



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

The Hands That Fight Indifference

Father Jonathan D. Kalisch, OP

Director of Chaplains and Spiritual Development



In his 2015 message for Lent, Pope Francis invites all of us, including our brother Knights, to participate in overcoming the problem of global indifference. As an international order, our brothers should be proud of the countless works of mercy they perform and contribute to spiritually and financially. Oftentimes, as the pope indicates, the “hands” of our brothers serve as the gate of the Church between God and the world. Those same hands are “rejected, crushed and wounded” in the acts of mercy they perform.

One cannot read the newspaper and not think of the efforts of our brother Knights and their families. The Christians persecuted in the Middle East, our brothers facing war in Ukraine, those in the Philippines and Haiti still recovering from natural disasters, those courageously fighting for conscience rights and religious

freedom, the many Knights serving in the armed forces — none are forgotten by our Order. As chaplains, can we encourage our councils to engage in spiritual, financial and hands-on support of these global efforts? Can we help every council commit to new ways of locally supporting athletes, and the families of athletes, heading to the Special Olympics in Los Angeles this summer? Can we also do our part to find new ways to overcome the tragedy of 22 suicides a day among our veterans? Can we identify and support veterans making the military pilgrimage for peace and healing to Lourdes, France, this May? This is how the Knights of Columbus forms “part of that communion in which indifference is conquered by love.”

Pope Francis entrusts us chaplains with a “formation of the heart” for our brothers: “Anyone who wishes to be merciful must have a strong and steadfast heart, closed to the tempter but open to God ... which realizes its own poverty and gives itself freely for others.” The curriculum for this formation, Pope Francis reminds us, is found in the examples and the continued prayers of the saints, who “have triumphed once and for all over indifference, hardness of heart, and hatred.” This month we can recall St. Joseph, “the just man” and protector of the Church; Venerable Michael McGivney, protector of the poor and defender of the widow and orphan; as well as the 10th anniversary of the death of St. John Paul II, who forgave his assassin and poured out his life for the Church to the end. May these three “Fathers” serve as models to accompany our brother Knights on their pilgrim way. May we inspire our brother Knights so that every Knights of Columbus council stands out as an “island of mercy in the midst of the sea of indifference.”

Monthly Reflection on Building the Domestic Church

The Pilgrimage of Education

By *Father Luis Granados, DCJM*

“You will show me the path to life, abounding joy in your presence, the delights at your right hand forever” (Ps 16:11). God has decided to show us the path of life through our parents. To educate a child means to show him a path and to walk with him. Our parents are those who walk with us, those who introduce us into a lifelong pilgrimage.

During the month of March we celebrate the mission of parents in the education of their children, because “the joy of all parents is to teach their children the art of living, as parents we want to be the primary educators of our children.” We may discuss the first point of this statement, asking ourselves whether education really is the joy of all parents. For sure, to educate is not always comfortable, but often long and demanding. However, even if it is not a pleasant task, this mission can provide parents with a deep joy as they teach their children the art of living. Education can be joyful because it is not just a “transmission of information” but an art, a pilgrimage together.

If we look at the family of Nazareth, we become aware of three ideas: joy, art of living, and pilgrimage. The Holy Family was a pilgrim family. The education of Jesus was a long path with many milestones at Bethlehem, Egypt, Nazareth and Jerusalem, where Jesus was found in the temple.

As the primary educators and catechists of their children, parents are irreplaceable. In particular, statistics have shown the huge difference made by the active presence of fathers in education. Pope Francis has recently reminded us about the danger of absent fathers. But the primary educators need the help of the whole community. The famous proverb applies here: “It takes a village to raise a child.” Between parents, teachers, priests, extended family members and other families, we are invited to build an “educational covenant” through which all work for the growth of each child. We do not want to replace parents but to assist them in their wonderful, lifelong (and joyful) mission.

