guild@kofc.org for more information.

If you are not already a guild member, we welcome you to visit fathermcgivneyguild.org to join and order materials. Or, send an email to guild@kofc.org. You can also invite every council member to join by bringing a lined pad to the next meeting and having each man put down his name and address. Send the completed sheet to Father McGivney Guild, 1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06510.

BEST PRACTICE OF THE MONTH

Support Vocations in Your Parish

Pictured is Father Scott Murray of the Diocese of Pembroke, Ontario. A member of St. Andrew's Council 15945 in Killaloe, Father Murray expressed his gratitude to the Order for its vocations sponsorship, saying, "I am grateful to the Knights for the years of support that they have given to me and my family, and I look forward to many years of collaboration with them in striving to build up communities."



Photo by Brian Walters Photography

Your parish and diocese are likely home to many young men and women pondering God's plan for their lives. Help them discern this plan by asking your council to host a Vocations Day in honor of St. Joseph on his feast day, March 19.

The day's events can be very manageable — simply invite discerning men and women to join you for a Holy Hour or rosary at your parish.

Of course, if your parish scheduling allows, you could plan a full-day retreat that includes speakers and time for meditation, confession and spiritual direction. The retreat should have three objectives: to spread awareness about vocations; to recognize how modern culture impacts people's ability to distinguish God's call; and to encourage people to persevere in the ongoing discernment process.

However you plan the event, be sure to share promotional material about the Knights of Columbus Refund Support Vocations Program (RSVP). Through RSVP, a Knights of Columbus council "adopts" one or more seminarians or postulants, providing them with financial assistance and moral support. Simply knowing about this program could give young men and women peace of mind regarding their financial obligations, helping them be more open to pursuing a religious vocation.

For more information, visit kofc.org/vocations.

Resources for Chaplains

Insurance Products

You probably know the Knights of Columbus sells life insurance, but did you also know that our long-term care insurance can help you pay for extended medical needs? For more details, visit kofc.org/insurance.

Important K of C Contacts

Office of Chaplains
203-752-4115
chaplains@kofc.org

Fraternal Mission Department
203-752-4270
fraternal.mission@kofc.org

Catholic Information Service
203-752-4267
cis@kofc.org

Father Michael McGivney Guild
guild@kofc.org

Planning the Months Ahead

FEBRUARY

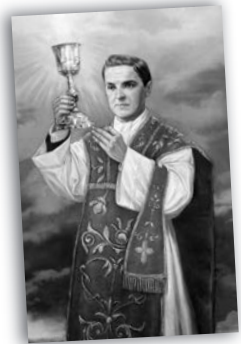
Join the USCCB in celebrating Black History Month in your parish and community. Visit usccb.org/issue-and-action to discover resources on celebrating the cultural diversity of the Church and on addressing the racial divide in the United States. Also of interest is W.E.B. DuBois's *The Gift of Black Folk*, available for purchase at knightsgear.com.

Organize a day of prayer and fundraising to support the Order's partnership with the Apostles of Jesus. Through this partnership, the Order helps provide care and shelter for orphaned children in Africa.

Mark the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes by asking your parish to support wounded or ill military personnel attending the 2017 Warriors to Lourdes Pilgrimage. By raising \$2,600, your parish can cover the travel expenses of one pilgrim. For information on how to make a donation, visit warriorstolourdes.com.



MARCH



Organize a Lenten retreat for parishioners and members of your council. During the retreat, allow the opportunity for prayer, reflection, faith sharing and confession. If time permits, consider leading a full weekend of reflection to offer a greater opportunity for spiritual enrichment, contemplation and meditation on the passion of our Lord.

Honor St. Joseph as patron of the Church by holding a novena from March 11 to March 19, his feast day. Encourage your brother Knights and parishioners to have a deeper devotion to St. Joseph by distributing the Domestic Church series booklet *St. Joseph: Our Father in Faith* (#328) and *Building the Domestic Church: The Family Fully Alive* (#10162).

Celebrate the international Knights of Columbus Day of Prayer for the Unborn Child, March 25, by organizing a pro-life Mass or prayer service with your council. Invite all members of the community, including public officials and health care workers, and distribute the *Prayer for Life* (#4665).

