



# 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 K of C and Sacramental Accompaniment

#### Father Jonathan D. Kalisch, OP

Director of Chaplains and Spiritual Development



In the 19th century, the young men of St. Mary's Parish in New Haven, Conn., were not actively engaged in the Catholic faith. So 29-year-old Father Michael J. McGivney gathered the "old guard" of active men — who were in their 30s and 40s — and invited them to take leadership roles in the K of C. Their primary evangelical goal: Help younger, non-practicing Catholic men engage in the faith.

This goal remains relevant even today. During the Easter season and throughout summer, your local K of C council can assist in evangelical outreach, especially through the Order's Sacramental Gifts program.

Start by discussing with your council your parish's sacramental programs. Let the Knights know how they can assist those just entering the Church at the Easter Vigil. Perhaps the council can become the place a new Catholic man first experiences fraternity and support. Coach the men of your council on the best way to welcome these new Catholics into the K of C. Remind the Knights that converts may already have a well-developed spirituality and theological understanding from years of seeking the truth.

In addition, the K of C's Sacramental Gifts program can help young men and fathers renew their own practice of the faith. A small gift — with the promise of prayers, support and perhaps the gift of a Mass said for the family's intention — will go a long way in showing dads that the K of C cares for the spiritual growth of all the men of the parish.

With your help, may every council understand its fundamental role in welcoming those returning to the faith and may the K of C continue to evangelize those on the peripheries. *Vivat Jesus!*

### This Good Friday, Remember Middle East Christians

The Knights of Columbus will spend \$3 million in direct funding for humanitarian programs in Iraq, Supreme Knight Carl Anderson announced in the wake of a recent visit to the country.

While in Iraq, Supreme Knight Anderson reviewed K of C sponsored projects and met with families displaced by ISIS. He also met with many senior Church leaders and government officials to discuss the issues facing these communities and possible solutions.

This Good Friday, as our thoughts turn to the Holy Land, please encourage your councils to pray for the Christians living in the Middle East.

*Since 2014, the K of C has spent more than \$20 million on behalf of persecuted Christians and other religious minorities targeted for genocide in the Middle East. The support has funded rebuilding — and saving — the town of Karamles after its liberation from ISIS; feeding tens of thousands of displaced people; providing housing for the displaced; supporting educational and medical programs, etc. Visit [christiansatrisk.org](http://christiansatrisk.org).*

### Help Increase Good Friday Attendance — and Revitalize Your Community

According to a recent Marist Poll, only 54 percent of Catholics say they will attend Good Friday services — this means that almost half will not. And when you start applying these numbers to your own parish, the number of empty pews seem startling.

So what can we do to combat this? Start by talking to your council's grand knight. All Knights are being asked to attend their local parish's Good Friday liturgy on April 19. They are also being asked to promote it among other parishioners, using pre-designed posters and other items available at [kofc.org/goodfriday](http://kofc.org/goodfriday).

Let's get our pews filled and our communities restored: Talk to your grand knight today.

*Poll details can be found by clicking here.*



Visit [kofc.org/chaplains-sign-up](http://kofc.org/chaplains-sign-up) to sign up to receive future issues of this newsletter via email. Previous issues are archived at [kofc.org/chaplains](http://kofc.org/chaplains).

# A Once-in-a-Life-Time Opportunity for You and Your Parish

*Take advantage of rare opportunity to venerate incorrupt relic of St. Jean Vianney during tour in United States*

The Heart of a Priest relic pilgrimage is still going strong, as communities across the United States continue to welcome the incorrupt heart of St. Jean Vianney, entrusted to the Order by the Shrine of Ars, France. Since November 2018, the relic has visited over half of the states in the nation, offering tens of thousands the opportunity to seek St. Jean Vianney's intercession.

"It was amazing to be able to see the heart of the parish priest who lived the life we are seeking to emulate," Archdiocese of Washington seminarian Louis McHale told *Columbia*. "It reminded me that, with the grace of God, it is possible to become a saint despite any challenges that might be in our way."

As McHale notes, a visit to the heart of the patron saint of parish priests is a boon to any man called to the priestly vocation. For this reason, Knights of Columbus chaplains and seminarians are particularly encouraged to take advantage of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to pray before the major relic of St. Jean Vianney.

