



# 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

## We Will Rebuild

BY CARL A. ANDERSON | SUPREME KNIGHT

I am writing this message while a massive fire is still engulfing our beautiful Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris. I say “our” because this magnificent structure has been for centuries an artistic patrimony of humanity, a place of prayer for millions of Catholics in France and throughout the world — and, more recently, a special place for the Knights of Columbus.

In May 2017, I joined a delegation of brother Knights from Paris to attend Mass at Notre-Dame Cathedral and to participate in a special exposition and veneration of the relic of the Crown of Thorns. Later that year, the Knights of Columbus was one of the major sponsors of a light show on the cathedral's façade. Titled “Dame de Cœur” (Queen of Hearts), the light show depicted the history of the cathedral in commemoration of World War I.

From the two-volume history *The Knights of Columbus in Peace and War* (1920), we read this: “In Paris on Good Friday 1919, the most impressive religious service held in the history of the American Expeditionary Forces in Europe took place when the Knights of Columbus ... held a service there for the public adoration of the cross. Ten thousand Americans packed the great edifice; the Cardinal Archbishop of Paris, Mons. Amette, presided.”

Much has been said about the significance of this tragic fire. It is difficult to grasp its significance for the French people and especially French Catholics.

Perhaps “The Virgin at Noon,” a poem by Paul Claudel, can help us understand. It is noteworthy that Claudel's conversion took place in Notre-Dame Cathedral during the singing of the Magnificat on Christmas Day 1886. ...

When the president of France announced that Notre-Dame Cathedral will be rebuilt, I thought of how the great Gothic cathedrals were originally constructed. An account from 1144 states that the faithful were freely “harnessed to carts, laden with stones, timbers, corn and whatever might be needed for the work of building the cathedral, the towers of which rose like magic into the heavens. ... Everywhere men humbled themselves, did penance and forgave their enemies. Men and women could be seen dragging heavy loads through mire and marsh, praising in song the miracle which God was performing before their eyes.”

Mindful of all the controversies consuming the Church in recent years, the image of this burning cathedral seemed in a way to symbolize the devastation so many Catholics have felt as our Church has been rocked by one crisis after another.

Fires have destroyed great cathedrals before, and they have been rebuilt. So let us hope this will be true again.

But not only this church. Let us resolve to patiently “rebuild” the Church, not with granite and mortar, but with living stones in the spirit of those earlier builders — with humility, penance and with gratitude for the miracle that God is still performing before our eyes.

And let us do so with confidence in Mary who “at that moment when everything collapsed” does not hesitate to intervene for us.

*Vivat Jesus!*

*This is an edited excerpt from Supreme Knight Carl Anderson's message after the fire at Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris, April 15.*



*Notre-Dame is illuminated during a light show titled 'Dame de Cœur' (Queen of Hearts). The Knights of Columbus in France supported the event as part of the commemorations marking the centenary of World War I.*

## The Virgin at Noon

BY PAUL CLAUDEL

“It is noon. The church is open. I must go in.  
 Mother of our Lord, I have not come to pray.  
 I have nothing to give and nothing to ask.  
 I am here, my Lady, only to look at you.  
 To look at you, to cry for joy, to know  
 That I am your son and you are there.  
 Only for one moment when everything stops. Noon!  
 To be with you, Mary, in this place where you are.  
 To say nothing, to look at your face.  
 To let my heart sing in its own language.  
 To say nothing, but simply to sing  
 because my heart is too full. . . .  
 Because you saved me, because you saved France.  
 Because France too, like myself,  
 was for you a thing to be considered.  
 Because at that moment when everything collapsed,  
 you intervened.  
 Because you saved France once again.  
 Because it is noon, because we are at this moment of today.  
 Because you are there for always, simply because you are Mary,  
 Simply because you exist.  
 Mother of Our Lord, we give thanks to you.”

# What Is a Spirit-Infused Leader?

*A spirit-infused leader lives a life of abandonment to the divine will.  
Such leaders can help revitalize our parishes, our communities, our Church.*

BY SEAN POTT | INTERIM DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS

Young men in our councils are starving for mentorship and leadership. They are in desperate need of men in their lives who have the moral authority to lead them and teach them how to lead. They need, and need to become, spirit-infused leaders.

This type of leader lives a life of discernment from a sincere humility and divine reliance. He is capable of answering Paul's exhortation to "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (1 Cor 11:1).

The problem today is that these leaders are few and far between. In my experience working with young men, their fathers failed to provide a model of Christ-like leadership that called their sons to holiness, excellence and to live worthy of imitation. We need these young men to become spirit-infused leaders now more than ever. We need to identify potential leaders and help form them in virtue.

But to be worthy of these leaders, and to inspire and direct them, we ourselves must strive to be spirit-infused leaders.

## STARTING WITH PRAYER

As leaders looking to build a team, if we don't start with prayer, we won't get very far. So the first questions for us would be these: Are we modeling the life, virtue and holiness of a spirit-filled leader? Are we praying? Are we discerning? Are we trusting all of your initiatives to God and relying on God? Chances are, we are, but we need to renew this daily. God knows what leaders we need, but I think it's fair to say that he is waiting for us to ask him for them.