Celebrate Founder's Day on March 29 by planning events in honor of Father McGivney's legacy. For ideas on how to involve your parish in Founder's Day and Orderwide Outreach Week events, visit the Council section of kofc.org/service.

APRIL

Celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday on April 23, the second Sunday of Easter, by leading council members and parishioners in devotions in honor of the Divine Mercy. Encourage the Knights in your council to help you plan ways of celebrating the feast day through activities such as a special prayer Holy Hour or a series of talks on the importance of the Divine Mercy in today's world. *Chaplet of Divine Mercy* prayer cards (#9402, available in packs of 100 for \$3) and Knights of Columbus rosaries (Rose-1, available for \$3 each or for \$2.50 each when ordering 50 or more) can be ordered should you wish to distribute them during these events.



Celebrate the Dignity of Each Unborn Child

On March 25, the Day of Prayer for the Unborn Child, Knights have the opportunity to defend the dignity of the unborn and speak out against the evil of abortion. We encourage chaplains to celebrate a special Mass or prayer service, welcoming all their brother Knights and parishioners.

As you plan your service, be sure to make a pulpit or bulletin announcement regarding the program at all Masses the weekend prior to the event. Also, ask your council to send a notice to local and diocesan newspapers, requesting them to invite all members of the community, including public officials and health care workers.

For more information on the Knights of Columbus Day of Prayer for the Unborn Child, see the "Community" section of kofc.org/service. In addition, to further assist your culture of life activities, the Supreme Council offers free flyers, brochures, posters and prayer cards that can illustrate your commitment to the culture of life and help provide your parishioners with thoughtful responses to common anti-life arguments.

Charity: The Knights' Cornerstone

*Excerpts from a homily given by Supreme Chaplain
Archbishop William E. Lori during the Knights of Columbus
Midyear Meeting, Nov. 20, 2016*

Father McGivney made charity the cornerstone of the Knights of Columbus. We are founded on God's merciful love for us and on the works of charity and mercy we are called to do for others.

As a priest who modeled his life on the Good Shepherd, Father McGivney connected the men of his parish to the practice of the faith because he knew they needed to experience God's mercy if they would be good husbands and fathers. He also sought to ensure that the divine mercy received in the sacraments would be translated into works of mercy for the widow, the orphan and to all those who are vulnerable and in need.

May Father McGivney's vision live on in us as we seek to attract young men and their families to the Order so that they might be a part of Christ's kingdom of charity and mercy. Let us lead by example, opening our hearts to Christ's merciful love in prayer.

Items of Interest for Your Parish



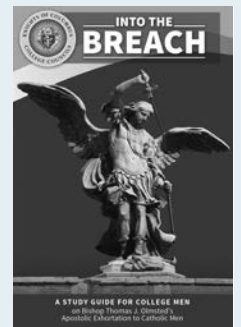
ChurchLoan — This Knights of Columbus service provides secured loans, unsecured loans and refinancing to institutions affiliated with the greater Catholic community in the United States, United States Territories and Canada. For information, visit kofc.org/churchloan.

Scholarships — The Knights of Columbus offers several educational scholarships for students applying to Catholic colleges or universities. The Supreme Council also administers two scholarship programs for students pursuing a vocation to the priesthood. For more information, visit kofc.org/scholarship.

The Online Catechism — The Knights of Columbus offers the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* in an interactive digital format to help everyone more easily learn about the teachings of the Church. Access it at kofc.org/catechism.

Refund Support Religious Vocations — RSVP allows Knights and parishes to “adopt” seminarians or postulants and provide them with financial assistance and moral support. For information, visit kofc.org/vocations.

Into the Breach (#340) — This pastoral letter written by Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted inspires Catholic men to engage in the spiritual warfare necessary to spread the Gospel. Copies can be obtained by contacting Catholic Information Service at 203-752-4267. Also available are two study guides on the pastoral letter, one of which is written specifically for single, college-aged men. These guides contain additional resources, such as prayers and an examination of conscience by Supreme Chaplain Archbishop Lori, and can be found on kofc.org/cis and kofc.org/college.



Catholic Information Service's Domestic Church Series — This special collection of popular CIS booklets focuses on family formation and spiritual life. The complete set is available to councils for the special price of \$150 (which includes shipping and handling) and comes with a kiosk for the booklets' display. For more information, visit knightsgear.com.