



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

Hope and God's Goodness

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The end of the liturgical year, with its eschatological themes, coincides with the closing of the Jubilee Year of Mercy — presenting a timely moment for a catechesis on the virtue of hope.

Hope means the expectation of a good in the future, regardless of the difficulties ahead. Since this good is arduous to obtain, one's experience and memories play a vital role in hope or despair. The proper object of the theological virtue of hope is one's eternal happiness through the possession of God as one's good. Hope has the assurance of certitude due to God's omnipotence. If a person responds to violence, tragic memory or abusive power with nonviolence and forgiveness, that person is placing his hope in the power of God's omnipotence to combat the injustice. God's merciful omnipotence and historic fidelity to his promises keep the flame of hope alive, despite all uncertainty. One's hope is not dependent on oneself or others, but only on God's goodness, as St. Thomas Aquinas taught.

The despairing man, in contrast — weighed down by his own sins and tragic experience — flees from God. His error lies in the preference for his own judgment of his past over the testimony of God. Tragically, suicide, meaninglessness, guilt, anxiety and despondency often follow the despairing man. Thus, to break from a despairing path, man must look beyond himself to the patient expectation of eternal life and justice in heaven.

Hope is tied to one's pilgrim status on earth. Hopelessness and despair are a result of one's denial of the eternal life to come. Both despair and presumption view man as having already arrived at his destination.

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10 Ways to Promote Vocations

During National Vocation Awareness Week (NVAW), an annual weeklong celebration held by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops during the first full week of November, ask your brother Knights to help you share information about vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life. This year, the NVAW is held Nov. 6-12, 2016. For more information, visit usccb.org/vocations.

1. Ask Knights to publicly recite your diocesan vocations prayer each Sunday.
2. Print your parish or diocesan vocations prayer on refrigerator magnets, and ask Knights to distribute them to students, parishioners and families.
3. Offer eucharistic adoration monthly, and invite Knights and all men in the parish to come to pray for an increase in vocations in your diocese.
4. Encourage Knights to send letters of encouragement or gratitude to each of the seminarians in your diocese — especially those sponsored through the Order's Refund Support Vocations Program.
5. Create a page on your parish or council's website with resources for any Knight or parishioner considering a religious vocation.
6. Before every regular council meeting, invite your brother Knights to get together a little earlier to say a decade of the rosary for a specific priest, seminarian, sister or religious novice. This may be a person from your parish, diocese or council, or even a friend of one of your brother Knights.
7. Check out your diocesan vocations calendar for dates of upcoming ordinations, and travel with your brother Knights to the ordination. Or, ask your grand knight if the council can sponsor a bus trip for interested parishioners.
8. Ask your brother Knights to sponsor a prayer breakfast with a vocation speaker.
9. Welcome your diocese's vocations director to the parish for a weekend, inviting him to speak to parish families and members of your council.
10. Ask volunteers from your parish and council to pray the rosary or attend Mass for the intention of an increase in religious vocations, with a different person committing to pray for that intention on each day of the month.



A glimpse of the "Tell a Priest, Thank You" exhibit at the Knights of Columbus-sponsored Mercy Centre during World Youth Day Kraków 2016. The exhibit, sponsored by diocesanpriest.com, contained messages to priests from thousands of pilgrims, serving not only to promote vocation awareness, but also to provide a chance for the youth to express their heartfelt thanks to the priests who touched their lives.

Adapted from *20 Ways to Promote Vocations in Your Parish or School*, copyright © 2015, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C.

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The Light of Christ, the Light to the Nations

Excerpts from the homily of Cardinal Donald Wuerl, addressing the attendees of this year's Supreme Convention, which focused on Pope Francis' call to be missionary disciples, Aug. 3, 2016.

In this convention we recognize our theme, "A Light to the Nations." As an expression of that evangelizing command to be disciples — evangelizing witnesses. It is precisely to be "A Light to the Nations" that we are called as Knights of Columbus individually and as our Order to be a reflection of Jesus, who is the "Light to the Nations." ...

But how do we bear this witness? How do we share this message?

How is it that we are able to do this? How is it that we are able to be a reflection of that light in our families, our communities, in the workplace, in wherever we find ourselves?

In the great task of the new evangelization — in the carrying out of the work of the evangelizing disciple — there are, I believe, three steps. Each of us is called first to renew our own faith. This is something we do both intellectually, by learning more about our faith, and affectively, by opening our hearts more deeply in prayer. ...

But it is not enough that we just appreciate personally our faith. We have to be confident in its truth so that we are willing to stand in that truth and be a witness to it in all that we say and do. ...

But there is a third element. Not only are we to deepen our faith in this Year of Mercy and in this challenge to be an evangelizing disciple, not only are we to stand confident in that truth, but we must be willing and prepared to share it.

All around us are those who need, once again, to be invited back into the fullness of the sacramental life of the Church, back into the embrace of God's mercy and Christ's living presence in his Church.