As priests, shepherds and educators, how can we help? I find two concrete ways for this month of March. The first one is related to our mission as shepherds of the flock. Through our conversations and homilies of Lent, we can remind parents of the greatness of their mission.

SEE **EDUCATION**, PAGE 2



An Island of Mercy in the Sea of Indifference

Excerpts from Pope Francis' message for Lent 2015

God is not indifferent to our world; he so loves it that he gave his Son for our salvation. In the Incarnation, in the earthly life, death and resurrection of the Son of God, the gate between God and man, between heaven and earth, opens once for all. The Church is like the hand holding open this gate, thanks to her proclamation of God's word, her celebration of the sacraments and her witness of the faith which works through love (cf. Gal 5:6). But the world tends to withdraw into itself and shut that door through which God comes into the world and the world comes to him. Hence the hand, which is the Church, must never be surprised if it is rejected, crushed and wounded.

The Church is the *communio sanctorum* not only because of her saints, but also because she is a communion in holy things: the love of God revealed to us in Christ and all his gifts. Among these gifts there is also the response of those who let themselves be touched by this love. In this communion of saints, in this sharing in holy things, no one possesses anything alone, but shares everything with others. And since we are united in God, we can do something for those who are far distant, those whom we could never reach on our own, because with them and for them, we ask God that all of us may be open to his plan of salvation.

All that we have been saying about the universal Church must now be applied to the life of our parishes and communities. Do these ecclesial structures enable us to experience being part of one body? A body which receives and shares what God wishes to give? A body which acknowledges and cares for its weakest, poorest and most insignificant members? Or do we take refuge in a universal love that would embrace the whole world, while failing to see the Lazarus sitting before our closed doors (Lk 16:19-31)?

In order to receive what God gives us and to make it bear abundant fruit, we need to press beyond the boundaries of the visible Church in two ways.

In the first place, by uniting ourselves in prayer with the Church in heaven. The prayers of the Church on earth establish a communion of mutual service and goodness which reaches up into the sight of God. Together with the saints who have found their fulfilment in God, we form part of that communion in which indifference is conquered by love. The Church in heaven is not triumphant because she has turned her back on the sufferings of the world and rejoices in splendid isolation.

Rather, the saints already joyfully contemplate the fact that, through Jesus' death and resurrection, they have triumphed once and for all over indifference, hardness of heart, and hatred. Until this victory of love penetrates the whole world, the saints continue to accompany us on our pilgrim way.

In the second place, every Christian community is called to go out of itself and to be engaged in the life of the greater society of which it is a part, especially with the poor and those who are far away. The Church is missionary by her very nature; she is not self-enclosed but sent out to every nation and people.

Her mission is to bear patient witness to the One who desires to draw all creation and every man and woman to the Father. Her mission is to bring to all a love which cannot remain silent. The Church follows Jesus Christ along the paths that lead to every man and woman, to the very ends of the earth (cf. Acts 1:8). In each of our neighbors, then, we must see a brother or sister for whom Christ died and rose again. What we ourselves have received, we have received for them as well. Similarly, all that our brothers and sisters possess is a gift for the Church and for all humanity.

Dear brothers ... how greatly I desire that all those places where the Church is present, especially our parishes and our communities, may become islands of mercy in the midst of the sea of indifference!

As a way of overcoming indifference and our pretensions to self-sufficiency, I would invite everyone to live this Lent as an opportunity for engaging in what Benedict XVI called a formation of the heart (cf. *Deus Caritas Est*, 31). A merciful heart does not mean a weak heart. Anyone who wishes to be merciful must have a strong and steadfast heart, closed to the tempter but open to God. A heart which lets itself be pierced by the Spirit so as to bring love along the roads that lead to our brothers and sisters. And, ultimately, a poor heart, one which realizes its own poverty and gives itself freely for others.

During this Lent, then, brothers ... let us all ask the Lord: "Make our hearts like yours" (Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus). In this way we will receive a heart which is firm and merciful, attentive and generous, a heart which is not closed, indifferent or prey to the globalization of indifference.