## IDENTIFYING LEADERS AT YOUR PARISH

Looking for leaders is a combination of observation and invitation. When we are at daily Mass, how aware are we of those who are consistently coming? Who around us has a consistent prayer and sacramental life? Are they involved in other positions of ministry? Have we engaged any of them in conversation? Has anyone asked how they can help?

We can determine a spirit-filled leader by his fruits (Gal 5: 22-23). Some characteristics are easily recognizable, but some are not. So we need to invest our time and energy to getting to know him. This way, we can discover his character, how he lives his life, what he's passionate about and what he's already involved in. We will also discover if he is worthy of imitation and if people follow him.

## ISSUING THE INVITATION

In my experience, spirit-infused leaders often recognize and discern needs faster than others. They are ready and willing to respond to an invitation to mission.

After we've identified these leaders, we should issue a personal invitation. A face-to-face "ask" is always the best way, and this "ask" should be built on a foundation of investment. Next, find a way to



bring multiple leaders together, possibly around a meal, because partnering as a group builds strength and unity. Finally, once they are gathered as a group, share and entrust to them the mission you have discerned and are excited about.

## CALLING THEM FORWARD

We should make our "asks" clear, direct and meaningful. Don't ask "Will you unlock the church?" or "Will you hand out these flyers?" Those things are good and necessary, but they lack weight unless they are part of a greater mission.

So it's worth asking, what is our mission and vision? Have we articulated that vision? Is it communicable and clear? Have we invited people to share in this mission?

Young people who have leadership skills, who are motivated by their prayer life and the pursuit of holiness, are looking for mission. They're not just looking to do something good, for the sake of it being good or helpful. Mission, by virtue, has a weight to it, but it also needs to have direction and it needs to be clear.

If we want long-term, committed spirit-infused leaders, who are willing to make sacrifices, we need to make sure our mission is worth it. Young people are looking for a cause that is bigger than themselves. They are seeking to be united under one standard, and that standard should be and must be Christ. I would only add that at the end of the day, they are following us, and desperately desire to see Christ in and through our leadership. Our call to mission will be only as strong as the example of our leadership.

## INCORPORATING LEADERS INTO COUNCIL LIFE

Many councils need to be re-energized by spirit-infused leadership. But it's important we honor the structure that exists, and honor the men who have been pouring themselves into their council for a long time. It's important we build trust and understand what drives these men.



## DO MORE

### A CHALLENGE AND MESSAGE FROM SUPREME CHAPLAIN ARCHBISHOP LORI

*Jesus said,  
“My children, I will be with you  
only a little while longer.  
I give you a new commandment:  
love one another.  
As I have loved you,  
so you also should love one another.”*

— Gospel for May 19, Jn 13:34

We have heard this teaching of Jesus before, but do we personalize it and truly know it to be true? Each one of us is called to love one another in the most profound way — by caring about others’ eternal well-being. But Catholics in America today are, sadly, not known for loving one another to the point that we risk sharing our faith with others. One recent poll found that only 6% of Catholics believe sharing their faith is a “high priority.” Jesus invites us to do more, and he does not call the equipped; he equips the called.

### **This Month’s Challenge**

This month, I challenge you to invite one person out for coffee, to your home or an event at your parish. Tell them what you enjoy about the Catholic faith. If they have been away from the Catholic Church, invite them back. If they are not Catholic, ask them if they would consider joining. Either way, be welcoming and nonjudgmental in your conversation.

### LEADER, FROM PAGE 2

Knights, especially the council leadership, need to have a vested interest in their parish’s mission. The parish’s and council’s missions need to line up. If they don’t, we need your help in getting the council’s mission aligned. Cast the vision to the entire council, and let the Knights wrestle with it. The men who are passionate about the mission will float to the top. And when it comes time for elections, the council will want to elect members who understand the vision and mission of both the parish and council.

### ENCOURAGING SMOOTH TRANSITIONS

We should be encouraging a smooth transition that assimilates knowledge of the council’s dynamic and history. We should know the pressure points and what the men are passionate about. If new leadership doesn’t acknowledge this, councils can become fractured. As a chaplain, the shepherd of the council, we need your help to prevent this fracturing. We need to help new leaders, especially if they’re really young, excitable, passionate, driven and zealous, honor those who came before them. We don’t want a new direction or new leadership to feel like a destruction of old ways. Instead, it needs to be a whole-hearted renewal.

### UNDERSTANDING LEVELS OF LEADERSHIP

Because of the trickle-down effect, the leadership under us is always one level removed. If we are men of prayer and discernment, the level of leadership under us will be good, but not necessarily great.

They can become great, but that requires mentorship and coaching.