Each evangelizing disciple, each Knight of Columbus, each one of us, is called to undertake this task.

Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, offers us the perennial wisdom of the Church on how we do this. He tells us: Go out, encounter [and] accompany those who should be more fully with us. As we do this, we evangelize.

Each missionary disciple has many qualities. There are a great number of identifiable characteristics of a new evangelizer. ...

First, we must be bold — have courage. After the resurrection and ascension of Jesus, the Apostles were all gathered in the Upper Room. They remained there "timid," as the Acts of the Apostles describes them. And then came the outpouring of the Spirit — the same Spirit you and I received in baptism, the same Spirit nurtured in this Eucharist — and we are told they were then bold (cf. Acts 2:4). Peter boldly stood up and announced the resurrection (cf. Acts 2:22-36). Paul boldly went out and preached in all of the lands that he could reach (cf. Acts 19:21-22). You and I have to have that same serene, confident courage.

The second characteristic of the new evangelizer is a sense of urgency. It is our turn now. Others have proclaimed the Gospel before us, and we stand on their shoulders. But it is our turn now. ... Our task is not just to know God's word but to do it. One way we can share our faith is

to share the monthly issue of *Columbia* magazine that each of us receives. I have made a practice for some time now of giving my copy, after I have read it, to a college student on one of our many campuses. It can serve not only as a way to grow more deeply in the faith but as an invitation.

The third characteristic of a Knight of Columbus evangelizing disciple is a connectedness to the Church. My brothers, the only Gospel message that we can proclaim, the only valid proclamation we have, is the one that is verified in the Church. It comes to us in that great line we call the apostolic succession and apostolic tradition. None of us has received directly the Gospel. It comes to us mediated and passed on in and through the Church.

Sometimes terms like apostolic succession, apostolic tradition [and] papal magisterium take on an abstract quality. Children usually have a way of going right to the core of things. Thirty years ago, as a young bishop, I found that when I visited parish schools I often received mail — lots of letters. This was not spontaneous correspondence. The letters came in neat packets, and you could identify the age of the youngster by the preferred writing instrument: a crayon graduating to a colored pencil to the ubiquitous No. 2 pencil and finally to a ballpoint pen.

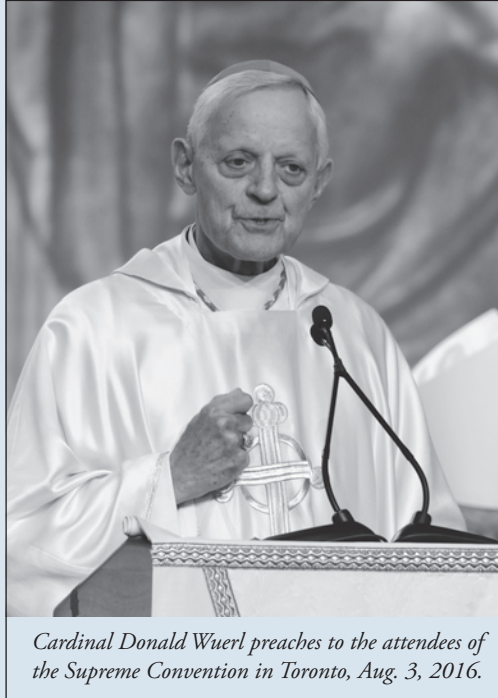
One of the letters I have cherished and kept to this day. It said, "Dear Bishop, I find it amazing that you know someone who knew someone who knew someone." Apparently, the teacher had said you are writing to the bishop so fill up the page. And my little correspondent continued, "... who knew someone who knew Jesus."

... Is that not what we believe? That we, through our connectedness to the Church, through our communion with the touchstone of the faith, Peter, can truly claim to know someone who connects us to Jesus Christ?

Yes, the name changes from John Paul to Benedict to Francis. But the rock is the same. Our allegiance must be the same because the assurance of our faith rests on that connectedness.

That brings us to the final characteristic: The defining quality of every missionary disciple must be joy. My brothers and sisters, we announce a Risen Lord. We have received the words of everlasting life. I think one of the reasons that our Holy Father, Pope Francis, is heard and received with such welcome is because he radiates the joy of the Gospel. So should you and I. Christ is risen and we are his heralds, his witnesses.

As we take on the task to be "A Light to the Nations," we simply remind ourselves of the joy and the truth of our Gospel message and the fact that because of our connectedness to the rock, to Peter, you and I can always say we know someone who knows someone who brings us to Jesus.



Cardinal Donald Wuerl preaches to the attendees of the Supreme Convention in Toronto, Aug. 3, 2016.

The Best Practice of the Month: Unburying the Church's Teachings on Death

A best practice among Knights of Columbus chaplains is that of praying for the deceased members of their councils and parishes. While the practice has long been a part of the Order's practices — each year a special memorial Mass is held at the Supreme Convention — many Knights and parishioners do not actually understand the full significance of the Church's teachings regarding why we pray for the dead and why we provide them Catholic funerals and burials.