As with all saints, however, the call to holiness is universal — and so we ask chaplains to encourage their councils to sponsor parish trips to a nearby host site, offering carpool or busing options to parishioners who might not otherwise be able to travel.

If you and your council have not yet had the opportunity to venerate this major relic, there is still time. The relic pilgrimage will be continuing through mid-June, with plans to visit New York and New England in April, the Southwest and Southeast in May, and the Great Lakes region in early June.

Specific details for each event can be found at [www.kofc.org/vianney](http://www.kofc.org/vianney). We ask for patience with the schedule. As our team continues to coordinate events, more dates and details will be added.

Questions? Email [vianney@kofc.org](mailto:vianney@kofc.org).



*Father George T. Snyder Jr. prays before the relic of St. Jean Vianney at St. Clare Catholic Church in Roseville, Calif., during an overnight veneration event, March 2.*

## Refund Support Vocations Program (RSVP)

Through this program, council and parish families raise funds to support seminarians in their area. Councils also provide their "adopted" seminarian or religious aspirant moral support and prayers for their success.

Do you know a seminarian in your parish, deanery or diocese who could benefit from this assistance? Connect with your local council today. Visit [www.kofc.org/rsvp](http://www.kofc.org/rsvp) for more details.

## Know an Inspiring Vocation Story?

The Knights of Columbus has long been a strong promoter of religious vocations — through our prayers, financial support of men and women in formation, and in the pages of our monthly magazine, *Columbia*, which is sent to more than 1.7 million Knights and their families.

*Columbia* is always looking for priests and religious to feature on its back cover. If you would like to nominate someone to share the story of his or her call to religious life, please email associate editor Margaret Kelly ([margaret.kelly@kofc.org](mailto:margaret.kelly@kofc.org)) with the person's name and contact information, plus a few words about why you are suggesting him or her.

One goal with the vocation feature is to encourage young people to consider a call to the priesthood or religious life. To that end, we typically try to feature younger individuals. Among priests and male religious, preference is given to members of the Knights of Columbus.

PLEASE, DO ALL YOU CAN TO ENCOURAGE PRIESTLY AND RELIGIOUS VOCATIONS. YOUR PRAYERS AND SUPPORT MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

KEEP THE FAITH ALIVE

**'MY LOVE FOR THE EUCHARIST BROUGHT IMMENSE PEACE.'**

As a second grader, I began to consider a call to the priesthood by "marrying" my friends on the playground and hearing "confessions" in the bushes. But in high school, my faith began to wane.


While in college, I became so tired of being a lukewarm Catholic that I needed something to change. Either I would fall madly in love with God, or I would leave him forever. I came up with a timeframe for God to change my heart: three months.

The Lord led me to a classmate who was on fire with her faith, and I asked about her spiritual practices. She recommended I try four things: daily Mass, frequent confession, adoration and serving the poor.

A month later, I woke up late one morning, ran to class and felt lost all day. I realized I had missed Mass. My love for the Eucharist had grown, a love that eventually propelled me into the seminary and has brought immense peace in my life ever since.

I love God three months. He did it in one.

FATHER SCOTT A. GRATTON  
Diocese of Burlington  
St. Stephen's Council 2284 in Winnsboro, Va.



*Father Scott A. Gratton's vocation story was shared in Columbia, May 2018.*





## FIRE IN THE BELLY

A CHALLENGE AND MESSAGE FROM  
SUPREME CHAPLAIN ARCHBISHOP LORI

*“And it happened that, while he was with them at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, ‘Were not our hearts burning [within us] while he spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us?’”*

— Gospel for April 21, Lk 24:30-32

A “fire in the belly,” passion, a drive — these are some of the ways we talk about others who can summon a deep, inner motivation and who make a difference. My brothers, can we say the same about our inner drive to go deeper in our Church’s teaching? Do our hearts “burn within us” and cause us to daily familiarize ourselves with the riches of our faith? Do we have a deep desire to be the kind of men who don’t stand silent when we hear our Church’s teaching denigrated? In order to lead with faith, we need to know our faith. We can’t give what we don’t have. By God’s grace, may we each become disciples whose “hearts burn within us.”