Pope Francis waves as he leads the weekly audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican Feb. 18. (CNS photo/Giampiero Sposito, Reuters)

EDUCATION, FROM PAGE 1

As Benedict XVI reminded us a few years ago, Catholic education "is a question of conviction — do we really believe that only in the mystery of the Word made flesh does the mystery of man truly become clear?" (*Meeting with Catholic Educators*, Washington, D.C., April 17, 2008). Catholic education is built upon this conviction: Jesus brings a great "yes" to our lives. Our divinization brings to fulfillment our humanity.

The second way we can help as priests is by offering a concrete practice to the families of our parish. How can we encourage parents to spend more time with their children? Let us invite them to plan a pilgrimage with other families. They can pick a date (maybe a Saturday) and choose a sacred place (the cathedral, or a sanctuary of our Lady or a saint). They can go with the families of their children's friends, with their extended family or with friends. The journey will help them to look at their life as a path, as a pilgrimage with the whole Church. Walking together with other families, the Lord will show them the path to life, "abounding joy in his presence."

A member of Dr. Earl C. Bach Council 3340, Father Granados helped establish the "Toward a Family Friendly Parish" program at St. Mary Catholic Parish in Littleton, Colo. The 12-month program, whose focus is to draw families closer to each other and to their parish family, was the model of the Knights of Columbus' "Building the Domestic Church: The Family Fully Alive" initiative. Copies of the *Building the Domestic Church: The Family Fully Alive* booklet (#10162) can be obtained by contacting the Supply Department at 203-752-4320. An online copy of this booklet and additional resources are available at kofc.org/familyfullyalive.

Monthly Suggested Activities

March

- Participate in the Holy Father's "24 Hours for the Lord" initiative, March 13-14, by organizing penitential service, highlighting prayer and offering the sacrament of reconciliation.
- Honor St. Joseph as patron of the Church through a novena, beginning on March 11 and ending on his feast day, March 19. Encourage your brother Knights and parishioners to have a deeper devotion to St. Joseph by distributing the Veritas Series booklet *Saint Joseph: Our Father in Faith* (#328).
- Celebrate the International Knights of Columbus Day of Prayer for the Unborn Child on March 25, the solemnity of the Annunciation, by organizing a pro-life Mass or prayer service at your church or with your council. Invite all members of the community, including public officials and health care workers, and distribute *Prayer for Life* cards (#4665).
- Celebrate Founder's Day and participate in Orderwide Outreach Week (March 21-29) to honor the legacy of Father McGivney. As our founder's vision called each man to active participation in the sacramental life of the parish, encourage your council to plan events for the parish community. For ideas on how your parish and council can join councils around the world in Founder's Day and Orderwide Outreach Week events, visit the "Council" section of kofc.org/service.

April

- Observe the 10th anniversary of death of St. John Paul II, which falls on Holy Thursday, April 2. Consider leading your parish community and council members in prayers to the intercession of John Paul II at the conclusion of Lent, prior to the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday.
- Encourage your council to promote Lenten and Holy Week observances by organizing Lenten penitential prayer services or Holy Hours. Following your service, offer to speak to council members and parishioners regarding the importance of fasting and abstaining during the penitential season, particularly on Good Friday. Consider concluding your talk by speaking of our sharing in Christ's resurrection, asking Knights to help distribute *The Resurrection of the Body* (109), part of the Luke E. Hart Series, to interested parishioners.
- Celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday
 - ◆ Instruct parishioners and members of your council on the indulgences attached to Divine Mercy Devotions.
 - ◆ From Good Friday, April 3, to the Second Sunday of Easter, April 12, lead your parish and council members in praying the novena to the Divine Mercy. During the recitation of the novena, be available to hear confessions.
 - ◆ Consider organizing a 40 Hours devotion to conclude on Divine Mercy Sunday at 3 p.m. — the hour of Divine Mercy.
 - ◆ Encourage members of your council to participate in a procession in honor of the Divine Mercy, or ask them to lead prayers during services on Divine Mercy Sunday. Ask Knights to assist with distributing *Chaplet of Divine Mercy* prayer cards (#9402) and *Knights of Columbus rosaries* (Rose-1) for use during the services. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops also offers suggestions on readings and prayers for Divine Mercy services. For details, please visit uscbb.org.

