



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

What Kind of Father Am I Called to Be?

An excerpt from Into the Breach, by Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted of Phoenix



Masculine chastity is a “long and exacting work” that we should be proud to undertake (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2342)! Imagine standing before the throne of God on judgment day, where the great saints of ages past, who themselves dealt with preeminent sins in their own day, will say to each other, “We dealt with the trouble of lust in our day, but those 21st-century men! These happy few battled the beast up close!” We can help each other and other men around us to strive for self-mastery, as this is best addressed among brothers. I encourage you to put aside your fears and insecurities, those that keep you from engaging head on in the fight for chastity. Christ wants to help men be formed after his own heart in each confessional of the Church and at each Mass. ...

Men, your presence and mission in the family is irreplaceable! Step up and lovingly, patiently take up your God-given role as protector, provider and spiritual leader of your home. A father’s role as spiritual head of the family must never be understood or undertaken as domination over others, but only as a loving leadership and a gentle guidance for those in your care. Your fatherhood, my fatherhood, in its hidden, humble way, reflects imperfectly but surely the fatherhood of God, the Father to those whom the Lord has given us to father.

What does it mean to “father”? In a reflection on fatherhood, Pope Francis explains: “When a man does not have this desire [for fatherhood], something is missing in this man. Something is wrong. All of us, to exist, to become complete, in order to be mature, we need to feel the joy of fatherhood, even those of us who are celibate.

Fatherhood is giving life to others, giving life, giving life” (Homily, June 26, 2013). This is why fatherhood — living out one’s vocation to fatherhood, whether that fatherhood is bound up in physical marriage or spiritual marriage in the priesthood or religious life — is absolutely essential for a man to live out the fullness of his meaning in life. ...

To fully live, all men must be fathers and live out their fatherhood! We cannot “become like God,” my sons and brothers, without this understanding and this movement of the heart followed by decisive action. If you do not embrace the spousal and fatherly vocation God has planned for you, you will be stuck in the impotence of the “seed” that refuses to die and refuses to give life. Don’t settle for this half-life! The question for every man is not “Am I called to be a father?” but rather “What kind of father am I called to be?”

Missionary Discipleship: It Begins With You

Let’s face it: Most Knights of Columbus chaplains have ideas on how to improve the faith and manhood of the men in their communities. But how to put these ideas in action? Start by asking your council members to become missionaries of the new evangelization.

How can men be these missionaries?

1. **Be present** – A Knight’s first obligation is to be present at home to his wife and children, helping make his own home a place of prayer, Christian love and open communication. Knights should then bring the same values to the parish. Chaplains should ask their councils to have at least one Knight go to each and every parish activity that is open to men or families.
2. **Be active** – Knights should be visibly active as a group in community activities, proudly wearing KnightsGear clothing. Chaplains might also proudly display their membership by pairing a K of C hat with their cassock, habit or collar.
3. **Be knowledgeable** – Knights should be well-informed about the Catholic faith. Turn to the resources listed in this issue for ideas on how men can give testimony whenever and wherever they happen to be.

Don’t pull punches. Spell it out. Most modern men are not interested in the Catholic faith as a passionate, complete way of life. For them, church events simply become yet another community program. They don’t see being a Christian as anything more than “being a good person.”

You and your brother Knights can help transform these men into disciples. But it begins with you. Don’t hesitate to engage, and really challenge your brothers to reach the ultimate goal: a man worthy to be called a true disciple of Christ.



Members of San Isidro Magsasaka Council 13150 in Luzon, Philippines, hold rosaries as they kneel together in prayer. At the request of their pastor, the council organized regular times to pray the rosary.

FROM OUR STATE CHAPLAINS

Spiritual Fathers and Dads Inspire Each Other

In preparation for Father's Day, June 18, state chaplains are working with Knights and parishioners to find ways to strengthen men in their vocations.

In North Dakota, State Chaplain Father Chad Wilhelm, pastor of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Devils Lake, N.D., does not hesitate to promote prayer and devotion among his parishioners; his parish bulletins invite parishioners to pray for the sick, participate in devotions to Our Lady of Fatima and spend time in the parish's Divine Mercy Eucharistic Adoration Chapel.

Father Wilhelm doesn't promote prayer and devotion just for his own parish, however. He asks each parish in his jurisdiction to advertise the Order's Building the Domestic Church While Strengthening Our Parish initiative in their weekly bulletin.