November is dedicated to praying for all souls, and each chaplain should take the opportunity to offer some brief catechesis on the Church's respect for the dead, especially the necessity of Catholic funeral rites and the importance of a Christian burial. Be sure to share the reasons why the Church does not consider cremation to be of the same value as that of a corporeal burial, explaining that corporeal burials allow us not only to show our respect for the life once lived in the body but also to confirm our belief in the resurrection of the body. Explain that if cremation is chosen, it should, generally, take place only after the funeral Mass. Additionally, the cremated remains should not be scattered but entombed in a mausoleum or buried in a cemetery.

Knowing that many choose cremation because they cannot afford a burial of the cremated remains, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops shares a practice that each Knights of Columbus should take as his own:

“As a means of providing pastoral support and an acceptable respectful solution to the problem of uninterred cremated remains, one diocese offered on All Souls' Day in 2011 an opportunity for any family who desired it the interment of cremated remains. The diocese offered a Mass and committal service at one of its Catholic cemeteries and provided, free of charge, a common vault in a mausoleum for the interment of the cremated remains” (*NewsLetter*, USCCB Committee on Divine Worship, Jan. 2012).

Work with your brother Knights to implement this beautiful and respectful practice in your parish, diocese or jurisdiction. You could work with other councils to cover the cost of the vault as well as an inscription of the names of the interned deceased.

Suggested Monthly Activities

NOVEMBER

- ❖ Remember deceased Knights, family members and parishioners during a memorial Mass. After the Mass, invite Knights and parishioners to join you in a cleanup at a nearby Catholic cemetery, ending the cleanup with a prayer service for the souls of all buried there.
- ❖ Join the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in marking National Vocation Awareness Week in your parish Nov. 6-12, asking your brother Knights to help you share information about religious vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life. See *10 Ways to Promote Vocations* (page 1) for suggestions on hosting the event in your parish.
- ❖ Host a parish event to coincide with the closing of the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica, which marks the end of the Jubilee Year of Mercy, Nov. 20. The event might include a talk on mercy, personal witness from a brother Knight who experienced or extended mercy, and the opportunity for confession.

DECEMBER

- ❖ Join brother Knights in spreading the light of Christ by illuminating a Nativity scene at your parish on Dec. 6 at 8 p.m. local time. Offer to bless the Nativity manger or tree before the lighting.
- ❖ Focus on the spiritual importance of Christmas by inviting the men or your parish and councils to an Advent Night of Reflection. The night might include discussions on the Nativity passages of the Gospels, quiet moments for personal reflection and individual spiritual direction, confession and Benediction. To organize a day for parish and council families with young children, turn to the booklet *Journey to the Inn: An Advent Celebration* (#9898, available for \$1 each).
- ❖ Celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Dec. 12, through a parish showing of *Guadalupe: The Miracle and Message*. Consider planning the event to coincide with the broadcast dates and times on your local station. Or, work with your council to order a copy of the DVD (available at knightsgear.com) for your parish and council library.

HOPE, FROM PAGE 1

The false optimism of the presumptuous man denies the reality of God's justice. Similarly, the man who despairs refuses to trust in anything beyond this life. Weighed down by oppression, he is paralyzed with neither the courage nor the will to act. The sin of the despairing man lies in the fact that he believes in a lie — a lie that says God won't or can't help. It has broken his spirit — he accepts his inferiority and non-humanity, and he denies God's ability and desire to care for him. His despair and presumption reduces the inexhaustible future of man's hopeful existence to nothingness.

Hopelessness creeps into man's consciousness when he loses sight of God's complete transcendent love of justice and mercy.

Hope allows former victims to “turn the other cheek” in a radical statement of hope in a God who will redeem them. An eschatological hope prays with the Our Father, saying, “thy Kingdom come” and “deliver us from evil.” Hope allows us to pray these words, trusting in the transformation of society through the incursion of divine reality. The recovery of the virtue of hope can liberate both societies and individuals that have been victims of moral evil and suffering.

Let us remind our brother Knights to live in the virtue of hope, trusting in the mercy and goodness of God, which transcends all that weighs us down. Because of God's mercy and goodness, we will be led in the way of his guiding providence.

Vivat Jesus!



A Prayer of Thanksgiving for the Jubilee Year

Let us joyfully thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Throughout this year of grace, he has bestowed on us every heavenly blessing in Christ. He has given us this precious time of mercy and conversion. Let us express our thanks and joy in the words of the Virgin Mary, our Mother. As we sing the Lord's mercy extending to every generation, let us ask him to pour out, like the morning dewfall, that same mercy unceasingly upon the entire world.

My soul proclaims the greatness of the lord, my spirit rejoices in God my savior;
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant, from this day all generations will call me blessed:

the almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm, he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
the promise he made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children forever.



From the *Concluding Rite of the Closing Celebration of the Extraordinary Jubilee in Local Churches*.
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