Best Practice of the Month

An admirable practice among Knights of Columbus chaplains and councils is that of participating in Lenten and Easter devotions, devoutly joining in the Church's celebrations of the passion and death of the Lord. Knights in the Luzon Jurisdiction, such as those in Pope John Paul II Assembly in San Juan, have provided an honor guard for services during the Easter Triduum. Elsewhere, the practice of Andres Bonifacio Assembly in Malabon is to provide an honor guard for the Holy Thursday vigil at its local church. Jose P. Rizal Assembly in Cainta provides an honor guard for a reenactment of the burial of Christ on Good Friday.

Councils may join more fully in the Church's celebration of Holy Week by organizing similar processions. Chaplains should encourage more active involvement by asking their brother Knights to promote a greater understanding of Lenten and Easter practices and devotions. Knights can help by distributing the Veritas Series *Prayer Time* booklet (#309) or *The Way of the Cross: Traditional and Modern Meditations* (#363) among Catholics and the local community.

We would like to produce a listing of other commendable practices that can be considered for publication. If you or your council has established a practice that demonstrates a chaplain's role in enhancing the spiritual life of Knights and their families, evangelization and outreach, or membership growth and retention, please send the information to chaplains@kofc.org.

Feast of Divine Mercy

In her Diary, St. Faustina writes that Our Lord spoke to her, saying: "Tell the whole world about my inconceivable mercy. I desire that the feast of mercy be a refuge and shelter for all souls, and especially for poor sinners. On that day the very depths of my tender mercy are open.



I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon those souls who approach the fount of my mercy."

In 2002, Pope John Paul II promoted prayers and devotions in honor of the Divine Mercy to Christians around the world, granting a plenary indulgence under the usual conditions. To receive the indulgence, the faithful must also fulfill a set of additional requirements:

- Take part in prayers and devotions in honor of Divine Mercy on the Second Sunday of Easter or Divine Mercy Sunday, in any church or chapel, while in a spirit completely detached from sin
- Recite the Our Father and the Creed in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, adding a devout prayer to the merciful lord Jesus

A partial indulgence is granted to the faithful who, at least with a contrite heart, pray to the merciful lord Jesus an approved invocation.



**KNIGHTS
OF COLUMBUS®**

CHAPLAIN'S
report

1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06510-3326

Prayer to Saint Joseph

To thee, O blessed Joseph, we have recourse in our affliction, and having implored the help of thy thrice holy Spouse, we now, with hearts filled with confidence, earnestly beg thee also to take us under thy protection. By that charity wherewith thou wert united to the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God, and by that fatherly love with which thou didst cherish the child Jesus, we beseech thee and we humbly pray that thou wilt look down with gracious eye upon that inheritance which Jesus Christ purchased by His blood, and wilt succor us in our need by thy power and strength.

Defend, O most watchful guardian of the Holy Family, the chosen offspring of Jesus Christ. Keep from us, O most loving Father, all blight of error and corruption. Aid us from on high, most valiant defender, in this conflict with the powers of darkness. And even as of old thou didst rescue the child Jesus from the peril of His life, so now defend God's holy Church from the snares of the enemy and from all adversity. Shield us ever under thy patronage, that, following thine example and strengthened by thy help, we may live a holy life, die a happy death, and attain to everlasting bliss in Heaven. Amen.

Copyright © Libreria Editrice Vaticana