As a result of these advertisements, more and more men are becoming familiar with materials promoted under the initiative, such as Bishop Thomas Olmsted's apostolic exhortation *Into the Breach*.

"What I'm seeing at the council level — which is very nice — is having a real drive home to ask all of our chaplains to read *Into the Breach* in their council meetings," he said.

Nebraska State Chaplain Father John Rooney, pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Shelby, Neb., said that the men in his state are also reading *Into the Breach*. And more than that — they are putting it into action. Praising the men in the local Fourth Degree assembly who provided an honor guard before the Blessed Sacrament on Holy Thursday this year, Father Rooney said, "It's just a beautiful witness of fatherly devotion to the Eucharist."

"These are men who are passionately in love with their wives, their families, God and the Church. They each are men of deep Catholic faith who inspire me to dig deeper, preach better and pray more fervently."

College councils are likewise helping men, particularly young men in their 20s, embrace Catholic prayers and practices that witness to the vocation of Catholic fatherhood. For inspiration, Cardinal John Henry Newman Council 10829, at the University of North Dakota, looks to St. Thomas More, promoting his example as an intelligent, preserving and faithful Catholic man.

Such Catholic examples are inspirational to young lay Catholic men, and when these laymen live out that example, priests themselves are inspired to be more faithful. As Father John Rice, state chaplain for West Virginia, shared about the men in his local council: "These are men who are passionately in love with their wives, their families, God and the Church. They each are men of deep Catholic faith who inspire me to dig deeper, preach better and pray more fervently."

For Father Rice, Father Rooney and Father Wilhelm, these men embody the virtue of what it means to be a Catholic man.

Recounting the reasons why he became a Knight, Father Wilhelm explained he was inspired as a young man in his hometown in North Dakota. There, he saw a local man at church. "He embodied what it meant to be a Catholic gentleman and Knight of Columbus. He was a farmer. He had this wonderful, deep voice and only had an eighth-grade education. He would get up and speak about Father McGivney off the cuff. He would talk about the principles of what it means to be a Knight."

Father Wilhelm went on to describe how local Knights came to his family's aid when he was young, helping with the Wilhelm family farm. "My dad had an accident in 1969 and the Knights came together. They helped us almost that whole year."

"That's why I have been personally inspired by the Knights of Columbus," Father Wilhelm said.

Resources and Ideas to Share With Dads

Many of the below resources are drawn from the suggestions and efforts of Wisconsin State Chaplain Father Richard Heilman and Matthew Christoff, a member of Father George Council 3758, in Plymouth, and founder of the New Emangelization Project.

Church Militant Field Manual by Father Richard Heilman
This book provides men with strategies for living like Christ.

Manual for Spiritual Warfare by Paul Thigpen
This book is designed to answer questions about facing the world's spiritual battle and shares resources to help in the fight.

The Holy League: holyleague.com
A parish-based network of men united in devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, the League calls men to make a stand against the dangers of relativism, secularism, impurity and religious confusion. The League's website, holyleague.com, offers practical tips and tools to aid men in their journey of faith.

Catholic Man Night: catholicmannight.com
A site that outlines ways Catholic men can come together for Catholic Man Night, a social gathering which includes Eucharistic Adoration, talks with your parish priest, the sacrament of reconciliation, discussions on how to better imitate Jesus, and simple fun.

Roman Catholic Man: romancatholicman.com
This website provides Catholic men with inspiring articles and resources, including some of those listed above. The site also provides purchasing details for sturdy, pull-chain combat rosaries modeled after those commissioned by the U.S. government for soldiers serving in World War I. These rosaries help men realize that the rosary is an essential aspect of masculine prayer, benefiting men — including the most courageous of soldiers — for centuries.

The New Emangelization Project: newemangelization.com
A response to the "man crisis" in the Church, this project is a targeted effort to help men rediscover and live their faith as part of the new evangelization called for by Vatican II.

Fathers for Good: fathersforgood.com
Fathers for Good is an initiative of the Knights of Columbus, providing resources and expert advice to help all men become the best fathers they can be.

Monthly Suggested Activities

JUNE

Encourage the members of your council and parish community to celebrate the solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, June 18. In honor of the feast, ask Knights to help you contact local hospitals' chaplaincy services, as well as the families of homebound parishioners, with details about your parish's distribution of Communion.

Hold a Father's Day Affirmation of Wedding Vows during or following all Masses celebrated June 18-19. 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.