### This Month’s Challenge

This month, I challenge you to deepen your desire to have a heart “burning within you” for new knowledge of the Church’s teaching and doctrine. Invest five to 10 minutes a day reading the Catechism of the Catholic Church or other resource, listening to a Catholic talk online, or taking advantage of another formation opportunity. Second, I challenge you to talk with a brother in Christ about what you’re learning.

## This Month’s Council Meeting “Cheat Sheet”

*Four things to bring up at your next council meeting.*

- ✓ To prepare for Holy Week and the Easter season, consider renewing your council’s devotion to Our Lady by meditating on the Sorrowful and Glorious mysteries of the Rosary — [www.kofc.org/rosary](http://www.kofc.org/rosary).
- ✓ Councils should encourage participation in Good Friday services — [www.kofc.org/goodfriday](http://www.kofc.org/goodfriday).
- ✓ Get involved with our new Helping Hands program, perhaps through cooking or serving Easter Dinner at the local soup kitchen or non-profit — [www.kofc.org/helpinghands](http://www.kofc.org/helpinghands).
- ✓ On May 9, the 22nd National March for Life will take place in Ottawa, Ontario. We encourage brother Knights from near and far to support the Canadian March for Life, whether by attending, volunteering, donating or offering prayers — <https://marchforlife.ca/>.

## Upcoming Activities

### APRIL

Celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday on April 28, the second Sunday of Easter. Knights in your council can help you plan a 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) and *Knights of Columbus rosaries* (Rose-1) can be ordered from [knightsgear@kofc.org](mailto:knightsgear@kofc.org) to use during these events. You can also use the resources at [www.kofc.org/holyhour](http://www.kofc.org/holyhour).



### MAY

Join Catholics throughout the world in celebrating both the World Day of Prayer for Vocations and Mother’s Day on May 12, Good Shepherd Sunday. Encourage the members of your council to take part in the Order’s Refund Support Vocations Program (RSVP) and honor the mothers of your local community following weekend Masses.

May 13, the optional memorial of Our Lady of Fatima, is the perfect day to ask your council to lead the parish in a rosary. On the day, distribute *The Message of Our Lady of Fatima* (#341), which your council can order from [www.kofc.org/cis](http://www.kofc.org/cis).

### JUNE

Work with council officers to hold a Father’s Day event during or following all Masses celebrated June 16-17.

Celebrate the solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, June 28. Offer to bless images of the Sacred Heart for families to display in their homes.

# Pope Receives Icon

Supreme Knight Carl Anderson presented Pope Francis with an icon of St. Jean Vianney in a private audience at the Vatican, Feb. 28, the last day of the Order's novena for repentance, renewal and rebuilding following the sexual abuse crisis. During their meeting, the pope and the supreme knight discussed K of C initiatives, including the Order's support of displaced Christians in the Middle East.

The icon is by Fabrizio Diomedi, commissioned as part of the K of C-sponsored pilgrimage of the saint's incorrupt heart throughout the U.S. Photos and prayer cards (in both Spanish and English) with the icon image are available under the media section of [www.kofc.org/vianney](http://www.kofc.org/vianney).



Courtesy Vatican Media



*The holy Curé d'Arles is depicted holding and pointing to a crucifix, indicating that Christ is the center of his life. Icon by Fabrizio Diomedi, commissioned by the Supreme Council (2018). Photo: Peter Škerlep © Knights of Columbus*

## A PRAYER FOR OUR PRIESTS

**W**e thank you, God our Father, for those who have responded to your call to priestly ministry. Accept this prayer we offer on their behalf: Fill them with the sure knowledge of your love. Open their hearts to the power and consolation of the Holy Spirit. Lead them to greater union with your Son. Increase their faith in the sacraments they celebrate as they nourish, strengthen and heal us.

Lord Jesus Christ, through the intercession of St. Jean Vianney, grant that your priests will be inspired to strive for holiness by the power of his example. As men of prayer, may they ponder your word, follow your will and faithfully lead the flocks you have entrusted to their care.

St. Jean Vianney, obtain for the Church an abundance of vocations to the holy priesthood. Through your intercession, may many faithful men hear Christ's call, and respond with courage and generosity.

Mary our Mother, guard with your maternal care these chosen ones. Intercede for our priests, so that by offering the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, they may be conformed more each day to the image of your Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

*St. Jean Vianney, patron of parish priests, pray for us!*