It’s also important we don’t presume that all council members have a prayer life, or that they all know how to pray. For those who don’t know, we need to teach them. This way they too can become men of deep prayer, men of humble conviction, men with a desire and willingness to be guided, moved, directed and inspired by the Holy Spirit. Inspire in them a hunger for continued formation and growth. Consider mentoring a handful of Knights in prayer and discernment, so they can later mentor their peers. The level to which we lead will inspire the other men to lead, the level to which we pray will inspire the men to pray. And all of us need to aspire to be men worthy of imitation.

### PRAYING FOR RENEWAL

As I mentioned at the beginning, prayer and discernment is of the utmost importance. We must entrust the success and fruitfulness of our councils to our Lord and the Holy Mother. Especially important is your spiritual guidance of the council, through the Masses you offer, your prayers and through the patronage of your parish or local saints. Ask for Father McGivney’s intercession, particularly through the prayer for his beatification. Pray to St. Joseph, the patron of fathers and workers. We can always look to his leadership of the Holy Family and ask for his intercession and inspiration for how we are called to lead. And as always, rally your council around the rosary, entrusting all your work to the intercession of our Blessed Mother.

*Sean Pott comes to the Knights of Columbus after more than 10 years of mission work with college students. He is excited to serve as the interim director of programs, working to help chaplains and councils instill faith-based programs at their parishes and councils.*

# Upcoming Activities



## MAY

Offer to assist your council's grand knight in determining the eligibility of potential new officers, if needed. Because only practical Catholics in union with the Holy See are eligible, a grand knight may consult you about the Catholicity of potential new officers.

Honor the mothers of your local community following weekend Masses on Mother's Day, Sunday, May 12. Ask brother Knights to invite the parish, especially students from confirmation classes or other youth programs, to support local women's centers or pro-life pregnancy centers.

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 [kofc.org/cis](http://kofc.org/cis).

## JUNE

Mark the feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church on June 10 with a public recitation of the rosary at your parish. Ask brother Knights, their wives and their children to volunteer to lead the decades.

Celebrate fathers during or following all Masses celebrated June 16-17. Be sure to preach on the Church's understanding of marriage and fatherhood on the days leading up to the event. For more information, visit [kofc.org/domesticchurch](http://kofc.org/domesticchurch).

Mark the June 22 feast day of Sts. Thomas More and John Fisher, who were imprisoned and eventually killed for their faithfulness to the Church's teaching. In imitation of these saints, encourage your parishioners and brother Knights to consider volunteering in prison ministry.

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.

## JULY

Support your council's newly elected officers and appointed program chairmen and directors as the fraternal year begins.

Celebrate the upcoming holidays of Canada Day and Independence Day with Masses of thanksgiving.

## St Ignatius' Prayer of Surrender

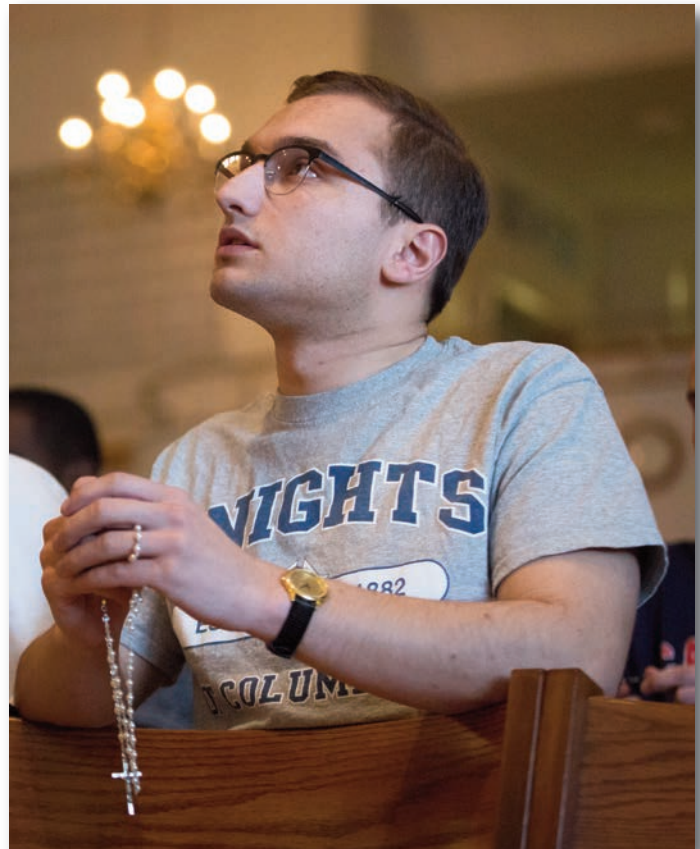
*St. Ignatius knew that a society of strong and determined Catholic men could accomplish great things. Nearly five centuries later, the Knights of Columbus agree. We offer this prayer as a means of surrendering ourselves, our councils and our parishes for the renewal of the Catholic faith.*

Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty,  
my memory, my understanding,  
and my entire will,  
All I have and call my own.

You have given all to me.  
To you, Lord, I return it.

Everything is yours; do with it what you will.  
Give me only your love and your grace,  
that is enough for me.

*Prayer from the Loyola Press, [loyolapress.com](http://loyolapress.com).*



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