On Father's Day, share the resources provided by Fathers for Good. Fathers for Good addresses the main concerns facing men: faith, family, finances, the domestic church, love and marriage. For more information, visit fathersforgood.org.

Mark the 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 23. 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. During your homilies, discuss the USCCB's Fortnight for Freedom Campaign and reflect on the importance of religious freedom, including topics such as:

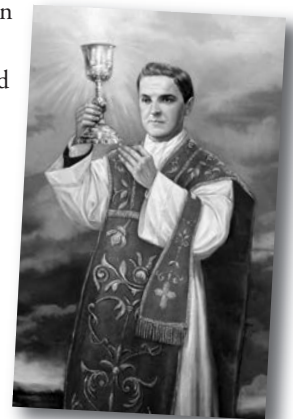
- The importance of praying for national leaders, especially that they follow political practices that protect all human life, uphold religious freedom and safeguard families.
- The example of the saints and holy people who have lived on North American soil, such as Kateri Tekakwitha and Junípero Serra, whose feast days we celebrate in July.

AUGUST

Preach about the central importance of the Transfiguration and the Assumption, celebrated on Aug. 6 and Aug. 15.

Join your parish and council in celebrating Knights of Columbus Family Week, Aug. 7-13.

Celebrate special Masses on the anniversaries of Father McGivney's birth (Aug. 12) and death (Aug. 14). Also, distribute cards (#10115) containing a prayer for the beatification of Venerable Father McGivney and copies of *A Model for Our Times* (#5044, available in quantities of 250) to all the members of your parish.



BEST PRACTICE OF THE MONTH

Bringing Fatherhood to Show-and-Tell

This Father's Day, June 18, is the perfect time to share the beauty of the vocation of fatherhood with your community.

But it's not enough if priests and chaplains only share some sort of congratulatory Hallmark-style greeting or cliché words of encouragement after Mass. Instead, Knights of Columbus chaplains have to treat these moments as a chance for "show-and-tell." That is, they must not only show their parish beautiful examples of fatherhood but also explain why the Church values fatherhood and offer resources to help dads embrace their vocations.

One way to encourage dads to learn more about fatherhood is through hosting events where they will talk about what fatherhood means, such as the Father-Daughter Banquet hosted by Knights in North Dakota. Additionally, Father Chad Wilhelm, state chaplain for North Dakota, recommends that chaplains encourage fathers to commit to simple activities that involve their sons, such as serving at Mass together.

In West Virginia, Elkins Council 603 gathers to discuss the book *Be a Man!* by Father Larry Richards. The sessions are held twice a week — once on Wednesday mornings at a local hospital and once on Saturday mornings at the parish hall. About a dozen men, Catholic and non-Catholic alike, join the discussions and look deeply at what it means to be a Catholic man, husband and father.



*Pictured is Father Larry Richards, author of *Be a Man!*, which spells out what it takes for men — including fathers — to passionately embrace God's purpose for them. Father Richards is a member of Francis V. Kloecker Jr. Council 13602 in Erie, Pa.*



Consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

“Contemplating the Heart of Christ, we are faced with the fundamental question of our priestly life: Where is my heart directed? Our ministry is often full of plans, projects and activities: from catechesis to liturgy, to works of charity, to pastoral and administrative commitments. Amid all these, we must still ask ourselves: What is my heart set on, where is it directed, what is the treasure that it seeks?”

– Pope Francis



I give myself and consecrate to the Sacred Heart of our Lord Jesus Christ, my person and my life, my actions, pains and sufferings, so that I may be unwilling to make use of any part of my being other than to honor, love and glorify the Sacred Heart. This is my unchanging purpose, namely, to be all his, and to do all things for the love of him, at the same time renouncing with all my heart whatever is displeasing to him. I therefore take you, O Sacred Heart, to be the only object of my love, the guardian of my life, my assurance of salvation, the remedy of my weakness and inconstancy, the atonement for all the faults of my life and my sure refuge at the hour of death. ...

Remove from me all that can displease you or resist your holy will; let your pure love imprint your image so deeply upon my heart that I shall never be able to forget you or to be separated from you.

May I obtain from all your loving kindness the grace of having my name written in your heart, for in you I desire to place all my happiness and glory, living and dying in bondage to you. Amen.

Prayer attributed to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque

“Fatherhood is giving life to others. ... For us, it is pastoral paternity, spiritual fatherhood, but this is still giving life, this is still becoming fathers.”

– From a homily of Pope Francis, June 2013